



SHOWPIECE

BENCH MARK

The tale of **Croft House** (*CroftHouse.com*) is one of humble beginnings and steep ascents: Friends Alex Segal and Riley Rea started by refinishing used wood furniture in Rea's garage on Los Angeles' Croft Avenue, with the goal of making a buck on Craigslist. They aren't the first SoCal company to kickstart its rise in a carport. Eleven years later, the brand known for its unexpected, angular shapes has moved into a new manufacturing facility in downtown L.A. and its wares grace the living rooms of Shaun White and Mandy Moore, just to name a few. One of their latest pieces? The Latigo Bench (\$2,600), with a streamlined welded-steel silhouette handsomely dressed in leather. "It was designed to be sculptural—we wanted to add beauty and warmth to a piece of furniture that is typically utilitarian," Segal says. "The curved opening below allows just the right amount of light to shine through, bringing life to the underside of the piece, which can often be forgotten." Making it an especially artful perch for, say, pondering your next garage startup.

—Kathryn O'Shea-Evans

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EXPERIENCE

GAME TIME

Antelopes, leopards and lions; spa treatments and chef-driven food. Safari in style at South Africa's Xigera Lodge.



A PICNIC ALONG
THE OKAVANGO DELTA



STAINED
EUCALYPTUS
WOOD CHAIR BY
ADAM BIRCH

The uninitiated might call Botswana's Okavango Delta a bit of a Nowheresville: a wild, untrammled land where swamps outnumber Starbucks by 100%. And that's just the way safari-obsessives like it.

"The difference between a safari in South Africa, in a place like Botswana, is the quality of the wildness," says Mike Myers, who has lived in the Delta for 40 years. "We're only accessible by airplane. We fly all our guests and staff here. There is no telephone pole you'll drive past—in the most remote sense, it's as wild a place as you can imagine."

No wonder this is the spot South African-born hotelier family the Tollmans chose to build a safari lodge like no other, with private access to 11,120 acres of bush. Opened this year within the western flank of the Moremi Game Reserve, Xigera Safari Lodge (*Xigera.com*; from \$2,320

per adult per night, all-inclusive; spa treatments additional) hosts just 24 guests at a time. Unlike other lodges of its ilk, customization is key, says Myers, the lodge's director. "At others in the Delta, you're pretty much stuck with their itinerary," he says of the canned morning and evening game drives and pre-planned meals that have become safari staples. "Here guests can do as much or as little as they want to do."

If you opt to hole up in the lodge, we wouldn't entirely blame you. Xigera's (pronounced kee-jera) 12 suites are sheathed in torched timber cladding with a roofline inspired by the wingspan of a local bird, the Pel's Fishing Owl. (Each room is also equipped with AC—crucial in October and November, when daily highs hover around 95 degrees.) In a nod to the UNESCO World Heritage Site land beyond the doors, everything inside is as locally hewn as possible, from the handblown stemware to the chairs carved by South Africa's Adam Birch. Throughout, you'll see pieces by artists from around the continent, among them Porky Hefer of Cape Town, who weaves ginormous nests you can crawl into, and Andile Dyalvane, a ceramist who grew up on a cattle farm in the Eastern Cape.

© JUSTIN PATRICK

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ROOM WITH A VIEW

THREE REASONS TO UPGRADE TO THE BAOBAB TREEHOUSE

For the ultimate second honeymoon-worthy respite, Xigera Lodge director Mike Myers recommends booking the Baobab Treehouse, a guest room lofted three stories above the Earth in a steel tower shaped like—you guessed it—a baobab tree. "Looking north over a huge flood plain... it's a beautifully romantic spot," he says. Why it's worth the upgrade:

YOU'LL SLEEP UNDER THE STARS

This being the Southern Hemisphere, American guests take in constellations—including the Southern Cross—you can't see in the States as you drift to dreamland in the king-sized deck bed.

YOU'LL PUT THE GLAM IN GLAMPING

Hand-carved wood furniture makes this guest room anything but standard issue. And because you're safely perched some 52 feet off the ground, you can raise the canvas walls to allow a free-flowing, cool breeze off the water.

YOU'LL STILL GET PAMPERING SERVICES

You're more than half a mile from the main lodge, yet service is just as exemplary. A guide awaits nearby to assist with anything you may need, be it a sunrise picnic or help lighting the hand-hammered copper fire pit.



