



CASA HOYOS IN SAN MIGUEL DE ALLENDE, MEXICO



THE EDITORS' LIST 2020

OUR FAVOURITE NEW SECRET
WINTER-SUN HOTELS

*All under
£150 a night*

COMPILED BY FIONA KERR



PINEAPPLE HOUSE CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA

THE SCOOP ROOMS FROM ABOUT £80

On a quiet street in Cape Town's busy Sea Point neighbourhood, this was once home to actor Paddy Canavan whose parties in the 1960s drew Hollywood stars. These days, the nine-bedroom hotel – which opened last year – is more chilled, a stroll from the Atlantic-side promenade, cafés and restaurants (try Jarryds for brunch and Mojo Market for sushi, Thai and Mexican). The eclectic, art-strewn style is very Cape Town. Leopard-print headboards are mixed with Frida Kahlo cushions; dark-blue velvet curtains contrast with teal or rose walls, set against glossy white tiles and exposed brick. The pineapple motif – a symbol of hospitality – is everywhere, from window panes to teaspoons. Each bedroom is different, some snug, others larger with balconies; the biggest, Three oh One, has an outdoor shower and views of Lion's Head mountain. The rest of the shared, open-plan interior includes a cosy living area, a kitchen where breakfast is prepared and a dining room overlooking the plunge pool. Owners Lesley and Rupert Sykes, who live next door, filled the hotel with things they love: Woodstock Laundry monkey-patterned kimonos; woven bath mats from H18 Foundation; Mervyn Gers crockery; Victoria Verbaan's drawing of a peachy backside and Krisjan Rossouw's dreamy portraits. An element of social responsibility means late-check-out fees go to non-profit Project Playground, which runs programmes for children in the townships. Donating unneeded items to Overstrand Hospice's charity shop is also encouraged. Given that everything here is for sale – bar the Bob Dylan *Cassandra* print in the living room – you may well need the extra suitcase space. **BOOK IT** pineapplehouse.co.za

THE TIING BALI, INDONESIA

THE SCOOP ROOMS FROM ABOUT £65

Backed by thick jungle on the island's quiet north coast, this striking hotel is a 'reward for the intrepid', says Nic Brunson, the Perth-based architect who designed it. Far from Canggu's chia-bowl-scoffing, concept-store-hopping crowds and Ubud's timezone-skipping techpreneurs, this is a corner of old Bali. Brunson's aesthetic might look like sharp-edged brutalism, but the high concrete walls – which blinker views from each of the 14 villas towards the sea in front and the jungle behind – are actually inspired by traditional temple gateways (or *candi bentar*). And while one side of the concrete is polished smooth, the other has been cast with lengths of bamboo, so its ridges are seen in textural negative relief. Rooms are stacked on top of each other in twos, a bedroom and living room opening out at either end – one of which has a small pool – with a circular, white-grid-tiled bathroom illuminated by a skylight in the centre. There are other modish touches, too, from the influencer-favourite floating breakfasts served to swimmers to the hot-pink modular daybeds beside the main beachside pool. Lie here long enough and fishing boats from Tejakula village will pull up for you to choose your own just-landed mahi-mahi for supper. The area is known for its community-driven marine-protection initiative, and there's snorkelling to try out just offshore and the thundering, 98ft Les Waterfall to explore further inland. But mostly, this is a place for guests to steal away and enjoy their prize in peace. **BOOK IT** luwakresort.com



MONTE UZULU OAXACA, MEXICO

THE SCOOP ROOMS FROM ABOUT £130

This state's wild and rugged Pacific shoreline has felt a growing buzz lately. And as surfers congregate near its epicentre in Puerto Escondido, in-the-know locals are heading south to the former fishing village of San Agustín. Mexican creative director Alan Favero has been holidaying here for nearly 20 years, and eventually bought a plot of land to open Monte Uzulu, set between the Sierra Madre del Sur mountains and the sea. He partnered with sensitive architecture specialist Mariana Ruiz of the firm At-te and lighting designer Paola Jose from creative studio Sombra, who ensured the hotel's 11 bedrooms have a continual stream of daylight shaded by *huizache* trees. Styled with the natural scenery in mind, using local materials such as *macuil* wood for bed frames and clay and lime to give walls a rosewood-tone finish, each room showcases collaborations from Favero's interiors collective Taller Lu'um, which partners with artisan groups around the country: baskets and straw lamps made in Michoacán; tables from the Sierra Norte de Puebla mountains; cotton bedspreads produced in nearby Teotitlán del Valle. Favero laid out the gardens as an edible landscape – full of melons, papayas and chilli peppers – to be rustled up into classic Oaxacan dishes at the Temporada restaurant. And there are all sorts of well-rooted activities to take part in, from paddleboarding through the bioluminescent lagoon of Manialtepec to an evening *temazcal* ceremony, an ancient Zapotec sweat-lodge ritual. This is an elemental retreat – an alternative hangout away from the crowds, on its own sublime stretch of coast. **BOOK IT** monteuzulu.com





