

National Geographic Traveller Online (UMV 409,000; Points 14) 2nd September 2020

(IMAGE 1 OF 3)

TRAVEL |

The Big Sleep Awards 2020: 48 of the world's best new hotels

From jaw-dropping design to exceptional service, our annual hotel awards are back and reward the very best trend-setting, rule-breaking and game-changing hotels in the business.

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ndown service at Cirqa, Arequipa, Peru, the winner of the Boutique Break category.

OTOGRAPH BY CIRQA

Wherever you check in on your adventures, there's no denying that a hotel can truly make a travel experience. The best are pillars of any great escape — a place that welcomes you with open arms, recharges and restores, all the while delivering top-notch service, incredible design and excellent value for money. It might be some time before many travellers rest their weary heads on the perfectly plumped pillow of a hotel suite, but that's no excuse not to dream, if you'll excuse the pun. In the 16 categories of our annual awards, this year more than ever we raise a glass to the new kids on the block who've been turning heads and setting the standard for the hotel scene — from urban design dens to stately stays in the country.

LEAVE THE WORLD BEHIND

Going off-grid needn't mean slumming it. These new, far-flung retreats are well-crafted oases that immerse visitors in the unspoilt beauty of nature.

Winner: Urban Cowboy Lodge, New York

Nestled in the Catskill Mountains, this lodge is a gateway to the great outdoors. The 68-acre grounds start with fire pits on the lawn, then fade to a wilderness threaded with hiking trails and creeks. Private decks and wood-burning pot belly stoves are some of the features of the 28 rooms and suites, set across five timber-clad buildings. For the interiors, co-owner Lyon Porter has achieved a nostalgic-yet-chic vibe based on Navajo-inspired geometric patterns, hunting lodge flourishes and antiques. At The Dining Room restaurant, meanwhile, the focus is on 'holistic' dishes and local produce. From US\$175 (£134).

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LOVE SHACK

These chic retreats are all about the romance, from Burton-and-Taylor-worthy honeymoon hotels to weekend escapes beyond your wildest dreams.

Winner: Paragon 700, Ostuni, Italy

When the setting is this spectacular, the love story almost writes itself. Set within the only red palazzo in the 'white city' of Ostuni (so named for its dazzling whitewashed buildings), Paragon 700 has all the intimacy of an 11-room hotel, but with the unabashed grandeur of a Renaissance palace. The lavish swirl of frescoed ceilings, cathedral-height doors and monumental, custom-made headboards are enough to sweep any hopeless romantic off their feet. Each room is individually designed and, in a wonderfully fitting renovation, the palazzo's old water cistern is now a plum spa, replete with a hammam and a relaxation lounge clad in Himalayan salt walls. Most importantly, however, given its setting in the sun-baked south, it's (supposedly) the only hotel in town with an outdoor pool. Doubles from €300 (£272), B&B.



The red palazzo in Puglia's 'white city', Paragon 700 in Ostuni supposedly boasts the only outdoor pool in the city centre.

PHOTOGRAPH BY PARAGON 700

Runners-up:

Camissa House, Cape Town

Meaning 'place of sweet water', a name given to the area by the Khoi people, this secluded Cape Town hotel has Table Mountain as its back garden and harbour views from its roof terrace. The eight rooms have egg-shaped bathtubs, bespoke wallpaper and thick rugs, making this the perfect place to be barefoot and blissed-out. Doubles from ZAR 8,610 (£376).

Parilio, Paros, Greece

This spot on sleepy Paros has all the whitewashed charm you could want from a Greek island hotel, but with seriously ramped-up luxury. Private terraces for all 33 suites, a striking pool and a plush restaurant mean you'll rarely need to step foot off-property. Doubles from €152 (£137), B&B.

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(IMAGE 3 OF 3)