

Travel

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Hotels to Check Into in 2016

Eight standouts are opening that aim to be destinations unto themselves.

By SHIVANI VORA

Hotel openings may seem like everyday events, but a handful come with more excitement and anticipation than the rest. They may be in a particularly notable building, bring a fresh concept to an already popular destination or have the potential to attract travelers to a location they may not have thought of visiting. With these factors in mind, we turned to travel professionals who check out new properties for a living and picked eight names worth checking into in 2016 (excluded from the list below are hotels that are reopening after a renovation, as with the Ritz Paris).



Rosewood Phnom Penh

Phnom Penh, Cambodia

EXPECTED OPENING Late 2016
Cambodia's capital city will add luxury accommodations to its hotel roster when the 148-room Rosewood makes its debut late in the year in the Central Business District. The hotel will occupy the top 14 floors in the Vattanac Capital Tower One, Phnom Penh's tallest building, which is shaped like a rising dragon, and will provide panoramas of the city skyline and the Mekong River. Historic landmarks such as the Royal Palace are close by, and amenities will include a spa, two restaurants and a bar on a cantilevered terrace. Bobby Zur, who owns Travel Artistry, a consultancy in Franklin Lakes, N.J., says that Rosewood's venture is timely because of the city's growing popularity with international travelers. "The property will be innovative in its approach of combining luxury with an authentic sense of place," he said.

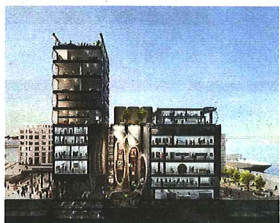


Amanemu

Ise-Shima National Park, Japan

EXPECTED OPENING March

When Aman opened a Tokyo property at the end of 2014, it was the brand's first foray into Japan. Now comes a far more remote one in Shima, a city about a four-hour train ride from the capital. The resort is perched on the shores of Ago Bay within a national park, and abundant hot springs are the draw: The 24 rooms and four villas have their own onsen, or mineral hot springs, and the spa has two onsen bathing pavilions. Jack Ezon, the president of the New York City travel consultancy Ovation Vacations, says that Amanemu will open a new frontier for Western tourists. "Most travelers to Japan hit Tokyo or Kyoto, but this resort is a rural perspective of the country that's a big change from the traditional city experience," he said.



The Silo

Cape Town, South Africa

EXPECTED OPENING Late 2016

A city venture from the Royal Portfolio, a hospitality group with three other high-end properties in South Africa's countryside including La Residence in Franschhoek, this boutique hotel on the Victoria and Albert Waterfront is being built in the grain elevator of a historic silo complex and will occupy the six floors above what will be the Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa. The Royal Portfolio owner,

Liz Biden, is designing the 28 rooms while the notable London-based architect Thomas Heatherwick is in charge of transforming the building. Mr. Ezon says that the former grain storage space will be an integral part of the Cape Town skyline. "You have an important museum and new luxury hotel in one building with an eye-catching design," he said.

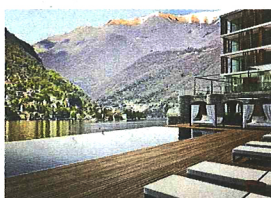


Park Hyatt St. Kitts

St. Kitts

EXPECTED OPENING November

Set on Banana Bay in the southeast peninsula of St. Kitts — an area with plenty of secluded white sand beaches — this property is the initial effort in the Caribbean from a brand known for sleek city hotels. It's also the island's first upscale beachfront resort. "Most travelers pass through St. Kitts airport to get to Nevis, but the Park Hyatt is going to make the island a destination," Mr. Ezon said. It will have 125 rooms, a 12-treatment-room spa and an aesthetic that combines contemporary architecture and a colonial feel reflective of the island's historic roots; several of the suites will have a rooftop pool and unobstructed ocean views.



Il Sereno Lago di Como

Lake Como, Italy

EXPECTED OPENING Spring 2016

The owners of the see-and-be-seen Le Sereno St. Barth are hoping to bring some of that hotel's glamour to their luxurious Lake Como venture on a promontory a few miles from the town of Como. The notable Milan-based

designer Patricia Urquiola has created a property with a contemporary, relaxed feel, and in keeping with the brand's philosophy of intimacy, it has just 30 rooms, each oversized with lake views and terraces. There's also a restaurant, infinity pool and spa. Stacy Small, the founder of the Los Angeles-based consultancy Elite Travel International, says that most hotels in Como are traditional and lean toward formality, but that the Sereno is hip and modern. "It brings freshness to a destination that's on the bucket list for so many travelers," she said.



Grand Hyatt Rio de Janeiro

Brazil

EXPECTED OPENING Spring 2016

As home to this year's Summer Olympics, all eyes are on Brazil, and this 436-room Yabu Pushelberg-designed oceanfront property is a needed addition to a city where full-service, family-friendly resorts are scarce, according to Ms. Small. Though it's in Barra, a residential neighborhood away from the crowds of Copacabana and Ipanema, guests will find all the amenities that come with a large hotel: three restaurants — Japanese, Italian and Brazilian — a large spa, a yoga studio, an extensive outdoor pool and lounge area, a kids' program and two club floors.

1 Hotel Brooklyn Bridge

Brooklyn Heights, N.Y.

EXPECTED OPENING Late 2016

The third location for Barry Sternlicht's 1 Hotels brand, founded with a mission toward sustainability, this 194-room hotel is being built on a pier in Brooklyn's new riverfront park and will have impressive views of the East River and the Manhattan skyline.

The nature-inspired touches throughout the space include shipping containers and pier structures, and there's no shortage of attractive amenities to lure



guests: several farm-to-table food outlets overseen by the New York City chef Seamus Mullen, a rooftop plunge pool, a screening room and car service from Tesla. "This will be Brooklyn's only full-service luxury hotel so far and will put the borough even more on the map than it already is," Mr. Ezon said.



Shanghai Disneyland Hotel and Toy Story Hotel

Shanghai, China

EXPECTED OPENING June 2016

These two resorts are part of the excitement about the first Disney park opening in mainland China and are conveniently built right next to the fun. The Art Nouveau-inspired Shanghai Disneyland Hotel has 420 rooms, while Toy Story Hotel, inspired by the Disney Pixar series of "Toy Story" animated films, has 800. Both immerse guests in the world of Disney with character-themed room keys, bath amenities and family activity centers with crafts and games. Mr. Zur says that the park and hotels may go beyond being the usual tourist draws: "Disney could be to U.S.-China relations what the Gorbachev-Reagan summits were to U.S.-Soviet relations. Or, it may just mean that hundreds of millions of Chinese nationals will be donning Mickey ears in the years to come."