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THE GOLD LIST 2019

SOME HOTELS ARE WONDERFULLY TIMELESS: THEY'VE BUILT THEMSELVES REPUTATIONS AS ICONS OVER MANY YEARS AND MANY VISITS. OTHERS THROW OPEN THEIR DOORS AND, PERHAPS BECAUSE THEY'VE MANAGED TO TAP RIGHT INTO THE ZEITGEIST, THEY BECOME INSTANT CLASSICS. IN OUR MANY YEARS OF TRAVELLING THE WORLD AND EXPLORING HOTELS, *CONDÉ NAST TRAVELLER* EDITORS AND OUR BANK OF TRUSTED EXPERTS HAVE MAINTAINED A LIST OF THE PROPERTIES THAT MOST IMPRESS, SOME OVER TIME, OTHERS MORE IMMEDIATELY. WE CALL THIS THE GOLD LIST. HERE, A SELECTION OF OUR EDITORS' ALL-TIME FAVOURITE HOTELS



HOTEL SANDERS COPENHAGEN

An instant modern classic when it opened in late 2017, the Sanders has a sense of drama in its bones. The name is derived from "Alexander's", after its owner, Alexander Kølpin, who for many years was one of Denmark's leading ballet dancers. Leaving the stage, he rejoined the family hotel business but wanted to have a project to call his own. To say the resulting property is "good" is like saying *Swan Lake* is a "nice bit of choreography". Sanders is impeccable, with a seemingly three-fold secret to its success: extraordinary attention to detail, warm and inviting design and staff who pride themselves on making guests feel at home. Many hotels have concierges with whom you can have a brief conversation when you return at the end of the day. But how many, the next morning, have already prepared a map for a place you'd mentioned you might visit – and laminated it, in case of rain? Style-wise, it blends colonial-era comfort – wicker chairs, a beige-and-white colour scheme, an abundance of artworks on the walls – with some Left Bank charm and a huge dollop of Danish *hygge* (there's a fireplace in the bar, after all). Like so many of the very best hotels, it has made itself a part of the fabric of the city. Locals stop in at the French-style bistro for weekend brunch, grab a quick coffee on the street outside, or come for an evening drink. Remarkably for a new arrival, the place feels old-school, perhaps because there's no focus on fashion or trying to be painstakingly of the moment, but rather on service, style and comfort, which it delivers with curtain-call-worthy aplomb. – **SW**
Doubles from AED 980; 0045-4640 0040, hotelsanders.com



HOTEL UNIQUE SÃO PAULO

It's not a Rorschach test. Don't dwell too long on Brazilian architect Ruy Ohtake's uncommon structure sitting on a grassy patch in São Paulo's refined Jardim Paulista neighbourhood. Is it a watermelon slice? An ocean liner? Step inside the gargantuan belly of a sunlit lobby, then spread out on one of the International Klein Blue cushion couches to imbibe a glass of bubbles. More liquid satisfaction is found along The Wall, the lobby bar with its 18m-high stash of spirits (for bibliophiles, 300-plus titles hide alongside). Guests are sent on a sensory adventure, from the unlit lift and barely illuminated corridor to 95 white-on-white cabin-like guest rooms, where an oversized porthole window continues to play with a sense of scale even as an abundance of natural light flows through (highly effective blackout panels close it at the touch of a button). Most fun are those rooms running along the building's elongated curve, featuring floors that could almost double as a skateboard park. Surround-sound speakers are hidden in headboards, and in the see-through bathroom is a tub with whirlpool jets; less high-tech but highly coveted are the complimentary Havaiana flip-flops in the closet. Save your appetite for the plump pink salmon sashimi, spicy Amazonian *cassoulet* and Portuguese *arroz de pato* (duck rice) at Dijon-born chef Emmanuel Bassoleil's rooftop Skye restaurant with its 360-degree metropolitan panorama and ruby-red lacquered swimming pool. Commandeer one of the white double daybeds and order Brazil's national cocktail, the caipirinha, colour-coordinated with the pool with fresh strawberries and raspberries. – **Cynthia Rosenfeld**

Doubles from AED 1,090; 0055-11-3055 4700, hotelunique.com.br →



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