

SUITCASE HOTELS

GREEN LUXURY

Embracing an ethos of sustainability, these gorgeous hotels coexist in luxurious harmony with the environment, upholding the baton of responsible hospitality.

By PRACHI JOSHI

ERIC LAFORTUNE / Alamy Stock Photo. Images courtesy of respective properties

FROM ADOPTING MINIMAL-IMPACT architectural designs that blend into their natural surroundings to using renewable energy sources, many luxury hotels are embracing an Earth-first philosophy—without compromising on their guests' comforts. Here's our list of some of the world's best properties making a conscious effort to protect our ecosystems and habitats.

SONEVA FUSHI, MALDIVES

With 63 beachfront villas and eight overwater bungalows, Soneva Fushi is one of the best luxury island hideaways in the Maldives. Sustainability lies at the heart of the resort's 'Slow Life' philosophy and barefoot ethos. The property recycles and reuses 90 per cent of its waste, including discarded glass bottles that are transformed into

works of art at their glassblowing studio; guests can also try their hand at this fun, unique experience. The resort's organic garden, which supplies produce to its restaurants, is irrigated by greywater and nourished by compost from its own kitchens. In 2008, Soneva Fushi introduced a two per cent environmental levy on all stays, which goes towards the Soneva Foundation—an organisation that invests in environmental and social projects, as well as offsets carbon emissions from resort activities. soneva.com; doubles from ₹146,000/night. Nearest airport: Malé. Vistara operates direct flights twice a week from Mumbai.

MIHIR GARH, JODHPUR

With just nine magnificent suites, the sprawling, fort-like Mihir Garh is ideal for an intimate sojourn

From left:
Soothing green environs
of Soneva Fushi, Maldives;
The rustic-chic façade of
Mihir Garh, Jodhpur.

away from the hustle and bustle of Jodhpur. Built using natural materials, its structural design complements the rugged beauty of the land and emulates the region's indigenous architectural style. Solar heating, rainwater harvesting, and sewage treatment are just a few of the many sustainable initiatives adopted by the property. Mihir Garh makes conscious efforts to support the local economy as well, by sourcing everything—from furniture and textiles to artwork and artefacts—from Jodhpur and surrounding rural areas. Even the artists and craftsmen who work on

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the property belong to the local district, which allows them to showcase their creativity with immense pride.

houseofrohet.com; doubles from ₹40,000/night. Nearest airport: Jodhpur. Vistara operates direct flights daily from Delhi and Mumbai.

THOTALAGALA, HAPUTALE

Tucked away in the remote town of Haputale, Sri Lanka's tea country, this restored, uber-luxe planter's bungalow dates back to 1870. A stunning property, each of its seven rooms features vintage furniture with historical memorabilia beautifully incorporated into the décor. Since the bungalow is situated on a working tea plantation, it naturally serves zero-mile tea—sourced from and processed on the estate—thus reducing the hotel's carbon footprint and keeping the local tea culture alive. Most of the daily produce is sourced from an on-site vegetable, fruit, and herb patch, while the rest is purchased from the nearby market, thereby supporting the local fruit, vegetable, and dairy vendors.

thotalagala.com; doubles from ₹60,000/night. Nearest airport: Colombo. Vistara operates direct flights five times a week from Delhi.

WAGHOBIA ECO LODGE, TADOBIA

Opened in October 2021 in the unbridled wilderness of Tadoba National Park, Waghobia Eco Lodge by Pugdunde Safaris sets new standards in eco-friendly construction. Relax in any one of their 14 rustic-chic cottages, built with adobe bricks prepared

on-site from the soil dug up for the lodge's foundation. Clever use of conical roof tiles help with insulation and reduce energy consumption. Rainwater harvesting, a water treatment plant, 100 per cent organic linen, and LED lighting are just some of the many sustainability initiatives at the lodge. Don't miss their farm-to-table experience that uses local produce to champion regional Varhadi cuisine. *waghobiaecolodge.com; doubles from ₹15,000/night. Nearest Vistara serviced airport: Raipur. Vistara operates direct flights twice a day from Delhi.*

