

THE HIGH END™

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Shaking Up A CLASSIC

Ingrained in popular culture by Hemingway, 007 and Madison Avenue's three-martini lunch, an iconic cocktail is having yet another moment.

By Roger Grody

The origin of the martini has long been disputed, with historic bars in New York and San Francisco having claimed credit. The classic drink survived Prohibition and a cocktail renaissance has drawn new devotees in the 21st century. Even James Bond, who famously insisted, "shaken, not stirred," might be surprised at how well the martini has maintained its cachet value on both sides of the Atlantic.

The martini is among the least complicated cocktails — gin (or vodka) with a splash of vermouth and an olive for garnish — so the best are products of high-quality ingredients and bartending skills. "The martini is such a simple recipe and yet it's one you can tweak, adapt, and personalize almost endlessly," reports London-based spirits journalist Alice Lascelles, author of the book "The Martini: The Ultimate Guide to a Cocktail Icon."

Acknowledging that the "perfect" martini is difficult to define, Lascelles playfully writes, "... that definition will change depending on a variety of things including the season, the setting, the company and, sometimes, how bad your day has been."

The Chandelier Martini dispensed at the Four Seasons in New Orleans — named "Martini of the Year" by Esquire magazine in 2023 — is served in a crystal coupe glass made from the same glass as the bar's monumental chandelier.

@JAIMECAMPANELLI

LEFT: \$13,000 Marrow Martini. BELOW: Chandelier Martini, Four Seasons New Orleans.




Arriving on a silver tray, it contains a blend of three different styles of gin and La Quintinye vermouth, then stirred exactly 24 times. “The Chandelier Martini is a modern tribute to the timeless classic, elevating its simplicity with precise technique,” reports Chandelier Bar general manager Blake Baudier, who suggests the blend of gins ensures balance and smoothness. “Complemented by a spritz of what we call Chandelier Magic [a mix of grapefruit bitters, absinthe, and maraschino liqueur] and a glamorous presentation, this martini perfectly embodies the spirit of the Chandelier Bar,” says Baudier.

Clemente Bar, situated upstairs from Michelin three-starred Eleven Madison Park in New York, offers the martini that topped Esquire’s 2024 list. Its signature cocktail features both gin and vodka (similar to a Vesper martini) but with an infusion of green curry and saffron, inspired by namesake artist Francesco Clemente’s extensive travels to India. Flavored martinis — variations such as passion fruit, lychee, and salted caramel that were considered cool in the ’80s — were a trend that faded in favor of more classic preparations. Thankfully, however, the espresso vodka martini is an ever-popular survivor.

After being viewed as passé in the ’70s and ’80s, the martini has reclaimed its aura of sophistication, and is occasionally a vehicle for indulgence that transcends the bar. San Diego-based jewelry house Marrow Fine has collaborated with Adalina, a stylish modern Italian restaurant in Chicago, to create the \$13,000 Marrow Martini. Justifying the high price tag, a nine-carat diamond tennis necklace dresses up a smoked heirloom tomato martini made with mezcal instead of gin or vodka. Designer Jillian Sassone, founder and creative director of Marrow Fine, reports, “The Marrow Martini is all about reimagining a classic — taking something timeless and making it unforgettable.” She adds, “A martini is effortless, cool, and always in style, much like a tennis necklace. Both are iconic in their own right ... understated yet bold, and perfect for any occasion.”

Naturally, the quality of gin is an important variable, and while Beefeater or Tanqueray London Dry are approachable favorites, prices of rare gins can be stratospheric. Watenshi, a limited-edition gin produced at England’s Cambridge Distillery — it is reportedly the world’s most expensive — sells for approximately \$3,700 per bottle. Lascelles, a martini authority eschews the need for extravagance, citing frozen glassware, good-quality ice, an elegant coupe that’s not too large, and classic juniper-forward gin as essential elements. ♦



Valley — a stunning high-rise complex in Amsterdam that was designed by the Dutch firm MVRDV.

PHOTO BY OSSIP VAN DUIVENBODE

ALGORITHMIC

By Roger Grody

Aesthetics

A cutting-edge computer-assisted design technique allows architects to transform skylines with more daring, dynamic buildings.

Casual observers of design, even some serious architecture buffs, may not be familiar with the term “parametric design,” yet admire it regularly. This unique style of design involves the use of specialized computer software whose algorithms can generate complex forms much more rapidly than manually adjusting individual elements. This high-tech approach, inspired by old-school designers who first experimented with avant-garde forms, further pushes the boundaries of architectural imagination and often results in alluring curves that evoke a sense of motion.

Iconic architect Frank Gehry, famous for Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles and the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, Spain, is a leader in this field, using parametric software to achieve the sculptural forms that have become his signature. The late Zaha Hadid, the pioneering architect once dubbed “Queen of the Curve,” and her eponymous firm are also known for the undulating contours and precisely fitted components typical of parametric design. And, long before Bill Gates or Steve Jobs ever imagined modern computing, Spanish architect Antoni Gaudí was creating architectural forms whose fluid qualities inspire today’s parametric

designers. The use of computer algorithms, which refine designs based on designated parameters, makes the eccentric angles and complex curves of contemporary architecture more easily achievable. Parametric design is a major reason why buildings are becoming increasingly intricate and dramatic, a departure from the more simplified geometric aesthetics that previously constrained designers.

Established in 2016 by architect Hamid Hassanzadeh, ParametricArchitecture has emerged as a leading online hub for designers, journalists, and enthusiasts of this rapidly emerging specialty. “Parametric design is a methodology in which algorithms define the relationships between various design parameters,” explains Hassanzadeh, who adds, “This means that instead of designing each component individually, architects set rules and parameters, and the design evolves within those constraints.” Hassanzadeh insists that these technologies are enabling groundbreaking projects, from intricate façades that respond to sunlight to entire cities planned for climate resilience. Hassanzadeh, whose ParametricArchitecture website and social media platforms have become a phenomenon, further states,

The King Abdullah Financial District Metro Station in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, by Zaha Hadid Architects.



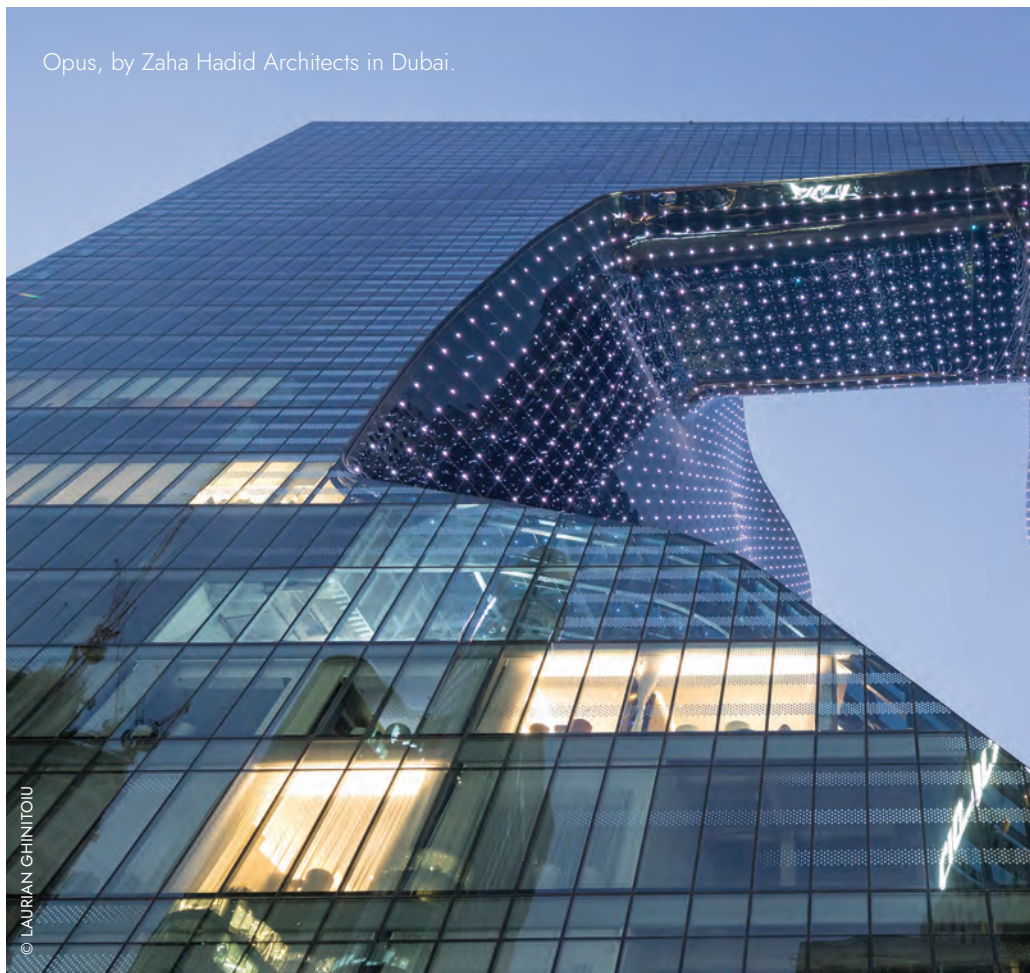
"Parametric design not only helps create highly efficient structures, but also ones that are captivating in beauty." He reports that artificial intelligence (AI) is now being integrated into parametric design programs, further enhancing their capabilities.