LES CACTUS PALM SPRINGS, USA

THE SCOOP ROOMS FROM ABOUT £145

Palm-lined boulevards and mid-century-modern landmarks have long drawn sunseekers to the kitsch desert oasis of Palm Springs.

While hotels with hard-partying pool scenes get the most attention, Les Cactus has a more make-yourself-at-home milieu in the peaceful but central Warm Sands neighbourhood. The Thirties motor lodge was converted into a bohemian hideaway in flamingo pink and jade green by hotelier Matthew Kurtz and the team behind city favourites such as the ranch-retro Sparrows Lodge and art-filled Holiday House. Canned cocktails are handed out in the airy lobby, where there are also art books and other curios for browsing and an acoustic guitar for late-night jamming (the place was named after French rocker Jacques Dutronc's poppy 1967 hit, which Kurtz and his wife listened to on repeat while planning their wedding). Bedrooms loop around the mist-cooled pool and offshoot courtyards are dotted with umbrella-shaded tables, low-slung hammocks and a fire-pit. There's no restaurant or bar, but staff can whip up bags of snacks, chilled drinks and takeaway breakfast baskets stuffed with fresh croissants from the nearby French patisserie. The design retains original touches from the hotel's previous incarnations – brick fireplaces and bright, glazed-tile showers – and adds updated, curvaceous wicker furniture, brass lights and hits of colour. Wardrobes are small, but that's probably because this was once a nudist retreat. After all, the most interesting stays, just like the most interesting people, have stories to tell. **BOOK IT** lescactusps.com

PHOTOGRAPHS: RYAN MANNING/MONOCLE PROJECT; ZACH SORENSEN





MOND HIRIKETIYA, SRI LANKA

THE SCOOP ROOMS FROM ABOUT £60

This is one of those places the owners have put their heart and soul into – right down to the own-line ceramics and handcrafted soaps – creating a personal stay that’s almost a distillation of themselves. Jessica Fernando and Renato Soto were part of the original crew who set the ley lines to Hiriketiya – then a sleepy village on a horseshoe bay with a perfect point break, now a quietly rising hotspot – when they opened cool rental Soto House in 2017 after moving here from Zürich. Now their projects have evolved to include Mond: a clubhouse, café, artists’ residence and four-bedroom hotel overlooking the Indian Ocean between Nilwella and the long sweep of Dikwella beach. True to Fernando’s Swiss-Sri Lankan roots, the architecture blends Le Corbusier concrete curves with Geoffrey Bawa jungle modernism; instead of windows, each room has floor-to-ceiling teak shutters that can be angled to catch the breeze. By day, the courtyard café acts as a local hub, dishing up pains au chocolat, *kitchari* bowls, juices and coffee (hands down the best in town) to a jumble of surfers, yoga teachers, sculptors and healers – a chilled-out scene that circulates between here and the rooftop bar. There are also meditation sessions and women’s circles, *shakti* dancing and movement workshops, underscoring a soulful, spiritual vibe attuned to the ebb and flow of the tides and the cycles of the moon (the English translation of the German ‘mond’). **BOOK IT** sotohouse.lk

