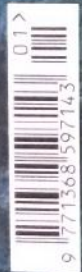


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THE GOLD LIST 2017



THE WORLD'S MOST EXCEPTIONAL HOTELS AND CLASSIC DESTINATIONS

THE GOLD LIST 2017

OUR ALL-TIME FAVOURITE HOTELS, RESTAURANTS,
COCKTAIL BARS AND BEACH CLUBS



THE GOLD LIST 2017

NIHIWATU SUMBA, INDONESIA

Originally built as a simple surf lodge in the 1990s, Nihiwatu was bought by American entrepreneur Chris Burch four years ago, who transformed it into a smart barefoot retreat. Sumba island, which Burch likens to Bali 40 years ago, has pristine beaches, quiet forests and traditional villages, where ikat weaving is still done by hand and cattle are used as dowry. The 33 bedrooms here are all seductive with elaborate, shell necklaces used as decoration and cushions covered in colourful batik; even the outdoor, egg-shaped bathtubs have been artfully gilded. Only 10 guests at a time are permitted to ride the left-hand break that made Nihiwatu the stuff of surf legend; everyone else lounges by the infinity pool, hikes through the surrounding rice paddies to out-of-time villages or gallops on horseback down the beach. No one wears shoes here, and everyone seems to don board shorts in the restaurant, where Australian chef Ben McRae produces sensational green-papaya soup and Thai pomelo salad with prawns. Everyone is invited to visit one of the projects supported by The Sumba Foundation: a philanthropic vehicle for local medical clinics, clean-water projects, and a school-lunch programme that has increased attendance figures. And if that doesn't pull your heart strings, says foundation director Steve Bierman, you just don't have a heart. +62 361 757149; nihiwatu.com. Villas from about £535 full board

ANASSA CYPRUS

Overlook, for a minute, the family-friendly fanfare surrounding this Mediterranean pile on the north-west coast of Cyprus: Anassa is so much more than somewhere to keep children happy. There are grown-up suppers to eat beneath lantern-lit olive trees, phenomenally firm massages in the comprehensive spa, clouds of heavily-scented lavender and jasmine in the gardens and thick rolled towels on the day beds. A perennial favourite for spring and autumn sunshine, the hotel recently underwent a gentle nip-and-tuck to the tune of seven figures, resulting in a smartening of the bedrooms, a refreshing of the communal areas and an opening of a boutique that gives Matches a run for its money. Now the whole place is glowing. Sunlight bounces off the polished marble floors and bougainvillea erupts from terracotta urns. Fling open the pale-blue shutters for stellar sea views of the gin-clear waters of the Akamas National Park on one side and the bobbing marina of nearby Latchi on the other. Make no mistake, Anassa is big – the rolling lawns, the different levels of the pools, the winding path down to the wide scoop of pebbly beach – but it is well considered. Everything is muted and understated – a nautical striped chaise longue is as wild as the design gets – but a rotation of visiting artists means there is always something engaging on the walls. +357 26 888000; anassa.com. Doubles from about £380