Gensler is a global architectural firm whose portfolio includes the 128-story, gently spiraled Shanghai Tower (China's tallest) and the Silicon Valley headquarters of AI chipmaker NVIDIA. Gensler developed a proprietary algorithm, creating a parametric, pattern-producing system that allows designers to rapidly generate and test different scenarios for façades, which means their responses to sunlight and other environmental factors can be precisely evaluated. For the two 1,050-foot-high towers of Shanghai's "Gate of Science," Gensler applied a parametric design approach to create mesmerizing exteriors whose staggered glass panels echo ripples of water.

Dramatic curves were a known signature of Zaha Hadid whose legacy continues through Zaha Hadid Architects, the London-based firm she founded with parametrically designed projects around the globe. Opus, located in the shadows of Dubai's Burj Khalifa tower, is essentially a reflective glass cube distinguished by an alluringly abstract, curvilinear hole cut from the heart of the structure. "The precise orthogonal geometries of Opus' elemental glass cube contrast dramatically with the fluidity of the eight-story void at its center," explains project director Christos Passas. Opus, which incorporates luxury residences and a five-star hotel, is among many projects representing the parametric possibilities Zaha Hadid Architects has become associated with and defies preconceived notions of high-rise architecture. The firm's 42-story Morpheus hotel in Macau — the glitzy gambling destination is considered the Las Vegas of Asia — also features quintessentially Hadid-esque curves and cut-outs that provide dramatic visual interest. Its glass façade is entirely wrapped in a free-flowing lattice inspired by ancient Chinese jade carving traditions but executed with state-of-the-art technology. "The expertise of all members of the Morpheus team has created new possibilities for architecture," says project director Viviana Muscettola. "The comprehensive parametric model combined all of the hotel's structural and fabrication requirements and will radically change how our built environment is planned and constructed," adds the architect.

SOMA, the architect studio of Michel Abboud in New York, is committed to the use of advanced software that enables its designers to create structures whose aesthetics would be far more difficult, even impossible, to achieve

Opus, by Zaha Hadid Architects in Dubai.



through traditional methods. Agora Tower in Dubai, a parametrically designed luxury residential building by SOMA, features an undulating façade whose rhythmic, organic patterns were inspired by the growth of trees. Sinuous balconies wrapping around each floor meet the lifestyle requisites of residents, add elegance, and increase energy efficiency by moderating interior temperatures.

Mumbai, India-based Sanjay Puri Architects has embraced parametric design in a portfolio that encompasses projects on practically every continent. For The Forest, a high-density but eco-friendly residential development in the African nation of the Congo, the company employed a series of cascading balconies, among the parametric design-generated elements that contribute to the complex's compelling aesthetics. "In our case, we always start with hand-drawn sketches, but parametric design tools are applied after these sketches as a second step towards achieving the desired design," explains principal Sanjay Puri. Noting that his firm's first free-flowing, abstract design was conceived in 2000, the architect recounts, "Due to the lack of appropriate software, we had to create 160 sections for a small

“Now, parametric design allows us to generate the required forms and drawings for fluid, abstract spaces, translating to ease of understanding and execution,” says Puri.



[approximately 20,000-square-foot] building to make the engineers and contractors understand what we wanted.” He explains that advances in parametric software have resulted in greater efficiencies. “Now, parametric design allows us to generate the required forms and drawings for fluid, abstract spaces, translating to ease of understanding and execution,” says Puri. “The possibilities are endless.”

UNStudio, the acclaimed Dutch firm led by Ben van Berkel, has put parametric design methods to effective use in projects such as China’s Raffles City Hangzhou, Wasl Tower in Dubai, and a pair of stunning high-rises in Melbourne, Australia, distinguished by spiraling “green spines” of generously planted terraces. Much of UNStudio’s portfolio, from aesthetically elevated airports and bridges to graceful skyscrapers, reveals the complexities achievable through parametric design, without those projects appearing computer-generated. Furthermore, the application of new technologies does not impede the firm’s abilities to incorporate relevant cultural influences in its designs, whether traditional Arabian accents in a Dubai residential tower or ancient Chinese references in a Shenzhen opera house.

Another Dutch firm, MVRDV, promotes the use of a parametric approach to arrive at flexible systems rather than specific rigid designs, and founding partner Winy Maas has long insisted

that architects should embrace technology. At an international design seminar in 2009, Maas stated, “Parametrization is an essential part of the practice at MVRDV,” adding, “Everything, including desires and emotions, can, in fact, be parametrized.” Valley, a mixed-use high-rise complex in Amsterdam by MVRDV, features a myriad of unexpected angles conceived with the assistance of parametric software. The firm’s Binhai Library project in Tianjin, China, where extravagant curves are juxtaposed against more traditional geometry, is also cited as a parametric project. Ensconced into the library’s relatively conventional, rectangular footprint is an interior plaza anchored by a luminous spherical auditorium. “We opened the building by creating a beautiful public space inside; a new urban living room is its center,” explains Maas.

While parametric design is being widely adopted by architects worldwide, it is not without detractors. Although using computer software for renderings and floor plans has been standard practice for decades, critics suggest that parametric software further dehumanizes the creative process. Supporters insist that no algorithm supersedes human imagination, and that parametric design is simply a tool for translating complex concepts into reality. Parametric design expert Hamid Hassanzadeh submits, “Tools do not dictate design — they only amplify the architect’s vision.” ♦

The Morpheus Hotel in Macau, China, by Zaha Hadid Architects.