XIGERA'S
SYCAMORE
SUITE

The food will sate any ardent gourmand—and, just like your to-do list, can be completely tailored to your whims. On the menu (which includes the personal recipes of lodge founder Bea Tollman): white wine and fennel-baked line fish; sweetcorn fritters with avocado and cherry tomato salsa; and toothsome desserts, like rooibos and cinnamon poached pears.

In case it's not yet been made clear: You're not roughing it here. A Tata Harper spa awaits to soothe all manner of travel aches with the brand's line of chemical-free products, which pair herbs from Vermont's Champlain Valley with South African baobab tree oil, cape chamomile, honeybush, and mafura butter. Treatments not to miss include a honey and pomegranate enzyme wrap and a rose quartz massage.

When you're properly invigorated and ready to roam, activity options are practically bottomless. You can hop into a 4x4 at your leisure for guided game drives, keeping eyes akimbo for red lechwe antelope, leopards and lions—oh, my. Bonus: Xigera's staff are trained photographers, happy to lend topnotch camera equipment or help you edit your shots on their iMacs. Budding ornithologists may prefer a guided walking safari; all the better

THE ELEVATED
LODGE,
DESIGNED BY
ARCHITECT
ANTON DE KOCK



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© BLACKLAND DISTILLERY

to ogle some 440 species of birds including the rare African skimmer, western-banded snake eagle and purple gallinule, which has all the sartorial elegance of a peacock thanks to its shimmering blue-green plumage. One beloved exploit for Myers: hopping aboard a glass-bottomed mokoro (canoe), to see crocodiles and hippos taking advantage of mother nature's de facto AC—the lagoons. “Going through the narrow channels, you’ll see things, like sitatunga, that are unique to water areas,” Myers says of the spotted and striped amphibious antelope. It’s the type of sighting that may remind you, deep in your bones, that you’re an animal, too.

—K.O.E.

BOTTLE

BLACKLAND
GIN

Texas is known for the three B's: barbecue, Beyoncé and bourbon. While the latter of Lone Star exports has shot to the top of its category in the past decade, another mother spirit is making her way through the ranks. Helmed by attorney-turned-certified sommelier Markus Kypreos, Fort Worth-based Blackland Distillery infuses a base of Texas red winter wheat distillate with 12 distinctive botanicals and veils it in a handsome bottle that makes a statement gift (or fine token of self-appreciation).

Kypreos practiced law at night while attending the Culinary School of Fort Worth with “a natural progression of entering wine,” he says. One section of the sommelier exam covers distilled spirits, and that’s where he found his fancy.

From 2014 to 2017, he soaked up knowledge at five separate distilling schools, then put together a business plan, left his law firm, and built an impressive facility in Fort Worth's Foundry District. After more than 100 iterations with botanicals ranging from lemon peel to licorice root, Blackland Gin (BlacklandFW.com; \$33) was born.

The viridescent bottle exudes an art deco aesthetic that adds serious swagger to any home bar. Inside? A perfectly balanced, handcrafted gin that tempers juniper with earthy floral and citrus notes.

“It’s the epitome of what anyone should be looking for in a well-made craft spirit,” says Kellen Hamrah, director of front-of-house operations for Dallas-based restaurant group From Scratch Hospitality. “It’s local in production and sourcing, has great body and a wonderful botanical backbone.”

—Gabrielle Nicole Pharms

STAY

HOTEL
SAINT VINCENTCUSTOM VOUTSA WALLPAPER
WRAPS GUEST ROOM BATHROOMSPARADISE LOUNGE,
THE HOTEL'S LOBBY BAR

Hotelier Liz Lambert became an IRL influencer almost 20 years ago when she transformed a derelict, terracotta-roofed motel into one of the most scene-y, celeb-stocked getaways in Austin, Texas: the Hotel San José. Now Lambert, a partner of MML Hospitality, has a new baby: Hotel Saint Vincent (*SaintVincentNOLA.com*; from \$289) in New Orleans, which opened with 75 rooms on Magazine Street this summer. The 1861 building, a former orphanage, sat structurally preserved and ready for its next chapter—one that would marry history with a look that's decidedly now.

JUST AROUND
THE CORNER

STAYING AT THE HOTEL? THESE LOWER GARDEN DISTRICT LOVELIES ARE A MUST.

