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**Walking Rome's
Undiscovered
Neighborhood**

PAGE 47

**How Perfect
Is Boulder?**

PAGE 42

**A Night in
Exotic Istanbul**

PAGE 28

**Bargain Hunting:
French Flea Markets**

PAGE 18

**Africa Unbound:
A Hemingway
Experience**

PAGE 24

**Smoky Mountain
Sitdown with
Dolly Parton**

PAGE 20

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White interiors freshen a room at the Witt and a bathroom (lower) at Empress Zoe.

case mixed media works by talented young Turks and guest rooms are sultan-size, with polished oak floors and low-slung couches. After hours, the Longtable restaurant draws young Istanbulers with live soul music and saffron martinis. Equally fashionable are the 17 hypermodern suites at the new **Witt Istanbul** (www.wittistanbul.com; from \$195, including breakfast). Checking in is like staying with an impossibly stylish friend: island kitchenettes are clad in Carrara marble, beds are custom designed, and even the walls—laser cut with a subtle floral motif—are gallery worthy.



For total cultural immersion, the exotic heart of Old Istanbul is the best place to sleep, and hotels here come with a reliable alarm clock: the muezzin's early morning call to prayer. Book in advance to stay at the intimate **Empress Zoe** (www.emzoe.com; from \$80 including breakfast), where cheerfully painted rooms (some with hand-painted frescoes) are furnished with kilims. Though it's tempting to linger over breakfast in the garden, the location is perfect for getting a jump on crowds at the Blue Mosque and Hagia Sophia. A few blocks away near Topkapi Palace, flowery window boxes and fragrant cups of apple tea greet guests at the **Sirkeci Konak** (www.sirkeciKonak.com; from \$180 including breakfast). Housed in a graciously restored Ottoman mansion, the hotel manages an artful serenity, but it's the friendly staff and complimentary extras (afternoon snacks, a steamy marble hammam, and cooking lessons) that set it apart from the pack.

CHECKING IN

London's New Gastro-sleep

Gordon Ramsay ventures out of the kitchen.

In the past, you had to head far out of London to the bucolic villages of the Cotswolds or Berkshires for a stay in one of England's stylish gastro inns: homey pubs with locally sourced, seasonal fare and cozy, antique-stuffed bedrooms. But with the opening of Gordon Ramsay's **York & Albany** (www.gordonramsay.com), travelers seeking a quintessential English country inn experience don't have to venture beyond the fringes of London's Regent Park. Housed in a restored Regency coach house, the hotel's ten shabby chic rooms have pastel walls, original sash windows, and chunky vintage armoires. But the real draw is the casual yet sophisticated downstairs eatery, helmed by Michelin-starred Ramsay protégé Angela Hartnett. The three-course prix fixe lunch menu will set you back less than \$30 for unfussy, elegantly prepared offerings like rump of Cornish lamb. On warm days, head through the rustic stable doors to the hotel's stone-cobbled Italian deli (above), where staff will pack up a tempting array of home-cured meats and artisanal cheeses for an alfresco picnic. —JONI RENDON



STAYS UNDER \$150

Gettysburg, PA, and South Island, NZ

1 Hickory Bridge Farm, Orrtanna, Pa. Known to locals for its country-style dining, 65-acre Hickory Bridge Farm also has guest rooms for visitors looking to escape the bustle of Gettysburg, just nine miles away. The four streamside cottages include working Franklin stove fireplaces, while the two rooms in the farmhouse have handmade quilts. Larger parties can rent the "old farmhouse"—which dates to the 1700s and features a wood-burning fireplace. Go

horseback riding, tour a local vineyard, or visit the famous battlefield during the day. In the evening, don't miss out on a meal in the dining room—oven-fried chicken, corn fritters, spiced peaches, and homemade apple butter. Owners Robert and Mary Lynn dish up a full country breakfast every day except Sunday, when guests are served a picnic breakfast—hot sticky buns and fresh fruit—in bed. From \$75; www.hickorybridgefarm.com. —Jeannette Kimmel

Sunrise on Cemetery Hill at Gettysburg.



2 Watson's Way, Renwick, New Zealand Nestled in the heart of New Zealand's Marlborough wine region on the northeast coast of the South Island, this cozy hostel/hotel hybrid offers the best of New Zealand—quaint charm, laid-back atmosphere, and beautiful surroundings. Head to nearby Mount Richmond Forest Park for a tramp in the woods, or rent a bicycle from the hotel and coast along country roads leading to 20-plus wineries within a three-mile radius. The region is known for Sauvignon Blanc, but farm fresh berries and cafés—featuring mussels and scallops from the Marlborough Sounds—also merit a stop. In the evening, unwind by relaxing on the lodge's veranda or soaking under the stars in a private outdoor bath. From \$42 for a double room with private bath; www.watsonswaybackpackers.co.nz. —Rachael Dunlap