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**INDIA'S
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Exquisite Andamans

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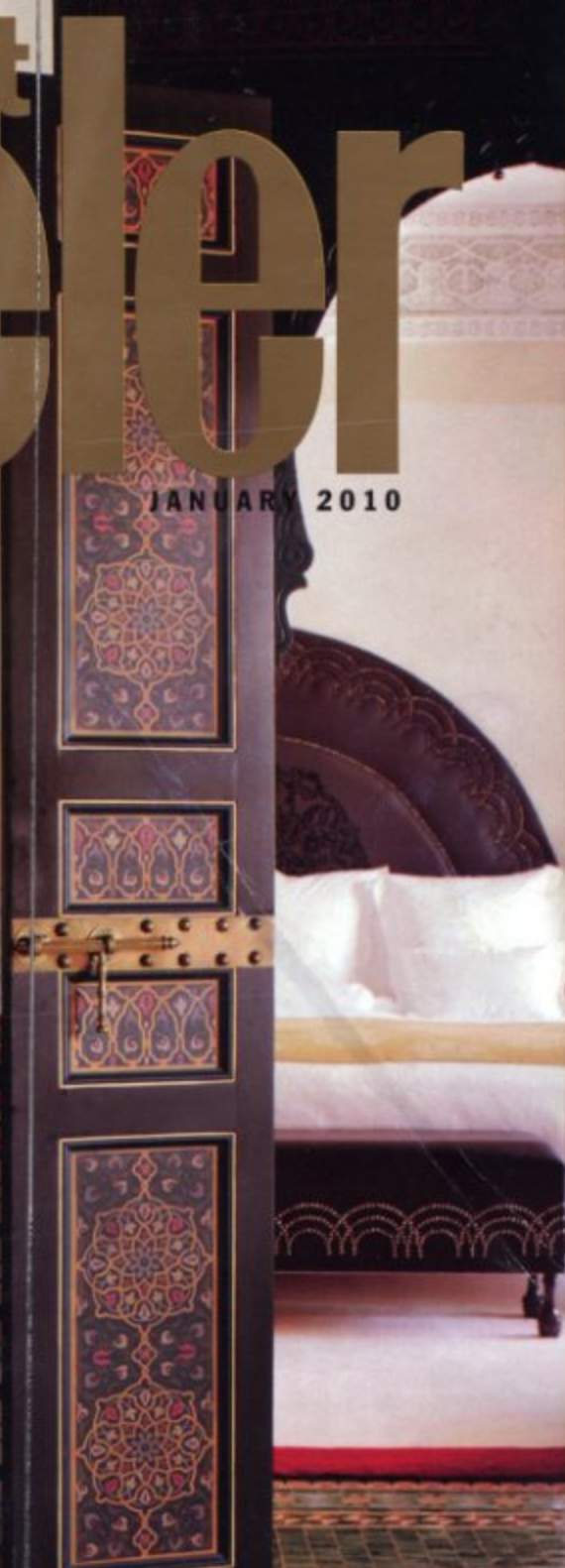
JANUARY 2010

**GOLD
LIST**

681 WORLD'S BEST
PLACES TO STAY

SPECIAL
36
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**TOP HOTELS,
RESORTS,
CRUISE LINES**



THE **WORLD'S**
BEST
PLACES TO
STAY

GOLD
LIST

681
HOTELS, RESORTS,
AND
CRUISE LINES

When deciding where to sojourn on your next vacation, there's one source worth banking on—our **SIXTEENTH ANNUAL GOLD LIST**. More than 25,000 *Condé Nast Traveler* readers, the world's most dependable source of travel intel, selected the best hotels, resorts, and cruise lines in our annual Readers' Choice Awards (see November 2009). But since figures don't express the whole story, we interviewed you on what makes these places the *crème de la crème*. Our findings? An index of extraordinary treasures that are the gold standard in international travel

Four Seasons, Nevis

☉90.6 ☉91.1 ☉86.3 ☉91.5 ☉87.2 ☉85.6 **88.7**
Slated to reopen in February following damage sustained during Hurricane Omar in October 2008, this property "is not all marble and golden faucets." Set on Pinney's Beach, the one-story buildings resemble a colonial plantation home, with "comfortable Caribbean-style rooms" in pastel colors. The restaurant Neve serves a breakfast buffet in an open, airy setting. \$\$\$\$; 196 rooms; beach, golf, pool, spa, tennis, water sports; 869-469-6238.