1

CLARET WINE &
COCKTAIL BAR

A buzzing boîte with an unmissable happy hour (order the Three-Legged Cat, with Kubler absinthe, almond, lemon and Peychaud's bitters) and dishes like roasted bone marrow with pistachio pesto. (*ClaretNOLA.com*)

2

DISTRICT DONUTS

Arguably better than beignets: the donuts in unexpected flavors here, like Funfetti, Nutter Butter, and blueberry cheesecake. (*DistrictDonuts.com*)

3

TURKEY AND
THE WOLF

The only-in-n'awlins offerings at this beloved sandwich shop include a Collard Green Melt on rye and the double-stacked, cheekily named Mama Tried burger. (*TurkeyandtheWolf.com*)

© NICK SIMONITE; DOUGLAS FRIEDMAN

© TALLEY & TWINE

ACCESSORY

ABOUT TIME

RIGHT: WOMEN'S
MOTHER OF PEARL WATCH, \$175

"We wanted to create something grand and a little debaucherous," Lambert says. Cue the Wes Anderson moments. Lambert says the interiors were meant to summon "classical Western European details with a full overlay of Italian modernism." Even the bathrooms are cinematic. In lieu of traditional wallpaper, she enlisted George Voutsa to create a psychedelic marbled wallcovering based on old financial-ledger bindings found in the building. "We loved it so much we ended up using it in other places, including robes and headboards," she says. Amenities like Sferra linens and D.S. & Durga toiletries add to the pampering feel of each guest room.

Of course, this is New Orleans, and you've got things to do beyond your four walls. You can plunge into the hotel's heated, palm-shrouded pool, open all year and fringed with candy-pink and white striped daybeds. Or duck into San Lorenzo & Paradise Lounge for grilled creole oysters in oregano parmesan butter. "I knew early on we wanted to do a restaurant with coastal Italian food, with a focus on Gulf seafood," says Larry McGuire, partner of MML Hospitality, of the all-day restaurant adorned in custom mohair couches and rope wainscoting. Need a drink? Make like Blanche DuBois and sidle up for cocktail hour at the second-ever outpost of Austin's famed French-Vietnamese Elizabeth Street Café, right here in the hotel. Because as Blanche says, in New Orleans, "an hour isn't just an hour—but a whole little piece of eternity dropped into your hands."

—K.O.E.

Lucky number seven is the only numeral that graces the watch faces of Talley & Twine (*TalleyandTwine.com*; from \$155). But Randy Williams, above, the company's founder, knows getting to the top is about anything but luck.

"The number seven represents completion. There are seven days in a week," he says. "I told myself when I started Talley & Twine that I would see it through to the end. I hope it's a reminder to others to finish what they start as well."

Williams founded the company after losing his job—when his wife was pregnant—with little more than \$25,000 from Kickstarter and a dream. "I felt that Black professionals were being largely ignored by traditional watch companies despite their purchasing power and influence on the watch community. I believe we now speak to that market better than anyone else."

Named for an intersection where the company is based in Portsmouth, Virginia, Talley & Twine features watch faces larger than most: 46 mm for men's and 41 mm for women's, a full 2 mm to 3 mm larger than the industry standard. No wonder they're worn by boldface names such as NFL players Malcolm Jenkins and Rodney McLeod. Among the timepieces, which come with a rare two-year warranty, are a paisley-banded number that would be right at home on Martha's Vineyard, and a mother-of-pearl-faced ladies' watch with a tufted cobalt leather strap. In 2021, in honor of turning 7 years old, the company has released an anniversary watch, their first that's a Swiss-made automatic. A statement piece that's right on time.

—K.O.E.

The country's most anticipated Italian restaurant isn't in Boston or New York. It's on an unassuming street in downtown St. Louis. "I didn't realize how large the Italian community was here," says Casa Don Alfonso's Chef de Cuisine Sergio Chierago, who grew up in Sardinia. "I felt at home as soon as I arrived."

In fact, just five miles southeast of The Ritz-Carlton St. Louis, where the restaurant serves as crown jewel, is the city's Italian community, The Hill. The rows of shops and homes here are as colorful as its proud Italian residents.

Casa Don Alfonso (*CasaDonAlfonsoStLouis.com*) is the first American offshoot of Mario Iaccarino's two-Michelin-starred Don Alfonso 1890, in Sorrento, Italy. To honor the family, Iaccarino's brother, Ernesto, who designed the menu, studied generations-old family recipes. So, tucked in a leather banquette beneath a stunning canopy of hand-blown glass wisteria leaves, you can tear into Grandmother Titina's ziti, Grandfather Alfonso's maccheroni gratin, and a beef ragoût and pea-studded lasagna that takes two days to make—all mainstays of Sunday lunches at the Iaccarino house in Sant'Agata sui Due Golfi.