NIMMU HOUSE, LEH

A 45-minute drive from Leh will bring you to the village of Nimmoo, where the three-storey Nimmu House offers a charming glamping retreat. More than 100 years old, this noble house was built for the cousin of the King of Ladakh, and is one of the last remaining examples of traditional Ladakhi architecture. Its renovation project preserved local heritage and also provided economic opportunities to the local community. The five heritage rooms have been renovated as per classic styles and materials, and the seven tents laid out in the orchard surrounding the house also embody Ladakhi design principles. Apart from its environmentally friendly design, Nimmu House is powered by solar energy, recycles water, and grows its own produce. *ladakh.nimmu-house.com; doubles from ₹10,000/night. Nearest airport: Leh. Vistara operates direct flights twice a week from Delhi.*



Clockwise from left:
The interiors of Thotalagala in Haputale feature vintage furniture blended with historical memorabilia;
Breathtaking setting of Nimmu House, Leh;
Red bricks lend a cool charm to the rooms at Waghobia Eco Lodge, Tadoba.



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ITC WINDSOR, BENGALURU

Located in the heart of the city, ITC Windsor is the world's first hotel to receive the LEED Zero Carbon Certification, which recognises the property's deep commitment to making the world a better place by assuring an enhanced quality of life. ITC Hotels' 'Responsible Luxury' programme has long worked towards contributing to a regenerative future, as is evidenced in their many initiatives. In addition to using locally sourced ingredients through organic farms, and recycling and reusing water to prevent wastage, the hotel's electrical energy demand is met through self-owned windmill farms near Bellary, creating a planet-positive footprint. The hotel also has its own water bottling plant and serves zero-mile drinking water in glass bottles christened 'Sunya Aqua'. ITC Windsor has also been awarded a platinum rating under the LEED EB (Existing Building) programme, which is their highest category of certification. *itchotels.com; doubles from ₹ 6,000/night. Nearest airport: Bengaluru. Vistara operates direct flights daily from Delhi and Mumbai.*

HOTEL TRIANON RIVE GAUCHE, PARIS

Steps away from the Seine River, the Notre-Dame Cathedral, and the magnificent Luxembourg Gardens, this charming 4-star hotel is located in Paris' Latin Quarter. The property has been awarded both the European Ecolabel and the international Green Key certifications in recognition of its



sustainable initiatives. Home to chic deluxe rooms, it offers artisanal and local products as amenities, serves organic fare in its restaurant, and participates in waste management and water saving practices. *hoteltrianonrivegauche.com; doubles from ₹10,000/night. Nearest airport: Paris. Vistara operates direct flights twice a week from Delhi.*

AL MAHA, DUBAI

Nestled in a lush oasis in the protected Dubai Desert Conservation Reserve, Al Maha, a Luxury Collection Desert Resort & Spa, is a luxurious getaway just 45 minutes from Dubai. Enjoy the region's scenic serenity while lounging by your tent's plunge pool. And if you're lucky, you may even spot some free-roaming Arabian oryx and other wildlife species, all reintroduced to the area, courtesy the



Clockwise from left:
The pretty setting of Hotel Trianon Rive Gauche in Paris;
Guests can enjoy stunning vistas of the desert from the privacy of their tents at Al Maha in Dubai;
Cosy green spaces to relax and unwind at ITC Windsor, Bengaluru.



hotel's conservation efforts. Al Maha is also committed to preserving the local Bedouin heritage through its design and collection of over 2,000 artefacts and antiquities. Other eco-friendly measures include the use of battery-powered vehicles and reusing cooking oil as biodiesel. *marriott.com; doubles from ₹112,000/night. Nearest airport: Dubai. Vistara operates direct flights four times a week from Delhi.* ✨

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