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Press release

Prix Versailles 2024: The World's Most Beautiful Hotels

In parallel to the World's Most Beautiful Restaurants List 2024, the Prix Versailles is unveiling the World's Most Beautiful Hotels List 2024: 16 newly opened or reopened hotels that have left an extraordinary imprint.

They will all be competing for three 2024 World Titles – Prix Versailles, Interior and Exterior – whose laureates will be announced at UNESCO Headquarters by late November.

Jérôme Gouadain, Secretary General of the Prix Versailles, would like to congratulate these 16 hotels that represent the best recent openings around the world:

“Through their architecture and their design, the World's Most Beautiful Hotels elevate the links between culture and tourism.

On the one hand, culture provides finesse, elegance, updates to ancient techniques and diverse shapes, forms, textures and colours, not to mention curiosity, which is the hallmark of a destination. On the other, tourism showcases cultural assets, encourages visitors to discover new people and places, and brings knowledge to life.

The World's Most Beautiful Hotels are ambassadors for intelligent, sustainable tourism rooted in culture.”

After the World's Most Beautiful Museums List 2024, which was released on 13 June, the other World Selections – Emporiums, Airports, Campuses, Passenger Stations and Sports – will be announced in September.



PRIX VERSAILLES

WORLD'S MOST BEAUTIFUL HOTELS LIST 2024

Manly Pacific

Sydney, Australia

The Dolli

Athens, Greece

Raffles Al Areen Palace Bahrain

Zallaq, Bahrain

Lasserhaus

Brixen, Italy

Pulso Hotel

São Paulo, Brazil

The Hanok Heritage House

Yeongwol, Republic of Korea

W Macau – Studio City

Macau, China

Maroma, A Belmond Hotel

Playa del Carmen, Mexico

Nobis Hotel Palma

Palma, Spain

Vermelho

Melides, Portugal

Cap d'Antibes Beach Hotel

Antibes, France

The Ned Doha

Doha, Qatar

La Fantaisie

Paris, France

Pan Pacific Orchard

Singapore, Singapore

Mondrian Bordeaux Les Carmes

Bordeaux, France

The Hazendal

Stellenbosch, South Africa

The Laureates are listed in the alphabetical order of the countries they represent (based on their two-letter ISO 3166 country codes).



PRIX VERSAILLES

PRESENTATION OF THE LAUREATES

Manly Pacific

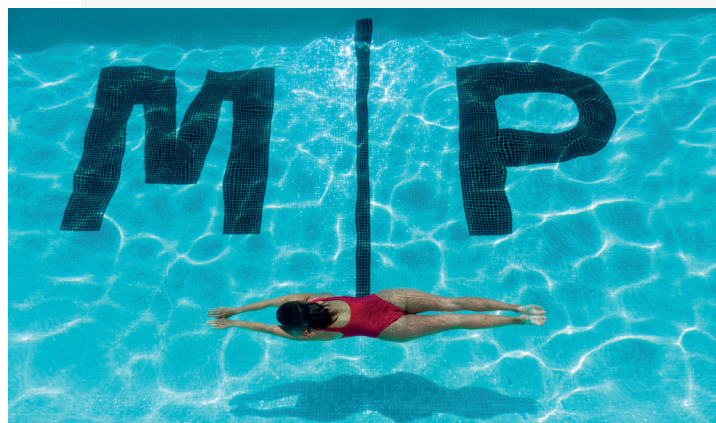
Sydney, Australia

It is said that Manly, which is a short ferry ride away from the bustling centre of the capital of New South Wales, is “seven miles from Sydney and a thousand miles from care”. This seaside suburb has been a popular destination amongst Sydneysiders since 1850, and the construction of the Pacific Hotel in the early 1900s firmly established it as a tourist spot. Since that time, the establishment has borne many names but, thanks to its location along the famous Manly Beach, loyal customers and locals alike have always known it as the Manly Pacific.