PHOTO BY IVAN DUPONT



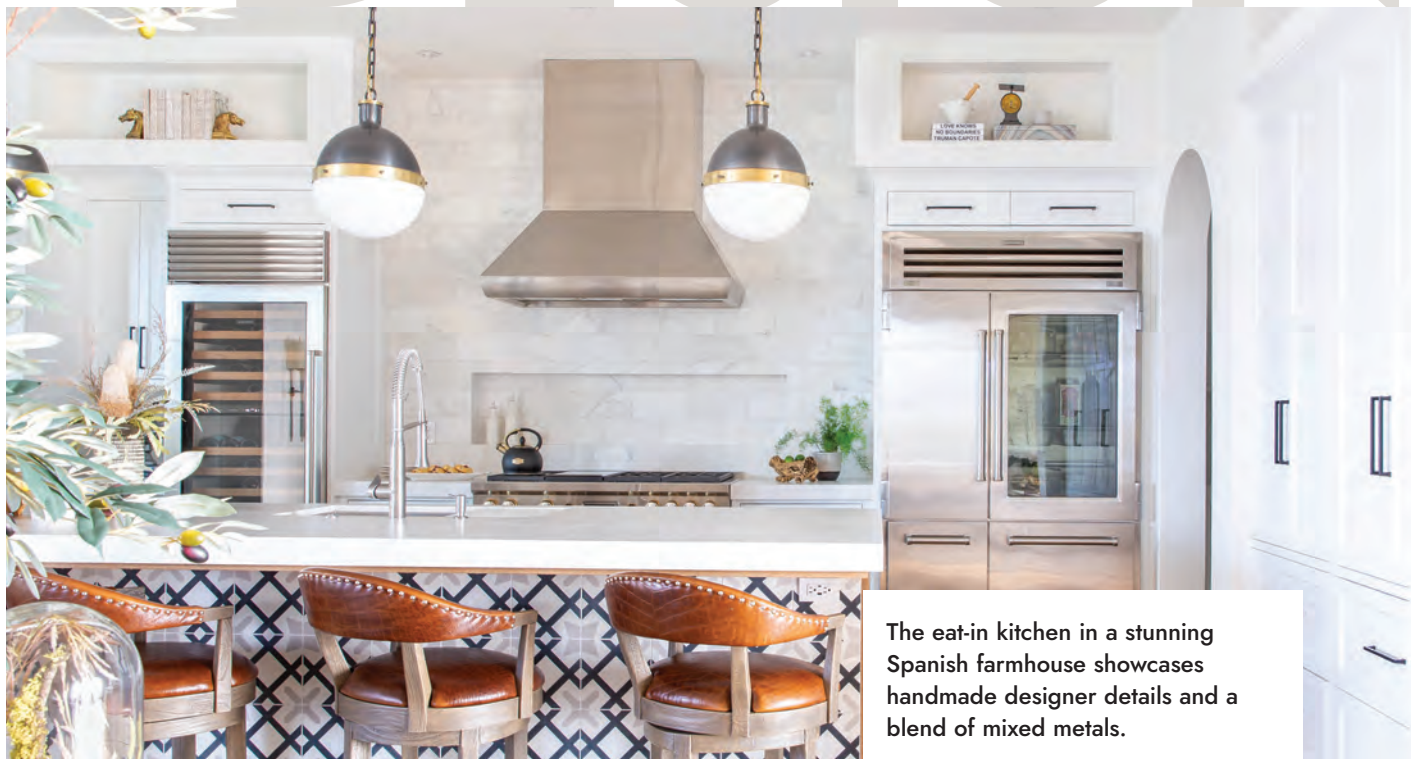
Meet
**Kerrie
Kelly**

By Cassandra Burr

This award-winning, California-based designer expertly marries the enduring charm of modern design with bespoke details to craft unique narratives.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF KERRIE KELLY STUDIO

DESIGN



The eat-in kitchen in a stunning Spanish farmhouse showcases handmade designer details and a blend of mixed metals.

For Kerrie Kelly, design extends beyond form and function. She isn't simply curating a space — she's crafting a lifestyle. Her approach to design, which celebrates the casual, yet refined California lifestyle, is one of the things that sets her apart in the industry. Of her California-inspired design philosophy, Kelly notes it's "all about balance — light and airy spaces grounded by natural materials, with a seamless indoor-outdoor connection."

Recipient of the 2024 ASID Designer of Distinction Award, Kelly is an industry expert whose passion for and commitment to design touches every corner of her life. She recently joined Fabuwood as creative director and is currently working on a Napa vineyard project for Hestan as well as several collaborations for KBIS 2025.

Getting Started

It all began in her family home in Sacramento, California. "My parents gave me the freedom to design my own room in blue and white, even though the rest of the house was neutral with a sunshine-yellow kitchen," Kelly recalls. "That yellow kitchen, with its Formica countertops, is where I'd sit after school, telling my mom all about my day while she cooked. It was a space filled with love and creativity, which greatly influenced my design journey."

At the age of 14, Kelly dipped her toes into design, working for The Gap in visual merchandising. "That early experience taught me the power of creating visually impactful and organized spaces," she notes. After studying Interior Design at California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo, and gaining invaluable experience in the industry, she joined the Ralph Lauren

Home Collection as a buyer. She credits her time at Ralph Lauren for her artful use of storytelling through design.

In 1995, Kelly founded the Kerrie Kelly Studio, and since then, has overseen numerous design projects, written two books — "Home Décor: A Sunset Design Guide" and Pearson Education's "MyInteriorDesignKit" — and collaborated with several brands to bridge the gap between lifestyle and design.

Finding Inspiration

An avid traveler, Kelly's trips are often a source of inspiration, as they expose her to "diverse aesthetics and cultural details," such as new textures and architectural styles. From Paris to Milan, the designer always returns from her jaunts with a fresh perspective. "The way Italians effortlessly integrate design into everyday life is something I try to emulate in my work," she says, commenting on her recent trip to Italy, where she attended the annual design exhibition, Salone del Mobile 2024.

From aspirational family homes to picturesque vacation rentals, Kelly's designs are ultimately inspired by people and places. "My clients inspire me," she explains. "I love creating spaces that reflect their unique stories and lifestyles."

The story behind one of Kelly's projects — "Light Bright Transformation" — is undisputedly unique. In 2018, an Elk Grove home the designer previously renovated for a family of five was destroyed in a fire. Working from the original design, Kelly reimaged the space to better suit the family's new lifestyle with

“‘Blended Family Bliss’ was about creating harmony for a family coming together,” Kelly explains.



A recent Sacramento renovation emphasizes connection and comfort in this spacious dining area.

teenagers, incorporating updated finishes and reworking the floor plan to create a modern, yet kindred space. “It was a special opportunity to turn a challenging experience into something beautiful and new for the family,” she says. Shower tiles handmade by the homeowners’ daughters were even salvaged and reinstalled, an homage to the home’s original design and the family’s resilience.

One of the designer’s most recent projects depicts the union of two families. “‘Blended Family Bliss’ was about creating harmony for a family coming together,” Kelly explains. A harmonious blend of luxury and function, the home features an entertainer’s kitchen, an outdoor oasis, an attached casita kitchen, and cozy living spaces that foster togetherness. Of her design process, Kelly says she enjoys “layering textures and finishes that tell a story, making a space feel curated rather than overly polished.” In this Sacramento residence, brushed brass and luxe gold accents, dazzling lighting fixtures, and resplendent details evoke a sense of opulence without making the space feel overdone.

Getting Creative

A designer, writer, and talented cook, Kelly’s creativity knows no bounds. Her blog is brimming with delectable recipes — such as her signature chocolate cake — entertaining tips, and intriguing accounts of her glamorous travels abroad.

“Cooking has always been a creative outlet for me, much like design,” Kelly says of her love for being in the kitchen. “Designing kitchens that inspire culinary adventures feels like a natural extension of that passion.”

It’s no surprise, then, that Kelly has teamed up with culinary brands such as Hestan and JennAir to unite the worlds of interior design and culinary innovation. “Collaborating with these brands allows me to integrate cutting-edge technology and design into my projects,” she adds.

A brand ambassador with several collaborations under her belt, Kelly is regularly seeking ways to merge design with lifestyle experiences. Looking to the future, she says this is where her focus lies, in addition to mentoring the next generation of designers. “I’m also working on a few personal projects that I can’t wait to share soon,” the designer adds. ♦

A Lake Tahoe vacation destination features natural stone elements and highlights the water views.



Getting to Know **Kerrie Kelly**

Must-Have Features in a Kitchen Design

- ▶ “Ample counter space, high-performance appliances, and smart storage solutions. A well-designed kitchen should make cooking effortless and enjoyable.”

Favorite Recipe to Wow Guests

- ▶ “Ina Garten’s Tequila Lime Chicken. Paired with fresh guacamole and a simple margarita, it creates an easy yet impressive dining experience.”

