



ICE PALACE The Ion Luxury Adventure Hotel sits amid nature in remote Iceland, an hour from Reykjavik. Built atop stilts with sustainable materials, it compliments the volcanic surroundings.

HEAT OF THE MOMENT You can't visit Iceland without dipping into a hot spring or two—including the Ion's own hot spring-fed pool, which sits on an expansive deck overlooking the vista.



ION LUXURY ADVENTURE HOTEL NESJAVELLIR, ICELAND

LOCATION

An hour from urbane Reykjavik, near the UNESCO-listed Thingvellir National Park, the remote Ion puts guests in the heart of the country's storied nature.

ARCHITECTURE AND INTERIOR DESIGN

Minarc

GUEST QUARTERS

45 guest rooms

WOW FACTORS

Once an abandoned inn, this intimate hotel was revamped with the addition of a new wing set on futuristic stilts. Meant to meld into the otherworldly landscape that defines Iceland, the sustainably built structure sits at the foot of a towering volcano, encircled by hot springs. The views are stunning, and easily enjoyed through ubiquitous oversized windows. Slick guest rooms, accentuated by sharp lines, feature concrete walls, wooden flooring, oversized photographic murals, waterfall showers and beds with fair-trade organic linens. Lava and driftwood accessories and furniture bring the land of fire and ice indoors.

FINE DINING

Indulge in field-to-table new Nordic cuisine (including Iceland's famous lamb) in hip surrounds at the Silfra Restaurant & Bar, or take in nature's seasonal light show—the aurora borealis—from floor-to-ceiling windows at the Northern Lights Bar.

R+R

Recreational activities including hiking, rafting and fly-fishing, and relaxation options like the heavenly spa and a 32-foot hot spring-filled soaking tub

NIGHTLY RATE

From \$250

DREAM DESIGNS

TASTEMAKERS

Hospitality and aesthetics rule at Design Hotels.

By Becca Hensley

There are hotels, and then there are Design Hotels. Thanks to the ingenuity of founder and CEO Claus Sendlinger, guests of the distinctive properties have come to expect a sojourn like no other. A decade ago, Sendlinger began by marketing 10 properties with a novel set of attributes: Each would boast an owner with a passion for hospitality, provide a unique sense of place, feature truly thought-provoking style and cater to guests who yearn for an authentic experience. With a keen understanding that innovative design is more than big-name brands and pleasing aesthetics, savvy guests lapped up the concept—and Design Hotels has grown to a coterie of more than 250 independently owned and operated stays in more than 50 countries. True to Sendlinger's vision, each exudes stellar architecture, interiors, gastronomy and coddling perks aplenty, yet no two are alike. Here are a handful of our favorites from around the globe. *Reservations through designhotels.com*



GIARDINO MOUNTAIN CHAMPFER, SWITZERLAND

LOCATION

A classic Swiss alpine village in the shadows of a ski mountain—and five minutes from jet-setter hub St. Moritz

ARCHITECTURE

Hinzer Architektur AG

INTERIOR DESIGN

Francesca Alder-Schweizer and Bofor Design

GUEST QUARTERS

78 rooms and suites

WOW FACTORS

Make no mistake, this is not Heidi's grandfather's chalet. Here, windows with epic views; local wood carvings; stone elements; sgraffito; decorative cutout balconies; and wool-, fur- and hide-covered furniture mix and mingle with contemporary flourishes including vibrant wallpapers, jazzy lamps and gleaming metals. Think of it as a former coachman's house with a twist—one where tuxedos are as welcome as skiwear.

FINE DINING

Ristorante Ecco on Snow, a temple of creative gastronomy, is helmed by culinary wunderkind Rolf Fliegauf—and his two Michelin stars. But get your fix now, this delicious resto is only open during the winter season.

R+R

A soul-nourishing spa channels the Swiss predilection for wellness with a sauna complex and treatments using the owners' own blossom scented beauty line, Dipiù.

NIGHTLY RATE

From \$294

SWISS WATCH This Giardino Mountain room boasts regal fabrics and original wood floors—an abstract nod to the summer wildflowers that blanket the mountainside of Switzerland's Engadine region.



DINE & DESIGN The luxurious Ristorante Ecco on Snow marries signature design with dining.

TAKE THE TUBE To reach these sleek, light-filled rooms at Barcelona's Hotel Omm, guests pass through rubber-lined, sound-absorbing corridors aglow with futuristic tubes.



