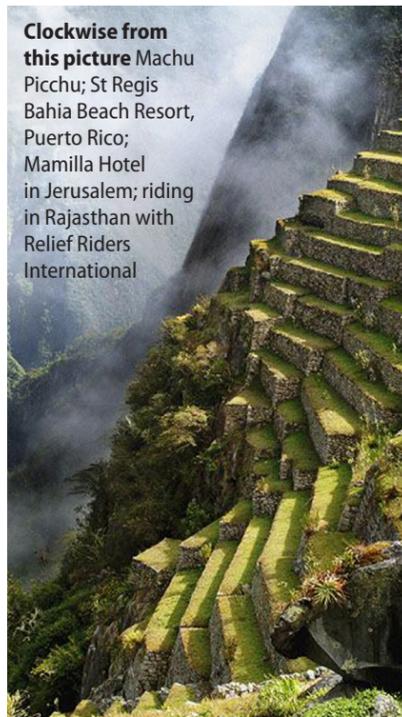
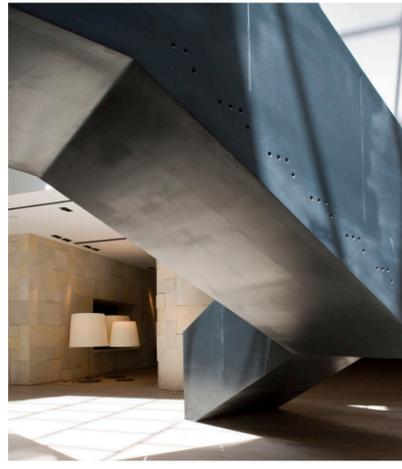


A TO Z OF THE YEAR AHEAD



Clockwise from this picture Machu Picchu; St Regis Bahia Beach Resort, Puerto Rico; Mamilla Hotel in Jerusalem; riding in Rajasthan with Relief Riders International

A IS FOR ANNIVERSARY

Trekkers the world over will be dusting down their walking boots in time for the 100th anniversary in July of Hiram Bingham's discovery of Machu Picchu. Those in the know will also head to Espiritu Pampa (the-traveller.co.uk), for this dramatic site was the Incan Empire's final outpost, not Machu Picchu as Bingham first proclaimed.

B IS FOR B HOTELS

Watch out for new hotel brand B Hotels and Resorts (bhotelsandresorts.com). Just like that other one-letter wonder, W Hotels, it is set to be super cool, with its eye on rapid expansion. First up is B Ocean in Fort Lauderdale Beach, opening early this year. B there or be...

C IS FOR COMMUNITY HOLIDAYS

Set to grow this year are holidays en masse, with the emphasis on having an experience to remember. 'It's where a group of friends, family or neighbours go away together,' says trends forecaster Kate Franklin. UK travel company Rural Retreats (ruralretreats.co.uk) also identifies an increasing demand for larger properties, for more than one family holidaying together.

D IS FOR DUBROVNIK

Following the opening of the impressive Radisson Blu Resort and Spa, and a new gondola ride to the top of the city's fortress, Dubrovnik has found its cool factor. 'It's a destination to watch for the year ahead,' says Tracy Long, consumer PR manager, BA Leisure. 'Bookings are up by 53 per cent for 2011. There's a real interest in the hundreds of islands along Croatia's coast, too.'

E IS FOR EXPERIENCE IT YOUNG

Forget about the kids' club – parents are demanding adventure, education and originality for their children on holiday. 'Parents are looking for more authentic experiences for their children,' says Christopher Wilmot-Sitwell, director of Cazenove+Loyd. Choices include experiencing life as a real Samburu warrior in Kenya.

F IS FOR FERNANDO DE NORONHA

Some 200 miles off the northeast coast of Brazil, Fernando de Noronha archipelago is gaining a reputation as one of the country's top eco-adventure destinations. Amazing diving and beautiful beaches await, and tourist numbers are restricted to preserve the ecosystem.

