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Charleston's Best New Hotels

by Laura Itzkowitz January 20, 2016



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There's no wrong time for a trip to [Charleston](#), which makes sense given the city has taken top honors in T+L's World's Best Awards for the past three years. Even in January—considered the low season—the weather was temperate, humidity was low, and there were plenty of fun things to do. Plus, a spate of new hotels has diversified the city's accommodations. While Charleston is home to plenty of classic grand dames, like [Planter's Inn](#) and [Wentworth Mansion](#), the more recent arrivals bring some much-needed youthful energy to the heart of the historic district. In the past year alone, five new hotels have opened and several more have undergone major renovations, with even more planned for 2016. These four new or recently refreshed properties stand out:



Courtesy of Spectator

The Spectator

Opened last July, this 41-room hotel provides plenty of outstanding design details. Jenny Keenan, best known for her warm and stylish residential projects, took inspiration from the 1920s with some midcentury and Hollywood glam mixed in. A hand-painted silk mural, Art Deco chandelier, and abstract paintings give the lobby an ultrachic vibe. In the bar, plush sofas, bookshelves, and a mirrored ceiling provide a welcoming backdrop for classic and inventive cocktails. Rooms feature velvet headboards, Carrera marble bathrooms, and minibars stocked with local goodies. [The Spectator](#) is also the city's first hotel to offer butler service—our butler Toby was friendly and personable. We loved the breakfast of warm mini-quiches, pastries, fresh fruit, and coffee he delivered to our room in the morning.

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The Restoration

Currently in soft opening mode, the new-and-improved [Restoration on King](#) prides itself on providing a thoroughly modern experience enhanced by [vintage amenities](#) that channel classic Americana. Spacious rooms sport a flattering blue color scheme inspired by the city's historic indigo trade, come equipped with kitchenettes, and feature editorial-quality photos. We loved the beautiful Assouline-curated library, where a librarian/concierge set out wine and cheese and regaled us with info about the many picturesque islands and beaches surrounding Charleston. The rooftop restaurant and bar offers great views of the steeple-filled skyline. If you go, book a relaxing aromatherapy massage at the Amethyst spa.



Courtesy of the Kessler Collection

Grand Bohemian Hotel

The [Grand Bohemian Hotel](#) lies somewhere between hip boutique hotel and sophisticated luxury property, with quirky design enlivened by pops of neons. Paintings—some better than others—decorate the walls and fill a street-facing gallery that hosts events open to guests and locals. A rooftop terrace with fire pits and whimsical décor is open year-round, though it's more of a draw during the warmer months. Most unique, however, is the wine tasting room and blending class that gives people a taste of what goes on behind-the-scenes in wineries. At the end of the sommelier-led class, participants take home a bottle of their own blend complete with a custom label.



Justin Falk Justin Falk

The Vendue

Though not exactly new, this art hotel in an 18th-century warehouse has undergone a complete renovation that brought it up to date and expanded its offerings. It [received a spot](#)

on our World's Best list for the first time in 2015. The last phase—completed in December—transformed the accommodations across the street at 26 Vendue (formerly the Anchorage). Rooms vary from classic Charleston style (exposed brick, original wood floors, oil paintings, and toile fabric) to more modern (leather headboard, dual-sided fireplace connecting the bedroom and bathroom). Art curated by Robert Lange Studios is displayed in the public spaces and is for sale. Be sure to check out the multi-leveled rooftop bar and stay for a meal at the Drawing Room—the chef's plates are as artful as anything decorating the walls and far more delicious. We loved the Carolina shrimp and cornbread that arrived in a cute cast iron pan and the deconstructed carrot cake.

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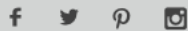
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