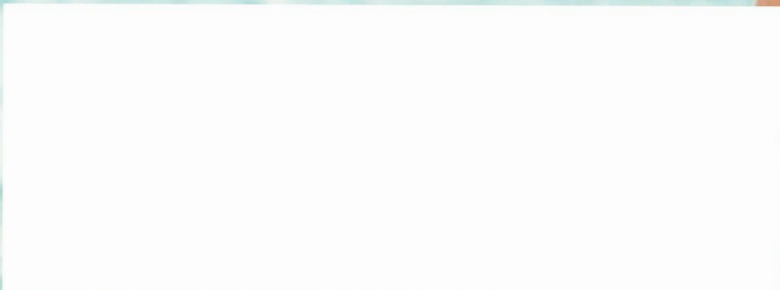


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CLOSE TO HOME, A WORLD APART



Las Alcobas in St. Helena, Calif., opened earlier this year with 68 guestrooms and suites.

NEW - AND NEWLY TRANSFORMED - HOTELS YOU CAN SUGGEST TO CLIENTS LOOKING TO VACATION IN THEIR OWN BACKYARDS

By Theresa Norton

A distinctive roster of hotels and resorts debuted this year in the U.S. and Canada, with others reopening in the aftermath of transformative renovations. Here's a sampling of one-of-a-kind properties to recommend to your clients who want to vacation closer to home.

Alohilani Resort Waikiki Beach

Hawaii's 48-year-old Pacific Beach Hotel is in the midst of a \$115 million facelift and is scheduled to reopen in December 2017 as the Alohilani Resort Waikiki Beach.

The 839-room property, whose new name means "the heavenly

brightness," is designed to bring an "aloha-chic" factor to the heart of Waikiki, and is located on Kalakaua Avenue, just 50 steps to the beach. The resort will feature five restaurants – including two by Iron Chef Masaharu Morimoto – as well as a 280,000-gallon saltwater oceanarium in the lobby.

The "Sneak Peek @ Aloha Chic" package, priced from \$289 per night, is valid for stays through December 2018. The package includes daily breakfast buffet for two, two cocktails and two appetizers per room for one evening, and complimentary self-parking for one vehicle.

Visit www.alohilaniresort.com/sneakpeek or call 808-921-6196. A



A glampsite at Ventana Big Sur in central California.



A guestroom at the Life Hotel in Manhattan.



A double room at the Alohilani Resort Waikiki Beach.

travel agent training program is available at www.TravelAgentAcademy.com.

Las Alcobas, Napa Valley

Las Alcobas, a Luxury Collection boutique hotel located amid vineyards in St. Helena, Calif., opened earlier this year with 68 guestrooms and suites. The property is within walking distance of the Culinary Institute, the Beringer Vineyards, restaurants and shopping in downtown St. Helena.

Most of the guestrooms and suites, which start at 450 square feet in size, feature outdoor terraces with fireplaces. Ten are equipped with outdoor soaking tubs on private balconies. All are appointed with custom furniture and oversized, spa-like bathrooms with tubs and showers, stone carved sinks and marble throughout.

The property is spread over three acres, the centerpiece of which is the Acacia House – a former Georgian-style residence dating back to 1905 – which now contains the new Acacia House restaurant overseen by Chef Chris Cosentino, six guestrooms and a small boardroom. Las Alcobas also features an outdoor pool with cabanas and a 3,500-square-foot spa. Rates start at \$695 per night.

Visit www.lasalcobas.com.

Waldorf Astoria Beverly Hills

The hotel, located at the intersection of Wilshire and Santa Monica boulevards, debuted this past summer with 115 rooms and 51 suites, Jean-Georges Vongerichten restaurants, a rooftop pool with VIP cabanas and a personal concierge service for each guest.

Guest accommodations feature a design described as a contemporary interpretation of Hollywood glamour and the Streamline Moderne style of the 1930s and 1940s. Every

guestroom features floor-to-ceiling windows that open onto oversized balconies. A Rolls Royce house car offers complimentary drop-off service within a two-mile radius. Deluxe guestrooms start at \$815 per night; suites at \$3,000.

Visit www.waldorfasteria.com or call 800-774-1500.

Fairmont The Queen Elizabeth, Montreal

Fairmont The Queen Elizabeth hotel in Montreal officially reopened on July 10 after a yearlong, \$140 million renovation.

The massive project included an overhaul of the 950 guestrooms and suites – with one suite recreated in honor of John Lennon and Yoko Ono, who held their famous “bed-in for peace” at the hotel in 1969.

New restaurants include the Rosélys bistro, the Kréma café and Bar Nacarat. Artisans market, which was scheduled to debut on Oct. 23, is described as an urban grocery with gourmet take-out counters featuring a Quebec wild-meat rotisserie, shellfish and sushi, cheese and deli meats, baked goods and crepes. A rooftop event space is scheduled to open in early November.

Rates start at CAD\$359 (about USD\$287 in early October).

Visit www.fairmont.com or call 866-540-4483.

Life Hotel, Manhattan

The Manhattan property opened its doors in April 2017, and is set in a building dating back to 1895, which once housed *Life* magazine, and where celebrated writers and artists like Norman Rockwell, Charles Gibson and John Ames Mitchell lived and worked. The developers included such architectural details as wood moldings and the original

marble flooring in the design. The 98 guestrooms feature high ceilings, wood floors with exposed concrete, wrought-iron bed frames and brass fixtures.

The hotel includes a lobby bar and lounge. A full-service restaurant helmed by Chef Michael Vignola is scheduled to open in November, along with a speakeasy bar in the basement. Rates start at \$249 per night.

Visit www.lifehotel.com or call 212-615-9900.

Ventana Big Sur, California

Perched in the hills overlooking the Central California coastline, this 59-room resort was scheduled to reopen on Oct. 20 following a multimillion-dollar renovation – and after a new bridge restored roadway access following mudslides earlier this year through Big Sur. It is the first North American property from Alila Hotels & Resorts, a brand from Asia.

Ventana is introducing the Redwood Canyon Glampsites – the buzzword for glamorous camping – in its redwood forest. Fifteen safari-style canvas tents in the 20-acre canyon will each feature plush mattresses with luxury linens, hot and cold running water, picnic tables, dinnerware, separate propane and wood-burning fire pits with firewood.

Glampsites include daily housekeeping service, access to ice chests and custom-curated picnic baskets, power bricks with electrical and USB plug-ins, baskets with bath towels and shower amenities, wine-and-cheese picnic backpacks, nightly turndown service with hot cocoa and tea, and hot-water bottles to warm bedsheets.

Nightly resort room rates start at \$675. Glampsites are priced from \$325 per night.

Visit www.ventanabigsur.com or call 831-667-2331.