

TRAVEL+ LEISURE

It List 2021: Our Editors' Picks of the Best New Hotels in the World

Believe it or not, the past 12 months were big for [hotel openings](#). Flinging open their doors for the first time, these new and revamped properties welcomed guests inside with a (masked) hello and a taste of travel's future.

Our guide to the essential openings of the past year took us to 29 countries in pursuit of the unforgettable. Over the course of 2020, T+L writers and editors trekked to a remote Namibian tented camp in a vast nature reserve, surfed the waves at a boho-chic resort in Baja Sur, Mexico, and sipped Sazeracs on the porch of an 1891 former residence in [New Orleans](#). While there are plenty of extravagant stays and familiar brands on the list, we committed to featuring properties that are the best at what they do while displaying a sense of innovation. Brand new builds, century-old architectural masterpieces, and family-run boutiques are all in the mix.

Ahead, you'll find a hotel or resort for every taste and travel goal. There's a 19th-century mansion in Jaipur, India, reborn as an intimate urban escape. A sleek getaway amid lush tropical forest on Malaysia's Desaru coast. A [safari lodge](#) in Botswana's Okavango Delta where African art is as big a draw as the wildlife. And a Massachusetts [wellness retreat](#), set on hundreds of acres of wilderness in the [Berkshires](#), where meditation, beekeeping, and [organic food](#) awaits. Read on for all 73 properties on the 2021 It List — your next adventure is a few clicks away.

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Grand Universe Lucca — Italy



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Lucca, Italy, was a strategic base during the Roman Empire and has been a wealthy merchant city since the Middle Ages—but the Tuscan city lacked a hotel worthy of its stature until now. Enter the Grand Universe Lucca, housed in a 16th-century palazzo once frequented by musicians like Puccini. A top-to-bottom renovation has made the property sing again: in the bright, airy spaces, the wood-beamed ceilings and other original architectural details (the wine cellar contains a fragment of a Roman wall) are complemented by modern furnishings. Many of the 55 rooms and suites look out on Piazza Napoleone, where the annual Lucca Summer Festival draws big-name musical acts. Guests can borrow bikes to get around town as the locals do, savor Tuscan specialties like chestnut-flour crêpes, try biodynamic wines in a tasting with the sommelier, and delve into the city's myths and legends with a local guide. In warm weather, the rooftop is the ideal spot to take in sweeping views of Lucca's terra-cotta rooftops with a glass of Chianti. granduniverselucca.com; doubles from \$264. — Laura Itzkowitz