

COUNTRY & TOWN HOUSE

THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

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Feel the Beat

Get sexy in Rio or live out the pages of *Vogue* in Miami – these four hotels have got that vibe.
Edited by Daisy Finer

1 James Royal Palm, Miami

You say art deco, they say Miami. You say Ocean Drive, they say yes, please. But only if we can stay at the James Royal Palm. Because when it comes to design, this has got to be the most interesting place in town to lay your hat. Formerly the art deco Royal Palm Hotel, this new incarnation opened to deafening applause in 2013. The work of world-renowned architecture and interiors firm Rottet Studio, there are references to the building's history at every turn – from the huge fountain and palm trees to the terrazzo flooring and the front lawn with its bonkers oversized topiary furniture. Rotational art reflects the burgeoning Miami art movement, but the rooms – home from home with mid-century teak pieces – pay homage to art deco and are carefully thought out to ensure all eyes are on the Bombay-sapphire water/sky backdrop. If there's a better view of South Beach, it won't come with hip bellboys, incredible cocktails and a poolside scene that is like something straight from the pages of *Vogue*. Just pack your neon or tropical prints, subtle fashion is not welcome here.

DOUBLES FROM £210
+305 604 5700; jameshotels.com/miami



2 J.K. Place Roma, Rome

There was huge buzz about this place – the third hotel from Ori Kafri – long before it opened its doors near the Spanish Steps last year. It was worth the wait. Designed as a home from home by Italian architect Michele Bönan, there's a library downstairs with shelves full of glossy coffee table art books, a glass-ceilinged living room and a sleek wood-panelled bar that wouldn't look out of place in *Mad Men*. Much of the furniture is custom-made in Tuscany; all of it is utterly chic. Stay in a master suite, with dove grey walls, a walk-in wardrobe and a modern four-poster. Spend the day exploring then hotfoot it back to the hotel for a bistro-style bite to eat: serious-sized burgers, spaghetti vongole and a mini kilner jar of perfect tiramisu, all served up to chilled-out Bossa Nova beats.

DOUBLES FROM £480

+39 06 982 634; jkrroma.com

ROMAN
HOLIDAY



GREEK
MYTH

3 New Hotel, Athens

Owned by the art collector Dakis Joannou, this renovated 1960s hotel is brilliantly located in the centre of Athens' Plaka district with its little backstreets full of fun shops and cafés. The exterior is an uninspiring block, but inside the Brazilian design duo Fernando and Humberto Campana have worked their whacky eco magic, lining up little cactuses as an art installation, making their signature Favelo chairs from bits of old wooden furniture and creating clever wall art for the 79 bedrooms using vintage postcards, evil eyes and Karagiozis (or shadow puppets) to reflect the history of the local area. The main draw is the restaurant and bar on the rooftop for its views across the city – a perfect place for a sundowner. A rare contemporary find in a buzzy city.

DOUBLES FROM £140

+30 210 3273000; yeshotels.gr

4 Shangri La at The Shard, London

OK, so it may feel a bit like it's geared towards an Asian businessman (read 'a tad corporate'), but that is no reason not to make this highflier top of your staycation list. Even if it's not the super-whizzy lift that takes you to the 35th floor in 26 seconds flat, or 'the best steak this side of Argentina' at Ting restaurant; or even the fact that the loo seats are heated and have both a front and back warm water hose to clean your parts; then it's those literally epic, jaw-dropping views that melt a Londoner's heart. Seriously, you're so high that the trains down on earth look like sluggish caterpillars. The location, too, is way more funky than the retail-obsessed West End, with Tate Modern, Shakespeare's Globe and divine Borough Market just a stroll away. The Shard puts the 'hot' into high rise, and then some.

DOUBLES FROM £450

020 7234 8088; shangri-la.com/london

HOT HIGH
RISE

