

BAZAAR

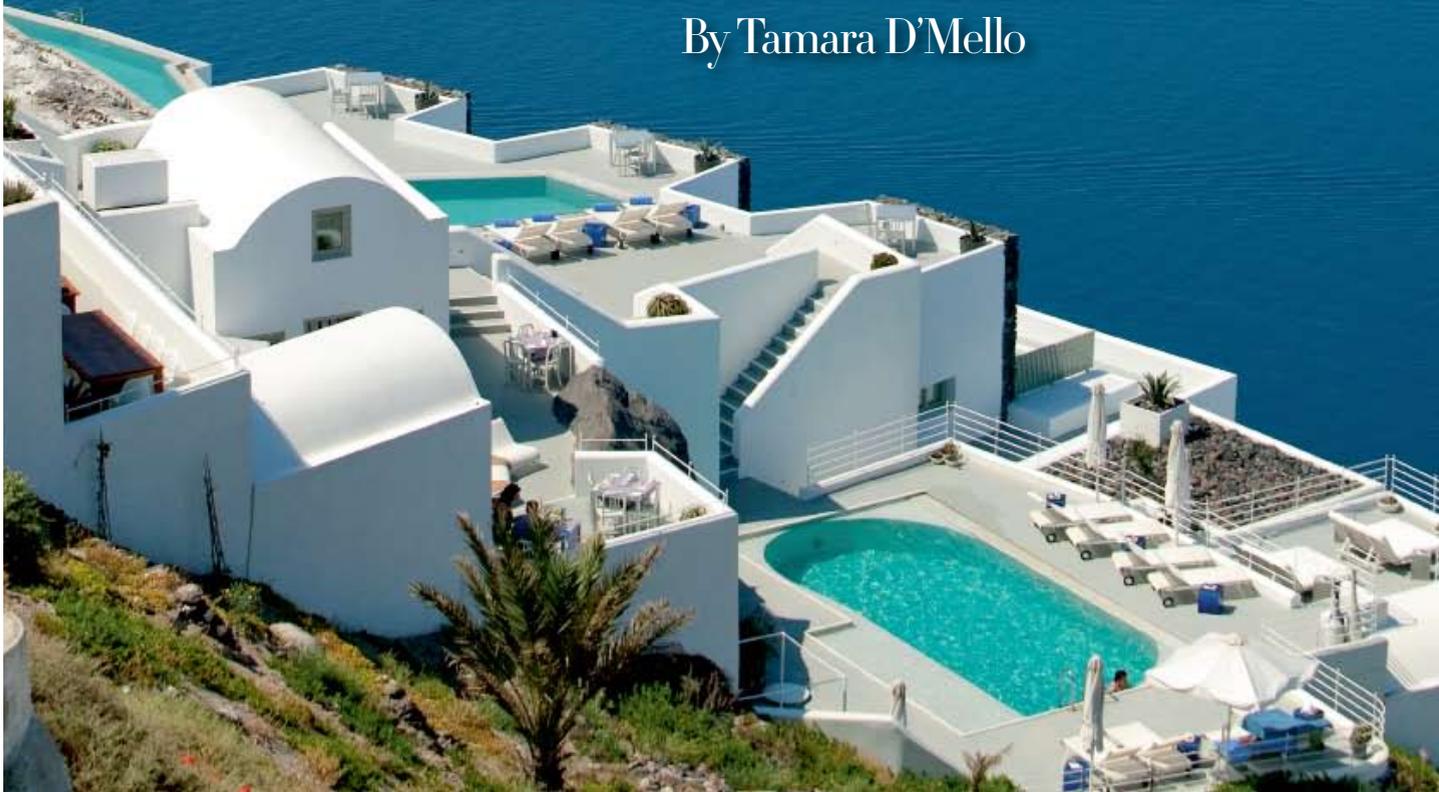
Harper's

The Santorini Grace hotel offers undulating views of the Aegean Sea and the Skaros rocks

Escape Timeless Travel

Bazaar scours the world for FABULOUS HOTELS that are bound to stand the test of time

By Tamara D'Mello



India Trident Gurgaon

1 Walk into the lush gardens that surround the Trident, Gurgaon, and you'll be taken by surprise. It may sit in middle of a slick business district, at a convenient distance from two airports, but the gently lapping reflection pools, fountains and intimate courtyards could fool you into thinking you're at a country resort. It's no wonder then that the property was voted India's leading hotel and Asia's leading meetings hotel at the World Travel Awards 2007.

