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FEBRUARY 2014 £3.99

ON THE
ROAD WITH
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JACKMAN**

PARIS

ITS HIP NEW NEIGHBOURHOOD

MOROCCO

GREAT PLACES TO
STAY IN THE DESERT

AUSTRALIA

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SKI SPECIAL

THE BEST OF THE ALPS

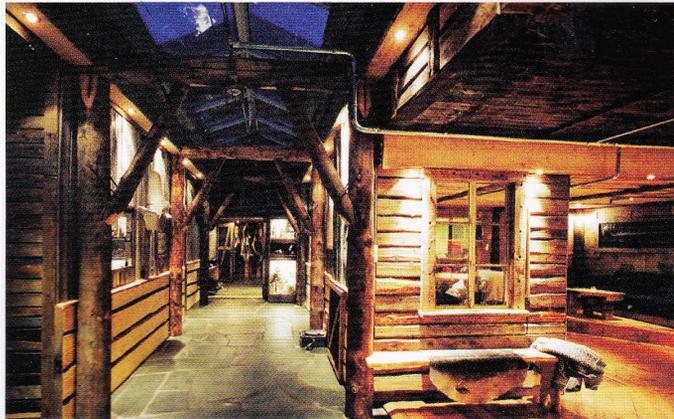
NEW YORK

FIRST REVIEW OF A
REBORN CLASSIC

THE
GOLD STANDARD

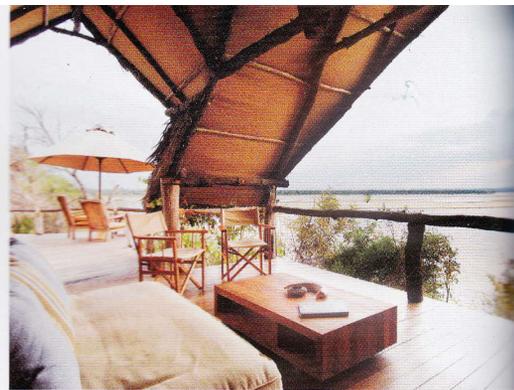
OUR ALL-TIME FAVOURITE HOTELS, RESTAURANTS,
COCKTAIL BARS & BEACH CLUBS

WILDERNESS HOTELS



TRAPPER'S HOTEL NORWAY

This is the most sensational place from which to experience the silent snowscapes, lilac-blue light and polar bears of the Arctic: a 16-room outpost from Basecamp Explorer on the island of Spitsbergen. A hip interpretation of a trapper's station – with sackcloth on the walls, reindeer antlers, sealskin cushions and tree-trunk bunks lit by fishermen's lamps – the hotel is insanely cosy, soberingly stylish, and beautifully evocative of the island's whaling, hunting and exploring past. Top spots are the Cognac Loft museum with its windows in the ceiling for gazing at the Northern Lights, and a long dining table beneath a map of Arctic exploits where you can sit on log chairs and pretend you're planning an expedition. As, indeed, you might be: perhaps to Isfjord Radio, a 1930s radio station-turned-boutique hotel with cashmere throws and a piping-hot sauna, 100km across the ice by snowmobile; or to Ship in the Ice, a 100-year-old schooner with 10 cabins, 60km away by husky-drawn sledge. Finding this level of comfort in such a brutal wilderness is surreal; the fact you that you can experience it over a long weekend from London is mind-boggling. +47 79 024600; www.basecampspitsbergen.com. Doubles from about £165



SAND RIVERS TANZANIA

The conservationist, hunter and walking-safari expert Richard Bonham opened this fantastic camp in the early 1990s on a prime spot in the Selous Game Reserve, where the Rufiji River bends lethargically on its long course to the Indian Ocean. It has been expanded and smartened up over the years, with the addition of suites and a handsome private satellite camp, Kiba Point; but the intrepid spirit of Bonham's original remains. The eight thatched guest bandas, set high on wooden platforms overlooking the river, are open-fronted, low-key and utterly in harmony with the environment; birdsong and the baritone chuckle of hippos is the constant, mesmerising soundtrack. Of course there are vehicles for game drives, but the point of this place is bush walking and learning to see the wilderness through the eyes of knowledgeable guides. The Rufiji River, too, is ripe for exploration: a crack-of-dawn boat safari to Stiegler's Gorge, past crocodiles flopping into the churning water, will paint vivid memories to last a lifetime. As will a night away from camp, sleeping under the stars on the edge of a lake after a hot bucket shower and candle-lit supper. Sweet dreams are indeed made of this. www.nomad-tanzania.com. Doubles from about £560

TIERRA PATAGONIA CHILE

The little-travelled road from Puerto Natales to Chilean wilderness lodge Tierra Patagonia laces through marvellous, archetypal Patagonian sheep country before ending at a simple red gate, the only man-made feature in a vast landscape of broad bowls and sweeping valleys. It's a tribute to architect Rodrigo Ferrer that the lodge itself, with its 40 bedrooms smartly done out in lenga beechwood and natural wool, is near-invisible from above. A two-storey, plate-glass window dominates the impressive principal salon; bedrooms, too, drink in that view of big sky and tufted grasses, the bright-blue waters of Lake Sarmiento and the jagged peaks of Torres del Paine. The owners, the American-Chilean Purcell family, set out to provide extreme comfort in testing terrain, a refuge for guests to return to having braved buffeting Patagonian gales by day, rambling with expert naturalist guides. And how brilliant it is to come back at dusk to a peppered-beef supper paired with a glass of mineral-rich Matetic syrah, and then to sprawl on a lambswool sofa and gaze out as the setting sun picks out the Torres' granite-and-basalt peaks. +56 2 2370 5301; www.tierrapatagonia.com. Doubles from about £2,800 all-inclusive for a three-night minimum stay

