

Can owning a holiday bolthole abroad ever be ecofriendly? 22



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Travel Best Places to Stay 2019

LONDON

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THE HOXTON

NEW SOUTHWARK 11 11 & ££

The Hoxton hotels attract those popping by as well as those staying over. Its latest offering has a Manhattan feel, from the spectacular bar to the roof garden with views of the City. On the ground floor is the Albie, named after Prince Albert – Queen Victoria and her husband had one of their boats docked nearby. The menu is “40% vegetarian or vegan”, with dishes such as burrata and courgette flowers, and crab linguine. There are 192 rooms, ranging from Shoebox to Biggy. All have king-size beds, Crittall-style warehouse windows and bathrooms with copper showerheads. Breakfast bags (granola bars, fruit and juice) are delivered to your room. Doubles from £139; mains from £12; thehoxton.com

BINGHAM RIVERHOUSE

RICHMOND 11 11 & ££

The Bingham, on a gentle bend of the Thames, was an artistic hub in the late 19th century, with visitors including John Ruskin and WB Yeats. In the 1980s, the Trinder family bought the pile, and it's now been given a magnificent refurb. The result is beautiful and homely: the 15 midcentury-modern bedrooms have copper baths and, in some cases, river views. Downstairs, there's an art-filled bar, a lounge lined with vintage paperbacks and a chandeliered dining room. The restaurant serves courgette risotto and lamb loin with goat's curd mash. Avocado is piled high on toast for breakfast. Doubles from £120; three-course dinner £45; binghamriverhouse.com



The view of St Pancras from Decimo, at the Standard. Bottom, the Belmond Cadogan

BELMOND CADOGAN NEW

CHELSEA 11 11 & £££

The Belmond Cadogan, on Sloane Street – a hotel since 1887 – reopened this February after a five-year refurb. It has a new spa, a gym, a library and a fresh feel. It's filled with art, including paintings by five British female artists, who took inspiration from the private garden on

Cadogan Place – to which, as a guest, you have a key. Adam Handling oversees the food, from dishes such as salt-aged duck with cherries to the croissants, afternoon tea and cocktails. The 54 rooms and suites have blond parquet floors with geometric rugs, and the beds are huge. The Royal Suite encompasses Room 118, Oscar Wilde's regular pied à

terre, where he was arrested in 1895 on charges of indecency. Doubles from £470; five courses £70; belmond.com

THE STANDARD NEW

KING'S CROSS 11 11 & ££

The first European branch of the US hotel chain is rocking. Its 10th-floor restaurant, Decimo, opened last week, with Peter Sanchez-Iglesias, from the Michelin-starred Casamia, in Bristol, at the helm. The styling is retro, with nods to the London Underground. There are single rooms, windowless ones (“cosy cores”), and others with views over St Pancras and baths on the terrace. There's a touch of the gentlemen's club in the use of leather and tweed, and you can watch the traffic with a gherkin martini (£8) in the red-lacquered Double Standard bar. Isla, the ground-floor restaurant, offers small plates such as burrata with pickled courgette; it overlooks the Library Lounge, with its DJ booth ready to party. Doubles from £199; tasting menus at Decimo from £65, small plates at Isla from £7; standardhotels.com

ONE ALDWYCH

COVENT GARDEN 11 & £££

In the former home of the Morning Post newspaper, One Aldwych is encircled by the Strand, Aldwych and Wellington Street. After a four-month revamp, there's more space to sit at the bar, an intriguing new cocktail menu and a soothing colour scheme of coral, soft blue and lavender in the 102 rooms. Room 604 has views of the Shard from the tub. There are two restaurants: Eneko offers pricy Basque food, including piperrak peppers and txuleta steak, in the former print room; on the mezzanine above the bar, Indigo serves braised lamb belly and beer-batter fish and chips. Bag a table by the balcony for the bar buzz. Doubles from £385; sharing plates at Eneko from £8, two courses at Indigo £24; onealdwych.com

BANKSIDE NEW

SOUTHWARK 11 11 & £££

A shrine to steel and glass, Bankside reflects its glossy location. It's part of Marriott's Autograph Collection, but still local-minded. Art is at the heart of its design, from the brutalist concrete wall blocks in the lobby to a mezzanine stocked with pottery. There's an in-house studio with a resident artist. Postmodern prints pattern the open-plan Art Yard restaurant, where the food is a mix of European, Middle Eastern and Asian sharing plates, from mushroom arancini to monkfish curry with dhal. Bread comes from London Bridge, honey from the rooftop beehives. Rooms are grey and gold, with prints of the Barbican. Doubles from £234, B&B; mains from £12; banksidehotel.com

