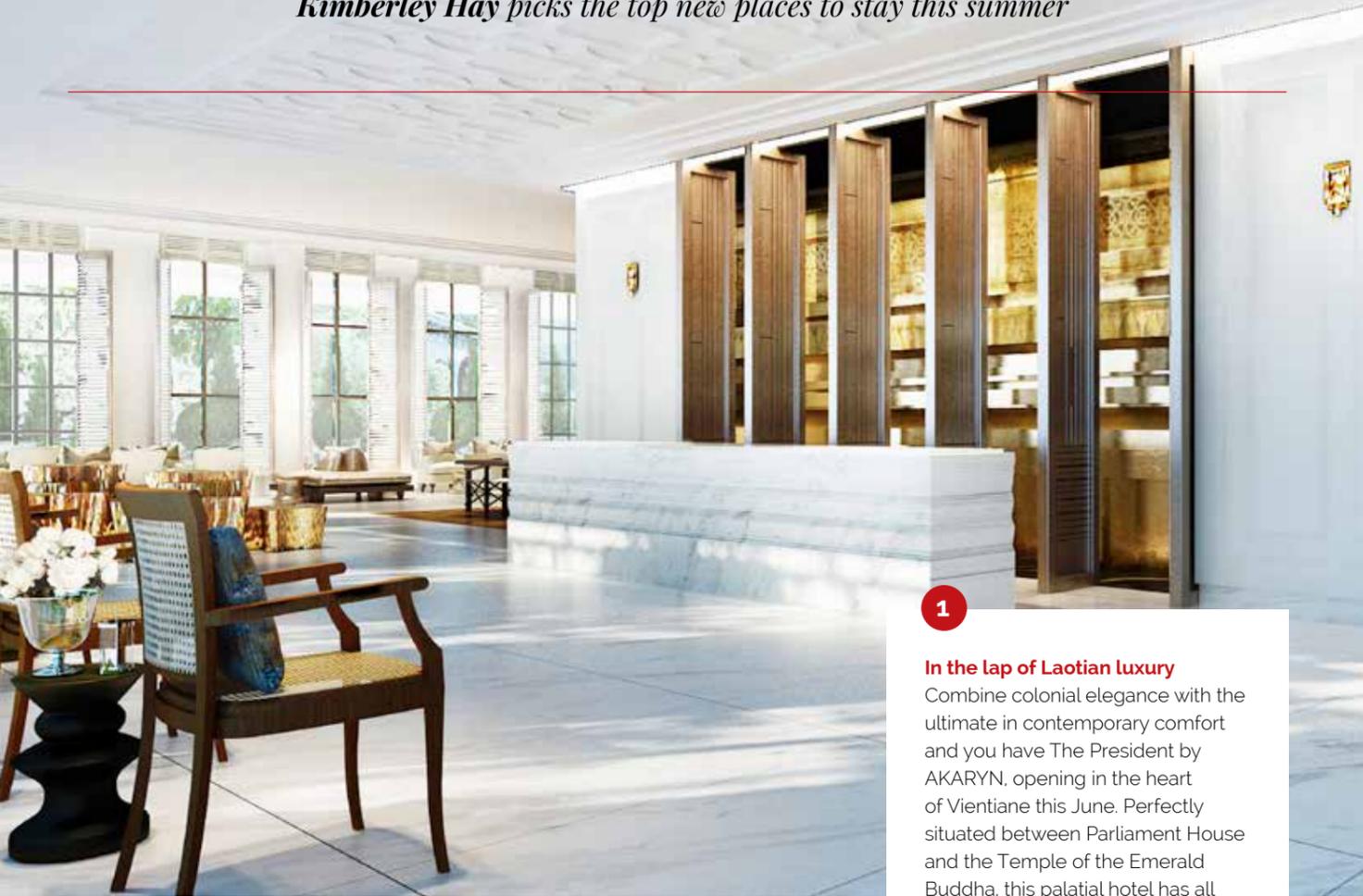


Hot List - Summer 2016

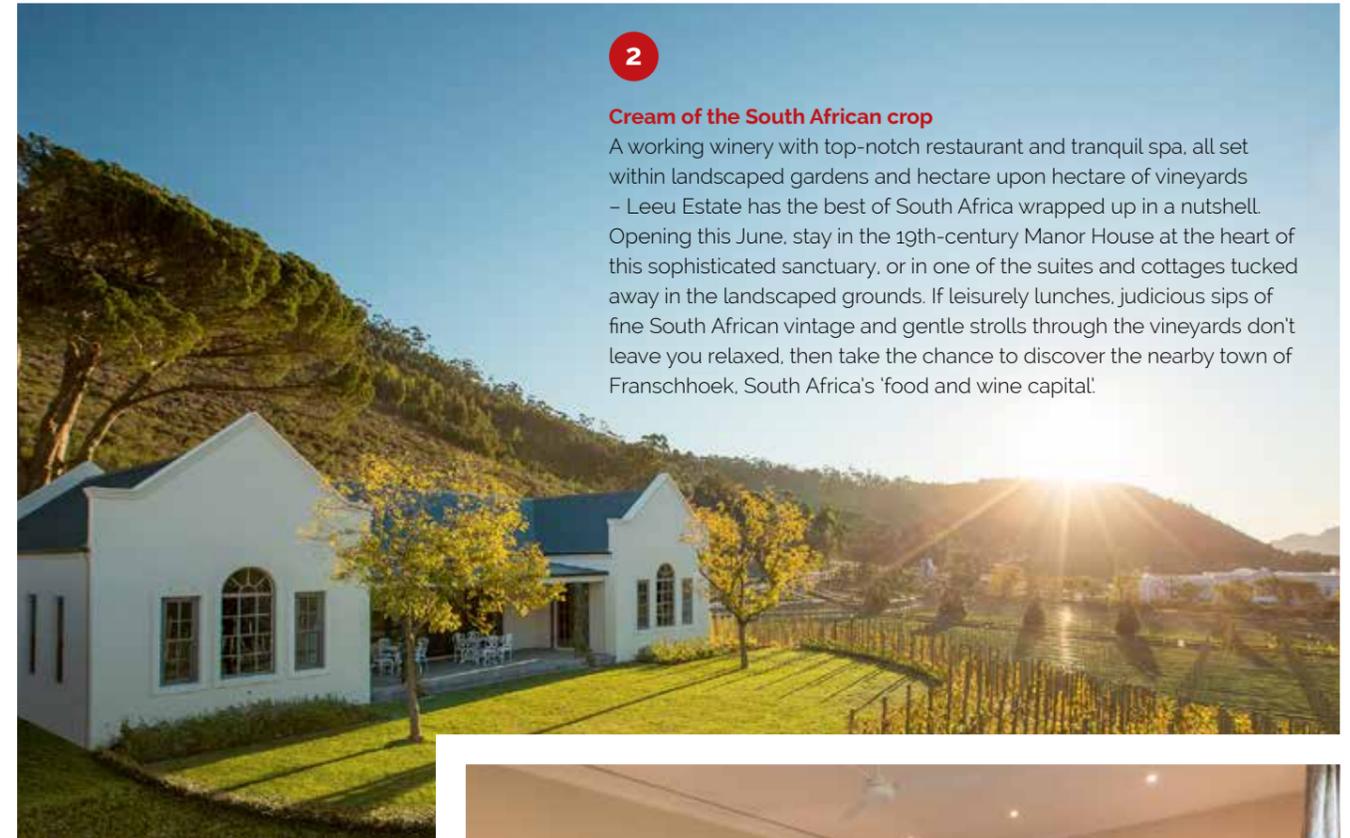
