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of cruise inspiration...

# TRAVEL

## Why spring is the new summer

Too hot? Too expensive? Too busy? High season isn't the only option for your annual getaway – so rethink the holiday calendar, says Chris Leadbeater



How do you solve a problem like the summer? It's a question you might well be asking as the year slips into gear and your thoughts turn to how and where you might spend a couple of weeks' annual leave in the hottest and busiest portion of the travel calendar. Should it be the Mediterranean? The US? The Middle East? Even further away?

Let's leave the "where" to one side for a second, because the key words here are "hottest" and "busiest". The high-summer temperatures in many Mediterranean coun-

tries are now far too much for some – and if you prefer a gentler heat, the prospect of July and August hitting the mid-30s should surely be a consideration in your planning.

Indeed, plenty of us are thinking along these lines. Survey results released this week by InsureandGo revealed that two-thirds of us (67 per cent) are considering avoiding the high summer for a holiday, having found last year to be too hot.

"Busiest" is a factor, too, especially when paired with its inevitable companion, "pric-

est", particularly as the bill for everything else seems to be rising.

There is an argument that, against this backdrop, spring is now the optimal season for that big yearly escape. Warm but not stifling weather is the backdrop in May, as Europe drifts into the low- to mid-20s. And the Easter fortnight (the first two weeks of April this year) sees prices propelled upwards by school holidays, the rest of the season tends to be considerably cheaper

A fresh idea: Mallorca in March is cool, at about 19C, but you will avoid the crowds of summer

for travel than the year's middle months. Take our holiday option for the Catalan coast, for example, which drops by a whopping £900 if you travel in April over July; or our suggested April fortnight in Croatia, which is £758 pricier in the summer.

The following options are ordered into the three prime months of spring: March, when Europe is still in hibernation, and the

Caribbean is more reliable April, when Europe has finalised its coat, and May, when the summer has begun, but school is in session. Whether or not a better season for travel ultimately, a matter of personal preference. But if you are mulling over your main annual break, it may no longer be the only a

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# Check in and check out this year's hot hotels

From a new Radisson at the Old War Office in London to the return of a timeless resort in Capri, some noteworthy sky-high openings in 2025 are guaranteed to thrill. Laura Fowler picks 25 of the best

## Le Grand Marais

By the sea, in the heart of the historic town of Le Grand Marais, the new 100-room hotel is a blend of modern luxury and historic charm. The hotel features a mix of classic and contemporary design, with a focus on local art and architecture.

## The Canale

Located in the heart of Venice, The Canale is a new 150-room hotel that offers a unique blend of Venetian history and modern amenities. The hotel features a mix of classic and contemporary design, with a focus on local art and architecture.

## Marmala Island

Set on a private island in the heart of the Tuscan coast, Marmala Island is a new 50-room hotel that offers a truly unique and luxurious experience. The hotel features a mix of classic and contemporary design, with a focus on local art and architecture.

## Hotel La Palma

Located in the heart of Palma de Maiorca, Hotel La Palma is a new 100-room hotel that offers a unique blend of historic charm and modern amenities. The hotel features a mix of classic and contemporary design, with a focus on local art and architecture.

## Capri, Italy

Set on the island of Capri, the new 100-room hotel is a blend of modern luxury and historic charm. The hotel features a mix of classic and contemporary design, with a focus on local art and architecture.



## Boys Hall

Located in the heart of London, Boys Hall is a new 100-room hotel that offers a unique blend of historic charm and modern amenities. The hotel features a mix of classic and contemporary design, with a focus on local art and architecture.

## Norram House and Mill Bay

Set in the heart of the Scottish Highlands, Norram House and Mill Bay is a new 100-room hotel that offers a truly unique and luxurious experience. The hotel features a mix of classic and contemporary design, with a focus on local art and architecture.

## The Brecken Hills

Located in the heart of Colorado, The Brecken Hills is a new 100-room hotel that offers a unique blend of historic charm and modern amenities. The hotel features a mix of classic and contemporary design, with a focus on local art and architecture.

## La Fontaine

Set in the heart of the French Alps, La Fontaine is a new 100-room hotel that offers a truly unique and luxurious experience. The hotel features a mix of classic and contemporary design, with a focus on local art and architecture.

## La Gemma

Located in the heart of the Italian Alps, La Gemma is a new 100-room hotel that offers a unique blend of historic charm and modern amenities. The hotel features a mix of classic and contemporary design, with a focus on local art and architecture.

## Manna

Set in the heart of the Swiss Alps, Manna is a new 100-room hotel that offers a truly unique and luxurious experience. The hotel features a mix of classic and contemporary design, with a focus on local art and architecture.

## One&Only Aesthetix

Located in the heart of the Maldives, One&Only Aesthetix is a new 100-room hotel that offers a truly unique and luxurious experience. The hotel features a mix of classic and contemporary design, with a focus on local art and architecture.

## Abdoul Pounkha River Lodge

Set in the heart of the Maldives, Abdoul Pounkha River Lodge is a new 100-room hotel that offers a truly unique and luxurious experience. The hotel features a mix of classic and contemporary design, with a focus on local art and architecture.

## Somnathu Vankar

Located in the heart of the Maldives, Somnathu Vankar is a new 100-room hotel that offers a truly unique and luxurious experience. The hotel features a mix of classic and contemporary design, with a focus on local art and architecture.