FINCA VICTORIA VIEQUES, PUERTO RICO

THE SCOOP ROOMS FROM ABOUT £110

This tiny isle seven miles off the coast of Puerto Rico was ravaged when Hurricane Maria tore through it in 2017. The guesthouse where Finca Victoria now stands, at the top of a hill at the heart of the island, was one of those flattened. In its place, however, Sylvia de Marco, the Puerto Rican designer behind San Juan’s much-loved Dreamcatcher Hotel, has created this very special hideout and Ayurvedic retreat that’s attracting a fresh bohemian crowd. Set on two-and-a-half acres of land, planted with medicinal and vegetable gardens, towering palms and flowering frangipani and hibiscus trees, the 11 bedrooms are surrounded by greenery and include wooden, Bauhaus-inspired two-storey treehouses and a glass-sided Invisible House. Although the property only opened last year, its interiors layer stories: works by local artisans and contemporary artists; finds from de Marco’s travels and furniture belonging to family members. At the hotel’s centre is a breezy communal space where chef Jordan Dossantos whips up vegan breakfasts using produce from the grounds after morning yoga classes on the open-air deck (available to everyone, whether you’re part of the *panchakarma* detox programme or not). There’s also a turquoise-tiled swimming pool and plenty of handwoven hammocks, plus a lounge that doubles as a boutique selling body oils and fragrant soaps made in the region. All part of a sustainable tourism scene that is coming back stronger. **BOOK IT** lafinca.com





DECHIU HOTEL HOI AN, VIETNAM

THE SCOOP ROOMS FROM ABOUT £65

Among the bungalows, beach clubs and seafood shacks of Hoi An's hectic shorefront is Dechiu, an unassuming oasis. TheO Pham, the Hanoian owner and architect behind this 10-bedroom spot, conceived it as a celebration of Vietnamese craft. The style dips its toe into tropical brutalism but with surprising warmth. Reclaimed-wood doors open onto a serene and earthy shared space and flavourful vegetarian/vegan-centric café Gieo. Past a tranquil koi pond, the stairwells are lined with a rotating selection of regional art. There's a *wabi-sabi* element at play with distressed cement floors and walls throughout, which, like most things at Dechiu, have a considered take. 'They are a reminder of the clay-built houses in the coastal countryside where I grew up,' says Pham. Each bedroom has its own subtle colour scheme, from honeyed ochre to milk and indigo blue, and is filled with antique and locally carved furniture, handmade linens and baskets made by northern hill tribes that serve as lampshades. Pham's favourites are the Architect's and Zen rooms, but all are designed to inspire creativity and meditation, with large desks and stacks of books beside daybeds dressed in vintage textiles. The sand is less than a minute's walk away, and there are bicycles to borrow for exploring Hoi An's merchant-house- and tea-shop-packed old town. This is a thoughtful, soothing place from which to tap into Vietnamese culture. **BOOK IT** dechiuhotel.com

PHOTOGRAPHS: SYLVIA DE MARCO; RASMUS NORLANDER; RYAN WIJAYARATNE





CASA HOYOS SAN MIGUEL DE ALLENDE, MEXICO

THE SCOOP ROOMS FROM ABOUT £115

Arguably Mexico's loveliest town, San Miguel de Allende has long attracted American artists and other expats to its pastel-pretty cobblestones, but it has become more genteel since Jack Kerouac and other beatniks hung out here in the 1960s. Recently, however, a handful of interesting hotel openings have brought much-needed fresh energy to the historic centre. The latest is Casa Hoyos, a 16-bedroom escape drawing a design-savvy crew. The 17th-century mansion has remained in the hands of the Hoyos family for four generations, at various points a currency exchange and grain store. Now it's been transformed by Mexico City-based architecture firm A-G Studio into an ode to mid-century modern. In the lobby are throne-like armchairs by Comité de Proyectos and *huanacaxtle*-wood structures that resemble the plumed serpent Quetzalcóatl, one of the most important deities in the Mesoamerican pantheon. Set over two floors, each bedroom showcases works by the country's most prolific creatives, from handwoven, geometric tapestries by Melissa Avila to mirrored ceramic pots by Paloma Layseca. Kicking the cool factor up a notch is Bekeb, a rooftop bar with views of the swimming pool and Sierra Madre mountains beyond, helmed by mixologist Fabiola Padilla, an alumna of Enrique Olvera's Cosme in New York. Padilla crafts cocktails with lesser-known Mexican spirits, such as the sugarcane-based *pox* and the earthy, agave-derived *sotol*, and homegrown herbs including minty *yerba buena* and lemony *cedrón*. An eye-catching update of San Miguel's artistic heritage. **BOOK IT** casahoyos.mx





