

TRAVEL+ LEISURE

THE BEST

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IN THE WORLD ARE...



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THE WORLD'S BEST AWARDS



THE TOP CITIES, HOTELS, CRUISE LINES,
DESTINATION SPAS, AIRLINES, TOUR COMPANIES,
AND MORE, AS DETERMINED
BY OUR VERY DISCERNING READERS.



► Who's to judge? You are.

Every year T+L asks readers to dish on their travel experiences—to share their opinions on everything from Southern cities to Asian islands, all-inclusive beach resorts to hilltop palazzos. Those assessments collectively define excellence in travel today, forming the basis of the World's Best Awards.

This year's edition marks the biggest World's Best Awards ever. We counted a record number of votes—more than 200,000 respondents submitted ratings—added dozens of new categories, and saw a heap of new players make the lists. (For more details on how the awards work, turn to page 81.) Kudos to all the winners, and thanks to you.

Edited by Sara Clemence

► Open the gatefold for our map of
the No. 1 hotels in 86 cities



WORLD'S BEST

Cities & Islands

CHARLESTON IS THE FIRST U.S. DESTINATION IN 16 YEARS TO TOP OUR LIST OF THE MOST LAUDED CITIES. AND PALAWAN RETURNS AS READERS' FAVORITE ISLAND.

Palawan, known for its dramatic cliffs, also crowned the islands list in 2013.

T+L ONLINE

WANT MORE WORLD'S BEST AWARDS?

Head to tandl.me/worldsbest for photos of every winner, videos, extended lists, and more.

HALL OF FAME

On the list for the past 10 years.

Scores have been rounded to the nearest hundredth of a point; in the event of a true tie, winners share the same ranking.



From private-island resorts to urban palaces, you'll find spots to inspire you with our gorgeous photographs of winners around the globe.



Charleston, Ischia, Chiang Mai, and beyond—get an intimate look at the top destinations with our exclusive video tours.



Don't see one of your favorites in the rankings? It only takes a few seconds to nominate them to appear on T+L's annual reader survey.

TOP 10

Cities

- 1 **Charleston**
South Carolina 91.66
- 2 **Chiang Mai**
Thailand 91.25
- 3 **San Miguel de Allende**
Mexico 91.19
- 4 **Florence**
89.85
- 5 **Luang Prabang**
Laos 89.85
- 6 **Kyoto**
Japan 89.75
- 7 **New Orleans**
89.75
- 8 **Barcelona** 89.60
- 9 **Savannah**
Georgia 89.57
- 10 **Cape Town**
89.46

TOP 10

Islands

- 1 **Palawan**
Philippines 93.71
- 2 **Boracay**
Philippines 90.47
- 3 **Ischia**
Italy 90.22
- 4 **Waiheke Island**
New Zealand 90.00
- 5 **Santorini**
Greece 89.07
- 6 **Cebu**
Philippines 88.65
- 7 **Mauí**
Hawaii 88.55
- 8 **Hilton Head**
South Carolina 88.35
- 9 **Kauai**
Hawaii 88.33
- 10 **Bali**
Indonesia 88.24

ROSAIRE GOODMAN/BRIEF

Top 100 Hotels

BIGGER ISN'T NECESSARILY BETTER—SMALL PROPERTIES, MANY OF THEM INDEPENDENT, DOMINATE THE RANKINGS.