There's a view of the water from almost every window or doorway. The gentle arches and serene beige tones that dominate the hotel are guaranteed to soothe work-frayed nerves. At the heart of the luxurious property, and always a striking shade of blue, is the outdoor swimming pool, which is heated during the winter.

The Trident offers you a choice of three restaurants. The first, Cilantro, has a cheery, modern feel, and serves 'world cuisine', namely Mediterranean, Thai, Indian and Italian. Indulge in a North Indian feast at Saffron, and at Konomi, you are invited to enjoy a range of Japanese cuisine on offer, including a wide selection of sushi, sashimi, yakitori, teriyaki and donburi dishes.

If you're looking forward to some quiet time, stroll outside to the Pool Bar, choose your drink, and settle in for a contemplative evening. The Trident's second bar—The Bar—has a wide range of aperitifs and unique house cocktails. Keep in mind that Fridays are 'margarita nights' at The Bar.

However, the most calming of the experiences to be had at the Trident is at Spa by Angsana. Surrounded by softly lapping pools, you can experience tranquility as you never have before. The body scrubs, wraps and therapies will leave you glowing and gorgeous, and if you're a bride-to-be, you should seriously consider checking in for the day.

Who Goes: Jet-setters and young entrepreneurs with a taste for the classic.

Contact: Trident, India; tel: +91 124 245 0505; www.tridenthotels.com



Surrounded by lush gardens, the Trident is a quiet sanctuary in the midst of a bustling city



The Opposite House presents a fascinating play of light and space



The Trident's calming ambience is heightened by its reflection pools

THIS PAGE: COURTESY TRIDENT, GURGAON. OPPOSITE PAGE: OPPOSITE HOUSE

China Opposite House Beijing

2 Like its name, which it takes from a guesthouse that sits on the opposite side of the courtyard from the main house, Opposite House in Beijing is a composition of all that is opposite, or a contrast, in terms of design. It's a revolutionary hotel—light and space are wrestled with and ordered in a way that is stunningly original.

The square structure, with its lattice of emerald green and yellow is inspired by a traditional wooden design. The green shell, described by its Japanese architect Kengo Kuma as an urban forest, reflects the vibrant street life that surrounds it. Once inside, this lattice forms a screen that provides privacy and comfort. In the central atrium, where the conventional boundaries of a hotel start to blur, you begin to grasp the concept of seamless space, which is at the centre of the hotel's design philosophy.

Restaurants are located in the hotel's cavernous basement, each set in a distinct space associated with one of the five elements. Take the elevator and get dropped off at 'The Egg', a white space, with a steel floor reflecting the overhead dome tricks you into thinking you're floating.

Sureño, the Mediterranean restaurant, is

done up in warm woods and olive grove motifs. Watch the chefs at work as you nibble on a perfectly browned pizza from the wood-fired oven. In Bei, the Asian restaurant, guests walk through a 'forest' before entering a dining room, where a large mirror reflects the chefs at work.

Throughout the hotel, the play of natural and artificial light at every turn is eye-catching. Guestrooms are open and simple, with brushed oak floors and bathtubs. Subtle Chinese elements of décor evoke a sense of place.

Who Goes: Artists, design aficionados and the rich, haute crowd.

Contact: *The Opposite House, China*; tel: +8610 6417 6688; www.theoppositehouse.com

Italy Torre Di Moravola Umbria

3 For history, surrounds and romance, Torre Di Moravola cannot be beat. This medieval watchtower that was recently restored is built along a mountain ridge that overlooks the Carpini Valley. The view is classic Umbria—360 degrees of secluded valleys, olive groves and oak forests—and it hasn't changed since the 10th century.

The terraces and gardens that surround the tower, along with the infinity pool have been aligned with the tower to give guests breathtaking views over the valley, in the region that is known as Italy's 'green heart'. To the east is a spacious dining terrace, to the south, an open pavilion leads to an intimate courtyard and medieval gardens. The west terrace, with its stone reflecting pool and sunken seating overlooks thick olive groves.

The building has been renovated with a light but modern hand, with the interiors now done up in contemporary materials. Each of the seven suites has private access to the terraces and the indoor public spaces, which are arranged on two levels that branch out from the tower's centre.

The main tower suite, the highest of them all, is the last word in exclusivity. The sitting room, with its high ceiling, has a watch gallery and stone fireplace. You can enjoy the magnificent valley view from your bed, or your private rooftop terrace. A stone bathroom with its own massage area is the perfect venue for some intense pampering.

