

TRAVEL TIPS 2011 + FREQUENT-FLIER SECRETS: MILEAGE UPGRADES

TRAVEL + LEISURE

500

WORLD'S BEST HOTELS



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Each year, *Travel + Leisure* asks readers to vote on their favorite hotels around the globe. What makes this, our ninth annual compendium of the top-ranked hotels from the World's Best Awards survey, stand out? Almost half of the winners are located in the U.S. and Canada, and another 20 percent are in Europe. Meanwhile, some of the most iconic destinations—California, Florida, Italy, France, and China—have 135 properties among them, and 62 hotels offer rates of less than \$250 a night. Also at your fingertips: our picks of the best farm-to-table restaurants, pools, tech amenities, and more. Plus, you'll find extended listings at TravelandLeisure.com, and—drumroll, please—the T+L 500 iPad edition, complete with interactive bonus features, will be on the App Store in January. So you can pinpoint your next hotel even if you're on the road.

KENTUCKY

LOUISVILLE

NEW 21c Museum Hotel (\$89.60) 90 polished-yet-industrial rooms and a multimillion-dollar art collection of works by living sculptors, printmakers, and painters—all in a 19th-century building. 877/217-6400; 21cmuseumhotel.com; doubles from \$229.

LOUISIANA

NEW ORLEANS

Ritz-Carlton (86.91) Converted department store located 1 block from Bourbon Street. Post-Katrina, the hotel underwent a \$150 million renovation. 921 Canal St.; 800/241-3333; ritzcarlton.com; doubles from \$319.

Windsor Court Hotel (88.84) 322 traditional accommodations—mostly suites—with bay windows, near the French Quarter. 300 Gravier St.; 888/596-0955; windsorcourthotel.com; doubles from \$170.

MAINE

CAPE ELIZABETH

Inn by the Sea (86.89) This 5-acre resort—connected by boardwalk to Crescent Beach—reopened in June 2008 after multimillion-dollar, green-focused renovations. 800/888-4287; innbythesea.com; doubles from \$350.

KENNEBUNKPORT

White Barn Inn (89.86) 19th-century buildings furnished with sleigh beds and rain showers. The namesake restaurant updates its 4-course prix fixe menu weekly. 800/735-2478; whitebarninn.com; doubles from \$420, including breakfast.

MARYLAND

ST. MICHAELS

Inn at Perry Cabin (88.32) Colonial-style 1816 manor—a classic Eastern Shore inn—on a private Chesapeake Bay inlet. 866/278-9601; perrycabin.com; doubles from \$390.

MASSACHUSETTS

BOSTON AREA

NEW Charles Hotel (86.53)

Harvard Square hotel with a New England aesthetic (Shaker-inspired furniture; geometric quilts) and 2 excellent restaurants. 1 Bennett St., Cambridge; 800/882-1818; charleshotel.com; doubles from \$299.

Eliot Hotel (90.15) Elegant Back Bay hotel—traditional without being stuffy, and family-owned for 50 years. Bathrooms are being updated with Bardiglio Italian marble. 370 Commonwealth Ave.; 800/443-5468; eliothotel.com; doubles from \$255.

Four Seasons Hotel (88.83) 273-room brick landmark, across the street from the walking paths of the Boston Common (Newbury Street's shops are also just a few blocks away). 200 Boylston St.; 800/332-3442; fourseasons.com; doubles from \$600.

NEW Hotel Commonwealth (90.59) Retro-looking but tech-savvy French Empire-style property next to Fenway Park. New additions include the Baseball Suite and Island Creek Oyster Bar. 500 Commonwealth Ave.; 866/784-4000; hotelcommonwealth.com; doubles from \$289.

The Taj (88.00) Legendary 1927 hotel (formerly the flagship Ritz-Carlton) beside the Public Garden. 15 Arlington St.; 866/969-1825; tajhotels.com; doubles from \$239.

XV Beacon (87.71) Cozy 60-room boutique hotel with bold décor—dark wood; brushed steel—that contrasts nicely with its 1903 Beaux-Arts exterior. All rooms have fireplaces. 15 Beacon St.; 877/982-3226; xvbeacon.com; doubles from \$445.

CAPE COD

Wequassett Resort & Golf Club (88.00) On a sailboat-filled bay, with a 1740's Colonial reception area and recently renovated rooms in clapboard cottages with 29 acres of gardens. Chatham; 800/225-7125; wequassett.com; doubles from \$575.