In 2021, the designers at Australia’s Coco Republic were chosen to tackle this monument – 213 guest rooms and nine suites facing the ocean, with a rooftop pool and bar – and update it to suit present-day preferences whilst maintaining the patina of its past. This project was fulfilled using a soft, neutral palette of textures, organic furniture and bleached wood to conjure up the spirit and romanticism of Manly’s heritage.



© Manly Pacific Sydney MGallery Collection



© Manly Pacific Sydney MGallery Collection



© Manly Pacific Sydney MGallery Collection

Raffles Al Areen Palace Bahrain

Zallaq, Bahrain



© Raffles Al Areen Palace Bahrain

On the west coast of Bahrain, the village of Zallaq has been famous since time immemorial as the home of Al Jazair Beach on the Persian Gulf. And it is there, on the “island of a million palm trees”, that Raffles Al Areen Palace (also known as the Palace of the Secret Garden) unveiled its 78 spacious, private villas, set amidst an environment of lush botanical gardens where refined tranquillity reigns. In fact, it is located just outside the Al Areen Wildlife nature reserve, a sanctuary for rare birds and other animals, as well as desert plants, in a region that is known for its biodiversity and its rich ecosystems.

Designed to be a haven of peace, the hotel celebrates Arab hospitality with refined architecture and an elegant, bold décor in which traditional Middle Eastern design meets contemporary aesthetics.

A magnificent showcase for the beauty and depth of Bahraini know-how.



© Raffles Al Areen Palace Bahrain



© Raffles Al Areen Palace Bahrain

Pulso Hotel

São Paulo, Brazil

In the heart of São Paulo's financial district, Pulso – Portuguese for "pulse", in reference to the sophisticated urban ambiance of Brazil's most populated city – is redefining hospitality as an integral part of cultural life and establishing a dialogue between cosmopolitan dynamics and local artistic production.

The ultra-contemporary building by architect Arthur Casas is home to a collection of unique works of art, in both its accommodation and its public areas. Each stay in one of the 57 suites – ranging from 32 to 64 m² – promises a different experience, with carefully selected furniture and objects, including rare pieces and antiques, as well as photographs, paintings and engravings inspired by the landscape of São Paulo.

Far removed from the chaos all around, visitors feel like they are spending the night in a warm, cosy modern art museum that suppresses the pulse of the city so they can hear their own pulses beating once again.



© Fran Parente



© Fernando Guerra



© Fernando Guerra

W Macau – Studio City

Macau, China

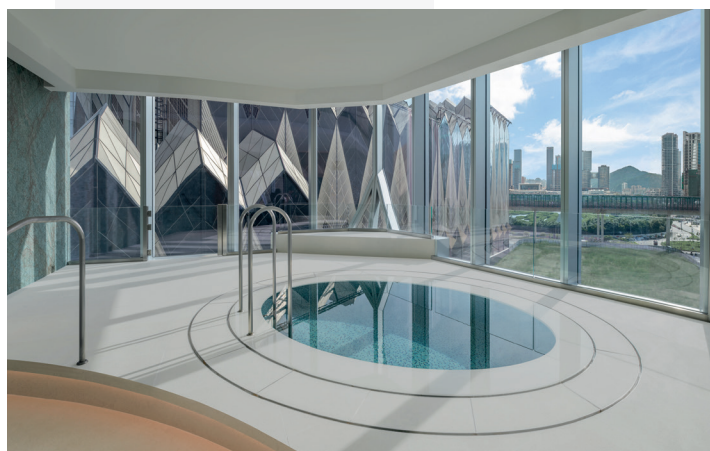
A little slice of Europe at the gateway to China – divided between high-tech towers and secret coves, avenues lined with neon signs and small cobblestone squares – Macau is a cinematic city whose large ports have seen the arrival of filmmakers from around the world, especially during the 1950s.

