

# Condé Nast Traveller



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## THE GOLD STANDARD

OUR ULTIMATE GUIDE  
TO THE WORLD'S BEST HOTELS

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## DINE OUT DOWN UNDER

The best restaurants in  
Sydney & Melbourne

## Mallorca

An island for all seasons

## Winter sun on the Egyptian Riviera

**PLUS** Where to stay on Phuket + 4 family-friendly beach hotels



# THE GOLD LIST 2007

The best hotels in the world for Service, Rooms, Food, Ambience & Design, Location and Leisure Facilities

## BEST HOTELS FOR SERVICE

Continued from page 20

### Asia

#### ★ The Peninsula Hong Kong 97.24

This grande dame of the Far East, and Hong Kong landmark, opened in 1928; a modern tower was added in 1994. There are 300 richly decorated rooms (those in the tower have panoramic views of the city), three bars and six restaurants, including the Philippe Starck-designed Felix (Pacific Rim cuisine). Other facilities include a Roman-style pool, seventh-floor sun terrace and ESPA spa.

**X-factor** The Peninsula is world-famous for its service. It has a fleet of Rolls-Royces to ferry guests around, and helicopter shuttle service from the rooftop helipad. Croydon-born Paul Quinn is its brilliant manager. *Doubles from HK\$3,600 (about £240). Salisbury Road, Kowloon, Hong Kong, China (00 800 2828 3888; www.peninsula.com)*

#### ★ Island Shangri-La

##### Hong Kong 96.00

All 531 rooms and 34 suites at this 56-floor skyscraper overlooking Victoria Harbour in the heart of Central district were recently refurbished, along with French restaurant Petrus and seafood specialist Lobster Bar & Grill (other restaurants include the relaxed Café TOO, Summer Palace for Cantonese, and Nadaman for Japanese). There is an excellent business centre, health club and a heated outdoor pool on the eighth floor. Guests enjoy direct access to the Pacific Place shopping centre.

**X-factor** Ideal for business travellers, this hotel offers express check-out and check-in and an extensive business centre. Service is always friendly and efficient, from doormen and concierge to waiters. *Doubles from HK\$3,800 (about £255). Pacific Place, Supreme Court Road, Central, Hong Kong, China (00 852 2877 3838; www.shangri-la.com)*

#### ★ Taj Mahal Palace & Tower

##### Mumbai India 95.98

Housed in an iconic 1903 building with a modern tower and offering mesmerising views of the Gateway of India and the Arabian Sea, the 546 rooms (many recently refurbished) present a choice of old-world charm in the palace (antiques and period

artefacts), European style mixed with Indian elegance in the tower, and regal luxury in the 51 suites. Facilities include a Jiva Spa and six restaurants, with Japanese cuisine at Wasabi.

**X-factor** Considering this is Mumbai's grandest hotel, it has an exceptionally warm, inviting atmosphere. Taj Club Room butlers assume the role of both guide and assistant. *Doubles from US\$385. Apollo Bunder, Mumbai, India (00 91 22 6665 3366; www.tajhotels.com)*

### Australasia & South Pacific

#### ★ Park Hyatt Sydney 95.00

Excellent hotel in a convenient waterfront location in the Rocks district. Many of the 158 contemporary bedrooms have fantastic views of the Opera House, Sydney Harbour and Sydney Bridge from private balconies, and there's a spectacular panorama from the rooftop swimming pool. The Iluka Spa uses home-grown Jurlique products; the Tony Chi-designed harbourkitchen&bar has floor-to-ceiling folding-glass doors and a show kitchen headed by Danny Drinkwater, who cooks delicious Australian/Mediterranean food.

**X-factor** Service is speedy, from dry cleaning and room service to the person who will unpack and pack your luggage should you request it. *Doubles from £230. 7 Hickson Road, The Rocks, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia (0845 888 1234; www.sydney.park.hyatt.com)*

#### ★ BLUE Sydney 91.67

Formerly the W Sydney and now a member of Taj Hotels, this stylish, 100-room hotel is in a converted wharf at Woolloomooloo, which is still surrounded by docked vessels. Historic timber meets contemporary chic in the loft-like bedrooms, many split-level and furnished with chocolate-brown faux suede. The Italian restaurant, Otto, has spectacular views over the marina, and the popular Water Bar was named 'Bar of the Year' by the *Sydney Morning Herald*. **X-factor** Despite the hotel's high hip-quota, the staff are down-to-earth and friendly. There's an excellent, informative concierge and a slick business centre. *Doubles from US\$515. The Wharf at*

*Woolloomooloo, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia (00 61 2 9331 9000; www.tajhotels.com)*

#### ★ The Hotel Windsor

##### Melbourne 91.62

One of Australia's last grand hotels, in a wonderful location close to the Treasury Gardens and Princess Theatre, the Windsor evokes Victorian elegance while providing all modern comforts, including a 10-choice pillow menu. The Halim Family and Melbourne-based Wetherby Capital acquired the hotel from the Oberoi Group in 2005. Many of the grand-scale bedrooms and suites have four-metre-high ceilings and marble bathrooms. Sunday brunch is served in the Grand Ballroom and afternoon tea in One Eleven Spring Street restaurant, which also has an excellent dinner menu.

