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## HOT NEW HOTELS

**54** new properties you need to have on your radar

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# HOT NEW HOTELS

**T**HIS YEAR'S list of Hot Hotels was compiled with the assistance of **Travel Agent's** expert in-house destination editors and contributors. We also consulted with industry experts Ignacio Maza, executive vice president of Signature Travel Network; Suzanne Hall, senior director of marketing and development, land products for Ensemble Travel Group; and Albert Herrera, vice president, hotels, destinations & tours for Virtuoso.

## U.S.

### Andaz West Hollywood, Los Angeles

Opened in January 2009, this hip hotel has been lauded by design experts for its "seductive, sophisticated atmosphere." This is the first North American Andaz hotel, part of a new global brand created by Hyatt. What we love: Rooms have views of the Hollywood Hills, the Sunset Strip or downtown Los Angeles and the huge rooftop Sundeck (overlooking the Los Angeles skyline) has a heated pool and private cabanas.

### The Ritz-Carlton, Dove Mountain, Marana, AZ

This resort opened December 18 in an amazing canyon that allows for neat hiking and biking. Great opening rates drew happy visitors over Christmas, who lauded the resort for its snazzy golf and spa facilities, as well as its CORE Kitchen restaurant. We hear many suites have double balconies and that the lobby lounge serves single-malt scotches and whiskeys from around the world.

### The Mandarin Oriental, Las Vegas

Signature's Ignacio Maza calls this "the jewel in the crown of Las Vegas' CityCenter." Opened December 4, the hotel, designed by the celebrated Adam Tihany, has become an instant icon in the city. "The property features an amazing Sky Lobby on the 23rd floor, with breathtaking views of the city," says Maza. "During your stay, do not miss a treatment at the hotel's 27,000-square-foot spa and dinner at Twist by Pierre Gagnaire, the celebrated Michelin-starred chef. If you are in a hurry, stop at Amore Patisserie to pick up some of the best fresh-baked desserts in Las Vegas."

### Vdara, Las Vegas

Vdara at CityCenter is a non-gaming condo hotel physically connected to Bellagio and adjacent to ARIA Resort & Casino. We say it's ideal for low-key travelers

seeking convenient access to all of the entertainment, gaming, shopping, dining and nightlife at CityCenter and in Las Vegas. Rooms here are homey, not only for their size (500 to 1,650 square feet), but for their full kitchens. Spa Vdara is a serious enterprise and well worth the indulgence; Bar Vdara is spacious and hip, with an outdoor area that's a real treat.

### ARIA Resort & Casino, Las Vegas

Where does one begin with ARIA's 4,004 high-tech guest rooms and panoramic floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking the Vegas skyline? Every room at this mega resort delivers a level of personalized automation currently found only in high-end custom homes. Downstairs, ARIA's amenities include fine dining courtesy of Masayoshi Takayama of Masa in New York City and Shawn McClain, executive chef at three of Chicago's top restaurants, while the 80,000-square-foot spa and salon has a living-room area and smoothie bar. Watch out for the pool area of all pool areas to open this spring. At 300,000 square feet, it will host 32 cabanas.

### St. Regis Deer Crest, Park City, UT

This luxurious ski-in/ski-out resort opened last fall in Park City. "The resort has several unique features, including a funicular to whisk guests up to the lobby, Remède Spa, private ski beach, ski valets and split-level infinity pool," says Maza. The hotel has 181 rooms and suites and is only 38 miles from Salt Lake City airport, making this one of the easiest luxury ski resorts to reach, year-round. It employs the famed St. Regis butlers, who attend to every need of their guests, Maza adds.

### Dakota Mountain Lodge, Park City, UT

Dakota Mountain Lodge is the first ski-in/ski-out property



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have one. The Crosby Street Hotel has 86 rooms and suites, many with views of downtown Manhattan. We hear that room #203, called The Meadow Suite, has more than 50 flowering plants on its terrace. Crosby Street Hotel also plans to attain Gold LEED certification. Its restaurant, The Crosby Bar, uses seasonal produce, much of which is from the rooftop garden. The hotel also boasts its own private cinema.

### The Surrey, New York

The Surrey, which reopened in October, has had a \$60 million investment

and atmosphere, says Signature's Maza. The hotel's new restaurant features dining by Jean Georges.

### Cooper Square Hotel, New York

This East Village hotel is the latest sign of gentrification in the formerly edgy neighborhood. Locals hate it, but it has certainly caught the eye of visitors who want to avoid the crowds of midtown. The top spot in the hotel is the 3,000-square-foot Penthouse with a wrap-around deck and 180-degree view of the city. The other rooms are smaller, but floor-to-ceiling windows help keep claustrophobia at bay.

its fifth star from the commissioner of the Alpes-Maritimes département in southeast France. The hotel is on the famous La Croisette at the original site of the Palais des Congrès, where the first Cannes Film Festivals were held. The redesign of the hotel, which added a number of oceanfront suites, pays tribute to the legendary film stars of festivals past, such as Sophia Loren, Brigitte Bardot and Elizabeth Taylor.