Dining at the Moravola follows the slow food philosophy—with seasonal and organic

In Torre Di Moravola, a medieval watchtower gets a makeover as a luxe resort

The legendary Nimb Copenhagen's rich, glorious past is reflected in its modern air



With its sweeping views and serene ambience, Santorini Grace is an experience in tranquility

pre-dinner aperitif, or a late-night cocktail.

It's rare for a hotel to bring its past and its present to a perfectly harmonious conclusion, but The Nimb succeeds in its quest for clarity and openness, while holding on to the romance that inspired it.

Who Goes: Loaded history buffs and Europe's elite.

Contact: *The Nimb, Denmark*; tel: +45 88 70 0000; www.nimb.dk

Greece Santorini Grace Santorini

5 The traditional white of a Greek village, and the blue of the sea that surrounds it is a colour combination that induces relaxation. Add to the scene magnificent sunsets, uninterrupted views of the Cyclades Islands, and conveniently located plunge pools, and you're left with one of the world's most elegant and romantic hotels.

The Santorini Grace sits 300m above the Caldera, a basin that was formed centuries ago by a sunken volcano. With a view of Skaros, famed for its Venetian ruins, and the picturesque white village of Imerovigli carved into the hillside, this hotel has a monopoly on serenity.

The boutique hotel has a range of accommodations. If it is privacy you are craving, the Grace Suite's private terrace, open-air plunge pool, and the endless, restless Aegean Sea at every lookout, is sure to win your heart. The VIP Suite looks out onto the Caldera and Skaros rocks, with a private terrace and sun loungers, a steam room and a plunge pool.

Dining at the Grace is usually alfresco, with a breathtaking view of the lit-up infinity pool dropping away to the sea. Fresh seafood and Mediterranean fusion are on the menu. For an unforgettable experience, sit down to a champagne breakfast, or a starlit dinner. The two poolside bars are open all day, and we recommend the Grace signature cocktail—a subtle blend of apple juice pear puree, lemon grass and vodka. It's a drink that suggests that light of sunset, and epitomises the hotel's cool sophistication.

Who Goes: The seriously rich and the once-in-a-lifetime holidayers.

Contact: *Santorini Grace, Greece*; tel: +30 22860 21300; www.santorinigrace.com ■

produce on the menu, all of which is grown on the retreat's property. Though there are opportunities to trek, go horse riding or sailing, or play tennis or golf, it's probably easiest to relax into the stillness of Moravola, and give in to that feeling that time is standing still. So lean back, against the cool stone, and give in to the rocky serenity of Moravola.

Who Goes: Writers and intelligentsia looking for inspiration and a quiet getaway.

Contact: *Torre Di Moravola, Italy*; tel: +39 075 946 0965; www.moravola.com

Denmark Nimb Copenhagen

4 This was the building in which the much-loved Danish 'open sandwich' was born, but that is the least of its claims to fame. What is now Nimb has always been a Copenhagen institution, on the edge of Tivoli Gardens.

The founder of Tivoli determined that it should hold a bazaar, and so its first bazaar was housed in this building. It had the only restaurant in Tivoli that sold hot food, and its elegant facade drew the city's well-heeled. In 1909, the building was reconstructed, and in 1932, covered balconies were added, and the decorated Moorish facade

was toned down. In 2008, the owners decided to create an 'open' hotel on this spot, each area within it 'visible and inviting'. The elaborate Moorish facade was restored and the building recovered its air of Middle Eastern inspiration.

The hotel is built entirely with materials that are known to become more beautiful as they age. The floors are built from Douglas timber and stones from the beautiful Öland Islands. The bedrooms are accented in dark oiled, heavily knotted oak. All the tables in the building are individually designed, and the wall paintings in the large bar have been created by artist Cathrine Rabid Davidsen.

For some hearty Danish food, visit the Michelin-starred Restaurant Herman, whose chef Thomas Herman, believes taste is linked to directly to recollection. Test his theory that everything we eat reminds us of something or someone with his traditional 'Captain's Stew', or 'Burning Love', the Danish take on mashed potatoes.

At the Nimb Brasserie, three open kitchens in the centre of the restaurant ensure that you know exactly what's cooking at any point—craftsmanship and quality are the words that define their offerings. The modestly named Nimb Bar is really a space of grand dimensions with a roaring fireplace—the perfect location for a