



— 150 —
HOTELS
YOU NEED
TO VISIT BEFORE
— YOU DIE —

By Debbie Pappyn,
Travel Journalist at
Classe Touriste.

Lannoo

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Introduction

By Debbie Pappyn, *Classe Touriste*

There's something eternally magical about pushing open the door of a new hotel room in expectation of what awaits on the other side – the novelty, the surprise, the views, the fragrance of crisp bed linen, the soft sound of the welcome tune on loop on the TV. After trying out well over a thousand different hotels during a lifetime of travelling around the world, I've always loved this moment and am perhaps even addicted to it. It's all about that feeling of arrival in a temporary home. Maybe it's a canvas yurt in a remote meadow somewhere in Mongolia, or a luxury suite behind a heavy, sound-proofed door in a Park Hyatt in some cosmopolitan, bright-lights city, a door that separates the frantic world out there from the calm, silent retreat inside. Hotels are worlds in miniature, different worlds, worlds endowed with singular rules and pleasures, places where falling asleep and waking are so different from at home. Maybe there's the sound of the ocean out back, like in Room 28 at the Wickaninnish Inn on Vancouver Island, or the whisper of reeds at the Inle Princess Resort in Burma, or the hippos laughing away after dusk, just like that night I spent at San Camp.

Often, it's not about the out-and-out luxuries like the gold taps, the over-the-top service and crazy amenities. Great hotels come in different shapes and sizes. Take the charming Haus Hirt inn in Austria: I would book a stay here in a jiff just to enjoy the wonderful long-drawn-out organic breakfast with a panoramic view over the snow-capped Alps. Or the Four Seasons Park Lane in London where I could stay in bed all day and night. Hotel beds can be absolute bliss, but there's always the danger that you'll never want to leave the room and go out and explore. 'Do not disturb' signs are a hotel lover's best friend. From the glorious beds, gourmet breakfasts, and views to die for, to the miniature shampoo bottles that you take home and use to help you travel back to a place in your imagination whenever you feel nostalgic... hotels are pure romance. Hotels tell stories. Hotels make stories and create memories. Enjoy these 150 places to stay, and don't forget to switch on the 'DND' on your smartphone!





— 01 — SAN CAMP

BOTSWANA

Kalahari Desert
Makgadikgadi

LEGENDARY
TENTED CAMP



TO VISIT BEFORE YOU DIE BECAUSE

This camp is the epitome of romance and style in Africa.



With views over the shimmering salt pans of the Makgadikgadi, San Camp is a cluster of pure-white tents set amid grassland – the ultimate, romantic African hideaway. The spacious, light-filled tents are stocked with museum-worthy antiques and collectables from the old days when the owner's father, Jack Bousfield, was a record-breaking hunter and safari pioneer in Africa.

The communal spaces are equally chic and classic, with fine linen and delicate tableware used during long and relaxing lunches between game drives and explorations of this remote corner of Botswana.

€€€€

From €1,120 / US\$1,260 per person per night, all inclusive.



— 02 — MIGRANTE GUESTHOUSE

CAPE VERDE

Boa Vista
Sal Rei

COLONIAL
ISLAND VIBE

◆ TO VISIT BEFORE YOU DIE BECAUSE

These islands are still a well-kept secret, with this small hotel as the ultimate must-stay.



Even though Cape Verde is today receiving more mainstream tourist attention, the island of Boa Vista and the little town of Sal Rei remain blissfully relaxed. Migrante Guesthouse has been here for well over two decades and is hidden in a colonial house situated in the old part of town. There are only five modest, yet comfortable rooms, each with its own distinctive personality and with lots of African and colonial charm, from

creaky, wooden floors to four-poster beds. Downstairs there's an intimate courtyard with high, white walls and tall trees, the perfect spot for enjoying a long breakfast or reading a book before heading to the long and empty sand beaches, just a short stroll away from the hotel.

€
From €80 / US\$90 per night for a double room,
with breakfast.

— 03 —
**SOFITEL LEGEND
OLD CATARACT ASWAN**

EGYPT

Aswan
Banks of the River Nile

**LEGENDARY
WRITER'S RETREAT**

◆ TO VISIT BEFORE YOU DIE BECAUSE

This is the ultimate colonial grande dame of Northern Africa.



In this opulent hotel you may well stay in a room that has been occupied by Aga Khan III, the Shah of Iran, Princess Diana or Agatha Christie, as is evident from the hallways decked with photos of royals, artists and other VIPs who've bedded down here. This iconic hotel overlooks Elephantine Island at the crossroads of the Nile river valley and the Nubian Desert. The style is a mix of art deco and Mamluk glamour with a decor echoing

ancient Egyptian motifs with a dash of French chic. When you check into the Old Cataract, you're stepping into an atmosphere reminiscent of an Agatha Christie tale, combined with an *English Patient* aura of a bygone era in North Africa.

€
From €120 / US\$135 per night.

— 04 — KINONDO KWETU

KENYA

Kinondo
Diani Beach

**AFRICAN-CHIC
BEACH RETREAT**

◆ TO VISIT BEFORE YOU DIE BECAUSE

This is probably the best-kept secret along the Kenyan coast.



Book a room here and it will feel like you are staying in the private home of its owners, Ida and Filip Andersson, and their three children, a Swedish family related to the famous Baron Blixen. This intimate hotel, just south of Diani Beach, is a far cry from the big, impersonal resorts along the Kenyan coast. The private beach is calm with almost no outsiders passing by, the ocean is warm and blue, and the hotel has an intimate, cosy home-away-

from-home feel, where like-minded guests come together to relax after a long safari trip. Highlights are dining on locally caught fish next to one of the two swimming pools with the Indian Ocean as a backdrop.

€€
From €210 / US\$570 per person per night,
all inclusive.

— 05 — LA MAMOUNIA

MOROCCO

Marrakech
Medina

PALACE RETREAT
IN A SEA OF GREEN



TO VISIT BEFORE YOU DIE BECAUSE

No other hotel can match its *Arabian Nights* vibe.



When celebs go on a romantic break to Marrakech, they hide away in the lush gardens of the iconic La Mamounia. There's no a more authentic way to enter a hotel in Morocco than being greeted by the typically dressed bell boys who lead you into a fairytale world of opulent decor with extravagant mosaics, hand-carved woodwork and sumptuous fabrics. The best buffet breakfast in town is served

by the large outdoor pool, surrounded by lush, mature gardens. Rooms are intimate, some with views over the Koutoubia Mosque and the Atlas Mountains, while the villas in the garden are the ultimate hideaway for romantic weekends.

€€€
From €550 / US\$620 per person per night.

Colophon

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Back Cover Image:

Steve Turvey

Book Design

ASB

Typesetting

Keppie & Keppie

If you have any questions or comments about the material in this book, please do not hesitate to contact our editorial team: art@lannoo.com

© Lannoo Publishers, Belgium, 2024

NUR 504/500

ISBN 978 94 014 3022 7

www.lannoo.com

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