

DEPARTURES

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2010

THE ART OF
LIVING
NOW
CHIC
AND
CLASSIC



BLACKBOOK

A GUIDE FOR THE SOPHISTICATED TRAVELER HERE & ABROAD

EDITED BY ANDREW SESSA

GOLDENEYE

Ian Fleming's beloved Jamaica retreat reopens in November after a two-year redo and expansion.

Itineraries

The Get-Away-Quick List

There's still time to book this season at some of the world's most promising new—and revamped—hotels. A global tip sheet.

When it comes to travel between Thanksgiving and New Year's, procrastination can lead to inspiration. "The key is thinking outside the box," says trip planner extraordinaire Lisa Lindblad. "Places that are off the beaten path or not thought of as winter destinations." Bill Fischer, another top agent and travel guru, agrees that there are always rooms to be found: "Clients constantly come to me only days before

they want to depart. We make it work no matter what."

In pursuing last-minute plans, it's smart to look for recently opened or relaunched properties. So DEPARTURES has done just that, calling on industry experts to help find places that haven't gotten overwhelmed by buzz—Soneva Kiri by Six Senses in Thailand, say—or have been flying under the radar while undergoing top-to-bottom renovations and expansions, like GoldenEye Hotel & Resort in Jamaica's Oracabessa Bay. What



SEE MORE AT departures.com

BEACH

Two classic Caribbean destinations are returning this season. On Jamaica's north coast, there's **GoldenEye Hotel & Resort** (from \$540; 876-975-3354; goldeneye.com), James Bond author Ian Fleming's famous residence. The 52-acre property is re-launching in November after a two-year renovation that added 11 cottages and six suites to the six original villas, one of which will become a new spa. There are also three main swimming beaches, including a peaceful lagoon. The popular,

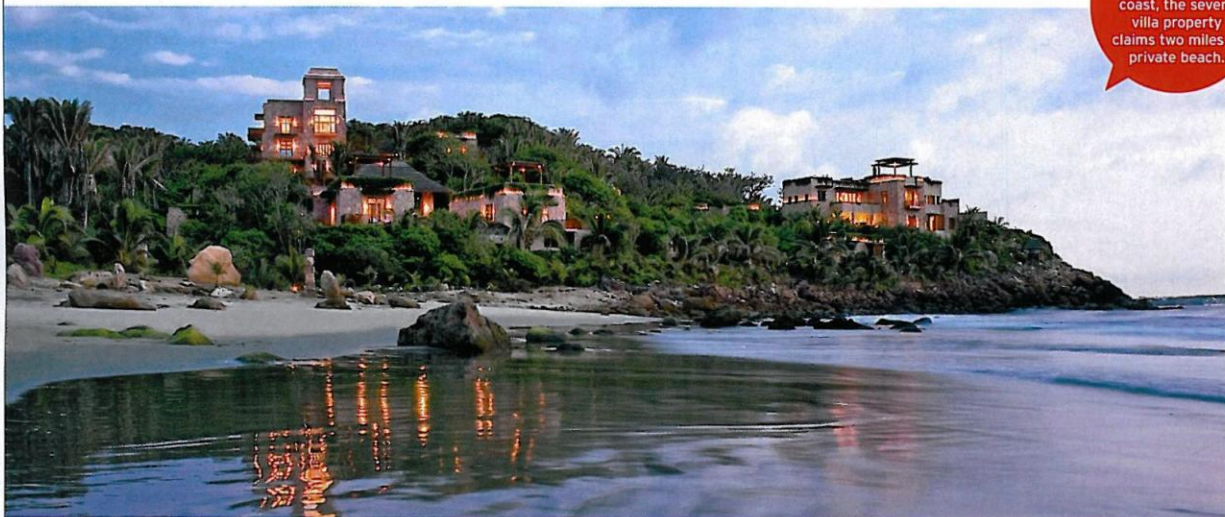
big Hawaii opening is the **Waikiki Edition** (from \$375; 808-943-5800; editionhotels.com), the first of hotelier Ian Schrager's new brand, a collaboration with Marriott. With an outdoor movie theater and a Morimoto restaurant, it has 353 rooms decorated in natural woods and plush white furniture. The beach is a quick walk away, but the hotel has its own lagoon with sand imported from the neighboring islands.