**X-factor** Celebrities and leaders of commerce love this hotel because of its impressively high standards of service and old-school, 'nothing is too much trouble' attitude. *Doubles from A\$300 (about £130). 111 Spring Street, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia (00 61 3 9633 6000; www.thehotelwindsor.com.au)*

### The Americas & Caribbean

#### ★ Copacabana Palace

##### Rio de Janeiro 96.08

A legendary meeting place for Rio's high society, this is undoubtedly the city's most glamorous hotel. Established in 1923, the 225-room property has entertained the great and the good for more than 80 years. Bedrooms are spacious and understated, with seven penthouse suites on the sixth floor. There is also a large pool, a rooftop tennis court and a new fitness centre and beauty salon; guests can choose between the celebrated Hotel Cipriani or the Pêrgula restaurants.

**X-factor** Old-world service that is formal without being stuffy. There is a team of concierges – of all ages – to deal with your requests. Guest relations director Annie Phillips is renowned throughout Rio. *Doubles from US\$410. Avenida Atlântica 1702, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (00 55 21 2548 7070; www.copacabanapalace.com.br)*

#### ★ Hotel Saint-Barth Isle de France St Barts 95.84

This stylish, elegant little property overlooks Flamands, one of the island's loveliest beaches. There are 33 rooms, suites, villas and bungalows and a two-bedroom fisherman's cottage, some with sea-views, others hidden in gardens and all with patios or terraces. There is also a Molton Brown Spa, floodlit tennis courts and two freshwater pools. La Case de l'Isle serves classic French cuisine.

**X-factor** Staff are totally unobtrusive but always around. No detail is overlooked, from organising beautiful picnics to the excellent turndown service with Molton Brown gifts on the pillow. *Doubles from €1,080. St Barts, French Antilles (00 590 590 275 666; www.isle-de-france.com)*

#### ★ Cap Juluca Anguilla 95.72

Andrew Harper's Hideaway Report recently voted Cap Juluca the best hotel in the Caribbean for the fifth year running. This secluded, sophisticated resort on a two-mile-long beach on the south-west coast of Anguilla has 18 Moorish-style villas (with up to six rooms in each) furnished with Moroccan rugs and lanterns. There are three restaurants, a golf driving range, tennis courts and a spa that offers appointments with the in-house shaman as well as more traditional treatments.

**X-factor** Celebrities flock here because of the privacy, discretion and exclusivity on offer: each white-domed villa has a dedicated butler and breakfast is served on your private terrace. *Doubles from US\$480. Maundays Bay, Anguilla (00 1 264 497 6666; www.capjuluca.com)*

### UK

#### ★ Dorchester London 95.29

This 75-year-old Mayfair hotel overlooking Hyde Park is one of London's finest. Its 250 bedrooms are decorated in traditional English country-house style with specially commissioned fabrics and exquisite antique furniture. The Grill Room is reputed to do the best roast in town. Interior designer Thierry Despont ➤

## Gold list



Appartement aux Bouquets, one of 21 idiosyncratic rooms at Château de Bagnols

➤ redesigned the popular bar last year; there is a spa and a Charles Worthington hairdresser.

**X-factor** Service is formal but friendly and immaculate. It has a 'solve anything' concierge desk and a desk for theatre tickets. Glamorous touches include a fleet of chauffeured BMWs and a Rolls-Royce Phantom. *Doubles from £420. Park Lane, London, W1 (020 7629 8888; www.thedorchester.com)*

#### ★ Jumeirah Carlton Tower

##### London 92.94

This classic-contemporary, 220-room-hotel in the heart of Knightsbridge is part of the Dubai-based Jumeirah Hotel Group. For the best Aberdeen Angus beef in London head to The Rib Room; go to The Chinoiserie for something lighter. A very glamorous ground-floor Gilt Champagne Lounge has just opened. There's also the Peak Health Club & Spa and a large pool surrounded by tropical plants under a glass roof.

**X-factor** Perhaps because such a high proportion of its guests are business travellers, service is extremely efficient. The staff is always prepared to go that extra mile, from preparing a private meal for two in the gardens of Cadogan Square to inquiring after cooking lessons with the chef. *Doubles from £199. Cadogan Place, London SW1 (0800 082 8000; www.jumeirahcarlontower.com)*

#### ★ The Ritz London 92.20

London's most famous hotel has gone from strength to strength since it opened on Piccadilly just over 100

years ago. There is still a no-jeans rule and gentlemen are required to wear a jacket and tie in the bar, restaurant and Palm Court. It has 133 gorgeous Louis XVI-style rooms and suites in blue, peach, pink or yellow, all with high-speed Internet access, and one of the world's most gloriously ornate dining rooms. High tea is served in the Palm Court and lavish cocktails in the Art Deco Rivoli Bar.

