THE BEST OF ASIA

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Bali: party vs spa holiday
Go vegetarian in China

Inside: Huma Qureshi on her favourite beach

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THE WORLD’S COOLEST NEW HOTELS

WIN A STAY AT COCO BODU HITHI, MALDIVES

Inside: Huma Qureshi on her favourite beach
HOSHINOYA TOKYO Japan
Noriyuki Hamada, the chef at the basement restaurant in this 84-room, modern ryokan, is changing the culinary game. He is pioneering Nippon cuisine, using traditional Japanese ingredients and classically French techniques. If food weren’t enough reason to check in, the property offers an updated ryokan experience across its 17 stores, complete with tatami matting and futon beds, but minus the floor level seating that the traditional inns provide. Good to know: Try Five Flavors of Delight, a series of seafood dishes that represents sour, sweet, bitter and umami, in delicious succession. (www.hoshinoyatokyo.com)

JETWING LAKE Sri Lanka
The Buddhist cave temple in Dambulla, a UNESCO World Heritage site dating back to the 1st century BC, is a huge draw with both locals and international visitors. Faith has it that the area was a place of refuge for a Buddhist king. Today, this slickly designed resort, overlooking an ancient water tank, Siyambalaweva, offers shelter from the chaos of the city. Breakfast in your room with a view of the lake, lounge by the pool through the afternoon and enjoy speciality Sri Lankan fare for dinner. Take a break in between and visit the spa. Reboot and repeat. Good to know: Located just off the Kandy-Jaffna highway, it’s a good base to go on safari at the nearby Minneriya and Wasgamuwa national parks, both known for their elephant populations. (www.jetwinghotels.com)

MALDIVES PRIVATE ISLAND AT VOAVAH
With just seven bedrooms, this Four Seasons property on the UNESCO-listed Baa Atoll takes exclusivity to the next level. Guests can make use of the beach house, the 62ft yacht, the dive centre and all its activities, the spa and the infinity pool. Or just laze on the blankets of powdery sand and thank the stars above. Good to know: The sea around the atoll is home to large manta ray populations; the best time to swim with them is from August to November. (www.fourseasons.com)

SANCTUM INLE RESORT Myanmar
Located by scenic Inle Lake, the 94-key stay aims to make guests feel one with their gorgeous surroundings. While it offers several tours, our pick is the half-day Wheel and Wine cycling tour of Red Mountain Estate, a nearby vineyard. You get a snapshot of life around the lake—lush sugar cane fields and sleepy villages with stilt houses jutting out onto the lake. And the bike ride ends with samples of some excellent local wine, obviously. Good to know: It’s not just the wine that’s a surprise here. Sample some of the locally brewed beer at the hotel’s Cloister Bar. (www.sanctum-inle-resort.com)

SANTANI Sri Lanka
Located 140km from Colombo’s airport, Sri Lanka’s first wellness resort sits on 48 acres of tea plantation. At this wood-and-glass mountaintop retreat, there are no TVs, and wi-fi is only on request, so you can connect with yourself. Blending modern science and ayurveda, the wellness concierge will tailor a detox plan just for you. Good to know: Fans of ketogenic fare will find the resort’s low-carb meal plan particularly appealing. (www.santani.lk)

SONEVA JANI Maldives
An overwater silent cinema, an observatory stocked with telescopes and a restaurant that serves up more than 50 flavours of ice cream—this is luxury with a quirky touch, and it works. Located on picturesque Noonu Atoll, the 25-villa resort also offers diving and snorkelling sessions with a marine biologist, so you can learn about the wondrous creatures you see. Good to know: Each of the water villas features its own 42ft private pool filled with filtered seawater. It’s like having a bit of the sea all to yourself. (www.soneva.com)

MEGAULI SERAI Nepal
The Taj group’s first jungle lodge outside India overlooks Terai grassland and the Rapti River, in Nepal’s Chitwan National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage site. The 30-key lodge has loads of local flavour, from the lobby chandelier made of 10,000 hand-painted Nepali beads to murals by a tribal artist in the rooms. Spot wildlife on elephant-back or in a canoe, and have your sundowners in a machan. The park is home to a key population of the endangered one-horned rhinoceros, the Royal Bengal tiger and hundreds of other species of birds and animals. Good to know: Sample cuisine influenced by the region’s ethnic groups, like Sherpa lamb soup and a traditional Tharu thali. (www.taj.tajhotels.com)

THE ANAM Vietnam
Despite the 117 villas and 96 rooms and suites, this beach resort near Nha Trang, an hour’s flight from Ho Chi Minh City, is designed for a peaceful, stress-free vacation. Between the 300m beachfront, three swimming pools, 3D movie theatre and range of dining options, there’s enough to keep you entertained. But chances are you may choose never to leave your ocean-facing villa. Go ahead, we won’t judge. Good to know: The hotel’s scale and multiple event venues makes it a great spot for saying “I do”—think a poolside pre-wedding party, a sangeet in the ballroom and a wedding by the beach. (www.theanam.com)