The nine-cottage **Uxua Casa Hotel** (from \$680; 55-73/3668-2277; uxua.com) opened last year in the bohemian fishing village of Trancoso, Brazil. Owned by a former Diesel

Matakauri Lodge (from \$520; 64-3/441-1008; matakaurilodge.com) reopened in August after a complete renovation by its new owner, U.S. hedge fund legend Julian Robertson (who also owns Kiwi properties Kauri Cliffs and Cape Kidnappers). The lakeside hotel is an ideal launching pad for activities like mountain biking, white-water rafting, golfing and sky-diving. At day's end, guests can dine at the modern European restaurant headed by Dale Gartland, late of New York's Per Se.

In Peru, the 128-room **Tambo del Inka** (from \$455; 51-84/581-777; luxurycollection.com) opened in May

IMANTA
In Punta de Mita, on Mexico's west coast, the seven-villa property claims two miles of private beach.



The smartest bets are on places that aren't yet overwhelmed by buzz or have flown under the radar.

200-room **Four Seasons Resort Nevis** (from \$450; 869-469-1111; fourseasons.com) returns in mid-December after a hurricane nearly destroyed it more than two years ago. With the opening so close to Christmas, it hasn't booked up completely, which means there are rare last-minute rooms at the typically sold-out spot.

In Mexico, the intimate, off-the-radar **Imanta Resorts** (from \$1,200; 52-329/298-4242; imantaresorts.com), 45 minutes north of Puerto Vallarta in Punta de Mita, boasts seven stone villas overlooking two miles of private beach. Dallas-based agent Jim Strong calls it "a hidden gem." And the

creative director, it includes a beachfront Bahian restaurant and a lounge made from abandoned fishing boats.

ADVENTURE

For a classic safari, there's southwest Kenya's **Olarro** (from \$340; 254-20/388-3312; olarrokenya.com), which reopened last year after a complete renovation. The eight-cottage property sits on a 10,000-acre conservancy an hour outside the Masai Mara. There are game drives into the famous reserve and hot air balloon rides, too. Just outside of Queenstown, New Zealand, the 11-suite

in the Sacred Valley. There's hiking, biking and kayaking through the rugged terrain, exploring the Incan ruins and mountain villages, and the property has its own train station for trips to Machu Picchu.

CITY

After three years of extensive renovations, **The Savoy** (from \$550; 44-20/7836-4343; fairmont.com), in London's West End, reopened in October with interiors by Pierre-Yves Rochon, an update of the legendary River Restaurant and 38 new suites and guest rooms in either English Edwardian or Art

Deco style, all overlooking the Thames. The **Mandarin Oriental, Barcelona** (from \$440; 34-93/151-8888; mandarinoriental.com) arrived last November on Passeig de Gràcia, Barcelona's famed shopping boulevard; its contemporary interiors are by Spanish architect Patricia Urquiola. In Paris, Raffles's highly-anticipated Philippe Starck-designed redo of the palace hotel Le Royal Monceau couldn't confirm availability, but a delightful alternative is **Le Pavillon des Lettres** (from \$400; 33-1/4924-2626; pavillonleslettres.com), the new sister property to Pavillon de la Reine. The hotel is steps from the Champs-Élysée, and each of its 26 rooms (all of which come with an iPad) is devoted to a letter of the alphabet and a corresponding writer—B for Baudelaire, say—with a book by the author on the nightstand and a quote written above the bed.

Back in the States, Miami Beach's new 50-room Soho Beach House may be full, but downtown the **JW Marriott Marquis Miami** (from \$330; 305-350-0750; jwmarriottmarquismiami.com) is just opening its doors. In addition to the 313 guest rooms, there's a huge entertainment complex (golf school, virtual bowling alley, basketball court) plus Daniel Boulud's first Miami restaurant.

