

Summer 2013

HOT LIST

Katie Parsons rounds up the best of this summer's new hotels, river cruises and exhibitions.

FRONT-ROW SEATS FOR THE GREAT MIGRATION



Mahali Mzuri, the newest camp from Sir Richard Branson's Virgin collection, will open in August. The 12 tents are perched overlooking a valley in the Motorogi Conservancy just north of the Masai Mara in Kenya. The area is home to abundant wildlife year-round and is the perfect base to witness the annual migration, which passes through between July and October. After one of the twice-daily safari drives, what better than a relaxing dip in the swimming pool, with views over the sprawling plains below?





CRUISE ECUADOR'S AMAZON

Travel on board the river cruiser *Anakonda*, the only luxury ship in the Ecuadorian Amazon rainforest, which sets sail in July. Visit remote and pristine areas, rarely accessed by tourists, and interact with the region's local communities, while enjoying the comfort and service of a floating 5-star boutique hotel.



STONE SCULPTURES IN VENICE

Coinciding with the 55th Venice biennale, Britain's pre-eminent stone carver Emily Young is staging her first European show in the cloisters of the Madonna dell'Orto church. After the exhibition in Venice from 1 June to 26 August, it will then be displayed at London's Fine Art Society in September.

A NEW BALINESE RETREAT

Opened in June on the eastern coast of Bali, the Regent Bali has 4 hectares of tropical gardens with 200 metres of beachfront protected by a coral reef. Built using local materials, all the locally inspired rooms overlook the island of Nusa Lembongan and the Indian Ocean and have a private terrace to enjoy the views. Offering the ultimate in 21st century luxury, the semi-private beach is fully equipped with high-speed Wi-Fi.



SANCTUARY ON A CONTINENTAL CROSSROAD

On the European side of the Bosphorus Strait, Shangri-La opened its newest hotel in May in a 1930s restored tobacco warehouse. The hotel combines European, Asian and Turkish styles and guests can choose from the signature Shang Palace Chinese restaurant or IST TOO, an all-day dining menu of world cuisine, including Japanese, south-east Asian, Mediterranean and Turkish foods. There is a traditional Turkish hammam, as well as the hotel's CHI spa.



LUXURY IN THE LAND OF FIRE & ICE

Less than an hour's drive from Reykjavik and close to Thingvellir National Park, the new ION hotel is well located for Iceland's natural attractions. Floor-to-ceiling windows, with panoramic views of Lake Thingvellir, allow guests to witness the dramatic landscapes and changing night sky from the comfort of the hotel's aptly named Northern Light's bar.

GANGTEY GOENPA LODGE

High in the eastern Himalaya, Bhutan's newest luxury lodge is set to open in the autumn. Offering guests a range of activities, including mountain biking and walking, the lodge overlooks the spectacular Gangtey monastery and valley, home to the rare black-necked crane. The building is inspired by the architecture of the unique Bhutanese farmhouses in the valley and has just 12 luxuriously appointed guestrooms.