Top Hosting Essentials

- ▶ “Beautiful serveware, ambient lighting, and a well-curated playlist. Adding a signature cocktail never hurts either!”

Favorite Trip to Date

- ▶ “My recent trip to Italy. The blend of history, art, and culinary excellence was unforgettable.”



Babymoon Bliss

By Michelle Konstantinovsky

A couple relaxes on the beach at Headlands Coastal Lodge & Spa in Oregon.

PHOTO BY STACIE STRUBLE / COURTESY OF HEADLANDS COASTAL LODGE & SPA

An oceanfront corner suite at Hotel Mousai Cancun.



COURTESY OF TAFER HOTELS & RESORTS

Let's explore these top destinations and rejuvenating settings that are unmatched for expectant parents.

As due dates approach, parents-to-be are typically in a mad dash to check off items from a seemingly endless to-do list. This time more than ever is the ideal moment to seek ways to de-stress and reconnect with one another before their bundle of joy arrives. The best way to achieve this? It's time to book a babymoon.

For the uninitiated, a babymoon serves as a relaxing and romantic getaway for couples on the verge of parenthood, and it may serve as the last restful retreat preceding a stretch of sleepless nights. Given the sacrifices ahead, future parents deserve to indulge in the most lavish of holidays — here are four of the most luxurious spots to relish in babymoon bliss.

Headlands Coastal Lodge & Spa

Along the Northern Oregon Coast, the Headlands Coastal Lodge & Spa is an oceanfront retreat offering soon-to-be parents a peaceful respite from pre-baby planning. The property's spa features prenatal massages tailored to each expectant mother's needs, and the spacious accommodations are ideal for unwinding and unplugging. The property's Meridian Restaurant & Bar serves elegant dishes in a design-forward space, and those same locally sourced options are available for in-room dining so babymooners can savor every second of alone time.

This destination offers packages specifically designed for those on the brink of parenthood. "We've tailored our Pacific Bliss Babymoon package with the comfort of parents-to-be in mind," says Andy Stoll, general manager. "It's a chance to relax, reconnect, and celebrate before embarking on your newest adventure."

Guests can choose between the property's lodges or cottages, both overlooking the waves of the Pacific. While the lodges offer sophisticated Northwest-inspired decor and close proximity to the spa, wellness options, and more, each condo-style cottage comes equipped with a gourmet kitchen, jetted indoor soaking tub, and gas grill.

Hotel Mousai Cancun

Opting for an all-inclusive, adults-only destination may be the optimum babymoon strategy, and Hotel Mousai Cancun takes its commitment to grown-up escapism seriously. The property's ultra suites are the pinnacle of luxury with exclusive butler service, a private jacuzzi, a jetted plunge pool, and sweeping top-floor views of the turquoise ocean.

"Cancun is the ideal backdrop for Hotel Mousai's breathtaking aesthetics, expansive oceanfront suites, dramatic infinity rooftop pool and bar, and authentic cuisine that is reflective of the destination," according to Sasa Milojevic, chief operating officer of TAFER Hotels & Resorts. "We invite guests from across the globe to enjoy this modern new property and create memorable vacation experiences."

The Ultra Mousai Corner Suite is a 1,364-square-foot oasis equipped with everything from a walk-in rain shower set against white quartz walls to the wraparound terrace. However, perhaps Hotel Mousai's top selling point for babymooners is its premium butler service. Offering personalized assistance with restaurant and spa reservations, activity planning, and a variety of other services, butlers are just a text away to elevate the overall experience. —>



Halekulani

Hawaii's Waikiki neighborhood of Honolulu has traditionally been known as Oahu's premier destination for honeymooners and families, but expectant parents can indulge in a tailored experience at the historic Halekulani Hotel. From poolside mocktails to elevated dining at La Mer, Hawaii's longest consecutive AAA Five Diamond and Forbes Five-Star restaurant, the property offers an array of top-tier features and services for babymooners, including opulent accommodations.

"Couples are drawn to our intimate setting, offering breathtaking views of the Pacific Ocean and the iconic Diamond Head," says general manager, Davide Barnes. "Our 'House Befitting Heaven' is the perfect escape before the journey of parenthood. Ideal for babymooners seeking attentive service is the newly transformed SpaHalekulani with tailored wellness treatments, romantic dining, and an unrivaled Orchid Pool experience."

The premier suites are the property's most spacious and uniquely designed accommodations, including the ultra-luxe top-floor penthouse and the Halekulani Suite — designed by Vera Wang and featuring expansive living and dining areas.

Babymooners can also relish romantic spa treatments for two at the recently remodeled SpaHalekulani. The facility's new private *Pu'uwai* — meaning "heart" in Hawaiian — suite features peaceful lighting and the only Japanese furo in Waikiki, with several curated ceremonies created specifically for couples.



Halekulani, a cherished luxury hotel in Waikiki, offers an unforgettable oceanfront atmosphere.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF HALEKULANI

The Inn Above Tide

San Francisco locals know Sausalito as the charming, artsy escape just a few miles north of the city, and the Marin County town also has a reputation for acclaimed hospitality, including The Inn Above Tide. The intimate waterfront hotel not only features panoramic views of the city skyline and historic bridges, but is located in a quiet corner of Sausalito that's still only steps away from galleries, restaurants, and unique shops.

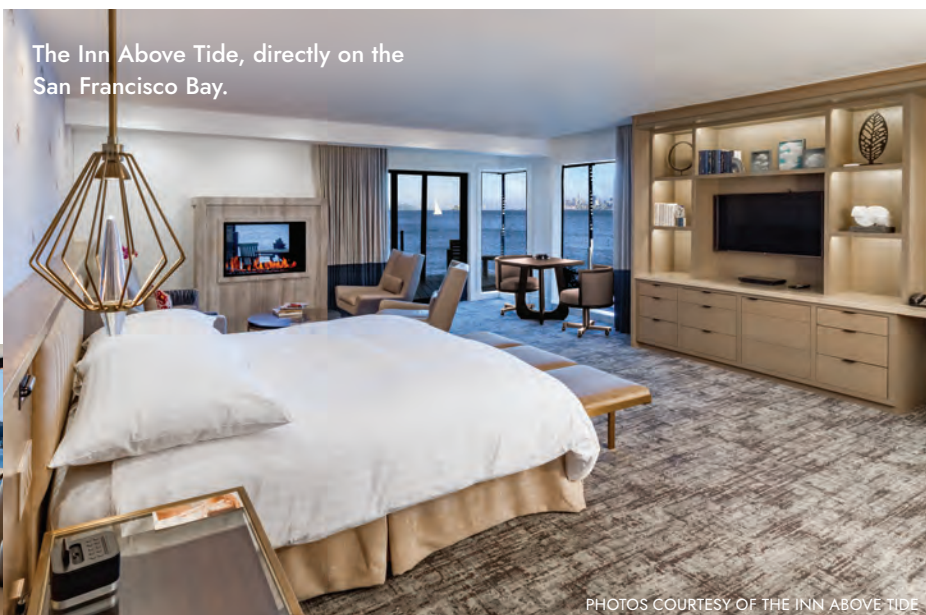
"The Inn Above Tide is the perfect babymoon escape," says general manager Mark Flaherty. "With its peaceful waterfront views and luxury comforts, it offers a supremely relaxing retreat before your little one arrives."

The property's variety of suites offers the ultimate

cozy retreat experience with features such as wood-burning fireplaces, spa-like bathrooms, and custom-designed furnishings. Occupying the southern corner of the top floor of the hotel, the penthouse includes a freestanding spa bathtub with floor-to-ceiling views of the Bay. The Inn Above Tide also outfits its rooms with custom-made linens and Bvlgari toiletries. Guests are also offered complimentary breakfasts and an evening wine and cheese reception, with nonalcoholic alternatives, of course.

To round out the rejuvenating experience, babymooners can luxuriate with a customized couples massage at the property's serene spa. For expectant moms, consider booking a prenatal massage that not only encourages relaxation but also promotes circulation and reduces tension. ♦


The Inn Above Tide, directly on the San Francisco Bay.



