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Dreamy Suites: 10 Best Hotels of 2018



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Travel I know the difference between expensive travel and the truly luxurious

It is, admittedly, self-indulgent to look back at the end of another globetrotting year and pick my favorites among the dozens of luxury hotels that I've had the pleasure of staying at and writing about.

But after yet another year of exploring (often a guest of various hotels), my deep affection for hotels is inevitable. And I discovered some great ones in 2018. Ranging from a historic sporting lodge in Scotland to a cutting-edge safari camp in Tanzania, they share a singularity—they're the kind of quirky places that make me wonder why anyone thought to build (or renovate) them. Which makes me love them all the more.

Here (alphabetically) are 10 standouts—some brand new, some new to me, and all surprising and charming in ways that are completely their own.



Chablé Yucatán^{CHABLE}

Chablé Yucatán, Mexico

Wellness is a bit wily. We all want it we don't know what it is. Is it green juice and a vegan bento box? Is it sound therapy and shamanistic healing? HIIT and massages? A glass of fine mescal and a Cuban cigar? At Chablé, wellness is whatever makes you feel good. Occupying the remains for a 19th-century henequen (sisal) plantation, the hotel pays homage to the history of the region while taking its own approach to well-being. The heart of Chablé is its massive spa, and the heart of the spa is a cenote, or natural pool that is held sacred in Maya tradition. "Everything coming from it is powerful," says spa director Carmelina Montelongo. "It nurtures everything."