G IS FOR GIVE SOMETHING BACK

More tourists are choosing to combine a once-in-a-lifetime trip with community work. Relief Riders International (reliefridersinternational.com), for example, takes groups horse riding through the Thar Desert region of Rajasthan, India, dropping off medical and educational supplies to rural communities on its way.

H IS FOR HARLEM

New openings have put NYC's Harlem back on the map. Design-savvy hotel brand Aloft (aloft.com) brings the first hotel to the neighbourhood for more than 40 years. On Lenox Avenue, chef du jour Marcus Samuelsson has opened Red Rooster restaurant, while the Harlem Tavern opens soon in a former gas station on 116th Street.

I IS FOR IT BAGS

When it comes to luggage, it's all about luxe. British brand Moncrief (moncrieflondon.com) offers bags made from the finest leather, and each comes with a cashmere blanket. LA brand Marc Marmel (marcmarmel.com), meanwhile, is inspired by the bygone era of glamorous travel, with purposely aged leather cases lined with silk.

J IS FOR JERUSALEM

Following the opening of the region's first design-led, luxury Mamilla Hotel (mamillahotel.com), and the reopening late last year of the Israel Museum, Jerusalem has a new buzz. This year sees the launch of the Mamilla's 1,000sq m Akasha Holistic Wellbeing Centre.

K IS FOR KARNATAKA

Set to be the alternative to Goa for 2011 is Karnataka, southern India's least visited state. The location of Judi Dench's new film, *The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel* (out later in the year), it's excitingly diverse. Highlights include IT capital Bangalore, 320km of pristine coastline, vast jungle tracts, stunning monuments and atmospheric hill stations.

L IS FOR LOCAL

More hoteliers and restaurateurs are using locally sourced products. New York's Andaz Hotel (andaz.com) holds a farmers' market each Saturday. At NYC's just-opened Bell Book & Candle, chef John Mooney has a farm on his rooftop, while at the Six Senses Spa at Westin Paris (thewestinparis.com), honey from rooftop hives is used for facials.

M IS FOR MIDDLE EAST

The Middle East continues to see big-name openings. Abu Dhabi's Saadiyat Island welcomes the new St Regis and the Rotana Resort. At the Emirates Palace (emiratespalace.com), the focus is on food – with a Hakkasan opening and the first Emirati restaurant for UAE, Mezlai. The Angsara Eastern Mangroves (angsara.com) makes its brand debut in Abu Dhabi, and The Palm in Dubai will see a new One&Only resort (oneandonly.com). >

Marc Lecureuil (www.marclecureuil.com), Pavan Aldo/SIME/4Corners Images, Amit Geron



Perfect powder
The Haute Route, from Chamonix to Zermatt, for thrill seekers; Estancia Vik Jose hotel (below)

NIS FOR NEVIS
Nevis is a winner for those seeking Caribbean luxury. After a two-year refurb, the Four Seasons (fourseasons.com) will open with a de-luxe spa, and a new Aman Nevis Resort is slated for this year.

OIS FOR ORDER AHEAD
Packing light is the order of the day for 2011. In the UK, hqhair.com offers its holiday service, where you can choose from hundreds of big brands and cult products to be delivered in advance to your hotel anywhere in the world. In the US, suitearrival.com delivers special travel-sized, custom-made grooming kits to your destination.

PIS FOR PUERTO RICO
As well as BA's new twice-weekly service to San Juan from 28 March (ba.com), Puerto Rico sees its first five-star hotel, St Regis Bahia Beach Resort (stregis.com), with a Jean-Georges restaurant, vast spa and Trent Jones Jr golf course. Known for its beaches, historic capital and duty-free shopping, Puerto Rico is up there in the luxury travel stakes.

QIS FOR QUILALEA ISLAND
Quilalea Island is a private island off the coast of Mozambique with a marine sanctuary teeming with wildlife and deserted beaches. The luxurious Azura Aquile lodge opens this month.