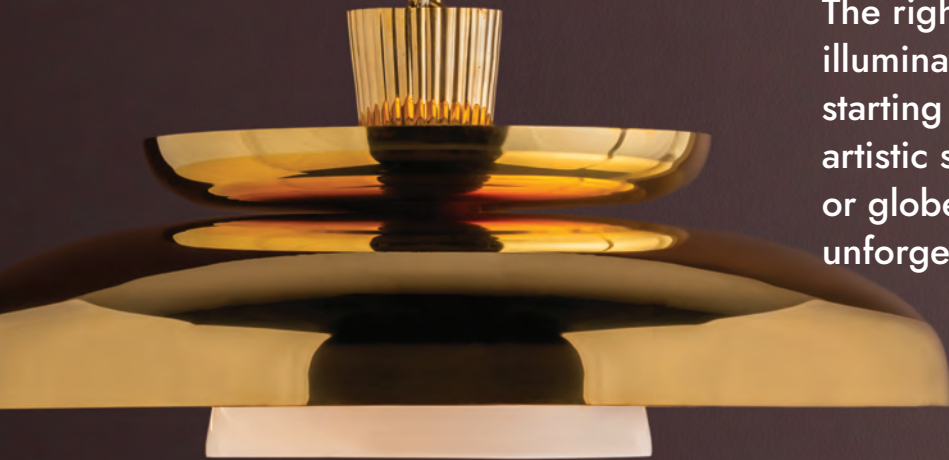
PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE INN ABOVE TIDE

Luminous Looks

By Alyssa Gautieri



The right lighting does more than illuminate — think conversation-starting sculptural chandeliers, artistic sconces with the finest details, or globe pendants that create an unforgettable vibe.



From simple to striking, the right fixture ensures a room's functionality, while also layering depth, warmth, and personality. "Lighting is crucial because it shapes the overall mood and energy of a space," says Erica Dodge, product manager at Hudson Valley Lighting. "It has the ability to create ambiance, whether you're aiming for a cozy, intimate feel or a bright, energizing atmosphere."

Lighting often doubles as artwork in the home, but there's a lot involved in choosing the perfect product — the most important being scale and size. "The fixture must be proportionate and enhance the room's atmosphere, without dominating it or disappearing into the background," says Dodge.

To find a ceiling fixture that is complementary to your specific room size, Elisabeth Gunshenan, design services designer at Perigold, shares a simple trick: The sum of the length and width of the room is equal to the number of inches the fixture should be in diameter. "For a living room, there's more flexibility to go larger," she adds. "When in doubt between sizes — go bigger and make a statement." →



Set the mood with a fixture inspired by current trends.

Here's what lighting pros are loving this year:

Mid-Century Style: There's a movement toward mid-century fixtures characterized by clean lines, organic shapes, and warm finishes, such as brass, bronze, and matte black. "These designs blend seamlessly into both contemporary and retro-inspired interiors, offering a balance between nostalgia and modern sophistication," says Ippolita Rostagno, founder and creative director of Artemest, an online destination for Italian home décor.

Natural Textures: Organic materials — think rattan, wicker, bamboo, and coconut shells — add depth and character to interiors. "These earthy textures are becoming more popular as designers look for ways to bring warmth and authenticity to both residential and hospitality spaces," says Dodge.

Pops of Color: Homeowners are leaning toward traditional fixtures that showcase vibrant hues, whether it's with colored glass, a patterned shade, or a bright finish. "Imagine taking the classic form of a Sputnik chandelier, but adding colored glass," says Gunshenan.



Dramatic Floor Lamps: With a sculptural shape, textured glass, or mixed metals, trendy floor lamps can illuminate a dark corner while adding height and visual interest. Gunshenan says, "Dramatic, overarching floor lamps are a great way to balance out a space that has a high ceiling."

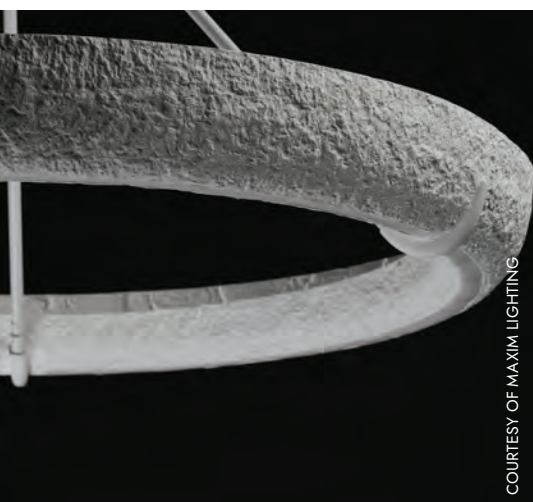


PHOTO BY GIOPAGANI, ARTEMEST.COM

This elegant floor lamp is made from meticulously carved wood and sleek brass.
Baker Street Muse Floor Lamp by Giopagani, \$8,880.

CORNO TRIPLE BRONZE BASE TABLE LAMP PHOTO BY PICCOLI SMALTI, ARTEMEST.COM;
RIGHT PHOTO COURTESY OF PERIGOLD

Sculptural Forms: Modern fixtures push boundaries with asymmetry, fluid curves, and bold geometric shapes — often pairing these sculptural silhouettes with raw materials, such as natural stone, textured glass, and aged metals. “This combination of earthy textures and statement-making designs makes lighting feel both timeless and cutting-edge,” says Adena Sperling, marketing director of Maxim Lighting.



COURTESY OF MAXIM LIGHTING

Soft Materials: Looking toward a light and airy aesthetic, designers are incorporating timeless pieces featuring soft textures, according to Rostagno. Consider “paper globes, fabric sconces, and ribbon appliqués that offer a gentle diffusion of light.”

Rich Brown Hues: Warm shades and deep browns are popular this year. “These colors are great at creating a cozy, inviting feel, while still looking stylish and sophisticated,” says Dodge. “These earthy tones work well with different design styles and have a timeless quality.” ♦



COURTESY OF PERIGOLD

Constructed from recycled wine bottles, this green chandelier features hanging glass pieces, all with uneven textures. *Sommelier Chandelier by Currey & Company, \$2,720.*



COURTESY OF HUDSON VALLEY LIGHTING

Resembling a wind chime, this sculptural chandelier features large oblong shades and tinted ombre glass. *Corbin Chandelier by Corbett Lighting, \$3,509.*

Curvaceous CONTEMPORARY

By Emily Jaeger

Curves breathe life, warmth, and mystery
into modern luxury spaces.



Halo Vigo, an elevator tower in Spain, designed by NOARQ in collaboration with AM2 Arquitectos.

COURTESY OF JOAO MORGADO

NOARQ



COURTESY OF ATTILIO FIUMARELLA

Rising above the Vigo skyline like a celestial halo, the striking urban elevator and promenade known as Halo (or Halo Vigo), built by Portuguese architecture firm NOARQ defy expectations. Its simple white curve is both elemental and enigmatic — a minimalist gesture that also challenges minimalism in the complexities of bringing such an expansive circle to life. This paradox lies at the heart of the curvaceous contemporary design trend, which challenges the rigid lines of traditional minimalism with soft, organic forms that are as inviting as they are provocative.

Far from being mere aesthetic flourishes, curves in contemporary design summon a sense of deep comfort. “Curves evoke natural and organic forms, subconsciously connecting us to nature and making us feel more at ease,”

COURTESY OF ATTILIO FIUMARELLA

Halo’s circular aerial passage offers panoramic views of the city and a functional walkway for pedestrians.

explain Esther and Elena Castaño-López of Spain's Sancal — a celebrated furniture and design studio from southeastern Spain. For architects such as José Carlos Nunes de Oliveira of NOARQ, they are unifying, dynamic lines that breathe life into structures, offering both mystery and continuity. "When the curves are big, we can't see the end ... it piques our curiosity, invites us to discover."

