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**THE LUXE
LIST 2026**

The best new
hotels in the Asia-
Pacific region

RAISING THE ROOF
The arrival pavilion
at .Here Baa Atoll
nods to Maldivian
dhoni boats.



COURTESY OF .HERE BAA ATOLL



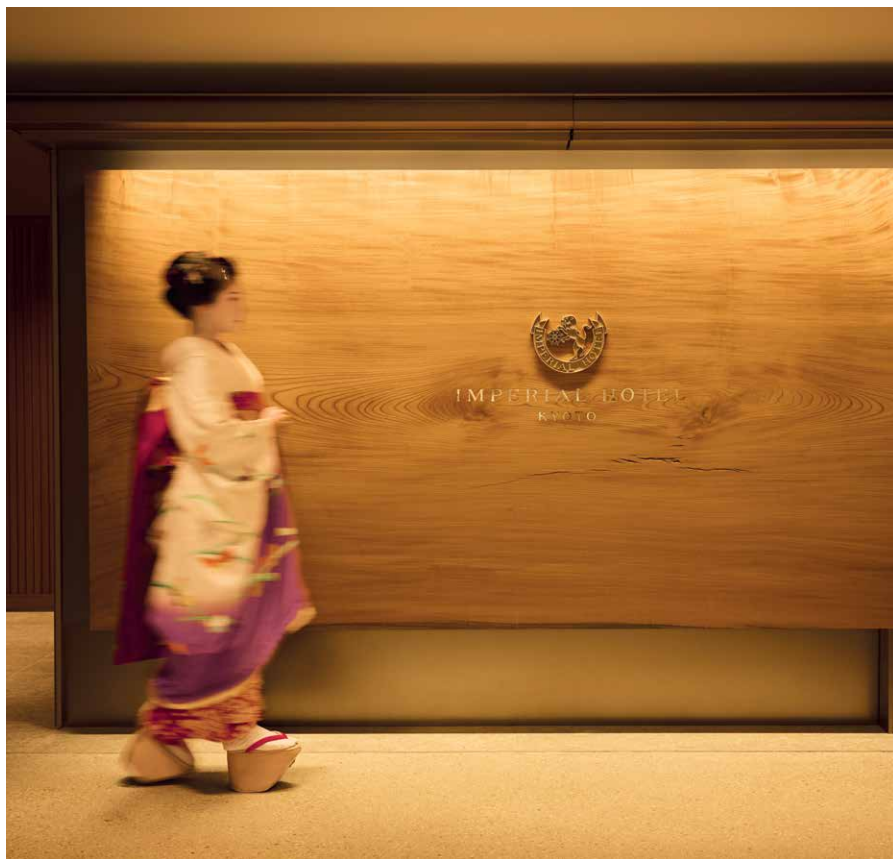
THE LUXE LIST 2026

IMAGINE A REFINED HERITAGE CONVERSION IN ONE OF KYOTO'S MOST STORIED NEIGHBORHOODS, A MODERNIST BYRON BAY BOLT-HOLE, OR A PHILIPPINE PRIVATE-ISLAND HIDEOUT THAT TRULY BRINGS OUT THE LOCAL CULTURE. ALL THREE ARE FEATURED ON *DESTINASIAN*'S LATEST LUXE LIST, OUR ANNUAL COMPILATION OF THE MOST NOTEWORTHY HOTELS AND RESORTS THAT HAVE DEBUTED ACROSS THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION. SELECTED BASED ON THE FIRST-HAND EXPERIENCES OF OUR SEASONED CONTRIBUTORS, THIS YEAR'S LINEUP OF NEW OR COMPLETELY REVAMPED PROPERTIES IS BIGGER THAN PREVIOUS EDITIONS, WITH MORE THAN TWO DOZEN REPRESENTED IN ALL.