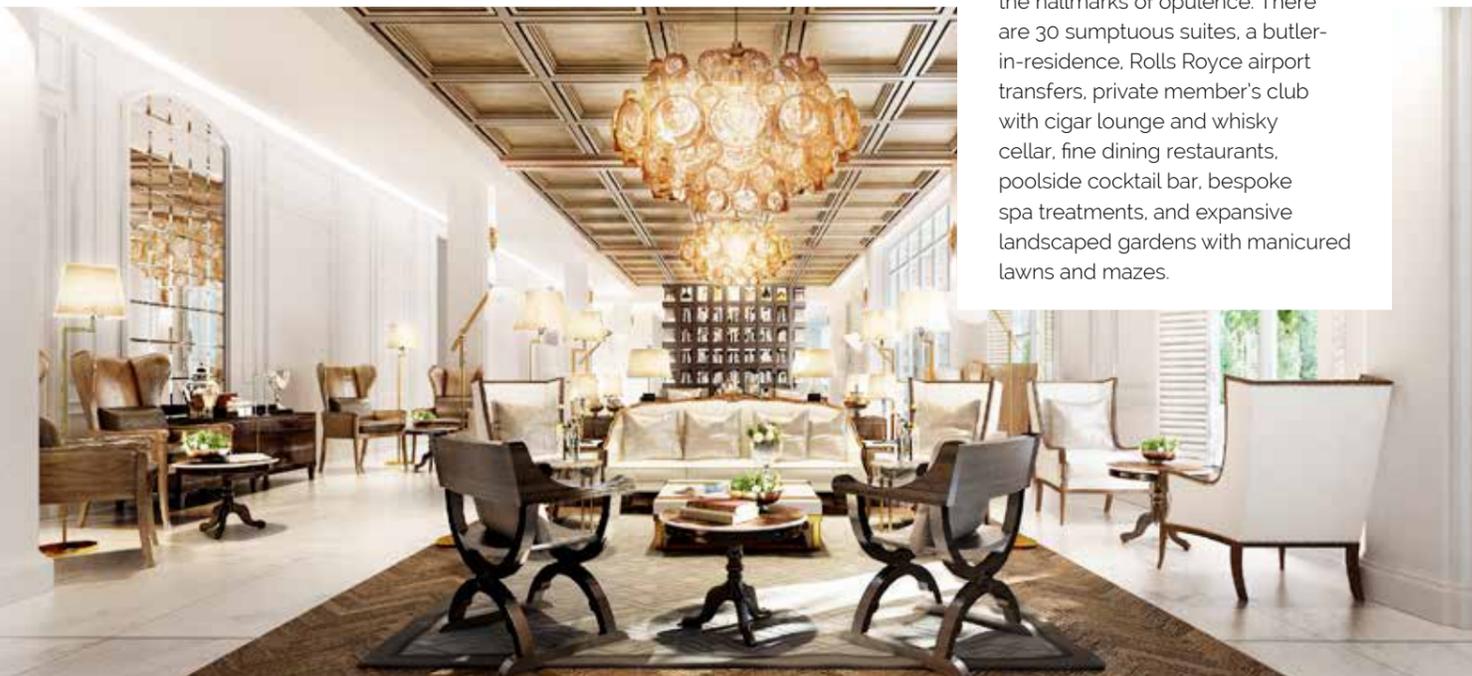
Kimberley Hay picks the top new places to stay this summer



