

Views of the Maasai Mara from Mahali Mzuri never fail to amaze



# SPIRIT OF ADVENTURE

*The new and improved hotels and hotspots perfect for your Eid Al-Adha escapes. Get ready to take the road less travelled*

## KENYA Mahali Mzuri

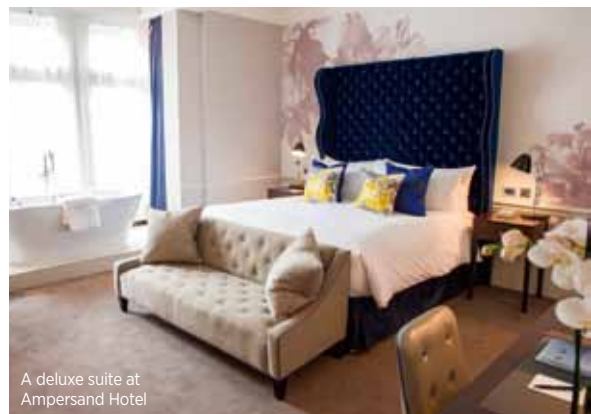
We're big fans of Richard Branson's Virgin Limited Edition travel collection, so news that a new tented camp in Kenya had his name written all over it means our passports are already in our bags. Mahali Mzuri is set in Kenya's Maasai Mara ecosystem, so you'll have a front row seat to some of the world's best wildlife watching – whether on a daily game drive or from your private deck. As for accommodation, forget everything you know about camping – or glamping – because the 12 luxury tents are some of the most stylish and serene we've seen. This is your *Out of Africa* moment.

*From Dhs3,103 a night; Mahalimzuri.virgin.com*

## LONDON Ampersand Hotel

The perfect place to rest museum-weary feet, this new London hotel is primarily located in Kensington for a vacation of both culture and couture. A stone's throw from The Natural History Museum, mornings can be spent swotting up on the past, before afternoons are spent shopping in the present – or, even better, buying yourself one. With Harrods, Harvey Nichols, Giorgio Armani and Jimmy Choo your neighbours, you'd be hard pressed to find a more sought-after postcode. The hotel itself is chic and charming, with its nature-inspired rooms (think botany and bird themes) and nods to British heritage. We love The Drawing Rooms – a tea salon that's perfected the art of all-day light bites, ideal for a post-shopping spree re-fuel.

*From Dhs975 a night; Ampersandhotel.com*



A deluxe suite at Ampersand Hotel



The library in the La Grange villa

## SOUTH AFRICA La Cle Des Montagnes

A flurry of luxury villas in South Africa has popped up on *Bazaar's* radar this month with La Cle Des Montagnes in Franschoek October's best pick. Set on six hectares of farmland, including a working plum and wine farm, these villas are precisely the right side of rural, maxing out on both nature and nurture. Surrounded by greener-than-green gardens and beautifully kept vineyards, the four villas, La Grange, Le Manoir, La Galerie and Le Colonial, of two to four bedrooms, are the picture of outdoor elegance. However, the real USP of the place is all the little extras – think personal chef, helicopter transfers, private vineyard tours, and butler at your 24-hour beckon call. This is one way to see South Africa in style.

*From Dhs3,380 a night; Lacleidesmontagnes.com*

## MOZAMBIQUE

### White Pearl Resort, Ponta Mamoli

Claiming to be located on one of the best undiscovered paradises on earth, we might just have to agree with the team at new Ponta Mamoli resort. The scenery that surrounds it is, in one word, spectacular – the kind of vistas one thought were reserved for retouched picture postcards. As of this month, the resort will have its own airstrip, so, with only 21 other rooms bar yours, we reckon you can almost claim it your own private island. With six beach suites, each with plunge pool, deck and outdoor shower, it's the perfect family vacation destination, with snorkelling, diving and dolphin swims topping our to do list. Visit now to see the annual Humpback whale migration, or go between Nov-Feb to see the Loggerhead and Leatherback turtles hit the beach to lay their eggs. Nature's underwater world meets the beauty of the beach.

