

# Hot, hot, HOTSPOTS FOR 2026

From private islands to historic palazzos, discover the latest luxurious destinations to put on your travel wish-list for the year ahead

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**TOP:** Rah Gili Maldives is the first of six individually designed islands  
**ABOVE:** The historic Orient Express Palazzo Donà Giovannelli  
**BELOW:** Luxury interiors at Airelles Palladio Venezia



A historic wine hotel in Burgundy, an ultra-luxe reopening in the Seychelles and two architectural wonders in Venice – these new openings may be found scattered across different parts of the world, but they all have one thing in common: a sense of quiet luxury and the spirit of reinvention. All you have to do is pack your wanderlust.

## TIME TO REVISIT VENICE

Perfect to fall in love with Venice again are two prestigious openings in the city. Airelles Palladio Venezia will be the luxury brand's first opening outside of France. Carved out of a collection of historic buildings, the hotel is found on the island of Giudecca, with views across to St Mark's and the Doge's Palace. Working with artisans and historians, the reimagining has resulted in 45 bedrooms, three restaurants and a wellness garden, with many of the 16th-century details of the original villa restored to their former glory.

[airelles.com](http://airelles.com)

Orient Express Palazzo Donà Giovannelli, meanwhile, is another historic masterpiece, created from a palazzo that dates back to 1436. Opening in April 2026,

guests can expect to step back in time with much of the building's bygone splendour bought back to life – from arriving by boat to the 15th-century Gothic portal to the gilded ballroom. Sprinkling magic throughout your stay are hidden passageways and a secret garden, as well as a fine dining restaurant and beautifully executed rooms.

[orient-express.com](http://orient-express.com)

## FAR-FLUNG AND FABULOUS

Renowned for its tailor-made itineraries across the world, Turquoise Holidays' USP is the ability to curate the dream trip with authenticity at its heart. One of its most-anticipated launches for 2026 is Fregate Island in the Seychelles, which has reopened after a four-year upgrade. The ultra-luxurious private island has just 17 sustainably designed villas set into an untouched, verdant landscape. Its natural setting, utter seclusion and personalised service are the big draws. While you can spend your days soaking up the sun on a deserted beach, its allure also lies in the sheer amount of facilities on offer: from a distillery to a tailor's workshop; art gallery to the largest wine cellar in the Indian Ocean. It also boasts a world-class spa and immersive experiences amid the island's endemic wildlife, which include giant Aldabra tortoises and endangered magpie-robins.

[turquoiseholidays.co.uk](http://turquoiseholidays.co.uk)



**CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT:** Fregate Island, Seychelles; Luura Cliff and Mera, Paros; Viking will be sailing along the Nile; Somewhere Island, Maldives; Château la Commaraine; Zannier Île de Bendor

## THE FRENCH CONNECTION

Due to open this spring, and set to be one of France's big openings for the year ahead, is Château la Commaraine in Burgundy. Set within a historic vineyard, the 12th-century estate has undergone a meticulous four-year restoration, becoming the region's first five-star hotel. The property, which is the sister to the Royal Champagne Hotel & Spa in Champillon, has 37 rooms and suites with period details and views across the fields. There are also two restaurants from Christophe Raoux and a lavish spa with outdoor pool. The estate's own *cuvierie* (winery) is built within the château itself, so expect the finest Pinot Noir on tap. [chateaulacommaraine.com](http://chateaulacommaraine.com)

Meanwhile, opening this spring in the South of France, and predicted to be Europe's summer hotspot, is Zannier Île de Bendor. Set on a seven-hectare private island, off the coast of Bandol in Provence, the whole project has taken five years, with the original village turned into a stunning 93-room hotel, with restaurants, art gallery and a wellbeing centre. [zannierhotels.com/bendor](http://zannierhotels.com/bendor)

## PUTTING PAROS ON THE MAP

Placing the postcard-pretty Greek island of Paros firmly in the spotlight this

summer are two new chic properties. Meros, part of the Santikos Collection of hotels, will open in June with 27 rooms and Cycladic design – think exposed stone walls, chalky tones and indoor-outdoor living. [santikoscollection.com](http://santikoscollection.com)

Family-owned Luura Cliff, meanwhile, features a village-like collection of whitewashed buildings, private pools and wellness experiences. Opening in May 2026, it will lean into Paros's rich culture with local, immersive experiences, from marble-carving workshops to field-to-fork feasts. [luurahotels.com](http://luurahotels.com)

## ALL AT SEA

Known for its Scandi-designed vessels and thoughtful, culture-rich itineraries, Viking has a host of new launches for 2026. Two new river ships, *Viking Ptah* and *Viking Sekhmet*, will take guests along the Nile to soak up the ancient secrets of Egypt with the company's thrilling Pharaohs & Pyramids itinerary. Elsewhere, new river itineraries have also been launched, such as New Orleans to Memphis, an 11-day voyage on the Mississippi River, discovering the wonders of the American South. Meanwhile, two new ocean ships will be added to Viking's fleet this year. *Viking Mira* debuts this spring with Mediterranean and Northern European sailings, while the *Viking Libra*, will launch at the end of 2026 as the world's first hydrogen-powered cruise ship. [vikingcruises.co.uk](http://vikingcruises.co.uk)



## MORE, MORE, MORE IN THE MALDIVES

Here Baa Atoll – Maldives' two-island launch takes barefoot luxury to a new level across two archipelagos, with butler service and suspended sky infinity pools. The first to open is Somewhere Island, with seven suites, while Nowhere Island, launching in spring, has just two presidential residences, and is available for exclusive hire. [here-maldives.com](http://here-maldives.com)

Six & Six Private Islands is another multi-island concept. Over the next six years, the company will unveil six individually designed islands with the first, Rah Gili Maldives, opening in February, and the second, Don Maaga Maldives, at the end of 2026. The ethos is rooted in Maldivian culture, with local design, cuisine and experiences at its heart. [rahgili.com](http://rahgili.com)