VINTRY & MERCER NEW

CITY OF LONDON 11 11 & £££

This 92-room boutique hotel east of St Paul's rubs shoulders with the livery halls and guilds. Vintry and Mercer are nearby wards, historic hubs for wine and textile merchants. Rooms are small but sumptuous, with rich velvet upholstery and hand-stitched wallpaper. The tapas menu in the Izakaya restaurant includes miso-glazed aubergine and salmon sashimi tostada. In the basement is Do Not Disturb, a speakeasy with sepia photographs of 1920s ladies. The table to book is at the Mercer Roof Terrace, where the dining room has a wide alfresco terrace, a modern British menu – enormous steaks, lamb chops – and great views south across the river. Doubles from £255; mains from £18; vintryandmercerc.com



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THE DIXON NEW

SOUTHWARK 11 & ££
Restored with advice from Historic England, the Dixon is in the old Tower Bridge magistrates' court and police station. A grand portico greets guests; inside, there are mugshots of the accused. The centrepiece is the former courtroom, now a bar. Two prison cells have been retained in the Provisioners restaurant, which offers linguine with burrata and wagyu beef burger with raclette cheese and fries; pistachio dukkah rosti florentine is on the menu for brunch. The 40 rooms in the original building have high ceilings and sash windows. The other 153 are in the sleek extension; 606 and 608 have views of Tower Bridge. Doubles from £199, B&B; mains from £15.50; thedixon.co.uk

REDCHURCH TOWNHOUSE

SHOREDITCH 11 & ££
The latest addition to Soho House is one of its peachiest. It opened last autumn, and the decor's as sharp as a Harry Styles suit, but its affordability makes it relaxed. There's a branch of the group's popular trattoria-style Cecconi's restaurant, where you can tuck into sharing bowls of lobster spaghetti or, on Sundays, a lunch buffet of cicchetti, oysters, risottos, roasts and tiramisu. Breakfast is fruit, pastries and eggs any style. The 37 bedrooms are an ode to the 1960s and 1970s, with sizes ranging from Large to Tins – crash pads, really, though with a king-size bed and a rainforest shower. Doubles from £150; mains from £7; redchurchtownhouse.com



A Sky Garden at the Stratford. Below, the Hoxton, Southwark

MAMA SHELTER NEW

BETHNAL GREEN 11 & £
The first Mama Shelter opened in Paris in 2008. Now it's all over the world, and has landed in east London, near Broadway Market and Victoria Park. It delivers on style, with neon signage and ceiling frescoes, and on price. The trendy dining area blends Gallic classics with British favourites: caper-flecked steak tartare and paneer tikka "kebab". At the weekends, there's a DJ booth in the covered courtyard bar. Bedrooms are Single, Small, Medium or Double-double (two double beds). Choose one facing the quiet internal courtyard, rather than the far-from-glossy Hackney Road. Doubles from £99, B&B; mains from £12; mamashelter.com/en/london

THE STRATFORD NEW

STRATFORD 11 & ££
The Stratford, a 42-storey skyscraper, was designed by the architects behind the Burj Khalifa. It's a 145-room hotel with a gym and a yoga room, then, above this, lofts for longer-term rentals. The three Sky Gardens have sunken firepits, alfresco bars and views of the Olympic park. Guests have access to the seventh-floor garden around the Allegra restaurant, which serves dishes such as sake-steamed turbot with kohlrabi. The Stratford Brasserie is more relaxed. Rooms are big for London, in a palette of greys with flashes of coral. Some look out over the Westfield shopping centre's loading bays, but you can keep the curtains closed. Doubles from £199; mains from £10; thestratford.com



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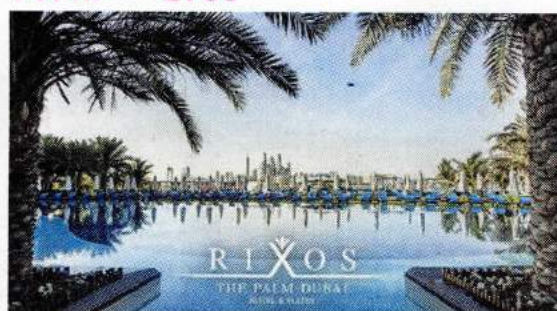
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