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InterRailing for adults

THE SUNDAY TIMES
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THE

100

BEST HOTELS IN THE WORLD



It's here! Turn the page for *Travel's* annual round-up of the globe's coolest pools, hottest bars, most soothing spas – and some downright-dreamy beds▶

1 ST PANCRAS RENAISSANCE, LONDON

They took their time (a decade!) over the restoration of London's iconic 1868 railway station, but it was worth it. Magnificent gold-leaf **murals have been discovered behind peeling wallpaper; the classic ticket kiosks are now part of a hip cocktail bar**; and the courtyard where carriages once drew up is a lobby with ornate steel girders and a glass roof. Book a 'Chambers' room in the original Victorian building rather than anything in the new-wing Barlow House. *Doubles from £205, room only (020 7841 3540, www.marriott.co.uk).*

2 SOUTH SANDS, SALCOMBE, DEVON

Cove-strewn Salcombe is **the most romantic spot in Devon – and it finally has an equally lovely hotel to match**. Re-opened last year overlooking a breezy little bay just outside town, South Sands comes with 27 rooms decorated with a laid-back New England aesthetic (driftwood and cheery marine colours), some with side-by-side bathtubs. The hotel's hub is its stylish glass-fronted restaurant, with a shellfish-heavy menu

by celebrity chef Mitch Tonks and views of gently lapping waves. *Doubles from £135, B&B (01548 859000, www.southsands.com).*

3 LIME WOOD, NEW FOREST

As soon as it opened last year, Lime Wood's reputation raced past those of its rivals. Maybe it's the gent in plus-fours who cycles a breakfast hamper to your room; or the Herb House with its ruddy-cheeked **lack of spa pretence alongside an LA-worthy treatment list**; or the sprawling gardens populated by pigs and rabbits (you can eat them later in the two superb restaurants). Or maybe it's just the way staff make you feel like you own the place. *Doubles from £195, room only (023 8028 7177, www.limewoodhotel.co.uk).*

4 ARCHANGEL, FROME, SOMERSET

This is a glamorous country-house hotel masquerading as a gastropub (hence **five-star treats at bargain prices**). Snuggle down in its log-fired lounge, dress up for its cool restaurant, showcasing the county's finest fare and set over three floors – or sneak away to its clubby upstairs Library. The six spacious bedrooms are pure rock 'n' roll, with

deep purple decor, freestanding zinc baths and 'Michelangelo' frescoes. *Doubles from £120, B&B (01373 456111, www.archangelfrome.com).*

5 READING ROOMS, MARGATE, KENT

Behind the unassuming brown facade of an anonymous Georgian terrace lurk **three of the prettiest bedrooms in Britain, each spread over an entire floor**. They have gigantic bathrooms, too. Outsized French-inspired beds look like islands on wooden floorboards, while vintage chandeliers and fireplaces make you feel as though you're starring in your own period drama. You have complete privacy – breakfast magically arrives at your bedroom door on a wooden tray. *Doubles from £150, B&B (01843 225166, www.thereadingroomsmargate.co.uk).*

6 BABINGTON HOUSE, NEAR FROME, SOMERSET

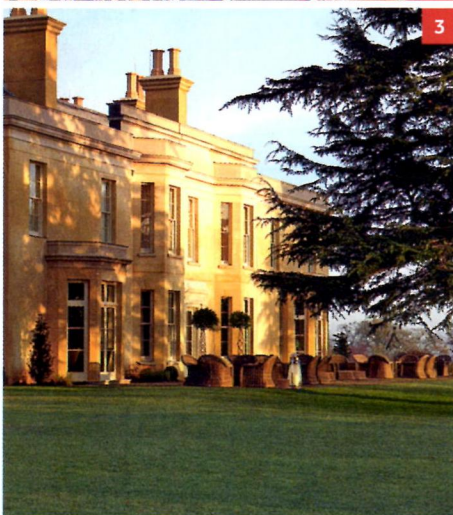
The sign at the top of the tree-lined drive leading to this 18th-century pile is quietly unassuming – its clientele are anything but. At this A-list favourite **the guestbook is a compendium of the cool and credible**. Ms Moss and Ms Paltrow have



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