With W Macau – Studio City, Zaha Hadid Architects performed the amazing feat of revisiting the sepia-toned glamour of Hollywood and film, along with the complex savoir-faire of the Art Deco period, to create a breathtaking contemporary reinterpretation.

Throughout its 557 guest rooms and suites spread over 40 storeys, as well as its leisure and entertainment facilities, the hotel lovingly explores the culture of Macau, celebrating with its architecture and design the finery that marked the destination's arrival on the global stage.



© W Macau – Studio City



© W Macau – Studio City



© W Macau – Studio City

Nobis Hotel Palma

Palma, Spain

The Mediterranean islands have always been places to conquer, ports of call or spots to rest and unwind. In a quiet part of the old town, the 37 guest rooms and suites at Nobis Hotel Palma occupy a historical gem, a mediaeval palace dating back to the 12th century which welcomed all the children of Odysseus and other adventurers.

Two inner courtyards are remnants of the establishment's noble origins when, during the period of Muslim rule over the Balearic Islands, it served as a palace.

They also provide evidence of the architectural metamorphoses that took place over the centuries, due to fire, earthquake and restorations.

For the most recent of these, the architects Jordi Herrero and Eduardo Garcia Acuña, alongside Gert Wingårdh and Helena Toresson from the Swedish architectural firm Wingårdhs, delicately added a contemporary layer within its walls – so vibrant with history – thereby revitalising the building in a new incarnation of Palma's timeless charm.



© Pernilla Danielsson



© Pernilla Danielsson



© Pernilla Danielsson

Cap d'Antibes Beach Hotel

Antibes, France



© Giulio Ghirardi



© Chapitre Six



© Stephan Julliard

Thanks to its elegant and understated geometric construction, its clean lines and curves, its light-coloured granite and stucco, and its broken stone floors, the Cap d'Antibes Beach Hotel is a wonderful homage to Modernist architecture and to Mediterranean seaside houses.

The free-spirited architect Bernard Dubois is the creator of this exhilarating cocktail.

To accentuate the views of the sea and the Lérins Islands, the renovation delicately pared down the hotel, erasing all barriers – from the lobby to the beach and from the exotic garden to the patio – and making nature a part of guests' wanderings.

Throughout the establishment, the play of light through the shutters creates a different atmosphere at every hour of the day.

Rare indeed is the architecture that so deftly employs precision, comfort and a sense of escape.

La Fantaisie

Paris, France

In a city with an immense supply of hotels, and in the heart of the hip Faubourg Montmartre, coming up with a new concept meant looking for a way to stand out from the crowd.

Still, with the 73-room La Fantaisie, the Parisian architectural firm Petitdidierprioux did not succumb to the allure of one-upmanship, opting instead to focus unobtrusively on plants along a stony side street. The materiality of the façade, made of patinated zinc in a grey-green hue, naturally pays tribute to the city's landscape.

But guests can simply turn off the bustling Rue La Fayette and walk a few steps to their peaceful haven, the kind of urban holiday location that Paris does so well, with the whole ground floor a blend of city and garden.

For locals and tourists just popping in, public access to the roof will treat them to panoramic views of the rooftops of Paris. In other words, it is truly a "fantasy" (*fantaisie*) rooted in its history.



© Sergio Grazia



© Jérôme Galland



© Jérôme Galland

Mondrian Bordeaux Les Carmes

Bordeaux, France



© Gaëlle Le Boulicaut

In the heart of the old Chartrons district, which was historically the realm of wine merchants and has since become a major cultural area, Mondrian Bordeaux Les Carmes was born of the transformation of the old Calvet wine cellars.

In the 18th century, the “Port of the Moon” (as the harbour of Bordeaux was dubbed) was the biggest in all of France and undoubtedly one of the most cosmopolitan places in the country.