1

In the lap of Laotian luxury

Combine colonial elegance with the ultimate in contemporary comfort and you have The President by AKARYN, opening in the heart of Vientiane this June. Perfectly situated between Parliament House and the Temple of the Emerald Buddha, this palatial hotel has all the hallmarks of opulence. There are 30 sumptuous suites, a butler-in-residence. Rolls Royce airport transfers, private member's club with cigar lounge and whisky cellar, fine dining restaurants, poolside cocktail bar, bespoke spa treatments, and expansive landscaped gardens with manicured lawns and mazes.



2

Cream of the South African crop

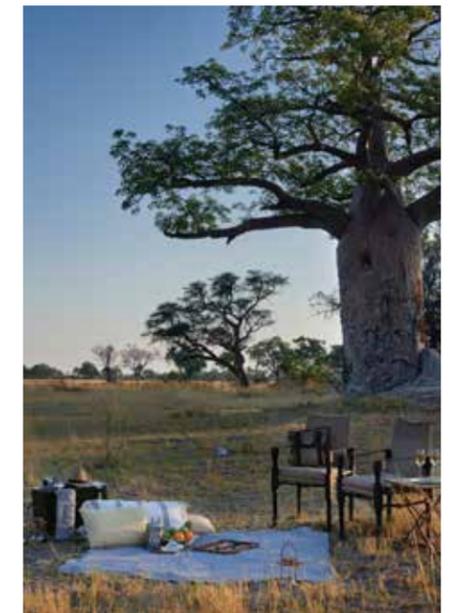
A working winery with top-notch restaurant and tranquil spa, all set within landscaped gardens and hectare upon hectare of vineyards – Leeu Estate has the best of South Africa wrapped up in a nutshell. Opening this June, stay in the 19th-century Manor House at the heart of this sophisticated sanctuary, or in one of the suites and cottages tucked away in the landscaped grounds. If leisurely lunches, judicious sips of fine South African vintage and gentle strolls through the vineyards don't leave you relaxed, then take the chance to discover the nearby town of Franschhoek, South Africa's 'food and wine capital'.