- 1 **Nihiwatu Sumba**, Indonesia 98.35
- 2 **Spectator Hotel**, Charleston, South Carolina 97.78
- 3 **Huka Lodge**, Taupo, New Zealand 97.65
- 4 **Montage Kapalua Bay**, Maui, Hawaii 97.39
- 4 **Southern Ocean Lodge**, Kangaroo Island, Australia 97.39
- 6 **Lodge at Glendorn**, Bradford, Pennsylvania 97.38
- 7 **The Willcox**, Aiken, South Carolina 97.25
- 8 **Casa Gangotena**, Quito, Ecuador 97.20
- 9 **Twin Farms**, Barnard, Vermont 97.19
- 10 **Singular Patagonia**, Puerto Bories, Chile 97.14
- 11 **Singita Grumeti**, Serengeti National Park Area, Tanzania 97.11
- 12 **Farmhouse Inn**, Forestville, California 97.07
- 13 **Londolozi Sabi Sand Game Reserve**, South Africa 97.06
- 14 **The Peninsula**, Shanghai 97.01

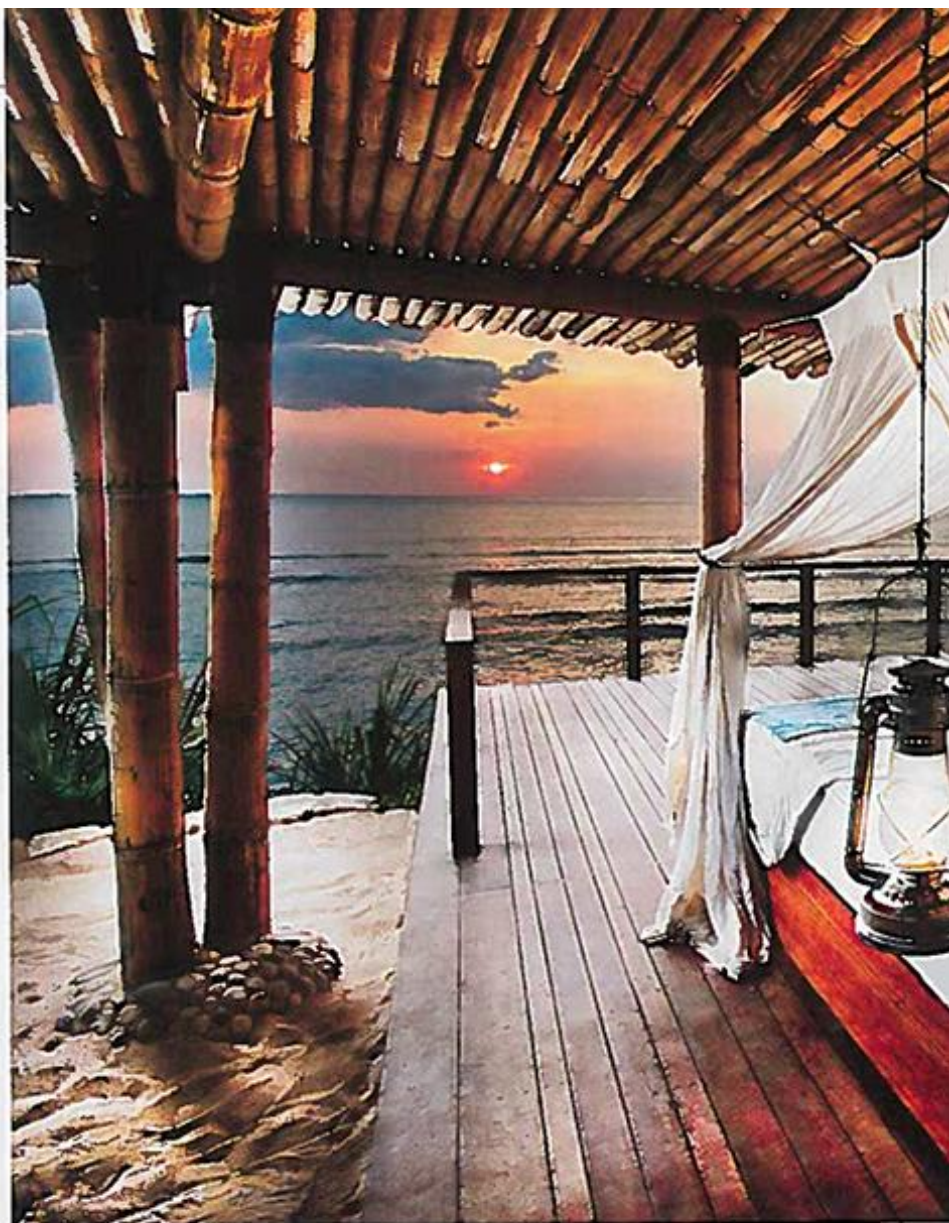
- 15 **Hotel Castello di Casole-A Timbers Resort**, Casole d'Elsa, Italy 97.01
- 16 **Gateway Canyons Resort & Spa**, Gateway, Colorado 97.00
- 17 **Cavas Wine Lodge**, Mendoza, Argentina 96.99
- 18 **Singita Sabi Sand Sabi Sand Game Reserve**, South Africa 96.95
- 19 **Manoir Hovey**, North Hatley, Quebec 96.93
- 20 **The Brando**, Tetiaroa, French Polynesia 96.80
- 21 **Château du Sureau**, Oakhurst, California 96.77
- 22 **Oberoi Udaivilas**, Udaipur, India 96.76
- 22 **Opposite House**, Beijing 96.76
- 22 **Triple Creek Ranch**, Darby, Montana 96.76
- 25 **Wequassett Resort & Golf Club**, Chatham, Massachusetts 96.68
- 26 **Old Edwards Inn & Spa**, Highlands, North Carolina 96.67
- 27 **Weekapaug Inn**, Westerly, Rhode Island 96.67
- 28 **Oberoi Vanyavilas**, Ranthambore, India 96.63