*From Dhs1,079 a night; Whitepearlresorts.com*

Pristine beaches at Ponta Mamoli



Relax and unwind at Alila Villas Soori

## BALI Alila Villas Soori

A little Eid escapism for the mind, body and soul comes courtesy of the new three or five-day bespoke wellness retreats at Alila Villas Soori. With Rejuvenate, Be Reborn or Reshape packages on offer, the combination of nutritional consultations, massages, spa therapies and spiritual development will take you on a holistic and spiritual adventure. With classes starting at 6am, the master cleanses, raw food workshops, cooking classes, and therapeutic spa treatments, will leave you in your best shape – and mindset – yet.

*From Dhs4,880 for three nights; Alilahotels.com/soori*

## CYPRUS

### Antara Destination Spa & Resort

Ever dreamt of staying in a palace? How about one-upping that and staying in the world's first luxury spa palace? Dreams come true this month at the hands of new Antara Destination Spa & Resort, as it redefines the benchmark of traditional luxury spas. Just six Royal Suites and one Presidential Suite mean privacy is paramount here as you go about your five-star sanctuary, while the focus is on cardiac and digestive health, stress management, women's fertility and emotional wellbeing. Let's not forget life's little luxuries too, namely helicopter transfers, personal butler and private chef. We're feeling better already.

*From Dhs18,420 a night; Antara-spa.com*



The Hellenistic exterior of Antara

PRICES APPROXIMATE



View of the new French garden at Shangri-La Paris

**PARIS**  
**Shangri-La**

Hot news from one of our favourite Parisian hotels this month is the opening of its Garden Wing and private French garden. Considering the Shangri-La is city-central, this really is a nature-lover's jewel in the capital's crown. With an Art Deco facade, 11 new rooms and nine suites that overlook the semi-circular terrace, it combines urban chic with outdoor elegance and is Paris' prettiest place for high society escapades. So, after a day of boutiques, boulevards and brasseries, with the Eiffel Tower as your backdrop, turn down your bed here. *From Dhs3,397 a night; Shangri-la.com*



Caribbean cool at The Cliffs, Oil Nut Bay

**CARIBBEAN**  
**Oil Nut Bay**

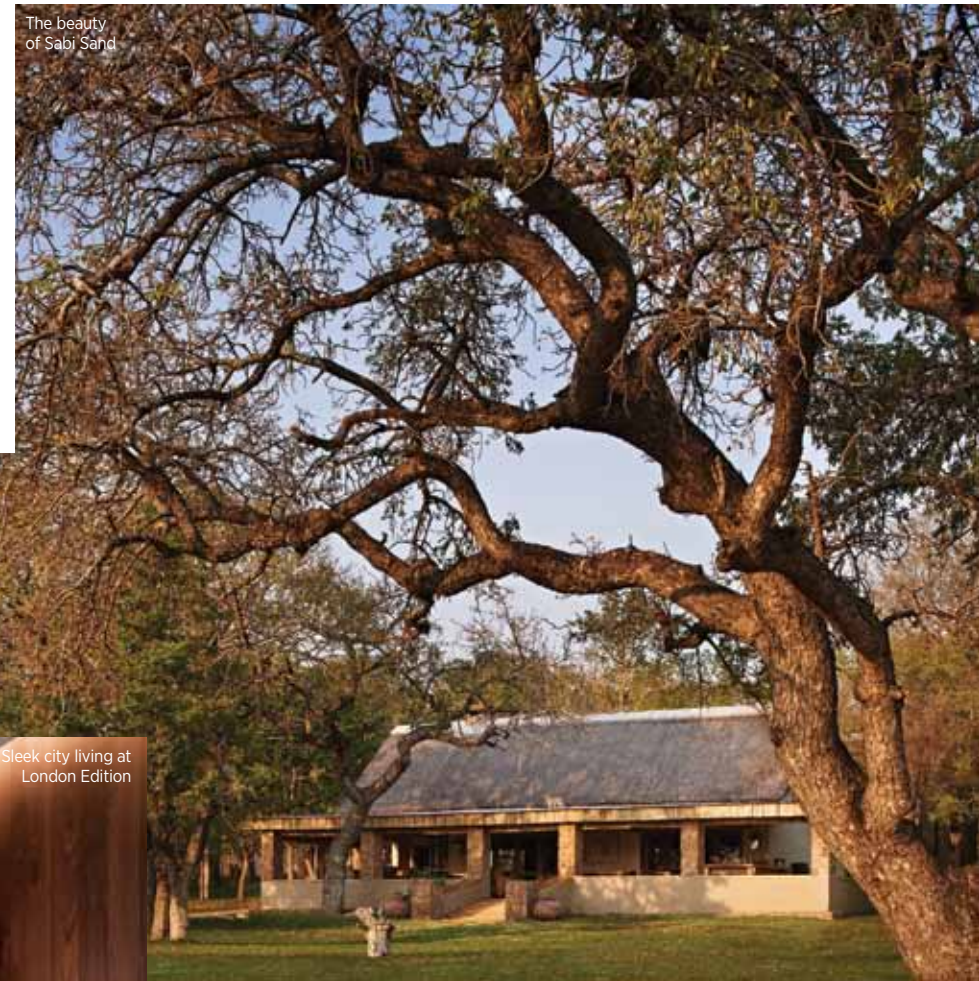
While officially opening in 2009, Oil Nut Bay recently found another reason to hit holiday headlines with the launch of its new The Cliffs suites. If the thought of private boat or helicopter arrival isn't enough to entice you here, perhaps the world-class architecture, three swimming pools, wellness centre and 1,334 square foot Penthouse Suite are. Oh, and let's not forget the unrivalled views of the sky blue Caribbean and the Fendi Casa furnishings. See you there! *From Dhs5,425 a night; Oilnutbay.com*