3

Waterworld

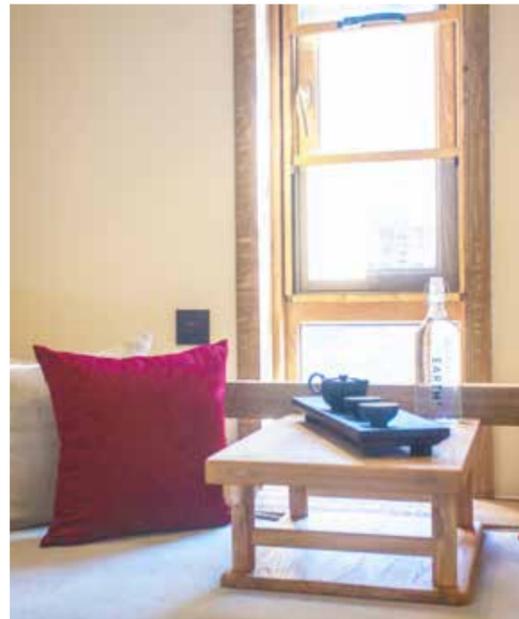
Take to the waters of Botswana's Okavango delta, one of the world's largest inland water systems, from the newly revamped Belmond Eagle Island Lodge. Perched on a private island encircled by some of the deepest stretches of the delta, this lodge fuses early-explorer adventure with 5-star luxury. By day, venture out on any number of water-safari excursions to spot the abundance of bird and aquatic wildlife, complemented by larger mammals and possible sightings of elusive big cats. In the evening, return to tented rooms with private rim-flow plunge pools, walk-in wardrobes and oversized beds with delta views. Dine alfresco overlooking the lagoon or by the firepit under a myriad of stars.



4

Spiritual healing

Set in the sun-drenched valley of Benzilan in the Yunnan province of China is LUX* Tea Horse Road Benzilan, one of the few accommodation options in this unspoilt area, and a lavish one at that. Inspired by the cultural legacy of this ancient trade route and the surrounding majesty of nature, this 30-room hotel provides supreme comfort and true Tibetan hospitality. Explore the surrounding mountains and glaciers on hikes along hidden trails and mushroom-picking missions, meditate with the monks at nearby monasteries, dine with genuine Tibetan hosts – in short, let go of modern-day troubles and ease into a simple yet more indulgent way of life.



6

A natural wonder

Tropical jungle, lakes, rolling waves and pristine beaches – Chena Huts not only offers an idyllic setting, but is home to a huge array of spectacular wildlife ranging from elephants and leopards to over 215 species of birds. Opened in December 2015, this is the first luxury safari lodge to be housed within the Yala National Park. Stay in 'huts' – or rather plush, private pavilions with an outdoor deck and plunge pool. The resort's all-day dining restaurant is just steps away, as is the immense wilderness and teeming animal and birdlife of Sri Lanka's oldest and second-largest nature reserve.



5

Take a deco

Think 1930s glamour and grandeur and you have the Primus Hotel Sydney. Originally the headquarters for the Sydney Water Board, the immense spaces and stunning architecture of this building were re-opened to the public in December 2015. Sensitively restored back to its iconic art deco design, the Primus Hotel Sydney features spacious rooms and suites, an imposing main lobby bar, high-end dining, and a heated rooftop pool and sundeck. Centrally located, the hotel is within easy reach of Sydney's shops, restaurants and harbour.



RIGHT NOW...

Insider tips to help you plan where to go and when

The pound sterling may have wobbled against some currencies as the EU referendum looms, but it is still attractively strong against many others and there are bargains to be had, says Compass Editor Jennifer Cox.

Japan

This year, British travellers will find Japan 50% cheaper than it was in 2013, due to the weakness of the yen and strength of the sterling. This means you'll pay around £6 to get into one of the fabled Japanese hot springs, and a plate of sushi from a restaurant conveyor belt will set you back a mere 60p!

Namibia

This is the perfect time to be planning a self-drive tour of beautiful Namibia. With around 22 Namibian dollars to the pound, diesel costs just 50p a litre, meaning you could fill a Ford Ranger 4WD for just £40. Locally sourced diamonds are exceptional quality and value too.

South Africa

Sterling is at an all-time high against the rand: currently at R22 to the pound, your holiday money will go twice as far as it did in 2010. For instance, a dish of miso-marinated baby chicken served with kale and granny apple kimchi at Babel – the revered restaurant between Paarl and Stellenbosch in the Winelands – will cost just £8.

Russia

Both Moscow and St Petersburg currently offer exceptional value, with around 100 rubles to the pound. For instance, a three-course lunch at Moscow's gorgeous Cafe Pushkin costs just £9. And a steam at St Petersburg's historic Yamskie bathhouse (loved by Lenin and Dostoevsky) costs just £5.