FIXIE LOFTS DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

THE SCOOP ROOMS FROM ABOUT £105

Husband-and-wife team José Luis Mejías and Meyling Wetto, who previously designed smart holiday apartments in Madrid, arrived in Santo Domingo looking for their next project. They spent months on the hunt for the right building, eventually falling for this spot in the historic centre, which they sensed was slowly evolving – ‘Like the transformation we’d seen in Panama City and Cartagena,’ says Mejías. With no floors or solid walls, it was renovated from the ground up over two years, with the duo sensitively preserving (some peeled-back walls show the layers of time, while others are replastered in lime), repurposing (mahogany roof beams form an impressive table in the living area) and adding complementary distressed touches. The courtyard and archway were once part of a hospital built in 1503, believed to be the first in the Americas, and now take on a Roman-bath feel, shading the pool as parrots call from the avocado tree above. Throughout there’s a deep thread of creativity: during the revamp, the couple drafted in local craftspeople to weave bespoke rattan-and-steel chairs and cast 90 pots for the cacti garden, and each of the seven lofts displays Mejías’s large-format photographs. While no food is served here – there are concrete-topped kitchenettes in each apartment, or guests can head to nearby plant-filled *Buche Perico* for contemporary Caribbean dishes – there is a roster of workshops on classic-bike restoration, yoga and agave-growing for a different kind of nourishment. **BOOK IT** fixielofts.com

ABODE AHANGAMA

SRI LANKA

THE SCOOP ROOMS FROM ABOUT £55

Along the country's sand-skirted south coast, 30 minutes east of Galle, Ahangama is a soulful surf spot that has gained momentum over the past few years – though it's been spared the tourist-boomtown hallmarks of rising hotels peeking above trees or big-brand retreats hiding behind high walls. Instead, low-key guesthouses and yoga shalas are quietly tucked along its snaking backstreets. Among them is Abode Ahangama, taking over a whitewashed Art Deco villa flanked by palms and frangipanis. It's the second project by Indian hotelier Abedin Sham, after Abode Bombay, a breezy bolthole in Mumbai's artsy Colaba district. This outpost ticks the same quirky boxes, including hand-painted signage, mismatched antiques and many of the building's original Fifties fixtures and terrazzo floors. There are four bedrooms, breakfasts of fresh-fruit shakes and egg hoppers eaten at a communal dining table in the living room, and a beautifully manicured garden where wild monkeys often outnumber guests around the pool. Like its Indian sibling, the property operates with a do-good ethos: the team collaborated with carpenters and metalsmiths from the area to create furniture from reclaimed wood; colourful, organic textiles come from artisans in northern India; and a partnership with a local animal charity is just one of the ways the hotel gives back to the community. An ideal fit for this slow-life slice of Sri Lanka. **BOOK IT** abodeboutiquehotels.com



WHITE SANDS HOTEL

HONOLULU, HAWAII

THE SCOOP ROOMS FROM ABOUT £60

In the 1960s Hawaii was riding high. Having recently acquired statehood, it was where American tourists flocked to soak up the Aloha spirit. Surfing was carving out a place in pop culture, Elvis starred in *Blue Hawaii*, propelling Oahu and Kauai islands onto the big screen, and crooner Don Ho sung to packed crowds in palm-print shirts and floral leis. White Sands opened at the heart of the action, in Waikiki, Honolulu, at the turn of that decade, and its recent makeover refers back to this heyday, with a nod to the 1970s, too. The styling is the work of Honolulu-based studio The Vanguard Theory, also responsible for the funky good looks of the nearby Surfjack Hotel. Unlike that space, which takes its cues from the Hawaiian surf scene, the design here skirts around the Pacific, mixing Japanese *shoji*-screen-inspired headboards with ceramic Polynesian Tiki mugs, porcelain 'hang loose' *shaka* hooks and warm, mid-century-modern furniture. The beach is only two blocks away, but most people gravitate to the hotel's palm-fringed courtyard with its swimming pool surrounded by cream sunbeds and coral-scalloped parasols. It will soon become even more of a hangout when the team behind hit joint Fête in Honolulu's Chinatown opens HeyDay pool bar and restaurant. For now, there are brews from local Kona Coffee Purveyors in the lobby and surf-and-turf tacos at the end of the street. It's the perfect taster of Hawaii, old and new. **BOOK IT** whitesandshotel.com

CONTRIBUTORS Katie Lockhart, Heather Richardson, Eric Rosen, Chris Schalkx and Michaela Trimble