

It list

2011

For T+L's sixth annual It List, we traversed the globe, putting the latest crop of hotels to the test. Here, our 50 favorite new properties, from a pioneering farmstead in South Africa to a sexy Manhattan skyscraper. Read on for this year's groundbreaking openings.



The Delaire Graff Lodges & Spa, in Stellenbosch, one of two It List hotels in South Africa this year.

THE T+L EDITORS' CHOICE AWARDS

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Dong Yi Rd.; 800/925-3673; waldorfasteria.com; doubles from \$517.

RUSTIC

CAPE WINELANDS, SOUTH AFRICA

Babylonstoren

This rambling 17th-century Cape Dutch-style farm estate in the Cape Winelands is no rough-and-ready dude ranch. Rehabilitated by Afrikaans designer-owner Karen Roos, 14 guest rooms in three traditional *landhuis*es (cottages) have been done up with vintage beds, Victorian claw-foot tubs, and chic, all-white sofas and rugs. For traveling gourmands, some cottages offer kitchens—glassed-in

cubes facing an eight-acre garden from which you can pick your own herbs, fruits and vegetables, the same produce used by the chefs at the restaurant, Babel. *Klapmuts Rd.; 27-21/863-3852; babylonstoren.com; doubles from \$416.*

RUSTIC

ASCOT, ENGLAND

Coworth Park

The Dorchester Collection's Coworth Park is a country-house hotel for the 21st century—a reinvented Georgian manor with polo ponies on both the lawn and the embroidered linens, and copper bathtubs within view of retractable

flat-screen TV's. But this 240-acre estate isn't just for the tweedy set. The restaurants by John Campbell, a Brit-Pop art collection, and high-style afternoon tea round out its appeal. *Blacknest Rd.; 44-1344/876-600; coworthpark.com; doubles from \$380.*

RUSTIC

PUNTA DEL ESTE, URUGUAY

Fasano Las Piedras

For those who dream about a South American Grand Tour: after São Paulo and Buenos Aires, your next stop should be Punta del Este, where some one thousand rocky acres are now the setting of the Fasano Hotel Group's first resort outside of Brazil. Yes, the nearby white-sand beaches are busy during the peak summer season (December and January) and Carnival (late February), but this spa retreat is a quiet respite throughout the year. The estancia is done up with cowhide walls and sheepskin rugs, and 32 guest casas all face a bird-filled estuary and pine forest. *La Barra; 598/4267-0000; fasano.com.br; doubles from \$600.*

RUSTIC

STELLENBOSCH, SOUTH AFRICA

Delaire Graff Lodges & Spa

British diamond jeweler Laurence Graff's sprawling 10-lodge estate adds a touch of sex appeal to the usually sedate Cape Winelands. A glass-walled wine cellar in the lobby is flanked on one side by a wine lounge with a fireplace, and on the other by a supper club designed by London interiors guru David Collins. He also gets kudos for the stand-alone suites, each with walls of grass cloth and polished plaster, and the butlers' kitchens. Graff's enviable art collection is on display in the hotel: a William

Kentridge portrait in the restaurant and bronze pieces by local sculptor Dylan Lewis in the gardens. *Helshoogte Pass; 27-21/885-8160; delaire.co.za; doubles from \$960.*

RUSTIC

QUEENSTOWN, NEW ZEALAND

Matakauri Lodge

It's no wonder hedge-funder turned hotelier Julian Robertson chose a secluded South Island spot for his family's third hotel, Matakauri Lodge, the latest sibling to the Farm at Cape Kidnappers and the Lodge at Kauri Cliffs. The property is ideal for adventurers in search of a luxury lodge near Queenstown. The 11 large, timber suites, decorated in rust, orange, and cream by native design doyenne Virginia Fisher, feature walk-in closets, open fireplaces, and the requisite mountain vistas. *569 Glenorchy Rd.; 64-3/441-1008; matakauri.co.nz; doubles from \$460.*

RUSTIC

ALAÇATI, TURKEY

Nars Alaçati

Don't be fooled by its modest stone façade. The newest hotel to arrive in Alaçati, the Istanbul elite's getaway on the Aegean Sea, does away with the area's quaint cookie-cutter aesthetic in favor of character and verve. Set in a pair of 19th-century manses, seven rooms are decorated with vintage rugs from Marrakesh and Turkish antiques, and toiletries are made with oil from the owner's family's olive trees. On balmy nights, weekends mingle in the courtyard over cocktails and *pide* (flatbread) from the hotel's wood-fired oven. *23A Alaçati Köy Meydanı; 90-232/716-0900; narshotels.com; doubles from \$231.*



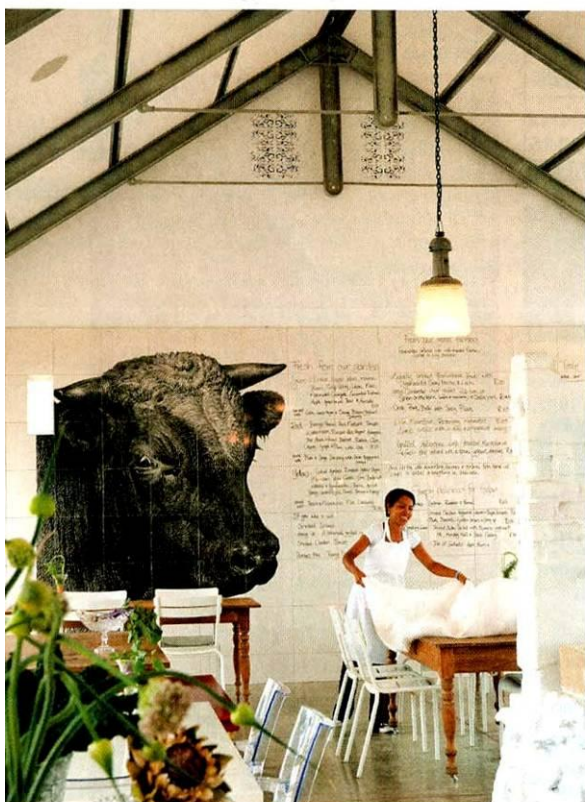
RUSTIC

LOITA HILLS, KENYA

Olarro

With a silent partner like Paul Allen (yes, that Paul Allen) backing Olarro, it's no wonder this hillside lodge overlooking the Masai Mara is becoming Kenya's next high-profile hideaway. Designer Anthony Russell has worked his magic on the seven thatched cottages and a two-bedroom villa: the tiled floors resemble giraffe markings, and the billowing fabric ceilings give the feel of a tented camp (without the hassle of having to unzip your door). At this new conservancy the wildlife may not be as prolific as in other parts of Africa, but after-dark safaris with night-vision goggles, as well as a perfect perch to watch the annual wildebeest migration, more than compensate. *263-13/42527; olarrokenya.com; doubles from \$1,370. +*

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Babylonstoren's Babel restaurant, in Cape Winelands, South Africa, left. Top: A bungalow at Fasano Las Piedras, in Punta del Este, Uruguay.

FROM TOP: GRACIELA CATTAROSI; DOOK PHOTOGRAPHY