



INDUSTRY REPORTS

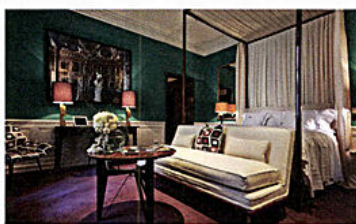
Luxury Services

1

Aman opens on Grand Canal in Venice

Amanresorts is launching its fourth Mediterranean destination with the opening of Aman Canal Grande Venice in the historic San Polo sestieri, in June. The resort, which comprises 24 suites, is housed within two five-storey adjoining buildings, one of them a palazzo built in the 16th century by the architect Gian Giacomo de Grigi. Almost all the suites offer views over the Grand Canal, there is a roof terrace and two 'secret' gardens flank the building, originally installed at the beginning of the 19th century. With ceiling frescoes by Giovanni Battista Tiepolo, the decorative scheme retains an updated yet traditional Venetian feel with faded pastel colourways, Rococo-era stucco plasterwork and mirrors. There are spa treatment rooms and various dining options; guests will arrive by water. The opening coincides with the Venice Biennale: a major contemporary art exhibition and the Venice Film Festival.

Amanresorts was founded by Adrian Zecha as a collection of intimate retreats in beautiful surrounds with the hospitality of a private residence. The first was Amanpuri (place of peace) in Phuket, Thailand; since followed by 26 more located in Bhutan, Cambodia, China, France, Greece, Indonesia, India, Italy, Laos, Montenegro, Morocco, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Turkey, Turks & Caicos and the US.



2

JK Place Rome opens

In the year that its sister hotel in Florence celebrates its 10th birthday, the new JK Place Roma hotel will open in July. The property is the biggest yet from the JK group, with 30 guestrooms (Florence and Capri both have 20 rooms), and is located just off via Condotti, one of Rome's luxury thoroughfares. The hotel will have a JK Café, rooftop bar and lounge area for both guests and non-guests. The whole has been designed by Michele Bonan, the group's interior designer. Bonan's distinctive use of classical sculpture and 19th-century Italianate artwork is the ideal match for the building which was once the University of Rome's Architectural School, and the imposing exterior has been meticulously preserved.

3

Chukka by Sian Parry-Jones

The downstairs space at Archer Street cocktail bar in London's Soho has been turned into a polo-themed pop-up bar called Chukka, also to host London's first exclusive Billecart-Salmon Champagne bar. It was designed by Sian Parry-Jones, former head of personal shopping at Harrods who also created the spa at Archerfield Links Golf Course in Scotland. "We are very excited about the launch of Chukka as we have a strong family tie to Vaux Park Polo in Somerset which belongs to my sister-in-law," Parry-Jones told Luxury Briefing. "We had a raid round the farm and borrowed sticks, balls, helmets, saddles, bridles, polo shirts and jeans to use on the walls." There's also an equestrian-themed fancy dress box filled with helmets, hobby horses and riding attire, an astro-turfed bar and a bespoke cocktail menu featuring drinks such as Treading Divots, to be served by staff wearing shirts supplied by polo lifestyle company Polistas.

4

KSL acquires Malmaison and Hotel du Vin

KSL Capital Partners LLC, a US-based private equity firm investing in travel and leisure businesses, has announced an affiliate's acquisition of Malmaison Group, the owner of UK-based boutique hotel brands Malmaison and Hotel du Vin. Having acquired 27 hotels in total KSL says it plans to invest in the portfolio and also supports growth strategy for both hotel brands. CEO Gary Davis commented, "We are delighted to welcome KSL as the new owner of the Malmaison and Hotel du Vin brands. It has recognised the significant potential in our business. Despite the wider challenging economic climate, we are proud of the strong operational and financial position that the hotels currently enjoy." Future initiatives include the opening of two new hotels in Scotland by early 2014.