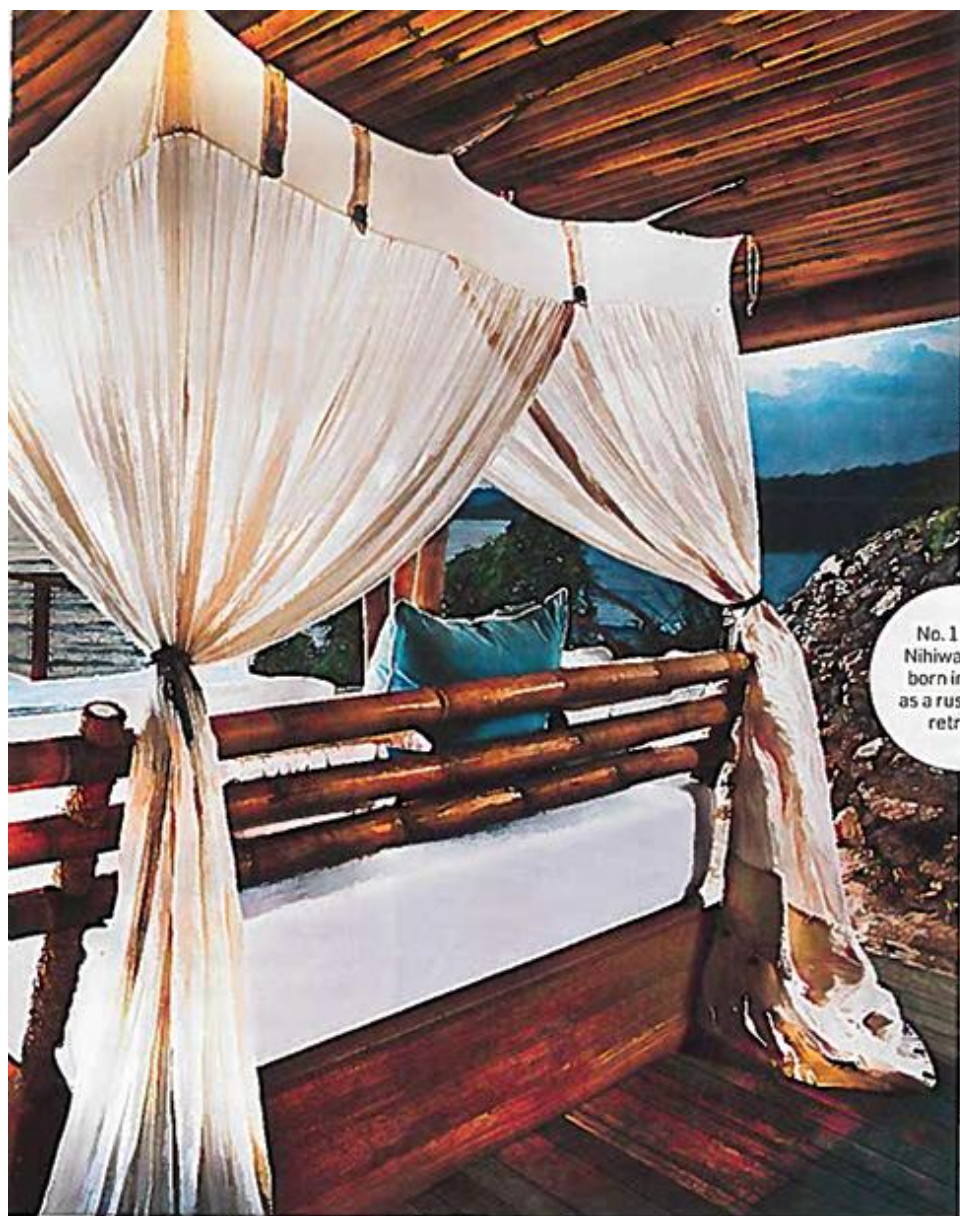
- 28 **Mombo Camp and Little Mombo Camp**, Moremi Game Reserve, Botswana 96.50
- 30 **Rosewood Mayakoba**, Playa del Carmen, Mexico 96.39
- 31 **Soly Luna Sacred Valley**, Peru 96.38
- 32 **Nayara Springs**, Arenal Volcano National Park, Costa Rica 96.36
- 33 **Kamalame Cay**, Andros, Bahamas 96.30
- 34 **XV Beacon**, Boston 96.27
- 35 **St. Regis Bali Resort**, Indonesia 96.22
- 36 **Tongabezi Lodge**, Livingstone, Zambia 96.20