### The Arch London

A glamorous hotel close to Marble Arch and Hyde Park, the Arch London sits inside seven Georgian Grade II-listed buildings and two mews houses. We love the in-house film library with the Best Picture Oscar winners from the last 50 years.

### Castel Monastero, Tuscany, Italy

Ready for a new Tuscan villa hotel experience that comes with a pampering spa and dining provided by chef Gordon Ramsay? Castel Monastero, in the medieval village of Monastero d'Ombrone in Chianti, is just 14 miles east of Siena—set atop a hill, of course, as all good villa hotels should be. What's cool about Castel Monastero, aside from the fact that it's in an 11th-century village, is that it has a 10,000-square-foot, 10-room spa, so it's unlikely you'll have to wait for an appointment.

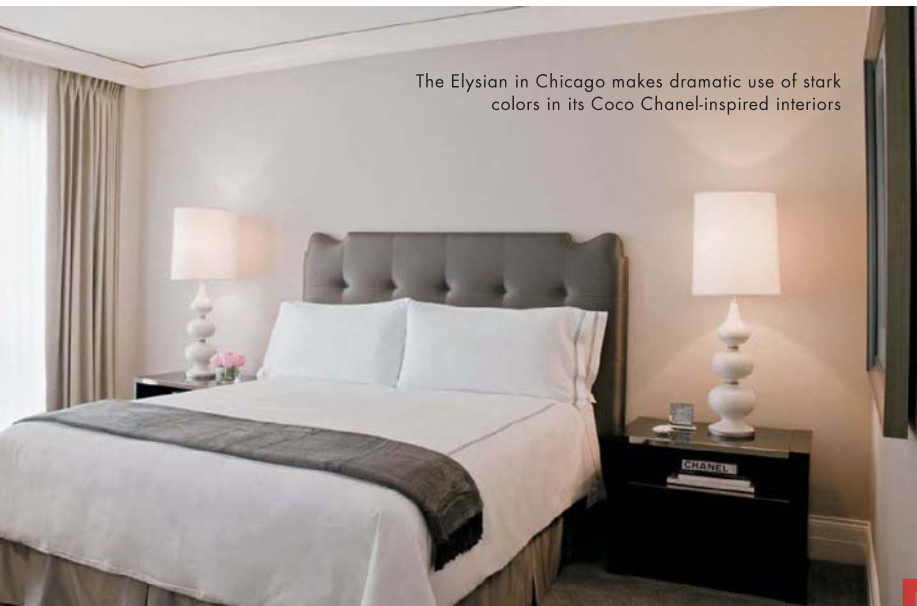
### Romeo Hotel, Naples, Italy

This design-oriented, high-end boutique hotel opened in an area of Naples nestled among Piazza Municipio and the cruise-ship terminals. While a major source of pride for the hotel is its rare art collection, we say its panoramic views of Mount Vesuvius and the island of Capri are arguably its top assets.

### Verdura Golf & Spa Resort, Sicily

The first resort from the Rocco Forte Collection made a splash when it debuted on the coast of Sicily last year. The service, imported from alma maters like The Ritz London, is tops. Our Junior Suite had a private terrace

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The Elysian in Chicago makes dramatic use of stark colors in its Coco Chanel-inspired interiors

and, oh, does it show. We found it to be quite chic, with lots of black-and-white motifs and beautifully tiled floors. It's also extremely private, on East 76th Street between Madison and Fifth. You'll find that Ellen Gerchik is the new director of luxury sales; you'll know her from Park Hyatt and Rosewood. Room service spotlights seasonal menus of Chef Daniel Boulud's French-American restaurant, Cafe Boulud, just next door.

### The Mark, New York

This iconic Upper East Side boutique hotel has been transformed by French designer Jacques Grange. The property has a chic, sophisticated and understated

### Europe

#### Grand-Hôtel du Cap-Ferrat, France

To celebrate its 100th birthday, Grand-Hôtel du Cap-Ferrat embarked on a \$90 million, 14-month refurbishment that was completed last May 15. Designer Pierre-Yves Rochon re-decorated the interiors; spaces are now filled with natural light. The tally is now 49 rooms and 24 suites, including eight new suites with private plunge pools. The highlight of the new spa is certainly its large garden with beautiful views over the Med.

#### Palais Stéphanie, Cannes, France

Palais Stéphanie, the newly renovated luxury hotel in Cannes, has earned