## Si-Si Series

Set in the heart of the Maldives, Si-Si Series is a new 100-room hotel that offers a truly unique and luxurious experience. The hotel features a mix of classic and contemporary design, with a focus on local art and architecture.

## San Palud

Located in the heart of the Maldives, San Palud is a new 100-room hotel that offers a truly unique and luxurious experience. The hotel features a mix of classic and contemporary design, with a focus on local art and architecture.

## Teigant House

Set in the heart of the Maldives, Teigant House is a new 100-room hotel that offers a truly unique and luxurious experience. The hotel features a mix of classic and contemporary design, with a focus on local art and architecture.

## Yam Yalam

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## COMO Le Montecarlo

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**Capri, Italy**

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underground cabot vines decked out in natural stone, wood and rattan, each with a dining terrace, pool and two, two or three bedrooms. There is a spa, a gym, a restaurant serving local organic produce, and pursuits including kayaking, SUP, yoga and pilates. **Opens May 2023** (from £204.8k, [idolhome.com](http://idolhome.com))



# Check in and check out this year's hot hotel

From a new Raffles at the Old War Office in London to the rebirth of a timeless icon in Capri, some seriously stylish openings in 2023 are guaranteed to thrill. Laura Fowler picks 25 of the best

**B**ig openings are afoot in the hotel world. These days, where we stay and where we spend our money matter more than ever. Run-of-the-mill just won't cut it: we want something special. Hoteliers, chefs, architects and designers are now striving to create game-changing hotels that thrill, whether via their food, interiors or location.

Wilderness escapes get ever more exciting, whether we are talking about a remote island hideaway, a fortress adrift in the Adriatic, say, an eco-farm in the Indonesian archipelago or a cabin in the Inner Hebrides – or a sleek modernist lodge high in the mountains of Greece or Austria which takes the humble wellness break to the next level.

This year also sees the birth of new hotel icons in London, Paris, New York and Rome – our grand dames of the future. So here are 25 amazing hotels opening in 2023 which will make your next trip extra special. Note that not all could provide prices at the time of going to press.

## Le Grand Mazarin France

This theatrical showstopper in the Marais is your quintessential Parisian: fashionable, sophisticated and sexy as hell. The Martin Brudniński-designed interiors are richly layered with velvet and tapestries, mid-century art and art deco furniture, in an urbane palette of mint green, tobacco and mustard. The hotel has a restaurant, a jewel box of a bar and a pool. It's a fitting new star for this creative neighbourhood. **Opens spring**; doubles from £607 ([legrandmazarin.com](http://legrandmazarin.com))

## The Comodo Austria

Above the clouds in an alpine spa town, the Comodo is a mountain refuge like no other. The low-slung lodge is pure retro-futurism: open-plan spaces of raw wood and concrete are furnished with mid-century modern classics, and glass

walls put you at once among the snowy peaks and pine forests. The location is superb: East Gastein is Austria's prettiest spa town whose beauty moved Schubert to compose a symphony. **Opens**; doubles from £291 (00431 6434 30432; [thecomodo.com](http://thecomodo.com))

## Mamula Island Montenegro

The Montenegro riviera, already blessed with one private-island hotel, gets another stunner this April. Mamula Island is an 1850s Austro-Hungarian fortress on a perfectly round islet guarding the Bay of Kotac, a breathtaking spot where the blue Adriatic meets the dramatic mountains.

The fortress shows no signs of conflict now, with its serene pool terrace in a courtyard of creamy stone, quiet bedrooms within thick walls and a restaurant helmed by chef Erica Archambault of Michelin-starred Septime in Paris. **Opens April**; doubles from £488 (£4.8 on [mamulaisland.com](http://mamulaisland.com))



## Hotel La Palma Capri, Italy

Two centuries after it opened, Capri's first hotel is being reborn following a top-to-toe makeover by the group behind Le Bristol and Hotel de Capri-Eden-Roc. It started life as the bohemian locanda of Giuseppe Padana, who hosted visiting creatives in the

mid-1800s when Capri was an artists' colony – among them John Singer Sargent and Frédéric Leighton, who painted and wrote poetry on Padana's walls during their stay.

Rest assured, there will be no scribbling on the walls now, thank you very much: interiors are white and dotted with statement furniture, the work of designer Francis Sultana. The dining options will be overseen by chef Gennaro

◀ Bloom service: a floral theme runs throughout La Fantasia in Paris

aro Esposito, whose Sorrentino has two Michelin stars, while side lounge bar conjures Capri's golden age. **Opens June**; doubles from £488 ([oetherrcolection.com](http://oetherrcolection.com))

## The Fifth Avenue United States

Martin Brudniński strikes a time in New York City, bringing heritage to a Manhattan mid-century modernist for a 19th-century social Avenue Hotel recalls the Gilded Age yet is simultaneously, of the moment: modern lighting and bank in its suites (some with velvet club chairs) and gilded walls in its various restaurants; multicoloured and gilded coffered ceiling in Florence Foster Jenkins. **Opens spring**; doubles from £488 ([thefifthavenuehotel.com](http://thefifthavenuehotel.com))



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# Le Grand Mazarin

## *France*

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