RIS FOR RETREAT AT SEA
Some of the latest cruise liners offer the best spas around. The just-launched Norwegian Epic (epic.ncl.com/the-experience/spa) sold out for its maiden voyage from Southampton to New York last June. It boasts the biggest spa at sea and has teamed up with Bliss Spas for cool treatments.



SIS FOR SAN DIEGO
Brand-new for June 2011 is BA's non-stop route to San Diego (ba.com), a gem of a city. Stay in the waterfront Marriott Hotel and Marina (marriott.com), which is finalising its £121m renovation, and explore the surrounding beaches and wineries, such as the Bernardo (bernardowinery.com).

TIS FOR TALLINN
Tallinn in Estonia has been chosen as Cultural Capital for 2011 (tallinn2011.ee/events). Expect innovative art and music events, such as the Birgitta Festival, held in the ruins of a Gothic convent overlooking Tallin Bay.

UIS FOR URUGUAY
Uruguay is sealing its reputation as one of the coolest destinations in the world with the arrival of cutting-edge Fasano Hotel in Punta del Este (laspiedrasfasano.com), a favourite holiday haunt of the world's glitterati. It follows on from hip hotels Estancia Vik Jose and Playa Vik in nearby Jose Ignacio.

VIS FOR VANCOUVER
Check out the new Rosewood Hotel Georgia (rosewoodhotels.com), due to reopen in Vancouver in March. The historic hotel, first opened in 1927, has been revamped by interior designers Munge Leung, recalling its heyday of the 30s and 40s. Wildlife lovers can take a trip to King Pacific Lodge (kingpacificlodge.com), an eco bolt-hole in British Columbia. Visit in September and there's a chance you'll see the native white bear.

WIS FOR WILDERNESS
Get-away-from-it-all breaks are increasingly in demand. Pan Parks (panparks.org) is a network of areas untouched by human intervention across Europe. The 11 parks, such as the Central Balkan National Park in Bulgaria and the Majella National Park in Italy, offer a variety of wilderness experiences – from walking on high-elevation trails to seeing the Northern Lights near the Arctic Circle.

XIS FOR X-FACTOR
Thrill seekers will love the new kinds of trip on offer this year designed to get the heart racing, whether it's heli-skiing in Sweden's Arctic Odyssey (whiteblancmange.com), taking on the Haute Route ski mountaineering challenge, or experiencing the Juniper Trail through Bhutan (both at wildernessjourneys.com).

YIS FOR YURTS
A new take on glamping, yurts are big this year. The Hoopoe Yurt Hotel in Andalusia, Spain (yurthotel.com), has sumptuous yurts with private bathrooms overlooking the Grazalema mountains, while visitors to arty Marfa, Texas, should stay at El Cosmico (elcosmico.com), where the yurts are stylishly decorated with bamboo floors, lantern lighting and queen-sized futons.

ZIS FOR ZZZZZ
Sleep is big business like never before. Spanish hotel chain Hospes started the obsession when it launched its Learn to Sleep programmes in 2009 (being updated this spring). The Benjamin Hotel in New York has its own sleep concierge (thebenjamin.com), while at Crowne Plazas (crownplaza.co.uk), the Sleep Advantage programme features upgraded bedding, relaxation zones and low-glycaemic index menus. Ritz Carlton (ritzcarltonshops.com) offers Drift to Sleep spa treatments, and the brand reports its beds and duvets are top sellers at its hotel shops.

Words: Angelina Villa-Clarke. Photograph: Wilderness Journeys

3 OF THE BEST...

GADGETS TO BUY ON BOARD

From top the Travel-Easy LCD World Alarm Clock, £15, all routes; the Balanzza Digital Luggage Scales, £17, all routes; the Swap Active Mobile Phone Watch, £299, long-haul flights only and highlifesshop.com.