Nisbet Plantation Beach Club, Nevis

☉96.2 ☉96.3 ☉92.9 ☉85.7 ☉92.9 ☉78.6 **90.3**
The resort's centerpiece, a restored 1778 plantation house that is home to the main restaurant, sits amid 30 acres of verdant jungle. Lemon-colored cottages have open balconies facing the sea. Dining at the Sea Breeze Bar & Grill is super-casual (conch fritters, burgers, and fries). "For relaxation and great ambience, this is the place." \$\$\$\$; 36 cottages; beach, pool, spa, tennis, water sports; 869-469-9325.

Peter Island Resort & Spa, Peter Island

☉84.7 ☉87.8 ☉89.4 ☉97.0 ☉91.6 ☉87.0 **89.6**
"A perfect hideaway" south of Tortola, this resort means "no crowds but plenty of nature." The recently refurbished A-frame chalets have new color schemes of lime, turquoise, magenta, and orange. "Open to the elements," Tradewinds serves West Indian and European cuisine. The 10,000-square-foot spa has ten treatment suites, some overlooking the ocean. \$\$\$\$; 52 rooms; beach, pool, spa, tennis, water sports; 284-495-2000.

Eden Rock, St. Barts

☉92.9 ☉86.0 ☉88.5 ☉96.5 ☉94.0 **91.6**
Former home of St. Barts's first mayor, it has "contemporary Caribbean" rooms with antiques and original art (some by the owner). Celeb-watchers laud "the location, in the middle of St. Jean Beach, which is like a mini St-Tropez." "It's tough to get great food, great wine, and a great beach in the same vicinity, but here we did." On the Rocks serves local fish. \$\$\$\$; 34 rooms; beach, water sports; 590-590-29-79-99.

Hotel Carl Gustaf & Spa, St. Barts

☉93.1 ☉90.0 ☉80.0 ☉90.0 ☉86.7 **87.9**
Red-roofed cottages enjoy "a great location" on a hillside overlooking Gustavia Harbour. Surrounded by foliage that "can block some of the views," guest accommodations have plunge pools, four-poster beds, and ceiling fans. Victoria's restaurant presents dishes from France, Asia, and the Caribbean. The year-old Carita spa has a double hammam. \$\$\$\$; 14 suites; pool, spa; 590-590-29-79-00.

Hotel Guanahani & Spa, St. Barts

☉87.7 ☉82.5 ☉87.5 ☉87.9 ☉89.7 ☉84.2 **86.6**
The pastel-colored rooms at this "very private" beachfront property with Creole architecture are "modern yet restful in their decor." They come with dark-wood furnishings and a lime-and-plum palette. Experientially, it's "perfect for those who want to avoid the usual scene at the bigger resorts." Le Bartolomeo focuses on Provençal dishes. \$\$\$\$; 68 rooms; beach, pool, spa, tennis, water sports; 590-590-27-66-60.

Hotel Le Toiny, St. Barts

☉92.9 ☉96.4 ☉96.6 ☉82.1 ☉92.9 **92.2**
The plantation-style resort is made up of cottages, refurbished in 2009, with splashes of vibrant color, French toile curtains, and private heated pools. "There's a sense of serenity and privacy that is so rare." "The fabulous menu" at Le Guaiac emphasizes French dishes with a creole accent; a greenhouse, which supplies fresh ingredients, debuted in 2009. \$\$\$\$; 15 cottages; beach, pool, spa, tennis, water sports; 590-590-27-88-88.

Hotel Saint Barth Isle de France, St. Barts

☉84.8 ☉88.6 ☉88.6 ☉91.4 ☉85.3 **87.8**
Drinks and canapés greet arriving guests at this "simple, slightly modern resort" where the cottages are

surrounded by banana plants and bougainvillea. The views of Baie des Flamands are "postcard ready." "Romantic would be an understatement in describing the dining experience" at La Case de L'Isle, where French cuisine is served at tables on the sand. \$\$\$\$; 37 rooms; beach, pool, spa; 590-590-27-61-81.