The artistry of its designer, Philippe Starck, drew inspiration from local influences – as demonstrated by the restored façade overlooking the terrace and the profusion of rich, ample materials in the 97 guest rooms and suites – but also from Japanese-style humility in the common areas – as exemplified by the fun and expressive cuisine concocted by Chef Masaharu Morimoto.

The exquisite entrance, with its immense glass doors topped by a Gothic arch, opens into ambiances that are historical and contemporary, local and global. A hotel at the crossroads of all the world’s cultures.



© Gaëlle Le Boulicaut



© Gaëlle Le Boulicaut

The Dolli

Athens, Greece

A short distance from the Parthenon and the Acropolis, The Dolli is a terrific home base from which to explore the city's wonders on foot. This manor, a symbol of neoclassical architecture that was built in 1925 by the architect Andreas Kriezis, was converted into a fabric emporium in the 1930s before gradually falling into ruin. This posed an immense challenge for the new owner, Mari Daskalantonaki, and for the architects Stelios Kois and Nikos Sifounakis, chosen to restore it. It took seven years of painstaking work to bring the iconic building back to life. The once-again immaculate façade accentuates the grandeur of Kriezis' work, with its superb tall windows and curved ceilings, and its 46 sun-drenched guest rooms and suites. The experience is at its peak on the rooftop, where guests can take a dip in the infinity pool – surely one of the most gorgeous in the world – and feel like they're floating above the Parthenon or dine at the restaurant, which has become one of the hottest spots in Athens.



© THE DOLLI



© THE DOLLI



© THE DOLLI

Lasserhaus

Brixen, Italy

In the heart of the oldest town in South Tyrol, the Lasserhaus had been an aristocratic residence since the 15th century. The family that owns the property tasked the Milan-based architectural firm Vudafieri Saverino with its reorganisation in a way that balances deference to the existing building and present-day lifestyles, as witnessed by the combination of the Faller family's collection of classical paintings with pieces by contemporary artists. The furniture, which is representative of Tyrolean traditions in the common areas, and the functionality of the 10 guest rooms elicits a sentiment of familiarity, intimacy and comfort. This sensual approach to the space includes the creation of a spa with every modern amenity on the mezzanine and, drawing from the depths of history, a small tasting room in the wine cellar.



© Franziska Unterholzner



© Franziska Unterholzner



© Paolo Valentini

The Hanok Heritage House

Yeongwol, Republic of Korea

The word *hanok* refers to a Korean architectural style that was employed all the way from the Three Kingdoms period (57 BC to 668 AD) to the Joseon Dynasty (1392 to 1910). For this project, the owner and creator, Chung-il Cho, and Sangyoon Kim for interior design, adopted a strategy of reinterpreting the beauty of their country. And architecturally speaking, nothing represents its history better than the *hanok*, a style of building with a gabled tile roof, natural materials chosen for their durability and health benefits, underfloor heating, rooms arranged around a courtyard, and feng shui compliance in harmony with the environment.

Here, each aspect of the design is a tender tribute to the national culture. At the same time, the authors reinvented this age-old architecture by employing cutting-edge materials on a monumental scale – 78 buildings spanning 16,332 m² – but with great sensitivity, given that the 35 guest rooms and 102 terraced houses are nestled inside a sprawling site with 300,000 m² of unspoilt nature.



© The Hanok Heritage House



© The Hanok Heritage House



© The Hanok Heritage House

Maroma, A Belmond Hotel

Playa del Carmen, Mexico



© Maroma, A Belmond Hotel, Riviera Maya

Between a tropical jungle and a white sand beach, in the beating heart of the Riviera Maya, Tara Bernerd & Partners were tasked with restoring the resort to its natural and cultural environment. This challenge was met and exceeded by Maroma's 72 guest rooms, suites and villas, all of which embrace ancient Mayan traditions, whether in terms of the materials, the motifs or the know-how employed. The renovation drew on Mexican heritage as a whole whilst showcasing Maroma's original architecture, with white stucco buildings aligned according to the sacred geometry of Mayan masonry.