**SOUTH AFRICA**

**Singita Castleton, Sabi Sand**

Another new South African hotspot is this intimate, exclusive-use farmhouse and safari experience set in the Sabi Sand Game Reserve that combines the privacy of a safari lodge with the rustic charms of a country farmhouse. All the high-end specs you could wish for are here with garden, swimming pool, wine cellar, gym, tennis court and spa, juxtaposed against the wonders of the wilderness waiting on your doorstep. With six cottages sleeping 12 people and enough activities to entertain everyone, this is the perfect family vs. friends vacation.

*From Dhs3,000 a night; Singita.com*



The beauty of Sabi Sand



Sleek city living at London Edition

**LONDON**  
**London Edition**

Pack your bags and be one of the first to stay in what is destined to become London's hippest hotel. Opening last month, and the brainchild of haute hotelier Ian Schrager, it's all straightforward contemporary elegance and no-nonsense service, married with having the fabulousness of Firovia on your doorstep at this 173-room residence. Dark, decadent and decidedly old-school glamour, we love the stunning fuss-free rooms that let the interiors do all the talking. From the hotel's Punch Room and Berner's Tavern Restaurant to the neighbourhood's Bond Street and Selfridges, this is the place to stay and be seen in. *From Dhs1,439; Edition-hotels.marriott.com*



Cityscape views of Shanghai at Jing An Shangri-La

**SHANGHAI**

**Jing An Shangri-La**

City breaks don't get much more fun, fabulous and flamboyant than in Shanghai and, with the opening of Shangri-La's third property in the city, Jing An, we have a whole new reason for a China vacation. An ode to both new and old-world décor, the hotel is filled with clever architectural elements and dripping in chandelier crystals – enough to rival the ritziest of Middle Eastern outposts. The real gem here is the view, seen from both Premiere and Deluxe suites, and the 82-foot sky-dome lap pool for a swim under the stars. *From Dhs1,125 a night; Shangri-la.com*

**AZERBAIJAN**

**Fairmont Baku, Flame Tower**

Taking pride of place in one of the three Flame Towers, Fairmont Baku is the brand's first Azerbaijan outpost. Not content with being in the city's tallest building, with 318 rooms it's also one of the biggest hotels. Sleek, contemporary and altogether pretty cool, views look out over the Old Inner City or the Caspian Sea, while rooms keep to the modern, minimalist design with an elegant cream and neutral palette. *Bazaar* loves the two-bed Royal Suite, while you'll find us lounging in the luxurious ESPA spa or sipping sundowners at Alov Jazz Bar. *From Dhs1,218 a night; Fairmont.com*