Anse Chastanet, St. Lucia

☉92.2 ☉92.3 ☉80.6 ☉90.3 ☉89.6 ☉88.8 **88.9**
You'll see "unbelievable sunrises and sunsets from your room" at this 600-acre resort where accommodations are divided between waterfront rooms and hillside octagonal cottages. Some decry the steps: "You need the legs of the Incredible Hulk to get from the beach to your room." "Courteous staff are interesting and fun." A vegetarian restaurant, Emerald's, recently opened. \$\$\$\$; 49 rooms; beach, spa, tennis, water sports; 758-459-7000.

Ladera, St. Lucia

☉87.6 ☉86.6 ☉85.6 ☉93.9 ☉90.7 **88.9**
At this resort on former plantation land, "the view of the Pitons from your room will take your breath away." "Secluded and romantic" accommodations of stone and tile have private decks, plunge pools, and only three walls—the fourth side is open to cooling breezes. "Exceptional Caribbean cuisine," like local pork and shrimp, is served at Dasheene. \$\$\$\$; 32 rooms; pool, spa, water sports; 758-459-6618.

Petit St. Vincent Resort, St. Vincent and the Grenadines

☉89.4 ☉83.0 ☉80.4 ☉91.5 ☉89.4 ☉85.1 **86.5**
This 113-acre private island has "friendly, considerate staff" and "a rustic atmosphere created by stone-and-timber cottages with peaked half-wood ceilings and terracotta floors. Shaded lounge on the sand steps from the beach." "Wonderfully swimmable beach" swims at The Pavilion include "a simple, perfect lobster salad." No phones or television. \$\$\$\$; 22 cottages; beach, tennis, water sports; 784-458-8801.

Parrot Cay, Turks and Caicos

☉79.0 ☉90.1 ☉82.9 ☉92.7 ☉87.7 ☉90.0 **87.1**
"At times we were the only people on the beach" at this island resort accessible solely by boat. In guest rooms, teak furnishings and Balinese furniture create "cool luxury." Lotus's Asian-inspired menu includes dishes like blue cod with chilies, lime, and cilantro. The spa recently introduced Ayurvedic treatments. \$\$\$\$; 58 rooms; beach, pool, spa, tennis, water sports; 649-946-7788.

Grace Bay Club, Providenciales, Turks and Caicos

☉92.4 ☉84.7 ☉80.3 ☉94.1 ☉88.9 ☉81.9 **87.1**
At this all-suite Mediterranean-style resort, expect "perfect seclusion on the best beach." Rooms have ceiling fans and daybeds on sea-facing terraces—"they are designed but not overly so"—though some guests lounge on canopied beach beds on the sand. The 90-foot Infinity Bar stretches to the beach. \$\$\$\$; 81 rooms; beach, golf, pool, spa, tennis, water sports; 800-946-5757.

CANADA ALBERTA

* Rimrock Resort Hotel, Banff

☉87.4 ☉87.4 ☉84.9 ☉91.1 ☉90.2 ☉80.6 **87.0**
From its Rocky Mountain location, the resort affords valley views that "inspire for hours." A short distance from Upper Hot Springs and the Banff Gondola, "the location is great for lovers of the outdoors." Dark wood dominates guest rooms. The lobby lounge, Larkspur, with two-story stained glass windows, is "sumptuous and relaxing," with live music at night. \$\$\$\$; 346 rooms; pool, spa; 403-762-3356.

* Fairmont Chateau Lake Louise, Lake Louise

☉84.1 ☉88.6 ☉85.9 ☉96.4 ☉91.9 ☉87.5 **89.1**
"A stunning hotel in a stunning location" on Lake Louise, it has towers, windows, and terraces influenced by the Italian Renaissance. Rooms with photos, paintings, and maps of the area "are small," so "get a lakeview room—it will be a memory you'll never for-