NANTUCKET

White Elephant (88.50) Nantucket Town's largest resort. Harbor views are best from the waterfront patio, chaise-dotted

green lawns, and updated 1- and 2-bedroom Garden cottages. 800/445-6574; whiteelephanthotel.com; doubles from \$550.

MICHIGAN

BAY HARBOR

Inn at Bay Harbor (86.86) Traditional Victorian resort along Lake Michigan's Little Traverse Bay. The world-class golf club features 3 Arthur Hills-designed courses. 800/462-6963; innatbayharbor.com; doubles from \$254.

BIRMINGHAM

Townsend Hotel (90.26) 150 rooms (3 with four-poster beds and full kitchens) in a gilded Detroit suburb that's convenient to the city. 800/548-4172; townsendhotel.com; doubles from \$375.

MACKINAC ISLAND

Grand Hotel (86.36) A grand retreat built in 1887, with one of the world's greatest front porches. 800/334-7263; grandhotel.com; doubles from \$480, including breakfast and dinner.

MINNESOTA

MINNEAPOLIS

NEW Graves 601 Hotel (87.00) 255 modern rooms (Frette linens; glass headboards) within walking distance of restaurants, theaters, and the Twins' new stadium. 601 1st Ave. N.; 866/523-1100; graves601hotel.com; doubles from \$199.

MISSOURI

KANSAS CITY

Raphael Hotel (88.80) 1920's European-style property overlooking Country Club Plaza, the first outdoor suburban shopping center in the U.S. 325 Ward Pkwy.; 800/821-5343; raphaelkc.com; doubles from \$169.

ST. LOUIS

NEW Four Seasons Hotel (89.83) 200-room hotel with streamlined interiors in a convenient downtown location, near the Gateway Arch. 999 N. 2nd St.; 800/332-3442; fourseasons.com; doubles from \$235.

Ritz-Carlton (86.74) 18-story hotel in an upscale residential neighborhood. A \$14 million renovation was completed last year. 100 Carondelet Plaza; 800/241-3333; ritzcarlton.com; doubles from \$199.

MONTANA

DARBY

1 Triple Creek Ranch (96.76) Adults-only mountain retreat on thousands of acres with recently refreshed log cabins (wood-burning fireplaces; hot tubs). 800/654-2943; triplecreekranch.com; doubles from \$750, all-inclusive.

NEVADA

LAS VEGAS AREA

Bellagio (88.89) Mid-Strip extravaganza with a palatial 55,000-square-foot spa, 14 restaurants, and dancing fountains. 3600 Las Vegas Blvd. S.; 888/987-6667; bellagio.com; doubles from \$159.

Encore at Wynn (88.52) Steve Wynn's latest resort feels like a desert oasis; the new Encore Beach Club has 3 tiered pools and 40-foot palm trees. 3131 Las Vegas Blvd. S.; 888/320-7125; encorelasvegas.com; doubles from \$159.

Four Seasons Hotel (88.64) One of the more tranquil Vegas locations, with plush room amenities (pillow-topped beds; L'Occitane bath products) and no casino, on the southern tip of the Strip. 3960 Las Vegas Blvd. S.; 800/332-3442; fourseasons.com; doubles from \$229.

NEW Loews Lake (87.06) Child- and pet-friendly resort on the lake, plus activities including watersports galore, and a 9,000-square-foot spa. 101 Montelago Blvd., Henderson; 866/262-4280; loewshotels.com; doubles from \$179.

1 The Palazzo (89.94) All-suite property with a 2-story fountain in the entryway and a Barneys New York and Canyon Ranch SpaClub. 3325 Las Vegas Blvd. S.; 877/883-6423; palazzolasvegas.com; doubles from \$199.

Venetian Resort Hotel Casino (88.37) A condensed version of its namesake city, with some of the largest rooms on the Strip. The hotel has Wolfgang Puck's Postrio Bar & Grill and was just LEED Gold certified. 3355 Las Vegas Blvd. S.; 866/659-9643; venetian.com; doubles from \$199.

Wynn Las Vegas (89.68) The flagship property from developer Steve Wynn has 2,716 rooms, plus a collection of restaurants overseen by rising



HOTEL PHOTOS

Want to see what these T+L 500 hotels look like? You'll find photos of all the properties on our list at TravelandLeisure.com.