5

Story comes to Shoreditch

Protégé of world-famous chefs including Thomas Keller (The French Laundry, Per Se), Tom Aikens and René Redzepi (Noma), Tom Sellers has an impressive culinary pedigree. His first permanent restaurant space, Story, opens this month, offering just 42 covers for sittings at lunch and dinner to experience either a six-course or ten-course menu. The launch follows the huge success of his pop-up, Foreword, in November 2011. Signature dishes such as Bread & Dripping will join new additions such as Beef Cheek, Stout & Cauliflower and Three Bears' Porridge; London-based Kernel Brewery will provide a range of craft ales.

6

The Social Eating House to open

Soon to open in London's Soho, the newest high-end hospitality hotspot, is the latest venture from Michelin-starred chef Jason Atherton. Famed in the UK for his Pollen Street Social restaurant, Atherton has been focusing on both the Far East and Britain for the past five years. He opened his first Hong Kong restaurant, 22 Ships, in early 2012 with the help of Singaporean entrepreneur Yenn Wong (founder of JIA Boutique Hotels and Sheung Wan's 208 Duecento Otto), building on his existing portfolio of three Asia-based restaurants: Esquina and Pollen in Singapore, and Table No 1 in Shanghai. The new London location, to be named The Social Eating House, will have interiors by Russell Sage Studios and promises vintage-infused, eclectic décor, an informal atmosphere and signature no-reservations policy. We hear rumours of another site, to be named Little Social, to follow...



7

Four Seasons first Spain property

Four Seasons Hotels & Resorts' European portfolio of grand hotels in historic buildings is set to expand with the development of the Canalejas project in Madrid, the first property in Spain. "Madrid has long been on our wish list," says Scott Woroch, executive vice-president worldwide development, confirming that the opening is scheduled for 2017. The new hotel, with 215 rooms, will be housed in a series of heritage buildings comprising the Canalejas complex adjacent to Puerta del Sol, and will also include luxury residences managed by the group, a high-end shopping centre and a 500-space private car park. Construction is projected to begin at the end of 2013. The development is funded in partnership with Grupo Villar Mir which, through its subsidiaries Inmobiliaria Espacio and Grupo OHL, is investing €500m in the project. Grupo Villar Mir is one of the largest privately-owned Spanish industrial groups.



"I love the vibe of Soho. I was a newcomer to the area before I went into partnership with Siobhan. It's a very exciting, happening place with an eclectic mix of people and personalities. I love Bob Bob Ricard to eat and a quick breakfast in Bill's is always good!"

SIAN PARRY-JONES SHARES HER OTHER SOHO HAUNTS, BESIDES HER POP-UP BAR IN ARCHER STREET, WITH LUXURY BRIEFING



8

Sukoon first luxury houseboat in Kashmir

News from India travel specialist Mahout: now that the British Foreign Office has lifted the ban on travel to Srinagar in Kashmir, tourists are steadily returning to traditional attractions such as cruising on the country's scenic waterways. The historic luxury houseboat, Sukoon, moored on Dal Lake, has just opened, offering five spacious rooms with large windows facing the lake and promising to bring standards of waterway hospitality to a new high. The boat was built in 1979 by the environmentalist M Yusuf Chapri, who originally named it 'Neil Armstrong': his correspondence with the astronaut is displayed on board. The boat was inaugurated by Heinrich Harrer (author of Seven Years in Tibet), and it received many prominent 'mountain men', including Robert Filming and Sherpa Tenzing. Sukoon's roof terrace offers space for guests to sit under a shamiana (canopy) or soak up the sun, looking across the lake to the Himalaya.

9

Chateau Bouffemont new venue

A crumbling, 19th-century, Beaux Arts-era landmark on the northern outskirts of Paris that once played host to French courtiers, under the auspices of noble former owners the Marquise de Priegnes and Baron Empain, has been restored and opened as a private hire venue. Set in acres of private land, Chateau Bouffemont has been renovated with high-speed wi-fi, flatscreen TVs and sound systems, to create an events space with all the mod cons. Ten suites sleep up



to 32 guests, with five grand halls served by a private bar and kitchen. Guests can expect views of the Montmorency Forest with opportunities to hike, mountain bike or sail and windsurf on nearby lakes. It's also convenient for golf, situated on the Paris International course designed by Jack Nicklaus. The project was directed by Milanese architects Augusto Busnelli and Marco Allievi of Studio Architettura, who also designed or chose the custom-made furniture, crystal chandeliers and other sumptuous elements throughout.

