

# Condé Nast Traveller

THE WORLD MADE LOCAL  
MAY-JUNE-JULY 2023 | ₹200

INDIAN EDITION

## THE 2023 HOT LIST

Our favourite new hotels  
from around the world

★ PLUS ★  
**GOING VEG IN  
SWITZERLAND**  
WHERE TO EAT  
IN LONDON  
**BOUTIQUE  
MUMBAI**  
DEEP INSIDE  
CONGO'S JUNGLE

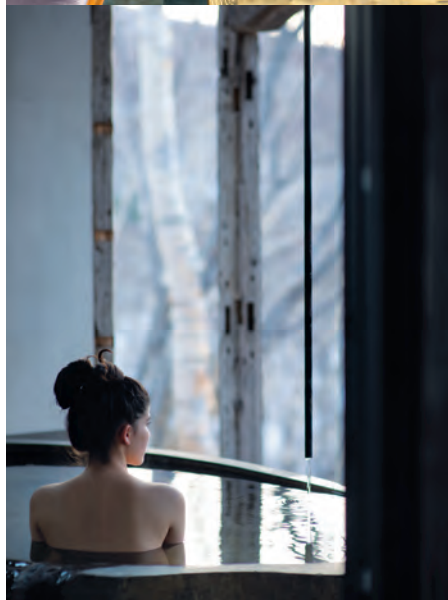
# Love & TRAVEL

From the Irish countryside to the gardens of  
Srinagar, journeys across space, time and emotions

# THE 2023 HOT LIST

Our pick of the best new hotels in the world

PHOTOGRAPH: HIMANSHU LAKHWANI



switching off and tuning in to the rhythms of the woodpeckers. DANIELLE DEMETRIOU  
From ₹50,425 per person; [shiguchi.com](http://shiguchi.com)

**INDIA**  
**DOLKHAR, LEH**

The Dolkhar is set around an apricot and apple orchard, on a plot of land that once belonged to owner Rigzin Wangmo Lachic's grandmother. That connection to the land comes out in every aspect of this seven-villa boutique property, from the menu at the plant-based restaurant Tsas—with food made using local ingredients along with those unique to Ladakh, such as tsamik, a herb found only in Turtuk—to the construction materials used, and in the furnishings and amenities sourced from artisanal communities across the Union Territory. Each of the villas at The Dolkhar is built across two levels—living and dining areas on the lower floor and bedrooms above. The property sports fun design elements like the use of willow and poplar in the roofing, Multani mitti from Spituk that's mixed with hay to coat the walls, and merlot and deep green stones from Chilling that are used to create feature walls. What makes the space particularly cosy is the use of yak and sheep wool rugs, cushion covers, and throws handmade by women artisans. Keeping with the local theme, in-room goodies feature local herbal teas and cookies called pulli. The result? A space that feels rooted while still giving you an experience that's recognisably contemporary. PRASAD RAMAMURTHY  
*Doubles from ₹25,000; [dolkharladakh.com](http://dolkharladakh.com)*

**INDIA**  
**TAJ AMER, JAIPUR**

Expansive is a word that applies to every aspect of Taj Amer in Jaipur. Grand arches frame the entrance while large chandeliers suspended from the ceilings bathe the whole space in opulent gold tones. Located in Kukas, close to the stunning Amer Fort, the Taj Amer is in a historical neighbourhood where erstwhile maharajas of Jaipur lived.. This regal past imbues its elegant design. The 245 rooms, of which 20 are suites, are contemporary in their look and feel but with a distinct Rajasthani touch. Intricate jaali and latticework, traditional lotus and peacock motifs and gold accents merge with a sleek modern aesthetic to create a 21st century version of royal living. Large picture windows in the rooms and suites offer views across the rolling Aravallis; the infinity pool and bar are perfect for a sundowner overlooking

for manure in the kitchen garden. Food is uniformly delicious, particularly the Kumaoni meal of lai (wild mustard) ki subzi, bhatt (local black soybean) ki dal, pahadi mutton, and bhaang (hemp seeds) ki chutney. Thanks to the wonderful host and the warm, ever-smiling staff, it seems like we are staying at a friend's family estate—albeit one that's travelled back in time. PRACHI JOSHI *Doubles from ₹18,800; [bluebookhotels.co](http://bluebookhotels.co)*

**JAPAN**  
**SHIGUCHI, HOKKAIDO**

From Shiguchi's hot tub—a giant rock, sliced in half, its excavated interior filled with volcanic onsen water—the dazzling whites of the valley are broken only by an ink-line of trees and the scarlet legs of a woodpecker in a nearby birch tree. Such is life at this escapist nirvana, in a wild corner of Niseko, on Japan's northernmost island of Hokkaido. Named after a traditional Japanese carpentry technique that joins

beams without nails, Shiguchi is about connection: between humans and nature, art and architecture, and possibly bathers and birds. English artist, collector, and long-time Niseko resident Shouya Grigg meticulously relocated five old kominka farmhouses from across Japan. Shiguchi's heartbeat is its gallery and restaurant, Somoza, where impressive woodwork is tempered by shelves of ceramics, abstract paintings and walls of glass framing valley views. Days might be whiled away drinking matcha in a floating tatami mat space wrapped in steel screens, discovering Ainu art artefacts in the lower-level gallery space or talking art with Grigg over dinners of wild Niseko, from foraged mushrooms to melt-in-the-mouth venison. Pathways cut into walls of snow lead to five spacious and atmospheric villas, with high-tech kitchens, rock or cypress bathtubs and deliciously soft Babaghuri pyjamas. Sturdy timberwork is the backdrop for antique furniture, fire stoves and artworks. But the real privilege here is