- 37 **Alpina Gstaad**, Gstaad, Switzerland 96.00
- 37 **Beau-Rivage Palace**, Lausanne, Switzerland 96.00
- 37 **Brenners Park-Hotel & Spa**, Baden-Baden, Germany 96.00
- 37 **137 Pillars House**, Chiang Mai, Thailand 96.00
- 37 **Rosewood Sand Hill**, Menlo Park, California 96.00
- 42 **Katikies Hotel**, Santorini, Greece 95.95
- 43 **41 London**, London 95.94
- 44 **Nayara Hotel, Spa & Gardens**, Arenal Volcano National Park, Costa Rica 95.91
- 45 **Lodge at Sea Island**, Georgia 95.90

- 46 **Lodge & Cottages at Primland**, Meadows of Dan, Virginia 95.87
- 47 **Ashford Castle**, County Mayo, Ireland 95.84
- 48 **Las Ventanas al Paraíso, A Rosewood Resort**, San José del Cabo, Mexico 95.81
- 48 **Gasparilla Inn & Club Boca Grande**, Florida 95.76
- 50 **Rancho Valencia Resort & Spa**, Rancho Santa Fe, California 95.69
- 51 **Nam Hai Hol An**, Vietnam 95.63
- 52 **Fogo Island Inn**, Newfoundland 95.60

- 53 **Brewery Gulch Inn**, Mendocino, California 95.59
- 54 **Hotel Santa Caterina**, Amalfi, Italy 95.57
- 55 **Acqualina, Miami**, Sunny Isles Beach, Florida 95.53
- 56 **Chanler at Cliff Walk**, Newport, Rhode Island 95.51
- 57 **Zamas Hotel**, Tulum, Mexico 95.49
- 58 **J.K. Place**, Capri, Italy 95.46
- 59 **Oberoi Rajvillas**, Jaipur, India 95.45
- 60 **Lion Sands Game Reserve**, Sabi Sand Game Reserve, South Africa 95.42
- 61 **Winvian Farm**, Morris, Connecticut 95.41





No. 1 hotel Nihiwatu was born in 2000 as a rustic surf retreat.

