



Hotel Openings We Love in December 2018

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All year long at *Traveler*, we watch and wait for certain hotels to swing open their grand doors with a borderline embarrassing level of excitement. These are the rainforest resorts or city boutiques—and everything in between—we think will be game-changers for their destinations. [Portland](#) continues to be America's most exciting hotel town of the year, and a secret garden in Palma will keep you off the beach all trip. And Brisbane, formerly Australia's most fly-in-and-get-out city? You'll actually want to overnight.

Here, the December openings from around the globe we're most excited

about now.



"We've been hearing about a [Detroit](#) revival for years now, and it does seem that one has been slowly, slowly in the works. But, with the recent opening of the beautifully designed [The Siren](#) and the opening of [Shinola Hotel](#) from the high-end watchmaker Shinola and the real estate firm Bedrock, it feels like the revival is finally full on. (Shinola Hotel officially opens January 2, but we're including it in our December roundup as an early Christmas gift to you because it's now accepting reservations). I'm going to be honest, my deep love of Motown aside, I've never been dying to go to Detroit, but I would get on a plane tomorrow for the sole reason of staying a weekend at Shinola. It's gorgeous. The 129-guestroom hotel, designed by Gachot Studios and Kraemer Design Group, joins two meticulously restored historic buildings, the former T.B. Rayl Co. department store and a former Singer

sewing machine-store, with three new buildings. Guest rooms are minimal but still warm, with lots of honey-colored oak and hits of rust, blush, and navy, and the lobby is straight-up cool—it feels like a modernist, art nouveau, deco mash-up with a peppering of groovy, in the best way possible. The design is exciting and fresh and moves away from the more default design tropes we've come to expect in new hotels. Chef Andrew Carmellini is behind the food and beverage, and highlights include The Brakeman, a beer hall focusing on craft beers from the Midwest and Penny Red's, which serves buckets of fried chicken alongside honey-butter biscuits and farmstand sides. I think the biscuits seal the deal. Motor City, here I come."

—*Rebecca Misner*



Ovolo The Valley, Brisbane, Australia

"This would not be the first time that a hotel opening has made us sit up and pay attention to a city we'd traditionally written off. But the opening of [Ovolo The Valley](#) has made us want to hang out in Brisbane for a few days before jetting off to the Great Barrier Reef (it helped the area land a spot on our [Places to Go](#) in 2019 list). The latest from the Aussie boutique brand, and their second in the city, goes deep on modern urban style: lots of tactile wall papers, colorful hallways, and interiors from a dream team of designers including Woods Bagot, who did New York's Baccarat. Plus, the full-wall windows, rooftop pool, and palm tree-studded entry give it a fun SoCal vibe that feels appropriate for Queensland." —*Erin Florio*



andBeyond Tengile River Lodge, Sabi Sands, South Africa

"[AndBeyond](#)'s newest outpost in [South Africa](#) marries high design and eco-

consciousness in a way that is rarely so effective. They have introduced solar power, and built the nine tents, designed as though floating above the Sand River, which runs alongside the property, with only sustainable materials. We love that all the suites have indoor/outdoor showers that make it seem as though you are bathing in the forest, as well as sunken lounges that you'll want to sit in all night with some local brandy, chatting about the sightings on the game drive earlier. Plus—and this is always a bonus for me with safari camps—there is a state-of-the-art gym and spa, for when you feel you need to work off some of the braai." —*E.F.*



Six Senses Maxwell, Singapore

I stayed at the new [Six Senses Duxton](#) when I was [Singapore](#) this past

August and walked past the not-yet-opened art deco [Six Senses Maxwell](#), which, together with Duxton (the properties are mere blocks apart) make up Six Senses Singapore, the brand's first-ever city project. Duxton was fantastic, and Maxwell looks like it's equally special, and both bring a refreshing boutique note to a city known for slick high rise hotels. French design hero Jacques Garcia did Maxwell's interiors, and they're stunning, as his work always is: opulent but still modern with lots of rich colors and textures (saffron drapes, teal velvet chairs, handwoven silk rugs). The hotel is located in the historic Tanjong Pagar district, which is exactly where you want to be in the city--close to great restaurants and bars, Chinatown, and, very importantly, a two-minute walk to Maxwell Hawker Centre where you will most definitely be going for chicken rice at least once. Maxwell's food and beverage program looks tight, with Cook & Tras, a social library restaurant and bar influenced by Straits heritage cuisine, Murray Terrace, a European styled brasserie, the spirits bar Garcha, and, what I'm most excited about, the Rose Lounge & Bar, which specializes in champagne. —*R.M.*