Nature and Nurture

Jonas Bjerre-Poulsen and Kasper Rønn, founders of Copenhagen-based Norm Architects, have profoundly influenced the global appreciation of Scandinavian design, particularly through their design philosophy of soft minimalism. This approach blends the rational ethos of traditional minimalism — where every element serves a purpose — with the warmth of organic materials and gentle curves, creating spaces that are cozy and serene. "Our soft minimalism concept cross-pollinates ideas from the fields of



ABOVE: Vigi House, designed by Norm Architects.

BELOW: Embrace & Enclose Lounge Chair by Norm Architects.

PHOTO BY SANDIE LYKKE NOLSØE & JONAS BJERRE-POULSEN



COURTESY OF NORM ARCHITECTS

design, philosophy, psychology, biology, and anthropology," they explain.

Rather than stark, sterile environments, soft minimalism seeks to add an allure to the built environment, embracing both mind and body through tactile, haptic designs. Clean architectural lines are thoughtfully balanced with curved furniture, textured materials such as wood and jute, and carefully curated objects and art. These elements soften the austerity often associated with minimalism, making spaces feel timeless, lived-in, and comforting.

This philosophy comes to life in one of Norm Architects' standout projects: a serene waterfront home just north of Copenhagen's bustling city center. Here, sleek modernist lines frame panoramic sea views, while built-in curved sofas invite quiet reflection or cozy reading sessions. In the master bedroom, flowing curtains stretch wall to wall, enhancing acoustics and creating a cocoon-like atmosphere of refuge and respite.

"Besides the modernist characteristics in the overall geometry, we wanted to bring our take on soft minimalism into play through homey details, soft elements, and tactile surfaces," says Sofie Thorning of Norm Architects. "This



COURTESY OF SANCAL

ABOVE: The Link & Loop sofas, a collaborative project between Sancal and design studio, Raw Color.

RIGHT: Yellow Mix, designer edition of the Loop sofa by Sancal.



COURTESY OF SANCAL

way we subtract all the unnecessary clutter while making sure that the sparse interior won't ever feel empty or cold."

Poetry and Mystery

For NOARQ, every line in a design serves a purpose. Rooted in minimalism, rational design, and environmental efficiency, its process is meticulous — iterative sketches refined again and again until form and function are perfectly aligned.

Yet, amidst this precision, curves emerge as unexpected, powerful gestures. "Sometimes the curve allows us to unify different parts in a single movement," explains de Oliveira, transforming spaces with fluidity that straight lines simply cannot achieve. At the restaurant Hora Do Almoço in Trofa, Portugal, for instance, he seamlessly melded ceiling and walls into a continuous, sculptural form — elevating a once-angular, nondescript storefront into a warm, inviting grotto that exudes both elegance and intimacy.

The circular design of Halo, de Oliveira asserts, achieves what a square never could. It seamlessly connects shoppers and residents to

downtown boutiques while inviting passersby to engage with the landscape from fresh perspectives — its graceful curvature framing both city and sea with effortless elegance. "One part of the promenade is covered, sheltered from the wind; the other, open to the sky. The circle is poetry."

Curves also redefine domestic spaces, as seen in NOARQ's recent project, the Ed & Jo House in Braga, Portugal. After countless design iterations, the NOARQ team introduced a dramatic double curve to connect privacy walls with the home's façade. This biophilic shape softens the structure's rectilinear form, adding warmth, intimacy, and a sense of mystery.

Creativity and Transgression

While minimalist architecture often embraces restraint, Sancal takes a bold, expressive approach. Unlike the subdued palettes of NOARQ and Norm Architects, Sancal's creations are unapologetically vibrant, treating furniture as emotional contemporary art. "Our approach to design is more hedonistic, expressive, and experimental, giving rise to a bold design language where color, textures, and shapes take center stage," says Sancal

— “Our approach to design is more hedonistic, expressive, and experimental, giving rise to a bold design language where color, textures, and shapes take center stage,” says Sancal’s Celia Victoria Ortolá, reflecting the studio’s ethos of playful sophistication.

spokesperson Celia Victoria Ortolá, reflecting the studio’s ethos of playful sophistication.

At the heart of Sancal’s aesthetic are curves — dynamic forms that infuse spaces with warmth and movement. “Curves express a more playful, creative, and sometimes even transgressive design, reflecting our passion for experimentation and enjoyment in every project,” she explains.

This philosophy comes alive in collections such as “Magnum” by EstudiHac, where seats inspired by cognac glasses cocoon the user in a cozy, elegant embrace. In “Roll” by MUT Design, overlapping cylindrical forms transform a simple chair into a sculptural statement, while “Loop” and “Link” by Raw Color explore rhythmic, curved patterns that redefine geometric simplicity.

Sancal’s designs aren’t just visually striking — they engage the senses, softening the rigidity of straight lines to create inviting, human-centered environments. Whether through bold silhouettes or tactile materials, these curvaceous forms embody the essence of emotional design, where comfort, creativity, and artistry converge. ♦

Instruments as Art

By Jack Boles

Craftsmanship and creativity converge in instrument design.



PHOTO BY VICTOR GAMA



ART

PHOTO BY JOSE FRADE



The Tipaw, part of the INSTRMNTS collection.



A Bogányi-designed piano with a sleek, futuristic look.

COURTESY OF BOGÁNYI PIANO

Music is an art unto itself, yet the craftsmanship behind musical instruments often goes unnoticed in the mainstream industry. Still, a vibrant community of artists and designers is redefining instrument design, blending innovation with artistry to create extraordinary, one-of-a-kind pieces that push the boundaries of both form and function.

What would be the musical instrument equivalent of a sports car? Perhaps the best candidate is a Bogányi Piano, by Gergely Bogányi, a pianist and designer in Budapest. The striking ideas for these instruments come from industrial designer Péter Üveges. Each one feels sleek and futuristic, adding a new sense of beauty to an already familiar and impressive instrument. According to the company, Bogányi Pianos feature “patented carbon fiber composite soundboards and striking, organic-inspired aesthetics.” This design also allows for “more power and roundness in the desired tone” of the sound, according to the group, while also making the pianos themselves lighter and much more stable overall. Being made by hand, they allow for much more customization than a traditional piano. Bogányi Piano is at the forefront of both innovation in design and integrity in artistic development.

Art is ever-evolving, and that statement has never been more true than with INSTRMNTS, a collaborative initiative between composer Victor Gama and PangeiArt. This collection of entirely

original musical instruments has been exhibited and performed around the world.

When asked about the design process of the original pieces from INSTRMNTS, Gama stated, “Many musical instruments around the world carry deep cultural, mythological, or spiritual meanings and are often central to rituals and ceremonies.” He continues, “When I design a new instrument, I follow a process where its shape and function emerge from a collection of stories, natural elements, symbols, and ideas. As the design evolves, it reflects the ongoing interaction between these concepts and my own musical exploration. The result is more than just an instrument — it becomes a tool for discovering new sounds, a bridge between tradition and 21st-century technology, and a guide to unexplored musical territories.”

Regarding what makes musical instruments such an exciting opportunity, Gama says they are “more than just tools for producing sound — they are rich, multidimensional canvases for artistic expression. Their design can embody mythology, cosmology, and natural forms, turning them into living sculptures that carry meaning beyond music.” His primary goal with this initiative was “to transform sound and music into a shared experience, creating spaces where history, culture, and artistic expression converge in unexpected ways.”

Gama also explains that the INSTRMNTS project has been very well received by the public.

“Gama stated, “Many musical instruments around the world carry deep cultural, mythological, or spiritual meanings and are often central to rituals and ceremonies.”

“We’ve witnessed how visitors are consistently drawn to the interactive nature of the instruments, showing genuine engagement across various groups, from young children to adults, participating in workshops and coming back for the live performances we stage,” he explains. “The excitement and curiosity sparked by the instruments seem to be a key highlight, especially with the compelling stories behind them.”

