



LIFE & ARTS

Food & Drink | Style | Travel | Arts | Books | TV

Books

Simon Schama on Umberto Eco's list of lists **Page 10**



Travel

Great escapes: our writers pick highlights of the year **Page 6**

Arts

Peter Aspden meets Orson Welles (sort of) **Page 8**



FT | Thursday December 24



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The Christmas challenge

*Six bottles of Champagne Bollinger Rosé await the winner of our cultural quiz of the year.
By Ludovic Hunter-Tilney*

Sun, sea, sand – and shops

Why hotels are developing their own designer boutiques. By Lucie Greene

Luxury resorts are fast becoming one of the best places to satisfy an interest in exclusive retail since a clutch of high-end hotels started to develop their own chic boutiques and initiate a number of designer collaborations.

Here are just some. Kanuhura, a hotel in the Maldives, has tapped women's wear brand Issa by Daniella Helayel and beauty brand Miller Harris to create a range of unique products for its eponymous shop. Beachcomber hotels have teamed up with designer Melissa Odabash on a holiday collection, and will soon be working with the children's wear designer Princess Marie-Chantal of Greece. And the Hualalai Resort on Big Island in Hawaii has created a \$3m fashion store that currently includes branded T-shirts from designer James Perse and an exclusive dress collection from Derek Lam; next season, Philosophy by Alberta Ferretti and swimwear brand Eres will design lines.

Then there is the One&Only group, which has opened two new-look boutiques at its Capetown and Maldives locations, both offering full ready-to-wear designs from Balenciaga, Marios Schwab, Matthew Williamson, Alice Temperley, Pucci and Missoni. The company also recently collaborated with lifestyle label Acne, shoe designer Christian Louboutin (who conceived a special collection of espadrilles), and celebrity pedicurist Bastien Gonzalez (who designed a red nail polish) on exclusive ranges. Kuoni, meanwhile, has collaborated with British designer Osman Yousefzada to create a travel collection, K by Osman, focused on locally sourced products.

Bev Malik, who worked with One&Only on their boutiques, explains the logic behind the trend: "Women and men love to shop on holiday, but you see these awful shops that you don't want to buy anything from, yet you still visit every day. It's a captive audience, and resorts are waking up to this. They're offering fashion, but



Holiday
An Issa kaftan by Daniella Helayel; the retail store at the Hualalai Resort in Hawaii

also product ranges that are exclusive." Indeed, cleverly edited fashion boutiques are proving to be a major draw for hotels. Isle de France, a small family-run hotel in St Barts, stocks Juliette Longuet, Lenny, and Tom Ford Sunglasses in its cupboard-size shop, and counts Uma Thurman, Heidi Klum, Daniel Craig and Giorgio Armani among its devotees. Similarly, Mexico's Los Cabos resorts, including Palmilla and Esperanza, boast multi-brand boutiques that are hot spots for Hollywood stars. "For lots of celebrities, it's the main reason they choose the resort," says Malik. After all, shopping away from the prying eyes of the paparazzi is enticing.

Patrick Fitzgerald, Chief Executive of the Hualalai resort, explains the appeal of their own high-quality boutique. "It fits with our guest profile. Our clients love good restaurants and good spas but they also love to shop."

As for the designers involved, representation in the resort boutiques gives them access to wealthy consumers, and a brand

presence in otherwise unexplored markets. "It's a great way to access women who like to shop," says Issa designer Daniella Helayel, who launched her Issa Holiday range at the Kanuhura resort in November (prices from £248). "You strengthen and build the label's profile as these resorts are visited by an international clientele," she says. "When you go away to paradise destinations, you're tanned and super-healthy so you feel much better about yourself. You're in a much better mood to shop."

Details

www.isle-de-france.com
www.kanuhura.com
www.aubergeresorts.com
www.beachcomber-hotels.com
www.oneandonlyresorts.com
www.kuoni.com
www.hualalairesort.com
www.issalondon.com



STYLISH RETREATS

The designer experience

While some designers dip into resort retail by designing exclusive collections, other brands take a more comprehensive approach. Visit Cape Town for the FIFA World Cup in 2010, for instance, and you can spend your stay at the new **Missoni** hotel, where the trademark prints of designer Rosita Missoni

dominate the interior. If **Bulgari** is more your style, then a trip to their Bali hotel will provide a backdrop of Italian style fused with Balinese leitmotifs. At the **Versace** chain of hotels the designer influence is so strong even the linen, rugs and cutlery are branded.

For a full-on **Armani**

experience, the Giorgio Armani spa, located in the sleek Armani Ginza Tower in Tokyo, cannot be beaten. Its luxury treatments include the three-hour "Armani Ceremony" which promises to purify and regenerate the skin. And, should you feel the need for some shopping after your treatment, a ride in

the lift to the fourth floor will transport you effortlessly to the Armani men's store.

Other brands have opted for a more enigmatic style. Take the **Hotel Lungarno** in Florence. It may not have an obvious brand association but spend a night there and the designer influences –

carefully sewn detailing on the leather wardrobe handles for instance – are all apparent. Dig deeper and you discover the hotel is run by Lungarno Alberghi, a management company run by the Ferragamo family.

Subtler still is **Oasi Zegna**, Ermenegildo Zegna's branding-free eco-tourist retreat in

north Piedmont. It offers activities such as mountain bike riding, rock climbing, skiing, and hiking – all to be undertaken, should you so desire, in Zegna's eco-friendly Oasi cashmere collection developed in the local Zegna factory.

Alex Coles