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The modern monolith of Baku's Flame Tower



**DUBAI: Anantara The Palm**

Palm Jumeirah has the monopoly on new Dubai hotels lately, but we're paying particular attention to Anantara The Palm which opened last month. With the brand's typical Thai interiors and hospitality, it's high on style and serenity. Dubai may be devoid of greenery, but not here, where tropical landscaping brings a touch of the exotic. The over-water villas are where the fash pack are staying and, with the spa opening next month, for now we're taking advantage of the in-room massages. *From Dhs1,950 a night; Anantara.com*

Sunset over the Water villas at Anantara The Palm

**DUBAI: Vida Downtown**

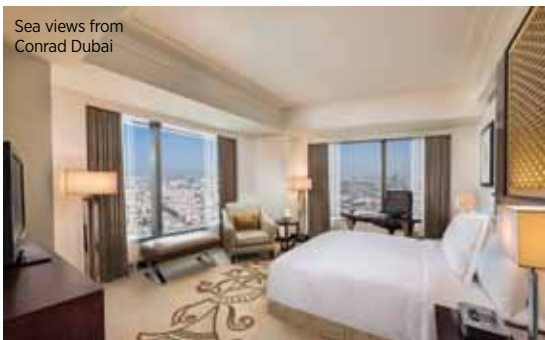
Boutique hotels are few and far between in this region, so viva hotel Vida, we say! Clean, crisp and incredibly pretty, this new urban bolt-hole in Downtown comes with intuitive style, convenience, comfort and sensory stimulation high on the agenda. The boudoir to book is the two-room 1,506 sq ft Boulevard Suite, with dining room, butler's kitchen, lounge and terrace. The fact that Vida is also home to La Serre restaurant, is just one more reason to make a reservation. *From Dhs800 a night; Vida-hotels.com*



Stage 2 lounge at Vida Hotel

LOCAL HEROES

Short haul holidays that mean maxing out on relaxing



Sea views from Conrad Dubai

**DUBAI: Conrad**

Plumped perfect opposite The Dubai Mall on Sheikh Zayed Road this is the city's most cosmopolitan hotel. We love the two beautiful Royal Suites, the Concierge App, which allows guests to customise details of their stay before, during and after each visit, and its Mood Services, which will tailor experiences for whatever mood you're in – think helicopter tours or sailing on the high seas. Bespoke at its best. *From Dhs1,750 a night; Conradhotels3.hilton.com*



The rustic haven of Zighy Bay, Oman

**OMAN: Six Senses Zighy Bay**

We love a touch of ethical travel at Team *Bazaar*, so we're huge fans of Zighy Bay's green code of practice – from the rustic rooms that use driftwood for décor to its onsite vegetable and herb garden. Putting a different spin on staycations, Zighy Bay's new luxury DJ Dispensary experience allows you to book four or six nights at the resort and have private one-on-one lessons with world-renowned DJs. Learn new skills and relax in eco-friendly refinery, yes please. *From Dhs11,859 for three nights; Sixsenses.com*



The pool at Sofitel Palm Jumeirah

**DUBAI: Sofitel Palm Jumeirah**

Take a trip to the South Pacific with Sofitel's new flagship, Polynesian-themed resort. While the hotel might be big – it boasts 361 rooms and suites – it lucks out on little French luxuries, with a certain 'art de vivre' sentiment with its lush vertical gardens, tranquil setting and views of Palm Jumeirah's East Crescent. We should probably tell you that the bathrooms are stocked with Hermès and Lanvin amenities, as we know how important the added extras are. With all rooms nodding to an island-chic aesthetic, we'd suggest booking a Beach Villa, with its own rooftop terrace and pool, or the Palm Suite, which has four bedrooms and its own signature terrace. For a real treat, take yourself off to So Spa for one of its traditional Tahitian five-star treatments. *From Dhs1,040 a night; Sofitel.com*

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