



THE 14th ANNUAL



THE YEAR'S 134 TOP NEW HOTELS
(INCLUDING 42 UNDER \$250 A NIGHT)

SHOWING AMAZING RESILIENCE, the art of hotel innovation is flourishing. Across the globe, hotels are still opening in strong numbers. We combed through the thousands that debuted in the last year, then bedded down anonymously at the most compelling candidates. A robust 134 properties spread across a record 55 countries won a place on our list with their blend of strong style, skillful service, state-of-the-art technology, and transporting aura. They're a diverse group, ranging in size from a three-suite gem in Lisbon to an eco-forward 4,004-room showstopper on the Vegas Strip, and in cost from \$130 a night at a boldly designed Mexico City tower to \$3,600 for a slice of the good life on a South Pacific isle once the private retreat of Malcolm Forbes. As more hotels strive to soar above the competition, the bar for excellence, too, climbs—although price tags don't. Nearly a third of this year's list offer rooms for less than \$250 a night, so there's no time like the present to ride the wave of good fortune.



Monte Azul selected for Condé Nast Traveler's Hot List 2010

Monte Azul Hotel & Center for Fine Art,
Chirripó National Park

If Costa Rica was a pioneer in ecotourism, Monte Azul may just redefine it: On-site owners Randy Langendorfer and Carlos Rojas have set new standards for sustainability and style in this remote jungle community. Friends and neighbors supply most of the hotel's needs: Perfectly aged steak, organic vegetables, fresh milk, eggs—even the hotel's uniforms—are produced just down the road. As for the rest, they make or grow it themselves: the artisanal bread, the furniture, the soaps, the shade-grown coffee, the welcome platter of chèvre that comes from their own goats. Not surprisingly, meals at Café Blue are fresh and inventive. Although Monte Azul's considerable charms will most appeal to those who prefer a gentler pace, the hotel has an elegantly bohemian side as well. Originally conceived as an artist's retreat, the hotel hosts its own artist-in-residence program, and buildings double as galleries for their works. Funky and charming, the four earth-toned casitas on the banks of the tumbled Chirripó River resemble 1950s Palm Springs-style artists' abodes cocooned in deep jungle. For long, quiet views of forest-laced mountains, wander up the hill past the resident troop of capuchin monkeys to the hotel's crown jewel, Casa Palo Alto. This graceful two-suite structure, built of local woods and dark stone and with endless windows, presides queenlike over the 125-acre private preserve and the thundering river below. **WHICH ROOM TO BOOK:** Casita Verde for privacy and economy; Casa Palo Alto for an elegant splurge (506-2742-5222; casitas, \$190).

UNDER \$250

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Graphic by Hassan Hussein and Byron Regis