WINNER'S CIRCLE

NIHIWATU

By Yves Béhar

It's not a place you go because you want a luxurious retreat from the real world. I've been visiting for six years, and for me it's like, *Where can I take my family where we're going to be outdoors the entire time?* There is no sort of indoor space per se, besides your bedroom. You feel very connected to the beach and the ocean.

But what makes it really special is the local culture. The island is populated by animists who live in small villages. Life there hasn't changed much for half a millennium. Ninety percent of the staff are local. We see them every year; we've visited their houses, they've taught me how to battle with a sword. That just doesn't happen when you have Swiss-trained butlers and hotel operators. This is a place that gives you the opportunity to enter somebody else's reality, somebody else's tradition, somebody else's culture.

Yves Béhar is a designer, entrepreneur, and sustainability advocate.



62 Inn at Hastings Park Lexington, Massachusetts 95.40

63 Curtain Bluff Antigua 95.40

64 The Surrey New York City 95.37

65 Farm at Cape Kidnappers Hawke's Bay, New Zealand 95.33

66 Four Seasons Resort Chiang Mai, Thailand 95.33

67 Biltmore Hotel Coral Gables, Florida 95.32

68 Milestone Hotel London 95.32

69 La Réserve Paris Hotel, Spa & Apartments Paris 95.29

70 La Residence Franschhoek, South Africa 95.27

71 The Goring London 95.19

72 Four Seasons Tented Camp Golden Triangle Chiang Rai, Thailand 95.17

73 Cloister at Sea Island Georgia 95.16

74 Tambo del Inka, a Luxury Collection Resort & Spa Sacred Valley, Peru 95.11

75 Saxon Hotel, Villas & Spa Johannesburg, South Africa 95.09

76 Gleneagles Hotel Perthshire, Scotland 95.08

77 Tu Tu'tun Lodge Gold Beach, Oregon 95.06

78 Leela Palace New Delhi 95.06

79 Le Bristol Paris 95.06

80 Sonnenalp Hotel Vail, Colorado 95.04

81 Villa Cora Florence 95.04

82 Ocean House Watch Hill, Rhode Island 95.03

83 Inn by the Sea Cape Elizabeth, Maine 94.97

84 La Casa Que Canta Zihuatanejo, Mexico 94.96

84 Madikwe Safari Lodge Madikwe Game Reserve, South Africa 94.96

86 Inn at Harbour Town Hilton Head Island, South Carolina 94.95

87 Qualla Hamilton Island, Australia 94.89

88 The Lanesborough London 94.87

89 Egerton House Hotel London 94.86

90 Jade Mountain St. Lucia 94.85

91 Greenwich Hotel New York City 94.76

92 The Knickerbocker New York City 94.75

93 River Inn of Harbor Town Memphis, Tennessee 94.71

(Continued on page 38)

WORLD'S BEST

Continental United States

HOTELS WITH DISTINCTIVE PERSONALITIES TAKE THE SPOTLIGHT—AND A NEWCOMER DEBUTS AS THE TOP CITY PROPERTY.

Charleston is ranked the No. 1 city for the fifth year in a row.