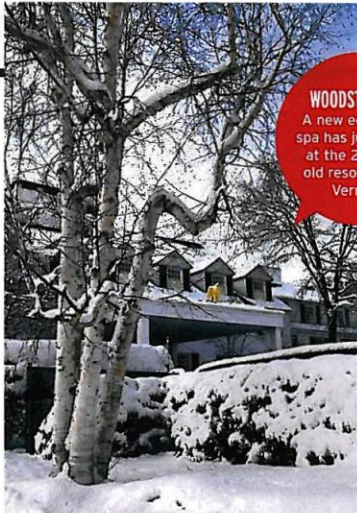
New York City, meanwhile, offers seemingly countless debuts. In Midtown the 60-story **Setai Fifth Avenue** (from \$545; 212-695-4005; setaififthavenue.com) opens in November near the Empire State Building. Its signature Setai design—dramatic limestone exterior; white onyx-

clad reception desk; Duxiana beds covered in Pratesi linens—includes a Julien Farel salon and an Italian-Mediterranean restaurant by James Beard Award-winner Michael White. A few blocks up, by Bryant Park, is the **Andaz 5th Avenue** (from \$335; 212-601-1234; andaz5thavenue.com). The hotel's loft-like rooms have floor-to-ceiling windows and travertine marble bathrooms, and it has just unveiled its suites. Downtown and ideal for SoHo shopping is the two-month-old **James New York** (from \$500; 212-465-2000; jameshotels.com), with works by local artists on every floor, river-to-river views and a David Burke restaurant.

CRUISE CONTROL

ALL ABOARD

Cruises book up early, but there are exceptions. "Focus on places crowded with ships," says Carolyn Brown of CruiseCritic.com, like the Caribbean, where **Crystal Cruises** (crystalcruises.com), **Silversea Cruises** (silversea.com) and **The Yachts of Seabourn** (seabourn.com) expect space. Flexibility is key: The costliest and the cheapest cabins sell out first, with trips that begin or end on the actual holidays usually less in demand.



WOODSTOCK INN

A new ecofriendly spa has just arrived at the 200-year-old resort in rural Vermont.

the remote, rainforest-covered island of Koh Kood—is the spa and its locally sourced treatments:

The Thai Silk Journey combines a papaya-and-rice body polish; an aloe, lavender and banana-leaf wrap; and a silk facial. On Tasmania's east coast, guests at the five-month-old **Saffire Freycinet** (from \$1,250; 61-3/6256-7888; saffire-freycinet.com.au) receive the one- or two-hour spa treatment of their choice upon arrival. The place is zen by design: Its curving wood roof frames the peaks of the Hazards Mountains, and the 20 suites roll along Great Oyster Bay like a wave.

The two-month-old **Oitavos** (from \$500; 35-12/1486-0020; theoitavos.com) brings a destination spa to the west coast of Portugal, with ten treatment rooms and a seawater pool. The spa uses Voya products, a line derived from organic seaweed hand-harvested on Ireland's wild Atlantic coast, and the ocean-inspired offerings include sea-salt exfoliations and seaweed and algae wraps. Finally there's **Sparkling Hill Resort** (from \$195; 250-275-1556; sparklinghill.com), in British Columbia. Owned by the head of Swarovski, the property is centered on a tremendous, 40,000-square-foot spa with 48 treatment rooms and North America's only cold sauna: a chamber chilled to negative 160 degrees and said to improve mobility and reduce chronic pain in a matter of minutes. —AMANDA FRIEDMAN

For the holidays, procrastination can often lead to inspiration.

SPA

Near Tucson the Sonoran Desert's Tortolita Mountains set the scene for the sprawling, year-old **Ritz-Carlton, Dove Mountain** (from \$260; 520-572-3000; ritzcarlton.com), with its 14-room indoor-outdoor spa and a pool surrounded by Native American-carved rocks. The Desert Moon Alignment massage, designed according to the lunar calendar, is delivered alfresco and at night.

In Vermont the 218-year-old **Woodstock Inn & Resort** (from \$195; 802-457-1100; woodstockinn.com) introduced a spa this fall. The ten-room LEED-certified retreat has soaring ceilings and skylights to invite in light, and the nature-inspired treatments change seasonally.

Thailand's year-old **Soneva Kiri** by **Six Senses** (from \$1,970; 66-3/961-9800; sixsenses.com) "is very ambitious, definitely one to watch," says Glen Donovan of the top-flight London-based travel agency Earth. The focus of the 29-villa resort—on

SPARKLING HILL

The British Columbia spa retreat has 48 treatment rooms and North America's only cold sauna.



FROM TOP: COURTESY WOODSTOCK INN & RESORT; SSDS