Bogányi Piano and INSTRMNTS are just two examples of a much wider movement that has only continued to grow, especially in the luxury realm. Artistic expression and musical instrument design go hand in hand. ♦

The Wonders of

By Jessica Ganga

Portugal

Luxury travelers are planning their next trip to this Southern European country for its epic coastline and much more.



In recent years, this southern European country has seen an uptick in tourism, and there is no question why. From its rolling wine valleys along the Douro River to lively cities such as Lisbon (or Lisboa if you're a local), the coastal Iberian country truly has something to offer every traveler.

But it's Portugal's vast coastline that sets this destination apart. Dotted with charming fishing villages, soaring cliffs, and white-sand beaches, it's a top choice for your next dream vacation.

"Portugal is attracting more and more visitors due to its unique combination of history, culture, gastronomy, and stunning landscapes," explains Ana Lopes, marketing consultant for Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Atlantic Portugal. "Additionally, the country has heavily invested in luxury tourism, the refurbishment of historical heritage, and exclusive experiences."

Sunil Metcalfe, sales director at Black Tomato, an award-winning bespoke luxury travel company, shares why he believes people are drawn to the country and its coast. "Portugal offers something for everyone, whether you're after adventure, relaxation, or incredible food,"

he says. "For travelers, the appeal is much the same. Portugal delivers great value while offering a rich mix of breathtaking coastal landscapes, fascinating history, vibrant culture, and, most importantly, fantastic wines." →



PHOTO BY FREDERIC DUCOULEZ / COURTESY OF QUINTA DA COMPORTA

ABOVE: The Quinta da Comporta, a luxury wellness boutique resort located in Carvalhal, Portugal.

BELOW: A serene pool at the Oryza Spa.

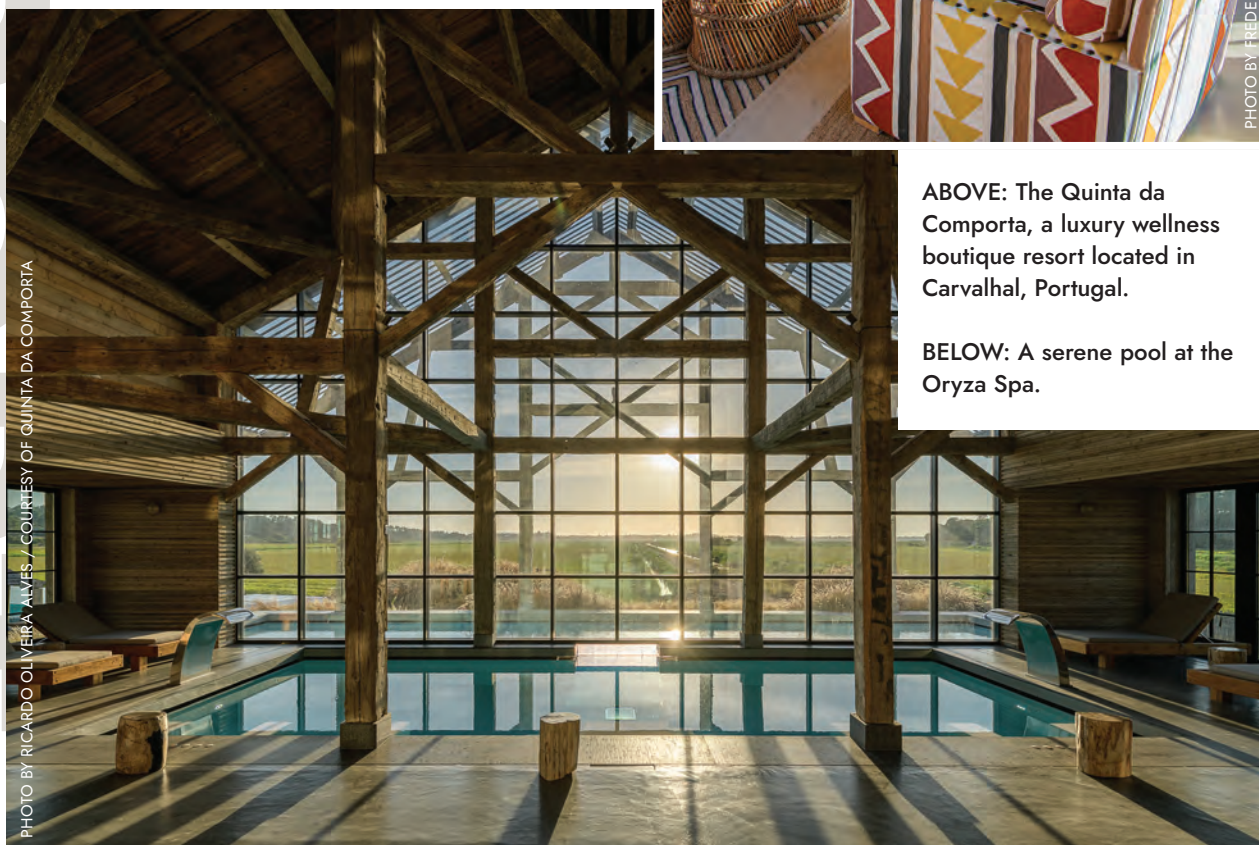


PHOTO BY RICARDO OLIVEIRA ALVES / COURTESY OF QUINTA DA COMPORTA



The Algarve coast boasts dramatic stretches of golden cliffs that are a favorite among tourists and locals.

©VISIT ALGARVE



A portrait of João Frederico Ludovice welcomes guests to the Palácio Ludovice Wine Experience Hotel.



Bahr is the sophisticated yet relaxed bar and restaurant in Lisbon's Bairro Alto Hotel.

COURTESY OF BAIRRO ALTO HOTEL



Belcanto in Lisbon offers classic Portuguese dishes in a chic dining room.

COURTESY OF JOSÉ AVILLEGROUP



PHOTO BY RICARDO JUNQUEIRA



Chef José Avillez

Surfing and Serenity

Nazaré, located north of Lisbon in the Costa de Prata region, is a small fishing town with a stretch of breathtaking beaches. This area attracts surfers from far and wide because of the “perfectly massive waves,” Metcalfe describes, which are thanks to the Nazaré Canyon. Visitors can learn to surf with private lessons — an adventure that Black Tomato can arrange.

For those who prefer to admire the waves from afar, Lopes suggests boat tours that guide travelers along the Atlantic coast. This option offers a more private experience. Black Tomato organizes half-day boat tours around cities such as Comporta, a tiny coastal town that has become a luxury retreat. “It’s the perfect place for those who want an elegant yet laid-back lifestyle, away from busy cities and tourist hot spots,” he says.

Metcalfe paints a picture of the town as a low-key yet chic destination. “It’s a favorite amongst those seeking tranquility and understated elegance,” he says. “Think long lunches at stylish beachside restaurants, leisurely bike rides, and evenings spent watching the sun dip over the sand dunes.”

For more serenity, visit Quinta da Comporta, a contemporary wellness retreat that connects guests to nature, encourages sustainable living, and offers a relaxing, balanced atmosphere. Everything from the architectural design to the interior spaces was carefully crafted to bring guests closer to the local beachside culture. Guests can relax by the pool, discover their Zen at the spa, or savor a farm-to-table meal on site.

Algarve’s Coastal Beauty and Culinary Excellence

Algarve, known for its soaring golden cliffs and crystal-blue waters, is the country’s southernmost region and home to many internationally acclaimed golf courses, such as the Quinta do Lago South Course at the Quinta do Lago Resort in Almancil. Most courses feature breathtaking views, while the local cuisine also draws guests. Fresh seafood and refined flavors are the highlight of many Michelin-starred restaurants in the area.

Lopes adds, “Cities like Lagos, with its fascinating caves and relaxed atmosphere, and Vilamoura, with its world-class marina and excellent infrastructure, are perfect destinations for those seeking luxury and relaxation by the sea.”

