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# ELLE DECORATION

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ELLE  
DECORATION

# ESCAPE

TRAVEL / CULTURE / HOTELS / RESTAURANTS Edited by CAT OLLEY

*Over the past two decades, these innovative stays have shaken up the hospitality landscape like no other – here's our celebration of the trailblazers...*

*10 of the best*  
**DESIGN HOTELS**





## IL SERENO THE LAKESIDE RESORT

The process of building a contemporary hotel on the shores of Lake Como – an area that hadn't welcomed any new properties in decades – was a slow and delicate one. Thankfully, Spanish designer and architect Patricia Urquiola was undeterred. For all its clean, vertical lines and use of natural materials (see the 30 waterfront suites clad in walnut timber), Il Sereno proved that a modern retreat could more than hold its own among the lake's converted palazzos. The airy interior, filled with Urquiola's sleek designs for Cassina, Molteni, B&B Italia and Kettal, is Italian through and through. From around £714 per night ([serenohotels.com](http://serenohotels.com)).

## ETT HEM THE INTIMATE HOME

Ett Hem might simply translate as 'a home', but few can claim an abode so stylish. The 12-room boutique hotel, masterfully coaxed from a 1910 Arts & Crafts townhouse in Stockholm's Lärkstaden neighbourhood, still retains the intimacy of the exquisite private residence it must have once made. Devoid of the vast atriums and anonymity of grand hotels, designer (and former *ELLE Decoration* editor) Ilse Crawford's deftest trick is a series of genuinely inviting communal spaces, where lighting by Michael Anastassiades and bespoke furniture by her own Studioilse jostle with beautiful vintage finds. Ett Hem confirms that luxury doesn't have to be loud – the honesty bar in the dining room says it all. From around £300 per night ([etthem.se](http://etthem.se)).



## ION ADVENTURE HOTEL THE REMOTE RETREAT

A hotel housed in an abandoned concrete barracks for a nearby power station might not sound a luxurious prospect, but anything slighter would feel lost in Iceland's rugged, elemental landscape. Two years after the country was unceremoniously put on the map by the Eyjafjallajökull ash cloud, this architectural tour de force opened an hour from Reykjavik. Set on diagonal stilts at the foot of Hengill volcano – still active, for an extra thrill – Ion's monolithic form rises out of the rocky hillside, sheltering a pool below and offering an uninterrupted panorama of lava fields. It also proved an early adopter of the luxury eco model, drawing on geothermal energy and local, sustainable materials. From around £205 per night ([designhotels.com](http://designhotels.com)).