

# Globetrotter

It's the month of love so we're comparing lodgings in the City of Light, introducing Myanmar's most captivating locale and meandering across borders as we taste the romance of rail travel. Here's what's hot in travel this month...



## Introducing... THE ST. REGIS MALDIVES VOMMULI RESORT

**L**ove it or hate it, February is all about Valentine's Day, and, in one of the most romantic destinations on the planet, what better time to introduce the newest addition to the world's most beautiful archipelago.

Amid the azure waters of the Indian Ocean and surrounded by swaying coconut palms, The St. Regis Maldives Vimmuli Resort is the brand's first ever private island resort, and what a debut it is.

Spread over lagoon, beach, coast and jungle, the 77 island and over-water villas, all with private pools, are scattered throughout these areas, each of which offers something unique. The lagoon boasts a water amphitheatre and The Iridium Spa; the beach has two signature waterfront restaurants; and the jungle houses a recreational centre and pop-up café. Beautifully designed with bespoke service,

those looking for all-out spectacular should book into the Astor Estate, the largest private villa in the entire country, covering 1,530 sq m. With a dedicated St. Regis Butler, a huge infinity pool, private fitness centre, mini-theatre and dedicated spa suite, this is quite possibly paradise found.

As well as endless castaway vistas, guests can enjoy the Blue Hole Pool, the Maldives' largest heated seawater hydrotherapy pool, dine on gourmet street food in a restaurant fashioned from an old shipping container, and discover Vommuli House, the expansive integrated recreational area. Go shopping at the Boutique, picking up the latest in fashion and accessories, indulge in star-gazing at the observatory tower or check out the water-sports centre for endless adventure on – or beneath – the crystal-clear waters.





## Escape to the City of Love

Paris became the world's most romantic city during the Belle Epoque, a title that it's retained to this day... do you prefer a palatial retreat or a touch of the exotic?

### FOUR SEASONS HOTEL GEORGE V

#### • What to expect?

Originally built in 1928, immerse yourself in stunning history and whimsical architecture at this palace hotel with the most illustrious floral displays in the country. Rooms are fittingly palatial, with period furniture, heaps of marble and vast dressing rooms. Bring your corgi, furry friends are welcome.

#### • Where?

Just a mile from the Eiffel Tower – perhaps the most romantic landmark on earth – and steps from the Champs-Élysées, this is the golden triangle of Paris and you simply couldn't be in a more romantic spot. Splurge on high-end shopping, visit the Arc de Triomphe and wonder at history amid the Grand Palais.

#### • Must-do?

There's nothing better than French fare, and Le Cinq is one of the city's best thanks to chef Christian Le Sueur. Settle into the beautiful La Galerie, where you can share some bubbles and feed one another home-made pastries from the elegant dessert cart accompanied by the sound of the resident pianist.

[fourseasons.com/paris](http://fourseasons.com/paris)

### HOTEL MAISON SOUQUET

#### • What to expect?

A magical *Moulin Rouge* moment in this exotic abode that brings to life one of the most lavish pages in the history of Paris. With just 20 rooms, expect beds garnished with lush drapes and rare silk, boudoir-style seating, tasselled lampshades and ornate mirrors – if romance is the order of the day, this place has you covered.

#### • Where?

Just a short walk from the rebuilt original Moulin Rouge cabaret, this hotel is on the street where Emile Zola lived, discreetly hidden behind an understated façade signalled by two red lanterns in the shopping, sightseeing and restaurant hub of Paris.

#### • Must-do?

The Reading Room, with its hidden bar, monumental fireplace and rich woodwork, is a must-dine and the hotel's Secret Spa – exclusively for guests who know to request the key – boasts a sparkling ceiling decorated with golden stars that shimmer above the swimming pool. Also check out the Musée national Gustave Moreau, a few minutes away.

[maisonsouquet.com](http://maisonsouquet.com)



#### • Insider

### A BIG FAT GREEK APPLE

If New York and Greece's largest city have been on your visit list for a while, get set to smile as Emirates launches a daily service between Dubai and Newark, via Athens, starting from 12 March. The new route offers global travellers another convenient access point to the popular New York Metropolitan area and will be the only year-round, non-stop daily service between the United States and Greece. Travel in true comfort by flying premium – book into one of the fully enclosed first-class suites or hop onto one of 42 angled (practically flat) business-class seats.



