

TATLER[®]

Travel Guide 2020

The 101 best hotels in the world



101 HOTELS

BUCOLIC BLISS



AMAN KYOTO

Kyoto, Japan

Two decades after the late, great architect Kerry Hill 'discovered' a secret garden on the foothills of north-west Kyoto, his vision has finally been realised – and it was well worth the wait. Aman's newest resort is all about the restorative power of nature with its extensive forest garden, established by its previous owner – one of Japan's most respected collectors of obi (the ornamental silk sash worn around a kimono). Large pavilions, built on stone terraces and clad in slatted black cedar, house 26 oak and tatami suites decorated with original artworks from Japanese master craftsmen. Wellness focuses on breathing (yoga, zen meditation, kendo) and bathing, both in the forest and in Kyoto's clear waters, while the spa features indoor and outdoor onsen – an indulgent ritual after a day visiting the many Unesco temples and rock gardens nearby. The closest, Kinkaku-ji, must be seen: you can hike through the property to the top of Mt Okitayama and look down on the gleaming Golden Pavilion – a view afforded exclusively to Aman guests. *InsideJapan Tours* (insidejapantours.com) offers three nights as part of a six-night Japan trip from £4,207, including transfers and guides.

THE NEWT IN SOMERSET

Somerset, England

The much-anticipated launch of The Newt has truly raised the bar for the English country house hotel. The Grade II-listed Hadspen House and its glorious sweep of pleasure grounds, orchards and ancient woodland has been reimagined as a utopian vision of a sustainable and self-supporting community. The point, and pleasure, of South African designer Karen Roos' passion project is to live in harmony with nature. Quietly lavish bedrooms, 23 in total, including the wildly romantic Constant Gardener suite, are spread across the main house. The stables have been charmingly reconjured as sprawling loft suites, and the Clock House makes the perfect base for a group to take over in its entirety. Possibly the most enchanting spot is The Granary, a glamorous bothy for two that comes with its own wood-burning stove. Venture out to swim, to attend a cider pressing and to eat the wonderfully seasonal delights created by head chef Ben Abercrombie, such as lightly grilled red mullet and duck breast with damson sauce. But the gravitational pull is towards the heavenly landscaped spaces: the walled Parabola and the Cottage Garden with its divine 17th-century thatched café that serves teas, hot chocolate – and lapsang souchong ice cream and plum sorbet in the summer. *Double, from £255 including personalised larder, access to gardens, estate and spa* (thenewtinsomerset.com).

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