In addition to the experiences offered by the hotel, the entire site now contributes to the spirituality tied to the genius of the place, the spirituality of a mind in perfect symbiosis with its environment.



© Maroma, A Belmond Hotel, Riviera Maya



© Maroma, A Belmond Hotel, Riviera Maya

Vermelho

Melides, Portugal

Tucked away in the centre of the village of Melides, in Alentejo region, Vermelho is Christian Louboutin's first hotel project. The French designer fell for the peacefulness of the pine forest and the incredible beauty of the light over the lagoon's rice paddies.

The hotel has 13 different rooms, all of them connected by a love of culture and heritage. This is materialised in the name Vermelho in a nod to Louboutin's signature colour. Its sound also calls to mind the colour vermilion as well as vermeil, a term meaning silver gilded with a thin layer of gold. To make Vermelho a reality, Christian Louboutin enlisted the talents of the Portuguese architect Madalena Caiado, the textile designer Carolina Irving for some of the interior décor, and local artisans with unique, ancestral know-how.

The result of this amalgamation is an aesthetic that is both intimate and profoundly inspiring.



© Vermelho



© Vermelho



© Vermelho

The Ned Doha

Doha, Qatar



© Joe Chua Agdeppa

In the space of a few decades, the city has been completely transformed, such that the Doha skyline of today is truly breathtaking. Still, located directly on the famous Corniche waterfront promenade, right near the Amiri Diwan and the Grand Mosque, there remained the old Ministry of Interior building – constructed in the 1970s by the Lebanese architect William Sednaoui, an icon of Brutalist architecture in the Middle East – that had taken its place in Qatari heritage. The architect David Chipperfield, with Soho House Design for the interiors, managed to refurbish this immense and mysterious building as an elegant 21st-century hotel.

The 99 guest rooms and suites, inspired by the glamour of the 1970s, are spread out over three floors. A new podium has created an oasis of vegetation, lined with basins and art installations. This reinterpretation delivers shady outdoor areas and amplifies the dignity of the site.



© Joe Chua Agdeppa



© Joe Chua Agdeppa

Pan Pacific Orchard

Singapore, Singapore

Singapore Island is hidden beneath densely packed vertical towers and luxuriant tropical nature, forming an original, futuristic garden with its monitor lizards and its primitive wild-life, a green jungle and a concrete jungle of megastructures.

Pan Pacific Orchard is the new symbol of all this, featuring a spectacular invasion of nature within a towering building.

In the aptly named Orchard Road district of Singapore, the “Garden City”, the architectural firm WOHA fused architecture with nature in an impressive combination of indoor and outdoor spaces including, for example, a tropical oasis on the second storey plus a winding sandy beach and palm groves surrounding an emerald lagoon.



© Pan Pacific Hotels and Resorts



© Pan Pacific Hotels and Resorts



© Pan Pacific Hotels and Resorts

The Hazendal

Stellenbosch, South Africa

Stellenbosch, which is located 50 kilometres outside Cape Town, is South Africa's second oldest city, home to vineyards that produce more than 200 wines.

Along the Stellenbosch Wine Route, The Hazendal – named after the vast wine estate on which it stands – was created out of old farm buildings, forming a subtle link between history, as evidenced in its Dutch architecture, and the modern amenities envisioned by Boogertman + Partners.

This finely crafted contrast, between past and future and between the patina of history and the glass double-height ceilings and windows of the modern extensions, is the source of the hotel's disconcerting charm. A majestic bar, appropriately situated in an old wine cellar, offers the chance to taste Hazendal's refined wines whilst enjoying the view of the Simonsberg mountain.

The shady central courtyard, which serves as the heart of the property and features a heated pool and elegant pergolas, is a sophisticated, laid-back place to bask in the sun of the Winelands.



© The Hazendal



© The Hazendal



© The Hazendal



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