#### • Culture

### BEDOUIN ARTS

The word Bedouin conjures up various images of shifting sands, flowing robes and long, loping strides of camels, but the culture is about so much more. The largest collection of Bedouin artefacts outside the Middle East is on display at Florida's Ruth Funk Center of Textile Arts from now until 29 April. With more than 50 pieces including elaborately embroidered textiles and embellished metalwork, as well as several photographs, learn how the ancient people of Arabia embraced family life, craftsmanship and the arts amid the harsh conditions of the desert at this fascinating exhibit in America's sunshine state.





## Three ways to... Ride the rails

Whether thundering across Mongolian wilderness or threading through the heart of Europe, it's time to take it slow with ever-changing vistas and the sheer romance of rail

### Trans-Siberian

Swim in glacial lakes, wonder at Mongolian wilderness and immerse yourself in history on the world's greatest railway journey. Running at a whopping 9,290 km, Golden Eagle Luxury Trains will whisk you from Moscow to Vladivostok aboard a beautifully designed train where your private suite also comes with a personal cabin attendant to ensure that you and your loved one want for nothing.

### Venice Simplon-Orient Express

Travel through continental Europe as you relive the nostalgic age of rail travel from London to Venice via Paris, the Alps and the Venetian Lagoon. Don your finery and allow the white-gloved stewards to welcome you aboard this vintage sleeping train, complete with socialite bar car, resident pianist and caviar-heavy dining menus. Whizz across the world's most romantic continent in sheer style.

### Eastern & Oriental Express

Soar past gleaming pagodas and lush tea plantations, and catch glimpses of ancient village life aboard Belmond's colonial-style train. Cosy up in your private lounge on a banquette-style sofa, and enjoy how your cabin transforms into a plush bedroom by night as you pass the colours of Singapore, roll through southern Malaysian countryside and trundle into Thailand and all the drama of Bangkok.





#### • Food for thought THINK CRICKETS

Need more protein in your diet? Then don't let the idea of eating insects bug you as the foodie news of the moment is surprisingly much more crispy than it is crawly

#### Azul Condesa, Mexico City

In stylish Condesa in Mexico City, this buzzing restaurant offers attentive service, fine dining and grasshopper guacamole. Tasty and nutritious, expect a grittier, meatier-tasting avocado-based dip with a smoky undercurrent that goes perfectly with freshly baked tortillas.

#### D.O.M, Sao Paolo

When DJ and chef Alex Atala visited Sao Gabriel das Cachoeiras in a remote Amazon state, an old woman offered him a bowl of ants to snack on. Pleasantly surprised by their ginger-like taste, he added the item to the menu at Sao Paolo's stylish D.O.M, one of the world's best restaurants.

#### Archipelago, London

While Brits aren't known for their adventurous eating habits, this spot on central London's Cleveland Street is renowned for being a place to taste the exotic. The award-winning eatery serves up delicious creepy crawlies with the menu featuring dishes such as worm faux caviar and crispy chilli and garlic crickets.

#### • App WANNAGO

Add to your travel wish list with free app WannaGo, which helps you build and organise your visit lists by city. While it's still a little thin on the ground in places, this app has potential. Your must-visit spots are stashed on your profile page along with lists you follow from the app's dedicated Tastemakers, who are based in cities across North America, Europe and the Middle East. Get it on Google Play or the Apple store.

#### • Insider THE M SCENE

Just five minutes from the world's tallest building, the four-star M Hotel Downtown By Millennium – formerly the Radisson Blu Downtown – has opened its doors as the first of the M Hotel Brand in the UAE.



#### • Going up in the world ANCIENT WONDERS

*Where?* Yangon, Myanmar.

*Why?* Currently one of the most exciting places to be in all of Myanmar, Yangon – formerly Rangoon – is on the up, with serious investment across the country and new direct flights from Nepal's Kathmandu.

*What?* Reaping the benefits of Myanmar's recent political and economic liberalisation, buildings that were once decaying and monuments that were crumbling are being spruced up, and there's an entire influx of new

restaurants, bars and shops coupled with awe-inspiring scenic views (that have been around for centuries, of course).

*Where to stay?* In the heart of the city, the Sule Shangri-La is perfectly located; go for a Club Suite for sweeping Yangon views. Tuck into Burmese eats at Summer Palace restaurant and then step outside – you'll be at the centre of the action, with Bogoyko Market, China Town and Yangon's colonial buildings all within walking distance. Just a few minutes' drive away, the National Museum and Kandawgyi Lake await your visit.