10

Balthazar opens in London

Parisian bistro-style restaurant Balthazar, a byword for glamorous dining in downtown New York, has been recreated and launched in London's Covent Garden by award-winning British restaurateur Keith McNally. The venture has been completed in partnership with Richard Caring's Caprice Holdings and has received a warm reception from critics and diners alike. The head chef is Robert Reid. Reservations at popular seating times, while available, are currently booked up far in advance. The restaurant accepts a limited number of walk-ins at each sitting.

11

Rivea new restaurant from Alain Ducasse

Alain Ducasse will open a new restaurant, Rivea, this month in the Byblos Hotel in St-Tropez. It will replace the current Ducasse-directed Spoon at Byblos. Ducasse told Luxury Briefing that Rivea represented "another facet of this delicious and inspiring Mediterranean land I love so much; a place where regional traditions and produce meet, thanks to the talent of (our) chef Vincent Maillard." The restaurant has been completely redesigned by the Italian duo Antonio Citterio and Patricia Viel, who have created an interior space structured "like an elegant metal greenhouse" with a bar area that resembles "a winter garden". A warm, tactile and retro feel has been created through the use of textiles in coral and terracotta and irregular stripped wooden booths. Alain Ducasse's new menu aims to be light and colourful and will also include classic desserts such as the Tropezienne cake, revisited and served with citrus zest.

12

Segera Retreat opens in Kenya

Wilderness Collection's newest property, Segera Retreat, on Kenya's Laikipia Plateau, has now opened. The retreat with spa aims to set new standards in the area for sustainable tourism and personalised luxury experiences. Run on solar energy, with water being sustainably harvested and recycled, six timber-and-thatch villas are elevated on wooden platforms looking out onto the surrounding savannah and Mount Kenya. When not on safari, guests can contribute to local reforestation efforts by planting indigenous trees in the Wangari Maathi Memorial Forest at the Zeitz Foundation Headquarters or at a local school, or take part in the daily monitoring of the endangered indigenous Patas Monkey and Grevy's Zebra.

13

Orient-Express opens in Santa Barbara

After seven years of restoration to a collection of 92 early 20th-century California-style bungalows, Orient-Express has opened its first hotel on the US west coast, El Encanto in Santa Barbara. "The addition of El Encanto to the Orient-Express family is another milestone in the strengthening of the Orient-Express footprint in North America," says John M Scott, president and CEO. "El Encanto is an icon on the west coast and fits perfectly with our existing international portfolio of unique assets." El Encanto sits in seven acres of landscaped gardens and each bungalow features hardwood floors, plantation-style shutters, bespoke accessories and a private patio or garden. The property now includes a seven-suite spa. Orient-Express worked closely with Santa Barbara's Historic Landmarks Commission to ensure that the main footprint of the hotel remained true to its original design. The concierge desk is embellished with Damien Hirst's 'Psalm print: verba mea auribus', a silk screen image of butterfly wings created with diamond dust chosen as the hotel is located on a significant butterfly migration path.

Champagne bulletin

It has been reported recently that the Champenois's key objective for mature markets is value growth, and London is leading the way with this trend. Volumes are expected to be down, but the encouraging trend is that total value has fallen by less. This is fuelled by the amazing love story that goes back 200 years between the British and Champagne wines. It is also being driven by London's booming restaurant, private club and hotel scene. UK Champagne Bureau Director Françoise Peretti told Luxury Briefing: "Champagne customers may be drinking less but they're spending more. We are seeing a new market emerging, as discerning consumers come and settle in London from developing Champagne markets such as China, India and Russia. This is where they choose to come to explore the best of Champagne." The UK is, by a wide margin, Champagne's biggest export market, a position it has held unchallenged for the past 17 years. Any change in the pattern of Champagne's global sales is likely to appear here first, and most especially in London. "London truly is leading the way as the place to come and explore the best of Champagne's diversity," says Françoise Peretti.