Lisbon: A City of History and Charm

Lisbon, Portugal’s capital city — known for its historic architecture, enchanting tilework, and bright yellow trams that traverse the city’s streets

— offers a “unique combination of culture and coastal proximity,” describes Lopes. “Historical neighborhoods like Alfama and Bairro Alto are a must-see.”

The Palácio Ludovice, located in the heart of Lisbon, is a boutique hotel that stands out among the rest, not only for its bright yellow palatial exterior but also because it combines storied history with luxury accommodations. “Palácio Ludovice has over 300 years of history, as this was the private house of João Frederico Ludovice, the king’s architect back in the 1700s,” explains Teresa Abreu, director of sales and marketing for the hotel.

The establishment is what’s called a “wine experience” hotel, which incorporates traditional Portuguese wines with guests’ stays. “We offer to all our guests, the opportunity to experience a wine tasting with one of our sommeliers,” says Abreu. “If you’re lucky enough to spend a Wednesday with us, take a moment to enjoy our special wine event — Grape Expectations. Every week, the sommelier will introduce you to a curiosity around the wine.” The curiosity, she adds, ranges from how to open a bottle with fire to the different varieties of corks.

A Culinary Journey with Chef José Avillez

Belcanto, a two-Michelin-star restaurant by Chef José Avillez, features both Portuguese wines and the flavors of the country with a fresh take on traditional dishes. “In Belcanto, we’ve long worked to promote the best Portuguese cuisine from a contemporary perspective, always believing in authenticity and valuing tradition,” says Avillez. “But in each dish, I also share my inspirations and emotions.”

One of Avillez’s signature dishes — sea bass with vegetable dashi, seaweed, and bivalves — incorporates his passion for the sea and highlights the country’s coastal connection. Belcanto’s extensive wine list showcases Portugal’s wine regions, as each terrain influences the character of the wine differently. “Each region has its own unique combination of soil, climate, and traditions, resulting in wines that reflect local identity and cultural heritage,” says Avillez.

A Destination to Remember

With its combination of picturesque landscapes, an expansive coastline, and storybook views, Lopes sums up why the country is a must-visit destination. “Portugal is a country that combines history, tradition, and modernity. It’s a versatile destination — perfect for relaxing or exploring. It offers city, countryside, beach, and even snow zones. Those who visit always return.” ♦

GREEN

Faux

Florals

By Jamie Yoos

Elegant alternatives to real flowers are available in the luxury realm this spring.

COURTESY OF AERIN

MAIN PHOTO COURTESY OF VALENTINA GIOVANDO

With the long-awaited return of warmer temperatures comes the resurgence of florals in interior design. Traditionally, flowers are a favorite way to bring the outdoors in and make a home feel vibrant during any season. However, in execution, natural flowers can be quite a hassle. They require specific care, and they wilt and expire much quicker than we'd like — all of which are unfavorable characteristics in any decor piece. Luckily, sustainable, long-lasting, and just-as-beautiful alternatives exist.

Diane James Home

Diane James is credited with creating the first collection of faux floral designs made in the United States to be sold at luxury retailers and through interior designers. Twenty years later, the brand has solidified its reputation as the ultimate destination for high-end faux florals.

"We make all of our arrangements in our studio in Connecticut, unlike our competition, which primarily makes their products in China," says Carolyn James McDonough, Diane James' daughter and co-CEO of the company. "Just like in fashion, we design two collections a year that capture the latest in home decor and floral trends so that every season there's a variety of designs to choose from."

Diane James Home creates the most realistic stems found in the industry, made of poly-cotton fabrics coated with a thin layer of latex to give the petals a soft, natural touch. "All of the materials used to make our stems replicate nature so convincingly that we have to tell our clients not to water our designs," McDonough explains.



Whether at home or in the office, according to McDonough, there is always an opportunity to display faux flowers to liven up a space. "We're great for second homes and for people who travel since they want to come home to a room that feels alive. Our designs are more environmentally conscious than fresh, they don't require water, last much longer, and have a lower carbon footprint."

AERIN Porcelain Flowers

Global luxury lifestyle brand AERIN's realistic porcelain flower sculptures reflect the detail and delicacy of natural flowers. The designs for each piece are inspired by the real thing, resulting in elegant and hyperrealistic products.



PHOTO BY ZACH PONTZ

ABOVE: Faux flowers by Diane James Home add a pop of color to this home.

MIDDLE: A single flower by AERIN Porcelain Flowers.

LEFT: Hundreds of shiny sequins capture the iridescent light in this Perpetual Flowers bouquet.

"We want our floral objects to look as realistic as possible and incorporate all the beautiful elements of a fresh flower," says Aerin Lauder, founder of AERIN.

"I love the idea of porcelain flowers because they last forever. Each one is hand-sculpted and painted in the rich hues of a flower in full bloom," adds Lauder, noting that porcelain flowers are perfect for gifting as they are both timeless and versatile. They can be seamlessly incorporated into any space, whether it be to bring a pop of color or simply to display your favorite flower. "These pieces create the magic of an indoor garden with a sense of ease and refinement."

Perpetual Flowers by Valentina Giovando

Based in Liguria, Italy, this artist puts an elegant and unique spin on faux floral arrangements. The offerings boast branches crafted from braided iron wire, flower petals made of various shiny sequins, and leaves made of moiré waxed fabric. Completely handmade, each piece is one of a kind, composed of various flower designs of different sizes, heavily inspired by the traditional oriental art of flower arrangements, such as the Japanese *Ikebana*.

"The Perpetual Flowers bunch has a sculptural form that remains the same over time, but its shape can also be changed according to the taste of the owner," says designer Valentina Giovando. "Since each flower and each branch are different from the other, [the client] can establish their own shape by arranging the flowers, matching their taste and their environment." ♦

Posh

Picnic Accessories

By Jamie Yoos

The return of warmer weather and vibrant seasonal blooms is the perfect excuse to host an ultra-luxury picnic. Here's a list of essentials to elevate your springtime feast from ordinary to extraordinary.

Fortnum & Mason: Stripe Picnic Hamper

No picnic is complete without the quintessential accessory — the basket. This picnic hamper from Fortnum & Mason is the peak of practicality, brimming with fun and functionality.

The basket features a fully insulated, lavish teal lining that doubles as a protective layer and contains glassware for four. Striped mugs, plates, stainless steel cutlery, cotton napkins, a flask, salt and pepper grinders, a corkscrew, and a freezable champagne or wine bottle holder complete the set. **\$865.**



COURTESY OF FORTNUM & MASON

Business & Pleasure Co.: The Hemingway Cooler

Inspired by the sleek lines and timeless elegance of mid-20th-century European cars and speedboats, the Hemingway Cooler combines vintage style with modern efficiency. Crafted for durability, it's built to withstand the elements, making it the ideal companion for springtime picnics. The cooler ensures that your drinks and food stay chilled for hours. With ample storage space, it can easily accommodate everything on your picnic menu. This addition is not just a practical necessity but a statement piece. **\$599.**



COURTESY OF BUSINESS & PLEASURE CO.

Maison Michel: Gina Bicolor Straw Floppy Hat

No picture-perfect springtime picnic is complete without an elegant sunhat. This straw floppy hat from Maison Michel is ideal for the occasion, featuring a sophisticated bicolor design, a cotton cord with a pompom, and a signature metal logo. The wide, flat brim provides ample sun protection while keeping things stylish and elevated. **\$1,400.**



COURTESY OF MAISON MICHEL

Ghurka: Pairing No. 285 Wine Tote

The chic, vegetable-tanned leather wine tote from Ghurka is an exceptional way to transport beverages in style. Crafted from premium materials, the tote exudes timeless sophistication. With a top leather handle for easy carrying, it comfortably holds up to two bottles. The gingham-lined interior adds a touch of classic charm while featuring a padded divider to keep bottles secure and protected. A zip-around closure ensures everything stays in place. **\$595. ♦**



COURTESY OF GHURKA