TOP 10 Cities

- 1 **Charleston**
South Carolina 91.66
- 2 New Orleans 89.75
- 3 Savannah
Georgia 89.57
- 4 Santa Fe
New Mexico 87.27
- 5 Nashville 85.09
- 6 San Francisco
85.09
- 7 Chicago 84.85
- 8 New York City
84.82
- 9 Austin Texas 84.57
- 10 Asheville
North Carolina 84.49

TOP 10 Islands

- 1 **Hilton Head**
South Carolina 88.35
- 2 Kiawah Island
South Carolina 88.00
- 3 Mount Desert
Island Maine 86.48
- 4 Nantucket
Massachusetts 84.60
- 5 San Juan
Islands Washington 84.33

- 6 Golden Isles
(Jekyll Island,
Little St.
Simons Island,
Sea Island, St.
Simons Island)
Georgia 83.47
- 7 Florida Keys
83.44
- 8 Cumberland
Island
Georgia 83.33
- 9 Mackinac Island
Michigan 82.86
- 10 Martha's
Vineyard
Massachusetts 81.19

TOP 15 City Hotels

- 1 **Spectator Hotel**
Charleston, South
Carolina 97.78
- 2 XV Beacon
Boston 96.27
- 3 The Surrey
New York City 95.37
- 4 Greenwich Hotel
New York City 94.76
- 5 The Knickerbocker
New York City 94.75
- 6 River Inn of Harbor
Town Memphis,
Tennessee 94.71

- 7 Old No. 77 Hotel &
Chandlery
New Orleans 94.26
- 8 The Langham
Chicago 94.21
- 9 Alford Inn Orlando
Area, Florida 94.12
- 10 Hotel Vintage
Seattle 94.12
- 11 Rosewood
(formerly the
Capella)
Washington, D.C.
94.04
- 12 The Hay-Adams
Washington, D.C.
94.03
- 13 Trump
International
Hotel & Tower
Chicago 94.03
- 14 Mokara Hotel &
Spa San Antonio,
Texas 93.89
- 15 French Quarter Inn
Charleston,
South Carolina 93.89



READERS SAY...
"Hollywood and New York design meets Lowcountry charm at the Spectator. The bar is the best in Charleston right now, and the butlers are wish-granting genies—without coming out of a bottle."

TOP 10

Resort Hotels

- 1 **Lodge at Glendorn Bradford, Pennsylvania** 97.38
- 2 **The Willcox Aiken, South Carolina** 97.25
- 3 **Twin Farms Barnard, Vermont** 97.19
- 4 **Farmhouse Inn Forestville, California** 97.07
- 5 **Gateway Canyons Resort & Spa Gateway, Colorado** 97.00
- 6 **Château du Sureau Oakhurst, California** 96.77
- 7 **Triple Creek Ranch Darby, Montana** 96.76
- 8 **Wequassett Resort & Golf Club Chatham, Massachusetts** 96.68
- 9 **Old Edwards Inn & Spa Highlands, North Carolina** 96.67
- 10 **Weekapaug Inn Westerly, Rhode Island** 96.57

TOP 10

Hotels New York City

- 1 **The Surrey** 95.37
- 2 **Greenwich Hotel** 94.76
- 3 **The Knickerbocker** 94.75
- 4 **Trump International Hotel & Tower** 92.78
- 5 **Refinery Hotel** 92.46
- 6 **WestHouse** 92.35
- 7 **St. Regis** 92.26
- 8 **The James** 92.16
- 9 **The Lowell** 92.06
- 10 **The Chatwal, a Luxury Collection Hotel** 91.84

TOP 3

Hotels Washington, D.C.

- 1 **Rosewood** 94.04
- 2 **The Hay-Adams** 94.03
- 3 **The Jefferson** 93.75

TOP 5

Hotels Greater Los Angeles

- 1 **The Redbury Hollywood** 93.14
- 2 **Petit Ermitage West Hollywood** 93.02
- 3 **Mr. C Beverly Hills** 92.43
- 4 **The Peninsula Beverly Hills** 90.92
- 5 **Montage Beverly Hills** 90.67

TOP 5

Hotels Chicago

- 1 **The Langham** 94.21
- 2 **Trump International Hotel & Tower** 94.03
- 3 **Waldorf Astoria** 92.88
- 4 **The Peninsula** 92.61
- 5 **Godfrey Hotel** 92.31

