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travel your dreams in style

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Top 10 best boutique & small luxury hotel chains

🕒 February 21, 2022 💬 8



GET COMPLIMENTARY VIP PERKS AT ANY SONEVA RESORT (CREDIT & TWO EXPERIENCES)

Monday newsletters always feature top 10 travel lists to inspire.

Today: Top 10 best boutique hotel chains

Well-known hotel companies like Four Seasons, Aman or Ritz-Carlton have been dominating the luxury travel market for years, building a loyal clientele among the world's discerning travelers. Yet, this trend has changed dramatically in recent years, as a global growth in number of wealthy travelers has driven an increase in the number of luxury hotels and resorts (although it remains to be seen how the COVID19 pandemic will affect this trend). Also, more and more travelers like to opt for boutique hotels that are not part of the well established hotel brands. Here are 10 small luxury hotel chains that

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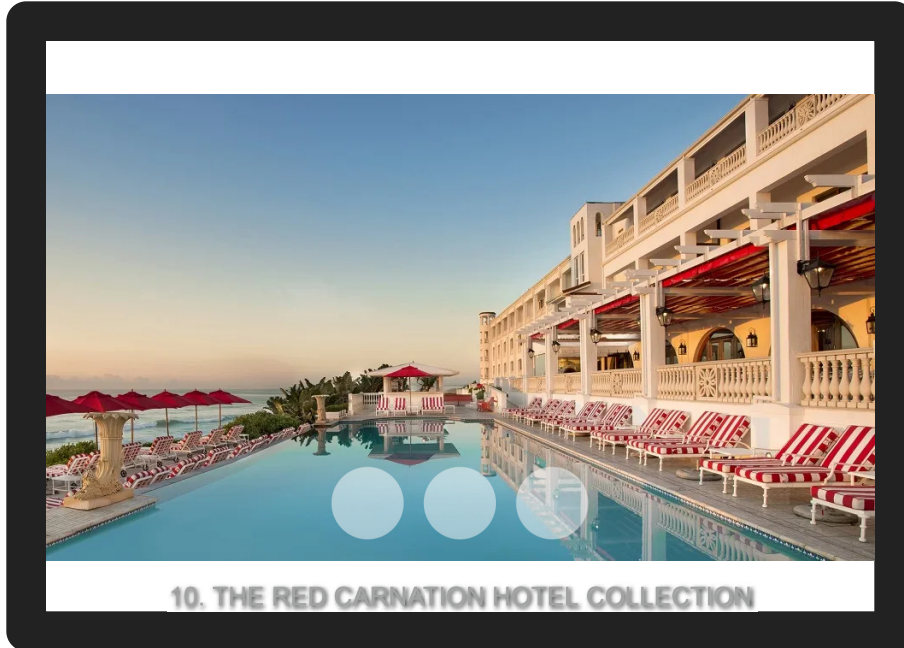
Contact me to get a resort credit and two personalized experiences (for two) at any Soneva resort in the Maldives or Thailand.



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you may have never heard of but should totally book because they're awesome (and I adore them).

There is more information (with trip reports & YouTube clips) below the slide show. Think I missed one? Leave a **comment** or take my **poll** below!



Readers of my blog get free VIP perks when booking Virtuoso rates at luxury hotels via **Classic Travel**. These perks may include an upgrade, daily breakfast, spa treatment, resort credit, early check-in, and late check-out. Click [here](#) to book your hotel online on the Classic Travel website.



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10. THE RED CARNATION HOTEL COLLECTION

Founded by Beatrice Tollman on the premise that “no request is too large, no detail too small”, Red Carnation Hotels are a collection of family-run, award-winning boutique hotels in the UK, Ireland, South Africa, Switzerland and the USA. Each hotel is a landmark of history and tradition, and generous hospitality is at the heart of each hotel experience, from creative turndown gifts to personalized and thoughtful surprises for guests. From the recently restored Ashford Castle in Ireland, to the Milestone, a historic mansion hotel in the heart of London, to the truly iconic Oyster Box Hotel in South Africa – the Red Carnation Hotels are unique and characterful with a personal approach to hospitality.

- **Website:** [The Red Carnation Hotel Collection](#)
- **Review:** read my review of the Twelve Apostles Hotels (Cape Town), a Red Carnation Hotel, [here](#).

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My [YouTube channel](#) is one of the most followed travel vlogs in the world. I publish one new video per week (hotel or flight review). Click [here](#) to subscribe to my Youtube channel.

Qatar Airways QSuite Business Class trip

Phenomenal Soneva Jani Maldives

Singapore Airlines A380 First Class trip

9. ALILA

The hallmark of Alila – a brand managed by the Hyatt Hotel Group – is the combination of innovative design and crafted luxury in unique locations, set apart by an unprecedented level of personalized hospitality, private spaces and bespoke journeys. Alila means “Surprise” in Sanskrit, which suitably describes the refreshing character of Alila’s boutique hotel properties in the USA, China, Oman, Malaysia, and Indonesia. To stay at any of Alila’s hotels and resorts is to embark on a destination experience. Be it in recreating the flavors of the local cuisine, enhancing your well-being through ancient healing arts or the thrill of adventure sports. Re-discover the luxury of living at Alila.