Set beneath a copper-plate ceiling and a wall of hand-painted tiles, the restaurant's wood-fired pizza oven turns out pies as authentic as you can get outside Napoli (the pizzaiolo, Jeffrey Mondaca, studied under master baker Peter Edris, of Frenchette in New York). The bar stools fronting this humble but mighty open kitchen make a fine destination for a one-on-one, capped with a spot of limoncello from the family farm.

—Katie Lockhart



SERGIO
CHIEREGO
BEHIND THE
PIZZA BAR;
GRANDMOTHER
TITINA'S ZITI



TABLE

CASA DON ALFONSO

AUTO AUDI RS7

AUDI'S FASTEST CAR
THIS SIDE OF THE V-10-
POWERED R8 SUPERCAR



The Audi RS7 (*Audi.com; from \$115,000*) is gorgeous to behold and strapped with every imaginable tech and safety system, but its undeniable appeal rumbles from under the hood. The RS7's twin-turbocharged, 4.0-liter V-8 barks and braps to the tune of 591 hp and 590 lb-ft of torque. Egged on by an eight-speed automatic and all-wheel drive, it explodes to 60 mph in 3.5 seconds, and touches a top-end limit of 190 mph.

It has an answer for every riddle of the road. With just a light touch of the throttle, this sensuous fastback converts all its potential into apex-seeking energy. It's not nimble, at more than 4,900 pounds, but it's astoundingly capable. It clips tight corners with ruthless efficiency with the help of firm steering,

grippy 22-inch summer tires, and massive carbon-ceramic brakes (but adaptive shocks give it resilience when needed). It protects passengers with a passel of technology, and its adaptive cruise control can stop, start and steer its way through traffic jams, and warn an exiting driver of oncoming traffic.

It's also endowed with spectacular style. The body cuts through the air with Tesla Model S finesse, graced in RS7-spec with blacked-out body trim and wheels. Red-stitched black leather sport seats have welcome grip and soothing comfort. It's useful too: Beneath the power tailgate, the hatchback cargo hold can tote at least a few rollaboard bags. It's on the short list for cross-country road trips, without a doubt.

—Martin Padgett

S

SHOP

MIRACLE PLUM



Miracle Plum (*MiraclePlum.com*) is a love letter to Santa Rosa, Sonoma County, California's simmering center of viticulture and farming that retains an undiscovered vibe. The name that Gwen Gunheim and Sallie Miller dreamed up for their gourmet food, wine and home goods shop—which ships its wares globally—honors local botanical savant Luther Burbank, who counts a miraculous seedless plum among the more than 800 new plant breeds he cultivated in his career.

Walk through the sunny yellow door and you'll find something you're craving: a hearty chicken za'atar salad, cup of cold brew or

one of those famous Santa Rosa plums at peak ripeness. Beyond that, Miracle Plum fulfills the desire to take home exquisite culinary taste, whether that's in the form of a rarefied ingredient or eye-catching piece of tableware. Shelves hold discoveries like Horikawaya Nomura Mitsubishi Soy Sauce, made by the same family for 300 years, and wonderfully fragrant single-origin smoked pimentón paprika that Burlap & Barrel sources from Extremadura, Spain. You can pop the top on a small-batch natural wine or cider, or experiment with another kind of mood shifter: Murakami Syouten, a mineral-rich brown sugar that people from Hateruma Island, Japan, use as a health tonic.

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SHOP FOUNDERS

GWEN GUNHEIM AND SALLIE MILLER

Connoisseurs of homekeeping will be drawn to the colorful swirls on enamel plates made by two sisters in Istanbul; urbane black brooms handmade from ebonized ash; or flinty stoneware bowls, crafted in a former Oakland cannery. Miller sums it up better than we can: "It's delicious stuff made well from all over the world."

—Maria C. Hunt

“Walk through the sunny yellow door and you'll find something you're craving.”

SETTLE CERAMICS SERVING PLATTER, \$136



MAKE A DAY OF IT

A side trip to Santa Rosa is a worthwhile addition to any San Francisco itinerary. Here, Gunheim and Miller's picks for staying awhile.