PHOTOGRAPHS: ATUL PRATAP CHAUHAN; SHOUYA GRIGG

## INDIA VILLA PALLADIO JAIPUR

Villa Palladio is a riotous ode to Rajasthani craftsmanship and colour. On the outskirts of Jaipur, it is as much a bijou wunderkammer as a retreat, with striking white crenellated walls above red awnings and a delicious confection of carved stone trellises, block-printed fabrics, hand-painted walls and chequerboard marble courtyards. Swiss-Italian hotelier Barbara Miolini and her Danish design collaborator Marie-Anne Oudejans' dual imagination shines bright in this restoration of a traditional haveli townhouse. Nine dollhouse-like rooms come patterned in red and white with gold accents, each with cloud-like beds, printed bath robes, and soft Jaipuri slippers. The forested hills of the lesser Aravallis are picturesquely framed in the arches of the breakfast terrace, and candlelit dinners are brightened by starlight. The spa offers Tibetan treatments and the sun-warmed pool has a candy-striped cabana and pavilion bar. At night, the dining area serves Italian and Indian food in a gorgeous, secret-garden-like space. DIVYA MISHRA *Doubles from about ₹31,500; villa-palladio-jaipur.com*

**Villa Palladio.**  
Opposite page,  
clockwise, from top  
left: **the ambience,**  
**food, and rooms**  
**at Shiguchi**

# HOTLIST 2023

the hills. The hotel concierge can set up culture tours and excursions around the city. For those who want to stay indoors, there is plenty to indulge in—from rejuvenating treatments at the Jiva Spa to an array of food and drink options across the three in-house restaurants. Or simply unwind at the poolside bar and lobby lounge. ARUNDHATI AIL *Doubles from ₹13,300; tajhotels.com*

## ITALY

### PASSALACQUA, LAKE COMO

From a pale amber villa shuttered in sage, seven acres of olive groves, mimosa, roses, jasmine, and magnolia descend to the glittering waters of Lake Como, wafting their fragrance into the sleepy air. A perfectly confected 24-suite hotel born of a 1787 neoclassical villa, Passalacqua is a second Como property for the De Santis family. The 12 suites in the original villa are baroque Italian, with original frescoes and ceiling carvings. Silks, etched Barbini mirrored cabinets, and Bordini leather ottoman tables join Bottega Conticelli vintage-style steamer trunks, concealing televisions that can be watched ensconced in billowy Beltrami linens. The rest of the lodgings are divided between the eight-suite Palazz, set within the repurposed ancient stables, with walls stencilled in damask patterns and a small spa. Down by the lake, Casa al Lago, an updated 1970s house with hand-painted silk walls and bronze light fittings, whose four suites can be booked exclusively or by the room. Guests congregate on the colourful swimming terrace for unfussy Lombardy lunches where the 200-year-old greenhouse and jaunty La DoubleJ-designed



## Kyagar, Ladakh.

Bottom left:  
pool area at  
Passalacqua

floral parasols offer a cheeky riposte to the formal villa interiors. Passalacqua deliciously recaptures the lost art of villeggiatura: taking to a country villa, and revelling in il dolce far niente. LYDIA BELL *Doubles from about ₹71,302; passalacqua.it*

## INDIA

### KYAGAR, LADAKH

The word “location” takes on a whole different meaning at this boutique hotel in Ladakh’s Nubra Valley. Situated on what was once the Silk Route, Kyagar is where owner Rinchen Kalon’s ancestors welcomed traders who braved the jagged peaks of the Himalayas to cross over to Ladakh. Located in Sumur, 117km from Leh, the 16-key property, with eight cottages, tries to get travellers to explore more of Ladakh. Sea buckthorn and rosehip bushes that dot the property are home to a variety of finches, warblers, serins, redstarts, and more. During

breakfast, as you dip khambir—the local sourdough—into your cup of steaming butter tea, don’t forget to look up to spot hawks and eagles careening through the sky. Kyagar also makes an attempt to leave as light a footprint as possible—the place is solar-powered and the food, locally sourced. Should you wish, the kitchen at Kyagar is happy to whip up a traditional meal, but also serves a wide range of regional Indian, European, and Asian dishes. Try the spicy pork fry with tingmo, a local steamed bun; momos with generous mutton fillings; and the earthy morel soup. Wash it down with Kalon’s mean batch of arrak, a local alcoholic beverage made from barley. As if Nubra’s mighty mountains aren’t enough, the night sky here is a true sight to behold: thousands of tiny pinpricks dot an inky blue canvas, making it a star-studded stay. SMITHA MENON *Doubles from ₹14,000; thekyagar.com*