- **Website:** [Alila](#)
- **Review:** read [here](#) my review of Alila Jabal Akhdar (Oman)
- **Review:** read [here](#) my review of Alila Villas Uluwatu (Bali)

Time + Tide Miavana, the world's best resort

8. EXPLORA

Explora is a travel company that owns and operates hotels and Travesías (nomadic journeys) in 7 remote destinations in South America and the Pacific, including Torres Del Pain National Park (Chile), Atacama Desert (Chile), El Chalten Patagonia (Argentina), Uyuni salt flat (Bolivia), and Easter Island. The Explora story began in 1989 with a group of friends who were enthusiastic about unconventional travel and adventure. Today, the company's hotels feature regularly on the cover of the world's leading travel magazines Conde Nast Traveler and Travel + Leisure. Explora proposes a way of traveling based on in-depth exploration of the surroundings, the luxury of the essential and a sustainable development.

- **Website:** [Explora](#)

Etihad Airways A380 First Class trip

Amanzoe, the most exclusive hotel in Greece

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7. TIME + TIDE

One of Africa's premium safari companies, Time + Tide's story started 70 years ago, when the legendary Norman Carr pioneered a community-based safari experience in Zambia. Father of the walking safari, he paved the way for modern conservation tourism, working hand-in-hand with locals to ensure they would benefit from the protection of their local wilderness and wildlife. Over the years, the company evolved, and today, it manages a portfolio of ultra-luxurious properties that stretches across the land and sea in Southern Africa, welcoming those who believe the road less traveled has more to offer. Time + Tide's portfolio includes Miavana, the world's most exclusive resort.

- **Website:** [Time + Tide](#)
- **Review:** read [here](#) my review of Time + Tide Chongwe Suites (Zambia)
- **Review:** read [here](#) my review of Time + Tide Kakuli Bushcamp (Zambia)
- **Review:** read [here](#) my review of Time + Tide Chinzombo Lodge (Zambia)
- **Review:** read [here](#) my review of Time + Tide Miavana (Madagascar)

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Soneva Fushi to host Maldives' first ever TEDx talk

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Soneva Fushi to host Mald...

Hosted by Soneva Fushi, TEDxBaaAtoll will join the theluxurytravelexpert.com

17h



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Review: Damaraland Camp by Wilderness Safaris (Namibia)

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Review: Damaraland Camp ...

Read here my review (with pros & cons) of Damaraland Camp a



& Soneva, or Damaraland Camp, at
theluxurytravelexpert.com

Mar 16, 2022



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Mar 14, 2022

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6. BAILLIE LODGES

Baillie Lodges is an intimate portfolio of boutique hotels setting new benchmarks for premium experiential travel in Australian style. Set in exclusive locations of unique natural or cultural significance, the boutique properties appeal to the discerning global traveler seeking a remarkable experience. Baillie Lodges was founded in 2003 by life and business partners James and Hayley Baillie, who together bring a wealth of high-end tourism experience to this dynamic venture. The Baillie Lodges collection includes some of the world's most extraordinary and remote locations, from Lord Howe Island off Australia's east coast to the outback's last frontier at Uluru-Kata Tjuta. Recently, the famous Clayoquot Wilderness Lodge on Vancouver Island, Canada, was added to Baillie Lodges' portfolio.

- **Website:** [Baillie Lodges](#)
- **Review:** read [here](#) my review of Longitude 131°, a Baillie Lodge



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[Review: Little Kulala Camp by Wilderness Safaris \(Namibia\)](#)

[Top 10 best Wilderness Safaris lodges in Africa](#)

[Travel news: this month \(February 2022\) in luxury travel](#)

5. WILDERNESS SAFARIS

Wilderness Safaris was established in 1983 by a group of individuals who had a dream: to share some of the most remote wilderness areas on the African sub-continent with guests from all over the world, in a way that lightly touched the environment, but left a big imprint on the soul. Today, the group operates in seven countries with over 30 camps, and is stronger than ever in its dedication to conserving and restoring Africa's wilderness and wildlife. Wilderness Safaris exists to protect wilderness areas and the fauna and flora they support, and believes that in protecting these areas – and including local communities in this process – they will make a difference to Africa and ultimately the world.

- **Website:** [Wilderness Safaris](#)
- **Review:** read [here](#) my review of [Bisate Lodge](#) (Rwanda)

4. OETKER COLLECTION

The Oetker Collection is a family-owned company, whose story began in 1923 with the acquisition of the historic Brenners Park-Hotel by the Oetker Family. After this first venture into the hotel world, another opportunity arose in 1969 when Rudolf August Oetker fell in love with the Hotel du Cap-Eden-Roc and decided to acquire it. Nine years later he added the iconic Bristol Paris to his portfolio. Today, the Oetker

Collection embodies the finest of traditional European hospitality, and also includes L'Apogee Courchevel (one of the top luxury ski-on/ski-out hotels on earth), The Lanesborough London, and two of the most vaunted properties in the Caribbean, St. Bart's Eden Rock and Antigua's Jumby Bay.