HOTEL OMM BARCELONA

LOCATION

The swank Passeig de Gràcia district, near a plethora of restaurants, boutiques and cultural sites

ARCHITECTURE

Juli Capella

INTERIOR DESIGN

Sandra Tarruella and Isabel López

GUEST QUARTERS

91 guest rooms, including eight suites

WOW FACTORS

Just as Barcelona's famous son Antoni Gaudi once took Barcelona's architecture up a notch, so too does architect Juli Capella. Aesthetic meets function with the exterior's jaw-dropping stone curtains, which, though composed from limestone, seem to be caught in movement. Shaped like the open flaps of an advent calendar, these angled windows attract copious sunlight while blocking street noise and providing privacy from outside views. Inside, a diaphanous lobby boasts earthy leathers, shiny metal and pops of bright color, making for a mood that's warm and comfortable. Guest rooms follow suit, with open floor plans and streamlined interiors.

FINE DINING

Michelin-starred Moo—overseen by the legendary Roca brothers of El Celler de Can Roca—delivers gastronomy that's as designcentric as its surroundings.

R+R

Dance the night away at Ommsession Club, a popular nightclub that's awash with hip locals; perch on the pool terrace to indulge in views of Gaudi's La Pedrera; or retreat to Spaciomm's tranquil den for a stellar massage.

NIGHTLY RATE

From \$323

OPEN BOOK Resembling opened pages, these innovative "stone curtains" were created by Omm's architect to block street noise and provide privacy.

THE MIRA HONG KONG

LOCATION

Kowloon Park, amid the hip, boutique-filled shopping district of central Tsim Sha Tsui

ARCHITECTURE

Edmond Wong

INTERIOR DESIGN

Colin Cowie and CAD International

GUEST QUARTERS

492 rooms, including 56 suites

WOW FACTORS

A restorative oasis from the throngs—and a homage to hip Hong Kong—this escape into the future begins via a tunnel flanked by wavy, white fins. It leads to a mood-illuminated lobby, awash in disco tunes; a room chock-full of suspended, metal Newton's balls; a pool aglow with disco lights; eccentric chandeliers aplenty; and guest rooms themed by color.

Choose red, green, silver or purple—they all come with Arne Jacobsen Egg chairs and glass-walled bathrooms with freestanding tubs and powerful rain showers.

The best perk of all?

Complimentary smartphones, fully loaded with Wi-Fi and long-distance dialing capabilities for use during your stay.

FINE DINING

With progressive European fare, Cuisine for Cantonese serves up modern flair, while Vibes open-air lounge whisks guests away to romantic private cabanas in a chic courtyard setting.

R+R

Options abound, from a top-notch spa and hair salon to a fitness center complete with an 82-foot infinity-edge pool.

NIGHTLY RATE

From \$272

HOW WE ROLL Futuristic and edgy, Hong Kong's The Mira offers art and contemplation at every turn. Case in point: this metal ballroom.



COLOR CHART Designed by three distinctive creatives, the guest rooms at Singapore's Wanderlust embrace diverse moods. Case in point: the capsule-like bathrooms, rendered in cartoon hues with showers and vintage tubs.



SINGAPORE SWING The Wanderlust hotel's whimsical white-edition rooms are reached through black-painted hallways.

WANDERLUST SINGAPORE

LOCATION

The heart of Little India—one of the city's most vibrant and colorful districts

ARCHITECTURE

DP Architects

INTERIOR DESIGN

Asylum, Phunk Studio, fFurious and DP Architects

GUEST QUARTERS

29 rooms, including one-of-a-kind duplex apartments

WOW FACTORS

The whimsical, Asylum-designed lobby features contemporary mosaics that reflect the building's facade, while guest rooms differ from floor to floor: Phunk's level presents candy colors and '60s-style neon lights that flash poetic messages; DP Architects' white-on-white scheme is the perfect contrast to its obsidian black hallway; and sumptuous textures and creature comforts abound in the cozy, fFurious-designed wing.

FINE DINING

Unpretentious Cocotte, run by chef Anthony Yeoh, serves up French rustic cuisine in digs that channel Provence.

R+R

A luxe outdoor deck and Jacuzzi

NIGHTLY RATE

From \$130



DESIGN DE-LIGHTS The Mira's many nooks and crannies offer a unique sense of intimacy; each of the six restaurants sport individual dining areas, most crowned with elaborate chandeliers.