

WHERE TO STAY



# STAYS TO SAVOUR

Michelin-worthy menus and ethereal settings: Some hotels are gastronomic destinations in their own right, inspiring far-flung journeys for the meal of a lifetime. From an underwater restaurant beneath the Indian Ocean to a five-course tasting menu in an icy Antarctic expanse, here are nine places where hotel dining goes way beyond room service

PHOTOGRAPH: ADRIAN LOUW



Restaurant  
Klein Jan at  
South Africa's  
Tswalu Kalahari



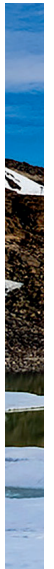




## FOGO ISLAND INN

### CANADA

The name might be a touch misleading; you shouldn't arrive at this inn expecting a humble affair with old-fashioned rooms and creaky floorboards. This ambitious, design-forward hotel – a gleaming white spread hovering on stilts above the craggy shoreline – has had architecture buffs making pilgrimages to this island off the coast of Newfoundland since 2013. It's also succeeded in putting the remote stretch of Canada's rugged North Atlantic coast on the global culinary map. Settle in to the dining room – with soaring floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking the temperamental waters below – and try to spy glimpses of passing whales as creative plates, composed of bounty sourced nearby, appear before you: poached lobster with confit fennel and onion broth; moose ribeye with glazed beets; seared scallops with parsley dumplings. [fogoislandinn.ca](http://fogoislandinn.ca)



THIS AMBITIOUS, DESIGN-FORWARD HOTEL HAS SUCCEEDED IN PUTTING THE REMOTE STRETCH OF CANADA'S RUGGED NORTH ATLANTIC COAST ON THE GLOBAL CULINARY MAP



WORDS: SARAH KHAN. PHOTOGRAPHS: BENT RENÉ SYNNEVAG, SIGNE EIRICK, MARKO PREZELJ, ELSA YOUNG



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### WHICHAWAY CAMP

#### ANTARCTICA

You're unlikely to travel all the way to Antarctica for a meal; bucket-list adventures such as polar camping, ice tunnel hikes in untrammelled terrain, and visits to a colony of 28,000 emperor penguins are sure to be the primary draw here. But White Desert's Whichaway Camp, with seven ultra-luxe sleeping pods and a plush dining tent with a deck overlooking freshwater lakes, will give you some serious culinary bragging rights: How many people can claim they've had a five-course tasting menu (complete with freshly baked bread) this close to the South Pole? And at White Desert's new Wolf's Fang camp opening this November, guests will trade tales from their Antarctic excursions at the ice bar, sipping on drinks made from 10,000-year-old glacial ice.

[white-desert.com](http://white-desert.com)

### OCA SUNDY

#### SÃO TOMÉ AND PRÍNCIPE

The two-island nation of São Tomé and Príncipe, off the coast of Gabon, is a tapestry of abandoned plantations, beaches and thick banana and almond tree forests. Thanks to South African tech entrepreneur Mark Shuttleworth, it's being transformed into an eco-tourism hotspot. There's not much footfall on Príncipe's wild northwestern coast, home to luxury tented camp Sundry Praia – so its award-winning restaurant, Oca Sundry, is left to the delight of hotel guests and foodie pilgrims. Paris-based architect Didier le Fort designed it to resemble a giant fish crafted from bamboo, serving flavour-spiked dishes like mango vinegar-marinated snapper and Wahoo fish ravioli with smoked mashed carrot. A highlight: the seven-course chocolate tasting menu by Claudio Corallo, where guests chew on raw cocoa beans and butter before sitting down to octopus in chocolate broth and decadent chocolate mousse.

[hbdprincipe.com](http://hbdprincipe.com)



### ANANTARA AL JABAL AL AKHDAR RESORT

#### OMAN

Starry skies are on the menu at this cliffside retreat in Oman. A steep, switchback-heavy two-hour drive from Muscat leads you to the highest luxury hideaway in the Middle East, an earth-toned escape hugging the rim of a canyon that soars 2,000 metres above sea level. And sure, you could settle in for a meal with a view at any number of sky-high restaurants on property – share the traditional lamb shuwa at Al Maisan's Friday brunch, perhaps, or graze on an array of pizzas and pastas at the poolside Bella Vista – but it's Anantara's signature Dining by Design experience that truly makes the trek worthwhile. At Diana's Point, which marks a spot where Princess Diana found a moment of repose during her 1986 visit to Oman, a private chef will whip up a canyonside dinner à deux just as the sun sets over the ravine beside you. It's a thrilling backdrop for a feast.