- **Website:** [The Oetker Collection](#)
- **Review:** read my review of The Lanesborough London [here](#).

3. SINGITA

Dedicated to environmentally conscious hospitality, sustainable conservation and the empowerment of local communities, Singita, meaning "place of miracles," was founded in 1993 with a single lodge, Singita Ebony Lodge. Today, Singita, together with its partner conservation Funds & Trusts, is the guardian of large areas of pristine wilderness in Africa and responsible for successful community partnership projects, making a tangible difference in the lives of the people living and working in and around its lodges. Singita proudly operates 15 luxury, award-winning lodges and camps, each a unique experience in its own right, in six regions across four countries in Africa.

- **Website:** [Singita](#)



2. ZANNIER HOTELS

Based on Da Vinci's famous quote "Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication", Zannier Hotels is a family owned luxury hotel group, driven by passion for hospitality and gastronomy. Nestled in exquisitely beautiful parts of the world, Zannier Hotels create luxury experiences that focus on local authenticity, understated luxury and simple, unpretentious design. The accommodations at the properties are sumptuous and the service is personalized. The Zannier collection includes a luxurious hotel chalet in the French Alps, a complex of Kmer villas near Angkor Wat, a rustic resort in Vietnam, and two stunning desert lodges in Namibia. Future boutique hotels are currently in development in Mexico and the Mediterranean.

- **Website:** [Zannier Hotels](#)
- **Review:** read my review of Zannier Hotels Phum Baitang (Cambodia) [here](#)
- **Review:** read my review of Zannier Hotels Sonop [here](#)

1. SONEVA

In 1995, Sonu Shivdasani, an Indian-British hotelier, launched the now world-famous Soneva Fushi resort in the Maldives, pioneering a trend for back-to-nature luxury holidays. He also built his house there, together with his wife Eva Malmstrom, a Swedish fashion model, who developed the design and furnishing of the resort. In 2009, Soneva built a second, even more spectacular hotel, Soneva Kiri, in Thailand. And in 2016, Soneva opened the most fabulous hotel in the Maldives, Soneva Jani. Founded on shared passions and masters of innovation, Soneva is a thriving community working hand in hand with the environment to craft beyond bespoke experiences where discovery is a way of life.

Contact me to get a **complimentary VIP benefits** at any Soneva resort.

- **Website:** [Soneva](#)
- **Review:** read my review of Soneva Fushi (Maldives) [here](#).
- **Review:** read my review of Soneva Jani (Maldives) [here](#).
- **Review:** read my review of Soneva in Aqua (Maldives) [here](#).
- **Review:** read my review of Soneva Kiri (Thailand) [here](#).

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What's the world's best small luxury hotel cl

- The Red Carnation Hotel Collection**
- Alila**
- Explora**
- Time + Tide**
- Baillie Lodges**
- Wilderness Safaris**
- The Oetker Collection**
- Singita**
- Zannier Hotels**
- Soneva**

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Review: Time + Tide Kakuli, South Luangwa National Park (Zambia)

8 COMMENTS

Neil E Dickenson says:

MAY 11, 2020 AT 4:45 PM

Voted for Wilderness Safaris in honour and memory of the rangers and civilians killed last month in the Virunga National Park.

Vlado Orlandich says:

MAY 11, 2020 AT 7:21 PM

Our dear The Great Expert ! Amazingly pleasant and helpful review for real travelers ! After viewing and familiarization, there is only one step left : choose a specific hotel, country and route. Always quite clear and convincing information ! Always with deep meaning ! I take off my hat... I'm immensely grateful !

BriN says:

MAY 12, 2020 AT 12:04 PM

I really haven't heard of any of these but I'm recently up for boutique hotels a lot!! They're so cosy and AMAZING.

I've been scared to try out anything other than the Radisson Blu for a very long time but now I'm glad I chose to try out boutique hotels♥♥

noah says:

MAY 12, 2020 AT 4:08 PM

Luxury Travel Expert,
Will you do a list on best cruise lines

Swiss Traveler says:

MAY 13, 2020 AT 2:19 PM

Hi, great read, again! What about COMO Hotels & Resorts <https://www.comohotels.com/en/hotels-and-resorts?> They might suit this category, too ... Cheers, Franziska

The Luxury Travel Expert ☆ says:

MAY 13, 2020 AT 2:23 PM

@ Swiss Traveler: I agree 😊

Kenneth B. Edwards says:

OCTOBER 19, 2020 AT 1:13 PM

Thanks for curating this valuable list, it will definitely help customers to compare all major small hotel chains to make well-informed decisions to spend their money wisely.

Robin Albertelli says:

FEBRUARY 21, 2022 AT 5:34 PM

the milestone in london. our go to location.
red carnation. can't say enough...

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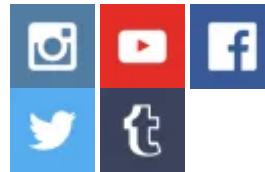
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