

CL

CELEBRATED LIVING

Bradley Cooper TAKES THE LEAD

**WOODEN
BOATS**
A Passion for
Craftsmanship

Why Your
**FAMILY
VACATIONS**
Matter

**LIFE'S A
BEACH**
Coastal-Inspired
Decor

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**BEST
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**SUMMER
MUSTS**
Music Festivals,
Sand Sculpting,
and More

**GARDENS
OF EATING**
The New Edible
Landscapes

The Platinum List

HOTELS ■ GOLF COURSES ■ CRUISES ■ SPAS

HOTELS

Top 10 Mexico/Central America/South America

1. **JW Marriott Cancun Resort & Spa**
(800) 223-6388,
jwmarriottcancunresort.com
2. **The Ritz-Carlton, Cancun**
(866) 265-2823,
ritzcarlton.com/cancun
3. **Alvear Palace Hotel, Buenos Aires**
011-54-11-4804-7777,
alvearpalace.com
4. **Las Ventanas al Paraíso, A Rosewood Resort, Los Cabos**
(888) 767-3966, lasventanas.com
5. **Four Seasons Hotel Buenos Aires**
(800) 819-5053,
fourseasons.com/buenosaires
6. **Las Brisas Acapulco**
(800) 223-6800, brisas.com.mx
7. **Copacabana Palace, Rio de Janeiro**
(800) 237-1236,
copacabanapalace.com
8. **CasaMagna Marriott Cancun Resort** (tie)
(800) 223-6388,
casamagnacancun.com
8. **Mandarin Oriental Riviera Maya, Mexico** (tie) (866) 585-8575,
mandarinoriental.com/rivieramaya
10. **One&Only Palmilla, Los Cabos**
(866) 829-2977,
oneandonlypalmilla.com

Top 5 Australia/New Zealand/South Pacific

1. **Four Seasons Hotel Sydney**
011-61-2-9250-3100,
fourseasons.com/sydney
2. **Park Hyatt Sydney**
(877) 875-4658,
sydney.park.hyatt.com
3. **The Westin Sydney**
011-61-2-8223-1111,
westin.com/sydney
4. **InterContinental Moorea Resort & Spa, French Polynesia**
(888) 424-6835, ichtelsgroup.com
5. **Lizard Island, Great Barrier Reef, Queensland, Australia**
011-61-3-9413-6284,
lizardisland.com.au



JW Marriott Cancun Resort & Spa

close encounters of the marine kind. And in Los Cabos, staffers at **LAS VENTANAS AL PARAÍSO** will make a plush bed under the stars for guests in rooftop terrace suites, **ONE&ONLY PALMILLA** recently introduced half- to three-day classes via its new PGA Tour Academy, and **ESPERANZA** launched candlelight yoga at dusk.

New to the list is the **ALVEAR PALACE HOTEL**, in Buenos Aires, a favorite among both leisure and business travelers for its period grace. “The hallways are wide, and there are big elevator lobbies,” notes David Moore, president of Adventure Associates, which is based in Dallas and specializes in South American travel. “There’s no traditional architectural cost-cutting that you see in a new hotel.”

But some newer hotels invested heavily in guest satisfaction this year, none more boldly than **ATLANTIS** in the Bahamas, which unveiled an \$11 million club — not for the casino’s big spenders or celebrity visitors but for teenagers. The unprecedented facility includes a Vegas-worthy dance club, touch-screen coffee tables in the Internet

lounge, a “gaming stadium” with 32 screens in the round, and private gaming cabanas.

“The teen and tween audiences are becoming increasingly powerful when determining where families will go on their holiday,” explains George Markantonis, president and managing director of Atlantis parent Kerzner International Bahamas.

Also targeting young guests, **THE RITZ-CARLTON, GRAND CAYMAN** now feeds kids 5 and under for free at four of its restaurants, including at the new floating dining tables recently launched for offshore lunch service. **LA SAMANNA** on St. Martin introduced new kids’ programs featuring treasure hunts and beach Olympic games, as well as boat transfers to the resort from the airport.

Guests looking for more for their money — a leading trend forged by the economy — should look to **CUISINART RESORT & SPA** on Anguilla, which added complimentary Internet access and daily breakfasts to its room rates.

