

Condé Nast Traveller

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10TH ANNIVERSARY HOT LIST SPECIAL

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THE HOT LIST 2009

Our choice of the world's best new hotels



in association with Virgin Atlantic: '25 years and still red hot'

HOT THE LIST 2009

10TH ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL

Welcome to our definitive guide to the hottest new hotels in the world. For this special 10th-anniversary supplement, we started with thousands of possible contenders and asked our correspondents around the world to check out the competition and report back. The 70 hotels that made the final cut span the spectrum from remote lodges in the African bush to urban oases in Beverly Hills, a spa resort in Abu Dhabi and a sensationally sexy newcomer in Miami. Compiled by *Condé Nast Traveller's* Associate Editor, Peter Browne, the Hot List 2009 is the most comprehensive ever, and we are proud to produce it in association with Virgin Atlantic, which is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year.

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GREAT COMEBACK KIDS & ONES TO WATCH Emily Mathieson **HOT HOTEL PEOPLE** Francesca Syz

THE HOT LIST 2009

UK, EUROPE & RUSSIA

NIMB Copenhagen

The Nimb has Copenhagen's most beautiful rooms, most elegant bar and one of its finest restaurants. Conveniently located opposite the railway station, it also opens into the famous Tivoli Gardens (to which guests get free admission). The building dates back to the early 19th century but has been entirely renovated by the Grønlykke family, who own a chain of delis and a luxury lodge, Falsled Kro, in the Danish countryside. From the railway side, the Nimb looks quite unassuming: a plain white building with a patterned-metal grill covering the façade. But viewed from the Tivoli side it resembles a Moorish palace made of white Italian marble illuminated by rows of light-bulbs. Inside, things are much calmer and more typically Nordic, with lots of dark, oiled oak and warm, grey stone from the Swedish island of Öland. There's a wine cellar, two restaurants, a counter selling gourmet sausages and a deli with a glass wall through which you can watch what's going on in the next-door dairy (organic milk is brought in daily to make its products). Each bedroom is different, but all have a mix of antiques and modern furnishings, rich fabrics, walls painted in deep, sober colours and fireplaces prepared and ready to light. Admittedly, such peerless luxury comes at a steep price, but at the very least you should stop at the bar for a Champagne afternoon tea beside a blazing fire.

WHEN TO GO It's cheaper to stay when Tivoli isn't open, but more fun when it is. The run-up to Christmas is particularly wonderful.

ROOM TO BOOK All are excellent, but number 14 lacks a Tivoli view.

00 45 88 700000; www.nimb.dk. Doubles from DKr2,900 (about £355)

LE COUVENT DES MINIMES HOTEL & SPA Provence

At the end of a quiet country road in the tiny village of Mane stands the Couvent des Minimes, a honey-coloured, 17th-century convent surrounded by orchards and olive groves. The retreat has recently been converted into

10 GREAT COMEBACK KIDS

Landmark hotels reinvented and reinvigorated

8. HOTEL DANIELI VENICE

www.starwoodhotels.com

French designer Jacques Garcia is updating the three palaces that make up the Danieli. The first, *Excelsior*, has reopened with fewer bedrooms and a jazzed-up restaurant; work is now under way on the other two



Lobby of The Regent Grand Hotel Bordeaux

a quietly chic, 46-bedroom hotel and spa with a delightfully unpretentious atmosphere. The bedrooms are all deeply comfortable and furnished in a clean-line medley of chocolate-brown and beige, with leather-topped desks, parquet floors, stained-oak armoires and fluffy white duvets. The gastronomic restaurant is headed by talented chef Philippe Guérin, who excels in refined southern specialties: foie gras with ham and prunes in a flaky crust; Sisteron lamb with rosemary (from the garden) and baby carrots; and a thyme-infused-chocolate and salted-butter-caramel pastry for dessert. The small but lovely spa offers a wide choice of signature treatments, including a hot verbena-and-lemon scrub and cold hydrating massage (which finishes with a homemade citrus sorbet) and the detox 'grape cure' with a grapeseed-and-crushed-nut scrub and warm grape-and-essential-oil wrap. There's also a heated, indoor pool with a sauna and hammam, should the mistral blow in.

WHEN TO GO July and early August, to see the famous lavender fields at nearby Plateau de Valensole; or December, for a pampering winter-weekend break.

ROOM TO BOOK The romantic beige-and-burgundy Cassine suite under the bell tower. 00 33 4 92 74 77 77; www.couventdesminimes-hotelspa.com. Doubles from €205

THE REGENT GRAND HOTEL BORDEAUX France

Its setting alone makes the Regent Grand special: directly opposite the Grand Théâtre opera house, which was designed by the same architect in the 1770s, at the heart of Bordeaux's beautifully preserved, 18th-century town centre. Its opening has at last given the city the sort of grand hotel it has lacked since the original Regent Grand closed in 1990. The reincarnation is five times larger, as it has cleverly colonised several adjacent buildings, resulting in a slightly convoluted layout within the handsome, golden-stone façades. Interior designer Jacques Garcia has come up with a theatrical take on 19th-century Second Empire style, with sultry low lighting, plenty of plush finishes, giant flower arrangements and a row of black Baccarat crystal chandeliers. Bedrooms, although rather tame by Garcia's flamboyant standards, are cocooning, with high beds,