**X-factor** Staff may be white-gloved but are also utterly charming. *Doubles from £490. 150 Piccadilly, London W1 (020 7493 8181; www.theritzlondon.com)*

### Europe

#### ★ Four Seasons Hotel Georges V Paris 98.24

This 1928 grand palace hotel close to the Champs-Élysées is thought by many to be the best Four Seasons hotel in the world. Its 245 rooms all have special architectural details; 30 have private terraces. Le Cinq, under the aegis of super-chef Philippe Legendre, is one of two hotel restaurants in Paris with three Michelin stars. Also recommended: tea on the terrace at La Galerie. There is a swimming pool, saunas, steam rooms, spa and gym.

**X-factor** The ever-resourceful concierge is as good at planning a family day out as getting opera tickets or a table for two in one of the city's other fine restaurants. There is also a 24-hour business centre. *Doubles from €710. 31 avenue George V, Paris, France (00 33 1 49 52 70 00; www.fourseasons.com)*

#### ★ Le Sirenuse Positano 97.21

A rare combination of super-chic and utterly charming, this family-owned 63-room hotel is built into the cliffs, affording spectacular Amalfi Coast views. The whitewashed bedrooms are filled with contemporary furniture and 18th-century antiques; most have balconies or terraces. Light snacks are served poolside, while La Sponda offers a gourmet seafood experience.

**X-factor** Most of the staff have worked here for years, and seem like part of the family – which may explain the warm welcome. *Doubles from €352. Via Cristoforo Colombo 30, Positano, Italy (00 39 089 875 066; www.sirenuse.it)*

#### ★ Villa d'Este Lake Como 96.57

This luxurious 154-room resort hotel, in a spectacular 25-acre park on Lake Como, consists of two magnificent buildings swathed in silk-brocade drapes and overflowing with antiques and oil paintings; the main house, built in 1568, and the *trompe d'oeil*-decorated Queen's Pavilion, built in 1860. There is also an outstanding 'beauty farm', a pool-within-the-lake and several restaurants, including the Veranda serving Italian haute cuisine and the Grill (for regional specialities).

**X-factor** It is rare to find service this good. The staff remembers every guest and pre-empts needs whenever possible; meals can be taken anywhere in the grounds of the hotel. *Doubles from €595. Via Regina 40, Cernobbio, Italy (00 39 031 3481; www.villadeste.it)*

## BEST HOTELS FOR ROOMS

Continued from page 22

#### ★ Anse Chastenet St Lucia 94.29

This is a laid-back, 49-room resort and spa on the south-west coast with dramatic views of the island's landmark Pitons. The extensive kitchen garden services two restaurants: the Piti Piton and Treehouse Restaurant, which serves tropical 'world' cuisine, and the Trou au Diable beach restaurant.

**X-factor** No two rooms are alike: some are in pretty little cottages with wraparound verandahs, others are in more contemporary buildings integrated into the landscape, with a bathroom-tree here and an open-sided living room there. *Doubles from US\$1,120. Soufriere, St Lucia, West Indies (00 758 459 7000; www.ansechastenet.com)*

#### ★ Cotton House Mustique 94.13

This hillside, colonial-style hotel on a private island in St Vincent and the Grenadines was originally a simple, eight-bedroom hotel created by Oliver Messel, it was expanded and given a major overhaul by French hotelier Grace Leo-Andrieu in 2004. Noted for its exceptional service and pretty rooms, the hotel has a new swimming pool and ESPA spa. **X-factor** The 19 rooms, cottages and houses (including a new pool villa) overlook Endeavour and L'Ansecoy Bays and are extremely elegant. *Doubles from US\$714. Mustique, St Vincent, West Indies (00 1 784 456 4777; www.cottonhouse.net)*

### UK

#### ★ Claridge's London 94.62

An Art Deco landmark in the heart of Mayfair, more popular than ever with well-heeled travellers of all ages. Claridge's Bar, a local institution, serves a range of Champagnes; the Reading Room provides light meals; there is formal dining in three Michelin-starred Gordon Ramsay at Claridge's, under the direction of chef Mark Sargeant. Other facilities include a florist, hair salon and spa treatment rooms.

**X-factor** Of the 203 individually decorated bedrooms and suites, about half are in 1930s style; others have Victorian-inspired decor. A showcase for classic British design, the hotel most recently commissioned furniture and design company Linley to revamp two suites. *Doubles from £284. Brook Street, London W1 (020 7629 8860; www.claridges.co.uk)*

#### ★ Whatley Manor Wiltshire 94.39

A 1920s hunting lodge converted into a classic-contemporary 23-room country-house hotel by its ➤