"It's been really exciting to see the hotel landscape change in [Portland](#) over the past few years. The Ace has been there for more than a decade, but the city's boutique hotel offerings, until fairly recently, were pretty slim. With [The Hoxton](#) opening this past October and [Woodlark](#) opening this month, it looks like Portland's hotel game is really keeping pace with its food and drink ones. Woodlark's location is great—you're right in the heart of downtown, and are in easy walking distance to Powell's City of Books, Heart Coffee (my favorite roaster in a city of truly excellent coffee), great shopping, and even better restaurants. I love that Woodlark is joining two of Portland's iconic, historic buildings—the Cornelius Hotel and the Woodlark Building—and that the hotel bar occupies the Cornelius' original library and Ladies Reception Hall where local suffragettes once gathered. Rooms are unfussy, lots of white and gray, but with pops of emerald green or cobalt

blue, brass fixtures, as well custom wallpaper patterned with native plants and botanical prints from the great Pacific Northwest artist Imogen Cunningham. The hotel restaurant, Bullard, and the bar, Abigail Hall, are exciting in their own right. Chef Doug Adams—*Top Chef* finalist, 2016 James Beard Award Rising Star nominee—brings his Texan touch (smoke and open fire) to Oregon's surplus of local produce, fish, and game to Bullard, while Abigail Hall was conceived and is overseen by Portland hospitality maven Jennifer Quist, who was behind the city's very cool Multnomah Whiskey Library." —*R.M.*



"The hotel scene in this artistic city on Florida's [Gulf Coast](#) has not done much to reflect the area's cultural cachet, skewing big brand over boutique. But [this hotel](#) from Marriott's Tribute Portfolio, really gets at the spirit of Sarasota. There are vertical gardens in the lobby; the terrace pool has floats

and a phenomenal juice bar (they're happy to spike the blends with local rums and tequilas); rooms are minimal, white and bright. But the greatest asset may be the hotel's downtown location, meaning that guests are super close to the Ringling Museum and the very walkable, underrated downtown. And if you want a beach day, Siesta Key, one of the [most popular public beaches in the country](#), is a short drive away." —*E.F.*



Can Bordoy, Mallorca, Spain

"[Palma](#) already has a fantastic boutique hotel scene—[Hotel Mama](#) became an instant favorite when I stayed there this summer, and Sant Francesc has been scooping our RCA awards for years. But this [boutique property](#) from Preferred Hotels inside a former school house feels more intimate than the

rest, like staying in the fabulous home of some eccentric relative with exceptional taste (a vibe that works very nicely in this old Spanish city). The structure was originally built in the Medieval times, and in the centuries since, has been added to with Gothic touches and marble tiling. The guestrooms feel elegant and glamorous, too, with art deco touches like sweeping velvet headboards and brass light fixtures, alongside grand old chandeliers hanging from exposed beam ceilings. You'll spend whole afternoons in the gardens, though, which are the largest private gardens in Palma and contain possibly the loveliest pool on the island, shrouded by greenery and close enough to the magnificent Palma Cathedral that you can practically hear the bells from the tower." —*E. F.*



The Liming Bequia, St. Vincent &

Grenadines

"[St. Barts](#) is my idea of heaven: the food, the beaches, the hotels, the cactus-meets-palm vegetation. It's ridiculously charming—if you happen to be there when the mega yachts and over-the-top vacationers aren't, which, unfortunately, is becoming harder and harder to do. I feel like Bequia, in the St. Vincent and Grenadines, may check most of the good boxes but skip the bad ones associated with many of the more developed, touristy Caribbean islands. With the opening of The Liming, local lingo for "the art of doing nothing," right now just might be the time to visit. The resort, located on the southwest coast of the tiny seven square-mile island, is made-up of nine bright and airy private villas (lots of white and marine blue), ranging from one to four bedrooms and one five-bedroom ultra-villa, all with private pools and uninterrupted views of the [Caribbean](#). Bequia isn't easy to get to—you'll most likely have to transfer at least once in Barbados or St. Lucia—but this challenge just might be a good thing." —*R.M.*

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