TOP 5

Resort Hotels Northeast

- 1 **Lodge at Glendorn Bradford, Pennsylvania** 97.38
- 2 **Twin Farms Barnard, Vermont** 97.19
- 3 **Wequassett Resort & Golf Club Chatham, Massachusetts** 96.68
- 4 **Weekapaug Inn Westerly, Rhode Island** 96.57
- 5 **Chanler at Cliff Walk Newport, Rhode Island** 95.51

TOP 5

Resort Hotels Midwest

- 1 **Big Cedar Lodge Ridgedale, Missouri** 93.59
- 2 **Sundara Inn & Spa Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin** 92.18
- 3 **American Club at Destination Kohler Kohler, Wisconsin** 91.05
- 4 **Grand Hotel Mackinac Island, Michigan** 88.78
- 5 **West Baden Springs Hotel West Baden Springs, Indiana** 86.42

WORDS FROM A WINNER

THE SURREY

No. 1 New York hotel the Surrey is known for its focus on art. We asked Natasha Schlesinger, art expert in residence, to share her favorite art spots in the city.

FRESH TAKES "The Park Avenue Armory has made an effort to be edgier and more engaging, while still respecting the building's grandeur. They're bringing in artists who are known by connoisseurs but not necessarily by the general public, such as Martin Creed, who has an immersive piece on view through early August."

DOWNTOWN DIGS "The Whitney Museum's new building is breathtaking with its open spaces and high ceilings. The portrait exhibition taking place includes artists like Andy Warhol and Chuck Close, and feels so relevant—it's about the self in today's world of social media."

HIGH SOCIETY "The roof at the Metropolitan Museum of Art has the most fantastical installations, and there's a bar that serves cocktails. Right now you can see a spooky partial house that British artist Cornelia Parker created, inspired by Hitchcock."



ADVERTISEMENT

CHARLESTON

BE CHARMED

A GUIDE TO THE CITY'S BEST



At once gracious and hip, historic and fresh, Charleston is having its moment. Open the door to this stylish Southern belle of a city, and come see why so many of its boutique lodgings have been voted No. 1 Best Small Hotel by *Travel + Leisure* readers in the World's Best Awards of 2016 and recent years. We map it all out here—from the hippest places to lay your head, to hot spots in the city's booming culinary and shopping scenes, and much more.

Look inside for a peek at our top city highlights and stellar hotel picks.

CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA

Experience the very best of a T+L World's Best City—from boutique hotels as beautiful as jewel boxes, to restaurants and cocktails on the culinary cutting edge. Real Southern hospitality is alive and well in Charleston; these days, it's served up with a fresh, vibrant spirit and a generous helping of contemporary style.

STAY

1 Revel in Art Deco-inspired design and modern-luxe amenities at **The Spectator Hotel**, a boutique keepsake. 67 State Street

2 Feel like a baron at **Wentworth Mansion** and savor rare views from the rooftop cupola. 149 Wentworth Street

3 Sleep in a plush four-poster bed at **Planters Inn**, a Historic District treasure. 112 North Market Street

4 Bask in period-style romance and modern luxuries at the **Market Pavilion Hotel**. 225 East Bay Street

5 Sip champagne at check-in, and choose from a menu of seven pillows, at the **French Quarter Inn**. 166 Church Street

6 Luxuriate in exceptional art and design at **The Vendue**, a reimagined 18th-century warehouse. 19 Vendue Range

7 Come home to elegance at **Belmond Charleston Place**, with its chandeliered lobby and rooftop pools. 205 Meeting Street

EAT + DRINK

8 At **Cypress**, savor Lowcountry ingredients transformed into American haute cuisine. 167 East Bay Street

9 Rediscover Southern locavore fare at **Husk**, with a menu by James Beard Award winner Chef Sean Brock. 76 Queen Street