“Travelers now have less time and things are more expensive,” says James Lohan of Mr. & Mrs. Smith. “They want



Four Seasons Hotel Sydney



Grand Hyatt New York

restaurant overlooking the iconic Water Tower Square and recently launched a complimentary wardrobe service that allows guests to store clothing — think winter coats for Sun Belters — at the hotel. Guests of the **FOUR SEASONS HOTEL MIAMI** can check in curbside and freely access the nearby Sports Club/LA Miami. The **GRAND HYATT NEW YORK** continues its \$130 million renovation with 150 redesigned rooms, a new restaurant overlooking 42nd Street, and a new grab-and-go market in the lobby.

Top hotels compete just as fiercely — if entirely differently — for family travelers, loading up on amenities from a kitchen for kids' cooking classes (**ATLANTIS**) to a dolphin-encounter center (**HILTON WAIKOLOA VILLAGE**).

The year-old **JW MARRIOTT SAN ANTONIO HILL COUNTRY** burst onto the list with a six-acre water park, 26,000-square-foot spa, Segway property tours, and two PGA golf courses. But its service was also lauded, a crop creamed from 23,000 applicants for 850 jobs. "We look for people who are genuinely friendly," says Mike Kass, the resort's marketing and sales director. "I can't teach you to be a warm, caring human being."

If a staffer can determine just when to suggest your favorite drink or quietly stock your rental car with bottled water, then they've delivered the elusive X factor — usually service related — that unites acclaimed hotels on every continent, in every niche of the hospitality business. **CL**

HOTELS

Editors' Mentions

Celebrated Living editors also recognize these outstanding hotels.

MAINLAND U.S.

The Boulders Resort, Carefree, Arizona
(888) 579-2631, theboulders.com

The Carlyle, A Rosewood Hotel, New York
(212) 744-1600, rosewoodhotels.com

Shutters on the Beach, Santa Monica, California (800) 334-9000,
shuttersonthebeach.com

Pelican Hill, Newport Beach, California
(800) 820-6800, pelicanhill.com

ASIA

Amandari, Bali, Indonesia
(800) 477-9180, amanresorts.com

FAMILY RESORTS

Hilton Los Cabos Beach & Golf Resort, Los Cabos, Mexico
(800) 445-8667, hiltonloscabos.com

Jaguar Reef Lodge, Belize
(866) 910-7373, jaguarreef.com

U.S. BUSINESS

The Fairmont Washington, D.C.
(866) 540-4505,
fairmont.com/washington

HAWAII

The Fairmont Orchid, Kohala Coast, Hawaii
(866) 540-4456, fairmont.com/orchid

Four Seasons Resort Lanai, The Lodge at Koele (800) 321-4446,
fourseasons.com/koele

U.S. CASINO RESORTS

ARIA Resort & Casino, Las Vegas
(866) 359-7757, arialasvegas.com

CARIBBEAN

Peter Island Resort & Spa, British Virgin Islands
(800) 346-4451, peterisland.com

CuisinArt Resort & Spa, Anguilla
(800) 943-3210, cuisinartresort.com

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS

Grand Hyatt Santiago, Chile
(800) 633-7313,
santiago.grand.hyatt.com

CANADA

King Pacific Lodge, A Rosewood Resort, Princess Royal Island, British Columbia
(888) 592-5464, kingpacificlodge.com

MEXICO/CENTRAL AMERICA/
SOUTH AMERICA

Esperanza, An Auberge Resort, Los Cabos
(866) 311-2226, esperanzaresort.com

Lapa Rios, Osa, Costa Rica
011-506-2735-5130, laparios.com

AUSTRALIA/NEW ZEALAND/
SOUTH PACIFIC

The Farm at Cape Kidnappers, Hawke's Bay, New Zealand
011-64-6-875-1900,
capekidnappers.com

EUROPE

Palace Luzern, Lucerne, Switzerland
011-41-416-16-16, palace-luzern.ch

Turnberry, A Luxury Collection Resort, Ayrshire, Scotland (800) 325-3589,
luxurycollection.com/turnberry

AFRICA

One&Only Cape Town, South Africa
(888) 877-7528,
oneandonlycapetown.com