

travel



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Hotel 1000, Seattle, Washington

It's about time sleepy, geeky Seattle gave us somewhere funky and fabulous to stay and, along with heavenly three-figure thread counts and gigantic cloud-like beds, this slick, city newcomer has been generously sprinkled with high-tech fairy dust. Here, in a wizard-like universe, the TVs morph into digital art galleries so images by Leonardo da Vinci, Monet and Jackson Pollock grace your walls (who needs museums?), while clever heat-detecting sensors mean you'll never be disturbed by housekeeping again. Each of the 120 rooms is kitted out with a revolutionary cabling system – it sounds dull but comes with brilliant benefits – including free WiFi and free telephone calls within the US. Other wet-weather fun (and boy, does it rain) includes a virtual golf game where you can play all the famous golf courses of the world – again geeky, again great. But, with all this gizmo fun, are we stumbling around trying to find the light switches? Happily this is a hotel where everything works brilliantly and where the human stuff is also toe-tappingly good. The massages in the spa are thoughtful and thorough; the staff are just an eye-catch away and the BOKA restaurant is a feast of full-fat flavours. Try the cider-braised pork belly with Fuji apples – so sweet and tender. A groovy, intelligent place; if Hotel 1000 is a hotel of the future we can all take a deep breath and relax. **Sarah Turner**
Doubles from £115. Ring 001 206 957 1000 or visit hotell1000seattle.com.



Anything to declare?

Flora Astor is a gem dealer and jewellery designer for private hush-hush clients after serious rocks.

How many trips did you take last year?

I travelled for work or fun at least every six weeks. I also got married and, unusually for a honeymoon, my husband Theo marched me around a series of Greek ruins. If you give yourself a time limit, it's actually rather fun.

When did you last travel economy?

If I fly I'll go back of the bus but I'd much rather take the train. I love the ever-changing views you get on the sleeper train from Glasgow.

The most unusual adventure you've had recently?

I went on a hiking trip last summer in the Swiss Alps with my husband. It was an uplifting, challenging and beautiful holiday. Such stunning scenery – I can't wait to go back. We brought down the average age of fellow hikers by at least 25 years.

Where is the world's best place to eat?

Our terrace in the foothills of the Cevennes, eating fresh goat's cheese and bread with too much olive oil and a big glass of red wine.

To sleep?

Our family's beach house on the Isle of Jura; always clear and peaceful.

To have fun?

I'd be lying if I didn't say Ibiza... It's just too good.

The best traveller you know? My mum, Annabel. She'll go anywhere, have fun, look great and want to stay forever.

What's your travelling secret? Smile and nod.

Food to fly for



Les Ambassadeurs at
Hotel de Crillon

Hold the menu in your hand? So déclassé, darling. At Les Ambassadeurs, the Michelin-starred restaurant situated in the sumptuous 18th-century former ballroom of the Crillon, the menu is attached to a little stand placed before you on the table, so you can read it without so much as lifting a finger. This restaurant is absolutely beautiful to look at: terrazzo floors, Baccarat crystal chandeliers, pretty wall sconces – and the service so smooth, so polished, you feel almost otherworldly. They manage the brilliant trick of being ineffably refined but never remotely snooty.

Chef Jean-François Piège started out wanting to be a gardener; rare and exotic plants and herbs play a big part in his cooking. One of his specialities, spider crab in bouillon, comes anointed with the freshest, most aromatic herbs. The poularde de Bresse in asparagus breadcrumbs, served with sushi and creamed morels, is dazzling – the best thing I've eaten in Paris in yonks. If you're here over the weekend with kids (and everybody is, because Parisians play in town, not in the country) don't take them to le Hard Rock – try Brunch du Monde at the Crillon instead. Choose from American, Italian, Mexican or Lebanese, with special tasting menus for children. **Jeremy Wayne**
Menu Déjeuner, from 75 euros per person. Hotel de Crillon, 10 Place de la Concorde, Paris 8ème (tel: 00 33 1 44 71 16 16).

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