- LUTHER BURBANK HOME & GARDENS**
Breathe in the medicinal garden full of healing herbs. (*LutherBurbank.org*)
- CHARRO NEGRO BEACH & BARRIO FOOD TRUCK**
Epic shrimp tacos, fresh and colorful ceviches, and more. (*CharroNegroFood.com*)
- CALIFORNIA SISTER FLORAL DESIGN & SUPPLY**
Rustic arrangements, gardening supplies and fragrant home gifts. (*CaliforniaSister.com*)

GEAR

S

JOY RIDE



GO FOUR TIMES
FASTER THAN
PEDALING ALONE

“Take a spin on an e-bike and the mental gains can soar, along with your speed and distance.”

Kids are onto something when they ask Santa for bicycles. Two-wheeled rides deliver freedom and adventure, but there’s even more happening under the helmet. Increased sharpness, happiness and creativity are all scientifically proven benefits of pedaling outside. Take a spin on an e-bike and the mental gains can soar, along with your speed and distance.

We love Specialized’s Como 5.0 (*Specialized.com*; \$5,500) for its classic look, chill geometry and impressive engineering. The seamlessly integrated motor multiplies your effort, putting the adage “a little bit goes a long way” into action. It’ll go up to 90 miles on a single charge, so you can commute or wander without worrying if you’ll make it back. You can easily lock up the battery when you reach your destination or need a charge—just turn a key to open the compartment, and it slides out of the frame. And for extra peace of mind wherever you wander, you can disable the motor and activate a motion sensor alarm through an app. Wider tires with a smaller radius give it a cushy ride, even when the road gets rough, and the low-entry design makes it easy to pedal in any getup. Toss on a basket—and up to 80 pounds of gear on the back rack—and it’ll be ready for whatever you throw at it. Just don’t be surprised if you never want to drive again.

—Erin Beresini

TRACK YOUR
BATTERY LIFE,
SPEED, AND MORE



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SPA

SENSEI LĀNA’I



ABOVE: AN
OFURO SOAKING
TUB IN A PRIVATE
SPA HALE;
RIGHT: GARDENS
ON VIEW FROM
THE GREAT HALL



Forget butlers and personal trainers. Serious stress—which arrived in droves the past two years—demands the work of a sensei. On an island known for its healing energy, Sensei Lāna’i, A Four Seasons Resort (*FourSeasons.com*; from \$650) provides guests with the opportunity to partner with an infinitely wise wellness guide responsible for crafting a transformative journey customized to your needs.

With proud mountains as a backdrop and the sea a whiff away, this tranquil retreat exudes a graceful, Japanese architecture aesthetic. Conceived by Oracle co-founder Larry Ellison (who owns the sparsely populated island in its entirety) in collaboration with renowned physician David Agus and Chef Nobu Matsuhisa, this sanctum leaves no need untended, wellness or otherwise.

Guests arrive from Oahu on Ellison’s own fleet of Pilatus PC-12s and are invited to amble the fragrant garden and ponder sculptures by the likes of Fernando Botero and Jaume Plensa, before consulting with a personal sensei. The unwinding continues with meditation sessions, sunset sails and sunrise hikes along the Koloiki Ridge Trail. The ridge runs toward the ocean separating Naio Gulch and Maunalei Valley, and affords incredible views of neighbor islands on clear days.

Everything here is state of the art, from the shiny gym to the thermal body-mapping technology massage therapists use to pinpoint your kinks with digital accuracy. But the real draw are the 10 exquisite spa hales, where you’ll learn the difference

between a spa treatment chosen at random and one curated through comprehensive mind-body analysis. Hawaiian for home, these 1,000-square-foot oases are decked out with teakwood and ofuro soaking tubs, infrared saunas and private garden plunge pools.

While most guests choose the Sensei Guided Experience, which comes with daily wellness credits to be used for recommended activities that range from fitness classes to horseback rides through Jurassic Park-like landscapes, self-guided a la carte stays can be arranged. Not just about detox or getting fit, Sensei Lāna’i cures from the inside out, and doesn’t judge. Feel free to swill wine, wallow lazily in the pool, or match wits with your worthy sensei. It’s all a cure for something.

—Becca Hensley



PLACE

FRENCH CONNECTION

Find a fairytale vacation home in exquisitely undiscovered Annecy, France.

“My God, it’s beautiful,” said Emperor Napoleon upon seeing the blue waters of Lake Annecy, which he then swiftly annexed to France.

