

THE HOT LIST 2009

UK, EUROPE & RUSSIA

➤ **ROOM TO BOOK** There are lovely views of the Royal Palace from Room 315; from Room 415 you look across the water to Strandvägen, one of the most elegant streets in town.
00 46 8 223160; www.lydmar.com. Doubles from SKr2,500 (about £205)

THE DOLDER GRAND Zürich

Set high in the hills, 1,500 metres above Zürich, this former *kurhaus* (traditional health spa) has been transformed by Norman Foster into one of the sleekest new urban resorts in the world. Foster's design marries a pair of new wings covered in an abstract forest pattern with the turreted, fairy-tale charm of the original *belle époque* structure. One wing houses the 21-treatment-room spa crafted from local limestone, American walnut and dark oak, and staffed by a team of mostly European therapists and specialists offering the sacred (yoga, meditation, shiatsu) and the profane (Botox and other cosmetic 'touch-ups'). Spacious and grand, with both 'steam' and 'snow' zones, the spa is traversed via a winding stone 'canyon' that leads from a domed meditation space to a black-bottomed pool and on to a trio of alfresco Jacuzzis with prime Zürich views. The other wing (which faces a nine-hole golf course) houses the 173 new bedrooms, all with floor-to-ceiling windows and eight-head showers, and most with small balconies. The lights, music and curtains are controlled by an integrated (and surprisingly useful) console. The formal restaurant, which serves an inventive take on traditional Swiss dishes by young chef Heiko Nieder, was granted a Michelin star less than a year after it opened.

WHEN TO GO In summer, when you can swim in the pristine waters of Lake Zürich.

ROOM TO BOOK Junior suites in the new wing have balconies and walls of windows to take full advantage of the views.
00 41 44 456 6000; www.thedoldergrand.ch. Doubles from Sfr870 (about £540)

WITT SUITES Istanbul

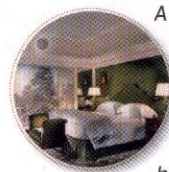
UNDER £150 From the outside, this boutique bolthole looks like a nondescript apartment block. But kitted out exclusively in bespoke furniture by Autoban, Turkey's top interior designers, Witt Suites is far from ordinary. The 17 generously proportioned, open-plan suites feel more like loft apartments than standard hotel rooms. With king-size wardrobes, a boxy leather sofa and rocking chair for lounging and mirrored kitchenettes equipped with espresso machines, the suites are well suited for long stays. Oversized beds with winged leather headboards also encourage long lie-ins – especially since you can order breakfast in bed at no extra charge. The grey-marble bathrooms are evocative of traditional hammams; but instead of a slab of olive-oil soap and a threadbare towel, here you get Molton Brown toiletries, sculpted Corian sinks and six shower heads. If the decor is modernist-Scandinavian, the view from the French windows is pure Istanbul: beyond a cluster of rooftops and boats criss-crossing the Bosphorus, minarets and domes are stamped on a smoky horizon. Public spaces are limited to a sun-deck and sleek lobby bar, where guests flick through design books over hot chocolate and cupcakes. On request, staff will

10 GREAT COMEBACK KIDS

Landmark hotels reinvented and reinvigorated

10. PRINCIPE DI SAVOIA MILAN

www.hotelprincipedisavoia.com



A total overhaul is under way. First up are public areas such as the Giardino d'Inverno Bar, which has been redesigned by Thierry Despont; the bedrooms will follow, but the hotel will stay open throughout

arrange a personal shopper, in-room massage or reservations at the city's hippest restaurants, most of which are within walking distance.

WHEN TO GO April for Istanbul's International Film Festival, or July for its Jazz Festival.

ROOM TO BOOK Only a handful of rooms have sea views; bag one of the two glass-walled penthouse suites.
00 90 212 393 7900; www.wittistanbul.com. Doubles from €149

MYHOTEL BRIGHTON East Sussex

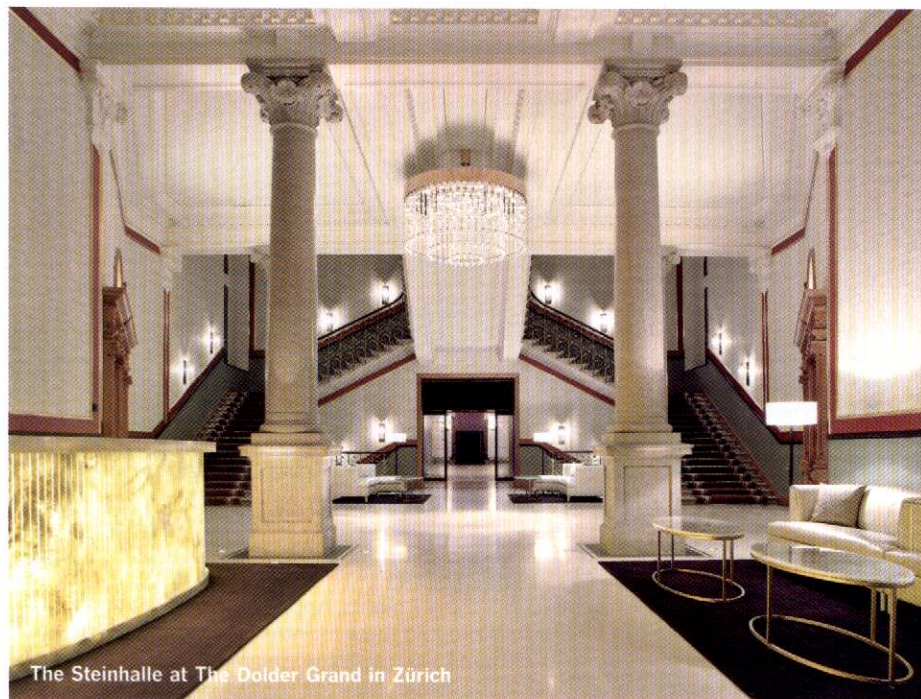
UNDER £150 There's not a straight line in Brighton's new MyHotel. Part of a major regeneration project in the area between the North Laines and the Royal Pavilion, this futuristic, 80-room hotel is full of space-age curves. Yet the design, a collaboration between owner Andy Thrasyvolou and New York designer Karim Rashid (famous for his eye-poppingly bright colour palette), also adheres to strict feng shui principles. On the ground floor, there's the popular, modern-Italian Zilli Brasserie and timber-clad cocktail bar Merkaba, plus a laid-back café-deli for a restorative Illy coffee or glass of Toscana Rosso and a panino. Upstairs, three floors of bedrooms are each named after a chakra (the second floor, for example, is Anahata or 'heart'). Rooms range from simple white cocoons (with strategic splashes of colour and huge floating beds that morph into desks) to more decadent suites, three of which were designed by local artists and have Roche Bobois circular beds and freestanding baths. While the vision is an ambitious attempt to engage guests both digitally and spiritually, the reality is slightly more straightforward: a fun, energetic hotel in a brilliant, central location.

WHEN TO GO Nothing beats an early-summer seafront stroll.

ROOM TO BOOK Embrace your inner kitsch and book the penthouse, which has its own 400-year-old carousel horse.
01273 900300; www.myhotels.com. Doubles from £140

HOTEL DU VIN POOLE Dorset

Britain's best urban-hotel chain – chic, buzzing and affordable – has struck gold again with this new south-coast outpost. Mansion House, a handsome, historic townhouse tucked away in the oldest, most attractive part of Poole, has



The Steinhalle at The Dolder Grand in Zürich