



Photo by Michelle Thompson

Insider tips

Travel Confidential

By Laura Fowler | 26 Mar 2013

ISTANBUL

The city's getting a hot new neighbourhood: the **Quasar** complex is centred around a major 1930s architectural landmark, the former Mecidiyeköy Liqueur and Cognac Factory, in the Sisli district. As well as shops, bars, restaurants and loft-style apartments, there will be a fashion and arts centre, and a major hotel, the **Fairmont Quasar**, is slated for 2016.

ROME

It's not often that Rome gets a new hotel, so it's all the more exciting that there's a **JK Place Roma** (a sister to two of our favourite hotels in **Florence** and Capri) opening in July. Until then, there's a new penthouse suite to stay in, at the **Regina Hotel Baglioni, Rome**. The Art Deco-style suite is 560m², almost half of which is its private terrace, and has 360-degree views of the city.

AUSTRALIA

The Aussies do style+sustainability as well as anyone - and the latest architecture-in-the-outback project is a series of temporary posh campsites on the **Larapinta Trail**, a 223-kilometre walking track from Alice Springs up through the mountains of the **Northern Territory**. The structures are designed by architects to provide decent accommodation for walkers in a region of temperature extremes. They are sustainably built, and use solar-powered energy, grey-water recycling and water-free composting loos - so adventurers can explore this remarkable wilderness and leave no trace. For more details contact www.worldexpeditions.co.uk

THE COTSWOLDS

Near **Broadway**, in Worcestershire, the 17th-century farmhouse **Dormy House** is reopening this September. It is currently being completely stripped out (a renovation costing £10million) and redesigned by Emily Todhunter, though original features like the oak panelling and beams and log fires will remain. The gardens are being landscaped by BBC garden designer Chris Beardshaw; and there's a spa in the offing, but we'll have to wait til early next year for that.

PORTUGAL

At the mouth of the Douro Valley, **Porto** is becoming increasingly popular as a city-break destination in its own right, as well as the book-end of a gourmet-and-wine break. From June there will be a new four-star hotel to stay in: **Hotel da Música**. The modern, music-themed hotel (score-pattern carpets, composer murals, grand piano in the lobby) is part of the regenerated **Bom Sucesso** market; there will also be dozens of shops and a food market within the historic neighbourhood.

LONDON

Yet more restaurant openings: in May, Alan Bird's (15 years exec chef at The Ivy; exec chef of Soho House Group) own restaurant, **Bird of Smithfield**, is opening in a Georgian townhouse. Not just a restaurant, either: there will also be a private dining floor with chef's table, a roof terrace overlooking the market, a lounge bar plus a live-music venue called The Birdcage. The people behind Worship St Whistling Shop are doing the cocktails.

Tokyo style is coming to **Soho** in September, coinciding with London Fashion Week, in **Chotto Matte** on Frith Street. A former Nobu and Zuma chef is developing the menu of Nikkei cuisine; the interior will include a cocktail bar with musical bartenders, Japanese graffiti, live music and glow-in-the-dark loos - which we're sure will translate very well in Soho.

And pop-ups a-go-go: out east, **Argentina** comes to **Dalston** for two nights only at **Cambalache**, held in cool warehouse venue MC Motors: Argentine wine and cocktails, street food and street art, literature and pop culture, tango and ice cream (17-18 April; tickets [here](#)). And the **Disappearing Dining Club** is putting on a dinner dance at The Hoxton Pig on 13 April: four courses plus DJs til late. West-side, Michael Wignall's temporary outpost of his two-Michelin-starred Surrey restaurant The Latymer, setting up Knightsbridge's **The Rib Room** 15-18 May. And the **Tanqueray Gin Palace** is popping up on Floral Street in **Covent Garden**. Open 27-28 March, it will be hosted by DJ Idris Elba and some of the world's leading bartenders, including The Savoy's Eric Lorincz.

COLORADO

Two top-drawer outdoorsy camps in the offing for Colorado: **Cresto Ranch** in the Rockies, opening this June (read full story [here](#)>>), and **Cloud Camp**, part of The Broadmoor resort on Cheyenne Mountain, opening May 2014. Cloud Camp is being built at 9,200 feet: a large, five-star, stone lodge with a wraparound deck overlooking the mountains, plus 11 log cabins, each with its own porch with swings and rocking chairs.

GHANA

Once known as Gold Coast, Ghana has its first big luxury hotel opening in August: the **Kempinski Hotel Gold Coast City**, in **Accra**. It's a big, modern property, with several restaurants, shops, a spa, and 269 rooms overlooking an outdoor pool on the roof. Primarily it's aimed at business travellers, but would make a good city stop-off for intrepid surfers heading to the beaches of **Busua** (check Foreign Office for travel advice before you go).

LIVERPOOL

A major photography festival brings images from around the world to Liverpool this summer. **LOOK/13** features city-wide exhibitions and events from low-fi pop-ups to the Tate Liverpool. Photographers include Martin Parr, Tom Wood, Rankin, Rob Bremner, and international greats Charles Fréger and Kurt Tong. Runs 17 May-15 June 2013 (www.lookphotofestival.com).

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