

# Best Finds 2017



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## BEST VIEW FROM A HOTEL ROOM

### Explora Patagonia, Chile

Walk into your room at this award-winning lodge and you could be forgiven for thinking it has a wall-sized mural of the Torres del Paine, the trio of granite spires synonymous with Patagonia. For each of Explora Patagonia's 50 rooms has jaw-dropping views so spectacular you'll feel torn between lying in your king-sized bed all day and setting off on a day-hike or a horse ride to put yourself in the picture.

See [explora.com](http://explora.com)

## BEST AFFORDABLE LUXURY HOTEL STAY

### The Reverie Saigon, Vietnam

The design at the Reverie Saigon is seriously lavish – marble floors, chandeliers, mosaic-tiled walls, floor-to-ceiling windows – and yet the prices are surprisingly reasonable for a beautiful five-star property in central Ho Chi Minh City. For as little as \$300 a night guests can enjoy the true luxury experience, including buffet breakfast, plus access to the exclusive Reverie Lounge for high tea and sunset cocktails.

See [luxuriescapes.com](http://luxuriescapes.com)

## BEST ARISTOCRATIC RETREAT

### Villa La Massa, Florence

Sitting right on the Arno River outside Florence, this 16th-century villa and its flower-filled gardens belonged to the Medicis – though a sumptuous spa and outdoor swimming pool are more recent additions. Stay in the daffodil-yellow main villa, which has an atmospheric, medieval hall surrounded by guest rooms graced with Renaissance-style four-poster

## MY BEST FIND

### LISA PAGOTTO, FOUNDER & DIRECTOR, CROOKED COMPASS

"Hunting with the nomadic Hadzabe tribe in Tanzania. Armed with only bows and arrows, we followed in silence as they cooed to birds, stalked gazelle, threw their arms into mongoose holes and hunted mice out from under the ground before resting in a hollowed-out baobab tree."

See [crooked-compass.com](http://crooked-compass.com)



beds, and you'll feel as if you're back in the days of the grand tour.

See [lhw.com](http://lhw.com)

## BEST OUTBACK HOTEL

### Prairie Hotel, South Australia

It doesn't get much more quintessentially Aussie than South

Australia's Prairie Hotel. This sophisticated outback pub is set in a historic stone building in remote Parachilna (population seven), on the plains just west of the Flinders Ranges. Guest rooms are surprisingly chic, and from the front patio you can catch spectacular sunsets with a glass of their Fargher Lager in hand. An ideal base for day trips into the desert, to discover ancient fossils and fascinating wildlife.

See [prairiehotel.com.au](http://prairiehotel.com.au)

## BEST APARTMENT RENTAL

### Apartments Actually, Paris

Apartments Actually lets you take on Paris like a local, through their selection of elegantly styled apartments in the chic Marais neighbourhood, as well as sprawling houses in Provence. They'll arrange neighbourhood tours, private yoga and cookery classes, which means all you have to do is book your plane ticket.

See [apartmentsactually.com](http://apartmentsactually.com)

## Check in and check it out: (From above)

**The Michael Klim-designed 50-metre alfresco pool at the Johnson, Brisbane;**  
**Explora Patagonia at the Torres del Paine National Park in Chile.**  
Photo: Explora Patagonia

## BEST PRIVATE ISLAND

### Dolphin Island, Fiji

You hire a private Fijian island for you and seven friends. Each couple has their own elegant, timber-floored bure. Maybe you paddleboard around the island, maybe you have a massage, maybe you laze under the palms by the infinity pool. Whichever way, when you start to get peckish your personal chef will pull seafood from the ocean and cook it up for you. Sound like a fantasy? Dolphin Island is the real deal.

See [dolphinislandfiji.com](http://dolphinislandfiji.com)

## BEST AUSTRALIAN RESORT MAKEOVER

### The Anchorage Port Stephens

The bay has had a fitting makeover to match its dreamy seaside surroundings, including luxe new spa, whisky bar, Hamptons-inspired rooms (almost every room has a balcony or terrace with water views) and infinity pool overlooking the marina. Nab a sun lounge by the pool with its dedicated Veuve Clicquot bar and revel in the nautical chic vibe.

See [anchorageportstephens.com.au](http://anchorageportstephens.com.au)

## BEST HOTEL POOL

### The Johnson, Brisbane

The Michael Klim-designed 50-metre alfresco pool makes checking into this funky, arts-inspired hotel in Brisbane's Spring Hill even more rewarding. The fabulous lap pool overlooks the inner-city suburb's jacaranda-lined streets dotted with restored Queenslanders and miners' cottages. Surrounded by cabanas, sun lounges, a sundeck and gym with north-facing views, it's the perfect place for a cold ale, and some much-needed pool time. Oversized inflatable swan optional. See [artserieshotels.com.au/johnson](http://artserieshotels.com.au/johnson)

