

Sea of tranquility

From off-the-map hideaways to beachside bars and first-class service, we select the summer boltholes that offer a little more than just a place in the sun

01 Experimental Beach Ibiza *Spain*

Better known for hedonism than health resorts, the Spanish island of Ibiza has more than its fair share of refined bars for a sun-down sojourn. Reopened this April in the Las Salinas reserve in the south of the island, the Experimental Beach Ibiza (from the foursome behind Grand Pigalle in Paris and London's Experimental Cocktail Club, among others) is another such stop-in. As well as hosting regular barbecues, there's a cosmopolitan menu overseen by head chef Alex Larrea.

Food is influenced by the company's French roots but executed with a distinctly Japanese flavour: the grilled black cod in miso and prawns fresh from the Mediterranean are advised. Bar manager Nicolas Baptiste's cocktail menu caters to any taste and early risers can also take part in one of the regular yoga classes. — JAF

eccbeach.com



02 Cortijo del Marqués *Spain*

More than 30 farming families once lived in the Cortijo del Marqués, originally built by an aristocrat but becoming a self-contained village by the 20th century. Today it is a destination for an international clientele keen to relax off-map or explore nearby Granada. It was bought by an Austro-Dutch couple in 2010, who traded in successful international careers in finance for a quieter life in Andalucía.

Spread out over the whitewashed *cortijo*, the 15 bedrooms are simple and tastefully decorated, with stunning views over the surrounding fields and olive trees. "We meet the most interesting people, with different backgrounds and from different countries," says co-owner Silvia Roth-Bruggers. "Our cosmopolitan life is no more but the world comes here to de-stress and enjoy the Andalusian pace of life." — DEP

cortijodelmarques.com



03 Grace Santorini *Greece*

Famous for the picturesque lime-washed houses that cling to its pumice-stone cliffs, the island of Santorini lies 200km south of mainland Greece. The village of Imerovigli in its northwest is home to the 20-room Grace Santorini hotel.

Like its sister premises in Mykonos, the aspiring chain's sixth venture takes its design cues from the surrounding vernacular: polar-white sheets, upholstery and finishes are accented by wooden touches and dashes of cerulean blue. The Mediterranean menu comes courtesy of chef Spiros Agious, while the poolside drink offerings are concocted by barman Salvatore Calabrese, whose signature tippie is the Grace: a refreshing apple, pear, vodka and lemongrass medley. The group will add new hotels in Marrakech and St Moritz in the coming year. — JAF

gracehotels.com



04 Les Niçois *France*

Business partners Olivier Chini, Vincent Traoré and Luc Sananes have brought a waft of southern France to their adopted home by opening a Parisian restaurant.

Named in honour of their native Nice, the trio's space and *epicerie* draws on the Riviera's irresistible food and sells an enviable mix of fresh tapenades, *ancholades*, sun-dried tomatoes and bottles of rosé. The restaurant's success is fast proving that a taste for the *socca de Nice* (chickpea-flour pancakes) can rival that of the more traditional crêpe Suzette in the French capital. — DHZ
lesnicois.com



05 Hotel Brummel *Spain*

Perched at the base of Barcelona's Montjuïc Mountain, this slick hotel provides a secluded retreat for visitors looking to avoid the commotion of the Catalanian capital. The 20-room, two-apartment hotel was opened by Austrian hotelier Christian Schallert, who enlisted the talent of local designer Blankslate to create spaces influenced by Geoffrey Bawa's tropical-modernism movement.

The in-house café and restaurant, The Box Social, focuses on fresh produce and guests are encouraged to explore the neighbouring reserve with guide maps and the hotel's running club. Greenery abounds on the interior patio and upper-level pool, which boasts a sun-drenched deck. — L.A.
hotelbrummel.com



PHOTOGRAPHER: PETROS EPSTATHIADIS. IMAGES: CAROLIN SARGE, DAVID DE VLEESCHAUWER

06

Asma Yapragi *Turkey*

Ayse Nur Mihci
Owner and chef,
Asma Yapragi



Serving home-cooked meals from family recipes passed through generations and using only local produce, Asma Yapragi ("vine leaf" in English) sums up the hospitality scene in the Turkish coastal town of Cesme. Owner and chef Ayse Nur Mihci talks about the rigours and pleasures of her business.

How can seasonal businesses succeed when they operate for just three months a year?

By staying true to their values. The restaurant is located in a quiet and secluded part of Cesme. This ensures that only people who want to discover it will venture out to find it. All of our produce is bought from the market and each meal is cooked that day. The ornaments that decorate and

give the ambience are from my collection. I am in love with my work and I think it shows from every single detail.

Why Cesme?