10 Dig into elevated comfort food that's seasonally inspired at **FIG**, an upscale bistro. 232 Meeting Street

11 Relish a farm-to-table menu with deep Southern roots at **The Macintosh**. 479B King Street

12 Head upstairs to **The Cocktail Club** for artful mixology on the rooftop terrace. 479 King Street

13 Enjoy a mouthwatering steak with locally inspired sides at **Halls Chophouse**, or come for the lively Sunday gospel brunch. 434 King Street

14 Keep the spirits flowing at **Proof**, or choose from the extensive wines-by-the-glass list. 437 King Street

15 Pair a classic cocktail with a delicious homemade snack at **The Gin Joint**. 182 East Bay Street

SHOP

16 Browse everything from party dresses to chic denim at **Hampden Clothing**. 314 King Street

17 Make your heirloom jewelry dreams come true at **Croghan's Jewel Box**. 308 King Street

18 Pop into **Le Creuset Boutique**, the cookware maker's signature shop. 112 North Market Street

19 Sign up for a candle-making class, or browse the unique gifts at **Candlefish**. 71 Wentworth Street

20 Shop for home and garden furnishings that capture the city's spirit at the **Historic Charleston Foundation Shop** inside the City Market's Great Hall. 188 Meeting Street

21 Peruse a variety of fine books and gifts relating to Charleston's history and architecture at the **Preservation Society Shop**. 147 King Street

22 Shop for tasteful men's clothing and accessories at **The Ben Silver Collection**, a repository of classic style. 149 King Street

23 Check out new designers' creations, from sportswear to special-occasion frocks, at **Berlin's for Women**, dating back to 1883. 116 King Street

DO

24 Mingle with locals, shop for sweetgrass baskets, eat, and enjoy at the historic **Charleston City Market**. 188 Meeting Street

25 Explore America's foremost Neoclassical dwelling, the 1808 **Nathaniel Russell House**, surrounded by formal gardens. 51 Meeting Street

26 Bring a picnic to **Waterfront Park** or take a promenade amid the walkways and fountains. 1 Vendue Range

27 Catch a show at the historic **Dock Street Theater**, a French Quarter gem. 135 Church Street

28 Set out for a two-hour sail on Charleston Harbor aboard the tall ship **Schooner Pride**. 360 Concord Street

29 Tour the newly renovated **Beaux-Arts Gibbes Museum of Art**, with its expanded museum store and new café. 135 Meeting Street

30 Discover the new **Gaillard Center**, a centerpiece for artistic excellence designed in the tradition of Europe's great performance halls. 95 Calhoun Street

31 Take in prime Charleston Harbor views at the c. 1825 **Edmondston-Alston House**, an exemplar of both Federal and Greek Revival design. 21 East Battery

32 Admire the **Avery Research Center's** archival collections and exhibits on African-American history and culture. 125 Bull Street

33 Visit America's first museum, the c. 1773 **Charleston Museum**, focused on the Lowcountry's natural and cultural history. 360 Meeting Street



Charleston Overview

Round out your trip with a visit to the city's surrounding islands, and discover two standout resorts: **The Sanctuary at Kiawah Island**, with the feel of a seaside mansion, and **Wild Dunes**, set on a beautiful beach on the Isle of Palms.

SMALL WONDERS: CHARLESTON'S BOUTIQUE HOTEL GEMS

Discover four dreamboat hotels that are redefining Southern hospitality with glamour, style, and grace.



Voted #1 Best U.S. Small City Hotel in the T+L World's Best Awards 2016, **The Spectator Hotel** enchants guests with 1920s-style chic and personalized butlers.



Named #1 Best U.S. Small City Hotel in 2015, **Wentworth Mansion** glitters with Tiffany stained glass windows, palatial guest rooms, and a serene spa.



Poised at the entrance to the historic city market, **Planters Inn**—Charleston's only Relais & Châteaux hotel—earned #1 Best U.S. Small City Hotel in 2014.



With spectacular skyline and harbor views from the rooftop bar and pool, **Market Pavillion Hotel** topped the list as #1 Best U.S. Small City Hotel in 2013.