KYOTO, JAPAN

IMPERIAL HOTEL, KYOTO

For its fourth property—and first new opening in about 30 years—Japan's Imperial Hotel brand draws on the visual language of its erstwhile Frank Lloyd Wright–designed Tokyo flagship in the renovation of a historic theater in the heart of Gion, combining bold art deco geometrics with subtle Kyoto aesthetics. While the conversion painstakingly preserved the tiled facade and dramatic eaves of the 1936-built Yasaka Kaikan—a nationally registered Tangible Cultural Property—the interiors have been completely rebuilt, with a rare exemption to local height limitations giving most of the 55 rooms views over Gion's old rooftops; the Japanese-style suites overlook an alley leading to a neighboring geisha school where kimonoed ladies glide to and fro. Dining options include 18-seat Ren for French fine dining and Yasaka for all-day fare focused around a custom-built charcoal-and-wood oven, while the basement hides a gorgeous subterranean pool clad in Kitagi stone. The undoubted highlight, however, is the guests-only rooftop bar, a perfect perch to watch the sun set over Kyoto's western mountains and sip a glass of chilled sake. *From US\$1,030 a night; imperialhotel.co.jp.* —**Jessica Kozuka**



MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA

Hannah St Hotel

While its Flatiron-like building and location next to a freeway-style overpass conjure downtown Manhattan, this newcomer to Melbourne's Southside neighborhood leans heavily into the city's creative side. The Melbourne Arts Precinct is close at hand, while original artwork throughout—from sculpture to poetry in neon—keeps the creative energy flowing indoors. The design by locally based Flack Studio eschews the expected. Interiors, from the lobby and working spaces to the 188 guest rooms, are modernist, with a palette that is rich, warm, and textural. Bathrooms are bold and fabulous. Sculptural lighting and custom furniture add a touch of theater. Coupette, a European-style bistro with a curved bar and sleek banquettes, feels casual but on-trend with its short, sharp menu (and luscious desserts). Carriage Lounge—moody and deeply plush—serves top-notch cocktails, while the Rooftop Terrace lounge channels a contemporary tiki-bar feel. An unexpected bonus is the black-and-white-striped indoor pool on the ninth floor, where swimmers can take in sweeping skyline views. *From US\$245 a night; hannahsthotel.com.* —**Margaret Barca**



TETSUYA MUKUME; COURTESY OF THE HOTELS; COURTESY OF SOORI PENANG; JONATHAN LEIJONHUFVUD

THE LUXE LIST 2026

GEORGE TOWN, MALAYSIA

SOORI PENANG

The mere mention of a stay at this new George Town retreat may elicit a look of wide-eyed wonder. Taking up two rows of shophouses within the Khoo Kongsi clan compound, known for its dazzling ancestral temple, Soori Penang is a deeply personal project for architect-hotelier Soo K. Chan, who was born in Khoo Kongsi and spent his early childhood among his maternal clan. Memories of those years shaped the quiet, introspective design of Soori Penang's public spaces and 13 suites, each one taking up an entire shophouse. The minimalistic interiors nod to Peranakan life through statement pieces such as an old-school rice grinder, recast as bubbling fountains in the suites' skylighted reflecting pools. A warm, relaxed approach to service lends the feeling of staying at someone's home, albeit one where the dimly lit lounge doubles as a wine bar and the entry courtyard features armchairs and custom trishaws. Insider access to Khoo Kongsi's clan temple is included, too—Soori guests can roam its halls an hour before opening time, and wander the forecourt long after gates close in the evening. *From US\$785 a night; sooripenang.com.* —**James Louie**



HONG KONG, CHINA

Kimpton Tsim Sha Tsui, Hong Kong

Towering 50 stories above Tsim Sha Tsui, this lifestyle-led hotel ticks all the boxes for a stylish city stay. The neighborhood itself is a blast, heaving with open-air bars, hole-in-the-wall cafés, and foot massage parlors. Clever architecture means each of the 495 rooms has a harbor view, even those on the lower floors. In the highest categories, monochrome marble bathtubs are sunk into the bedroom floor next to full-length windows—a feature that would be incredibly annoying at home, but which feels like a decadent, James Bond-worthy amenity here. As for the rest of the hotel, the design leans mid-century, mixing warm woods with mismatched terrazzo and low-slung furniture in earthy green and amber tones. The crowning glory is the rooftop Swim Club, with its vertiginous infinity pool, stripy cabanas, and showstopping views. Closer to the ground is Jija by Vicky Lau, where one of the city's most gifted chefs puts a modern twist on the rich cuisine of southwestern China. *From US\$408 a night; kimptonhongkong.com.* —**Lee Cobaj**



COMFORT ZONES
Left: The entrance foyer at Soori Penang. *Above:* Kimpton's first Hong Kong property stands tall above the streets of Tsim Sha Tsui. *Opposite, from top:* A maiko at Imperial Hotel, Kyoto; a corner suite at Hannah St Hotel.