As someone in love with the region, and living in Alacati, I felt that Aegean tastes weren't represented. I come from a large Aegean family and I wanted to share the richness that was given to me through food.

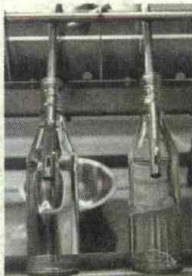
How has the sector grown?

In the Mediterranean region, Cesme is well known as a windsurfing paradise. Over the past decade it has grown beyond that name into a gourmet destination. Aegean cuisine is one of Turkey's most flavourful. Its viticulture has been revitalised and regional pride is being slowly invigorated. — [ADP asmayapraki.com.tr](http://adp.asmayapraki.com.tr)

07 Thoukis Spirits *Cyprus*

Based in Limassol, Thoukis Spirits is one of the island's oldest distilleries. Run by the founder's daughter and two grandchildren, it makes batches of rum, gin, vodka and the national tipple: ouzo. "The pleasure it offers is inextricably linked to the history and memory of our nation," says George Georgiou, the founder's grandson. "It's only as good as the ingredients and we use botanicals grown in the region and water from the nearby Troodos Mountains."

After educations abroad, George and his brother Thoukis returned to revive their grandfather's firm and launched a special-edition ouzo based on his 1929 recipe. The blend of aniseed, star anise, fennel and mastic is infused in high-proof alcohol and redistilled. — JAF
thoukis-spirits.com



08 Scorpios *Greece*

A former house on the southern tip of Mykonos reopened in May as Scorpios, a sprawling 6,000 sq m beach club founded by Mario Hertel, Thomas Heyne and Design Hotels Claus Sendlinger. Flanked by two pristine lounge-lined beaches, the club offers shops, restaurants and an extensive bar.

It is designed for guests to experience Mykonos in all its guises: as a spot where holidaymakers can eat, shop, enjoy the pristine views of the surrounding nature and let their hair down of an evening. Greek architecture firm K-Studio was drafted in to create a modern but serene take on the ancient Greek agora, characterised by its use of natural materials amid unerringly beautiful surroundings. — AK
scorpiosmykonos.com

09 Lighthouse hotels *Spain*

Spain recently provided a new beacon of opportunity for hoteliers with the country's network of 187 lighthouses. Public works minister Ana Pastor has paved the way for the *faros* (the majority of which are now automated and left unmanned) to be converted into towering holiday retreats.

The first lighthouse hotel is set to open on the small island of Pancha in Spain's north and will have just two rooms. With 20 more requests being considered for approval, holidaymakers looking for a solitary coastal getaway could soon be booking rooms on the little-known island of Tabarca or near the southern city of Cadiz. — LA

10
Castiglion del Bosco
Italy

With its rolling hills a source of inspiration for renaissance painters and more recently blessed with Unesco World Heritage status, Val d'Orcia is one of Italy's most seductive regions. Amid its sangiovese-heavy vineyards, olive groves, wheat fields and rows of cypress trees lies the medieval Castiglion del Bosco, near the town of Montalcino.

This 800-year-old estate houses Rosewood Hotels & Resort's third European opening and the newly restored complex boasts 23 antique-adorned suites, 10 villas and abundant spa, swimming and golfing amenities. The two on-site restaurants are enhanced by produce from an organic kitchen garden while a cookery school provides the opportunity to brush up on your Tuscan culinary skills during your stay. — BO
rosewoodhotels.com





II St Regis Venice San Clemente Palace Hotel *Italy*

Presided over by a 15th-century church and flanked by canals, the quiet island housing the St Regis Venice San Clemente Palace hotel could not seem further from the bustling, tourist-packed St Mark's Square.

Sharing the hotel's pristine berth and waterfront is the newly opened Acquerello restaurant. The place is overseen by executive chef Roberto Dal Seno; the menu is meticulously put together from ingredients gathered from Italy's Adriatic coast. The calamari and Venetian beef come highly recommended and although it is expensive, your own complimentary boat service does much to sweeten the deal. — JAF

acquerellorestaurant.com



I2 Hôtel d'Almeran *France*

At the foot of the Régional des Alpilles national park and surrounded by rocky outcrops, Saint Remy de Provence is a town where little seems to have changed in years. This May, however, the Hôtel d'Almeran opened amid the winding cobbled lanes in a 17th-century town centre *palais*. With furniture from Eileen Gray and Konstantin Grcic, the minimal, mid-century influenced interiors are brought to life by designer Margot Stängle and her husband Ralph Hüsgen, a specialist in marketing.

The food is superb, perhaps unsurprisingly given the hotel's location in Provence, and Benoit Fauci's menu is best followed by one of the fine wines from the dining room's floor-to-ceiling racks. — JAF

designhotels.com/hotel-d-almeran