The emperor had good taste. To understand the Gaullist passion for this alpine lake, picture an unspoiled Como or Garda. For the French, the Annecy region is considered one of the most desirable places to live in the nation. And yet to the rest of the world, the city remains an off-the-tourist-path secret all of 25 miles from Geneva, Switzerland, and 50 miles from the Italian border.

A sense of welcoming déjà vu is a gift Annecy bestows on all visitors. The medieval town center is laced by canals branching off the Thiou river and accessible only on foot. It’s an urban choreography that has remained unchanged for nearly 400 years: Pedestrians amble through arcades and over low bridges dripping with geraniums, while resident swans glide below. Parked on an island in the middle of the town’s main canal and looking like the prow of an oncoming ship is the Palais d’Isle, a 14th century castle now home to temporary exhibitions and a dungeon museum. It is one of Europe’s most photographed buildings.

That powerful feeling of pre-knowing Annecy happens because for most of us, we already do: There’s an iconic canvas by Cezanne, a spare blue masterpiece depicting a villa over water, rendered in light, gestural strokes. Sitting below crystalline, ice-capped mountains, the building’s shape is reflected on the face of a still alpine lake. It is Lac d’Annecy: 1896. (The villa is a hotel today, Abbaye de Talloires, where former monks’ cells are now luxury suites.)

The lake is the mirror that reflects back to world travelers what they need from a vacation. Winston Churchill said it was “the most beautiful view on earth” and Mark Twain

OLD TOWN ANNECY
ALONG THE THIOU RIVER

BYVALET / SHUTTERSTOCK.COM



CHÂTEAU D'ANNECY,
A RESTORED CASTLE
OVERLOOKING THE LAKE

refused to say anything at all, fearful he could not render Lake Annecy with any justice. There are beaches everywhere, like beads strung along the shores, filled with French families and Continental holiday-makers. It's the cleanest body of water in Europe. The lake is shallow and still at the coastline, so Annecy's water is warm, clear and welcoming to swimmers, paddlers, boaters, kite surfers and frolicking kids.

The topography of Annecy haunts visitors, too. Looking up on clear days you might see Mont Blanc looming. Every few years in the Tour de France, Annecy's nearby mountains make an appearance as a brutal climbing stage. Hobby cyclists can attempt a 1,300-meter ascent up the Semnoz to reach a mountain peak on two wheels, for a selfie deserving of its own yellow jersey. More casual (or less self-punishing) enthusiasts can rent bikes for an afternoon to trace the lakeshore on a flat cycle path laid over the old railway tracks between Annecy and Albertville.

Annecy manages to give everyone a choice: Who do you want to be on your holiday, amateur or ace? In alpine forests, hikers might decide between the grueling *randonee la tournette*, a trail circling the highest peak near Annecy; or a mellow walk across suspension bridges over deep Fier River gorges. Or you can do both.

In winter, the ice frieze over Annecy becomes the destination itself. Nearly all of France's world-class ski resorts—Chamonix, Albertville, Courcheva—are within an hour-or-so's drive. The many hundreds of black runs and off-piste options will keep avid skiers and boarders busy for eternity. But connoisseurs of après-ski are never disappointed: Alpine cheese makes excellent fondue, as does Alpine chocolate.

If someone were to craft the perfect destination in a laboratory, Annecy would be the result. No one gives better voice to this uncanny quality than one of the Haute Savoie's most famous artists in residence, Mary Shelley, who conceived of *Frankenstein* while staying nearby. But Annecy is no monster, it is just familiar, one of those all-too-rare spots where we meet our happiest selves.

—Sarah Rose

REAL ESTATE NOTES

The eastern shore of Lake Annecy is the more fashionable and expensive side, where the setting sun bathes homes in gold until as late as 10 p.m. in summer. (This is the Alpine light memorialized by Cezanne.) Conversely, in the shadow of the Rhone Alps, the lake's western shore can lose daylight by midafternoon; yet it has a mellow vibe, cooler temperatures in high summer and a lower price of entry.

There are no restrictions on foreigners purchasing property in France. About one-third of the buyers in and

around Annecy are locals; one-third are second-home-owners from Paris or Lyon; and the remainder are Britons, Americans, Russians, and residents of Gulf states. Notary fees and transaction taxes are paid for by buyers and make up about 7% of the sales price.

Prices around Annecy have consistently risen higher than average property prices in France, hovering around \$425,500 USD. Apartments, farmhouses and mountain chalets abound.