[anantara.com](http://anantara.com) →





## THE FARM AT CAPE KIDNAPPERS

### NEW ZEALAND

Seasonal New Zealand produce is the star attraction at the Farm at Cape Kidnappers, a remote 24-suite spread presiding over a sprawling 6,000-acre sheep farm with a serious edge-of-the-world feel. The rustic-chic atrium dining room makes a fine perch from which to survey the sources of much of the lamb, Black Angus beef, prawns, and salmon on the menu: the rolling pastures nearby and the North Island's Hawke's Bay and beyond. And when all those decadent meals start to add up? Work them off by teeing off – the lodge is home to an award-winning clifftop golf course with panoramic Pacific Ocean views. [robertsonlodges.com](http://robertsonlodges.com)



## BLACKBERRY FARM AND BLACKBERRY MOUNTAIN

### UNITED STATES

For more than four decades, Blackberry Farm, a 4,200-acre family-owned estate in the foothills of Tennessee's Great Smoky Mountains, has been the platonic ideal of an opulent rural American retreat. Elegant cottages with sweeping views, pastoral pastimes such as horseback riding and fly-fishing, and, as one would expect from a resort with "farm" in its name, sumptuous feasts in a genteel setting – in this case, a James Beard Award-winning dining room in a century-old barn. In 2019, the Beall family unveiled Blackberry Mountain, with cabins etched into soaring slopes and a thoughtful culinary program that earned the region a second stop in many a travel itinerary. But the Bealls aren't quite finished yet: this year, they set their eyes on neighbouring North Carolina's Blue Ridge Mountains, where they collaborated on the April reopening of the historic High Hampton Resort.

[blackberryfarm.com](http://blackberryfarm.com); [blackberrymountain.com](http://blackberrymountain.com); [highhampton.com](http://highhampton.com)

## RESTAURANT KLEIN JAN, TSWALU KALAHARI

### SOUTH AFRICA

In 2016, South African chef Jan Hendrik van der Westhuizen earned a Michelin star for his acclaimed restaurant Jan on the French Riviera, far from his roots. This April, he opened his latest culinary temple much closer to home at Tswalu Kalahari, a private game reserve in the arid desert landscape of South Africa's Northern Cape province. But don't come expecting a typical safari boma dinner here: Once you cross the threshold of the unassuming century-old whitewashed Boscia House, an evening of pure drama awaits. Descend a floating spiral staircase circling a curtain of falling water and pass through a subterranean root cellar stocked with a museum-like display of locally sourced pumpkins, cheeses and meats, before interacting with a true moveable feast that unfolds in different areas – with plenty of theatrics served up with every course.

[tswalu.com](http://tswalu.com)



ALEXANDER, PADASTE MANOR

ESTONIA

Thinking about making a reservation at Alexander? Flying in to Tallinn, the Estonian capital on the Baltic Sea, is only the first step of your journey. You'll need to drive another two hours south then board a 90-minute car ferry to the bucolic island of Muhu. There, Padaste Manor, the origins of which date back to the 15th century, looms over 70 acres of forests and meadows. But this is a well-trodden route for epicurean Estonians and in-the-know visitors alike, who frequently make travel plans solely to dine at one of the country's best restaurants. Housed in a contemporary glass pavilion at the stately abode, Alexander elevates humble ingredients sourced from the island – venison, pigeon, sole, and more – in an inventive nouveau Nordic menu, courtesy chef Diogo Caetano. [padaste.ee](http://padaste.ee)

ITHAA, CONRAD MALDIVES RANGALI ISLAND

MALDIVES

Dining at ocean's edge, gazing out over luminous waters as the sun dips below the horizon is par for the course at most Maldivian resorts. For the best dinner views, though, you'll have to head beneath the waves. Conrad Maldives Rangali Island laid claim to the world's first underwater restaurant when it unveiled Ithaa in 2005, and it remains a culinary and design marvel. Feast on an extravagant five-course menu – think lobster tortellini with saffron and potato cream, foie gras torchon with pecan granola and poached rhubarb and a valrhona chocolate tart with olive oil cream – in an acrylic tunnel five metres below the water, while sting rays, turtles and sharks pirouette alongside. [conradmaldives.com](http://conradmaldives.com)



FOR THE BEST DINNER VIEWS, YOU'LL HAVE TO HEAD BENEATH THE WAVES: FEAST ON A FIVE-COURSE MENU WHILE STING RAYS, TURTLES AND SHARKS PIROUETTE ALONGSIDE

