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Shortcuts: Champagne's first contemporary five-star hotel, and a Bulgari hotel in Shanghai

Travel updates from France, China and Georgia



Chablé Maroma

Claire Wrathall JUNE 29, 2018



Riviera Maya

Back in 1976 the Mexican architect José Luis Moreno bought 500 acres of jungle and gone-to-wild coconut plantation 40km south of Cancún, abutting one of the most beautiful bays on Mexico's Caribbean seaboard. He named it Maroma – somersault in Spanish – and began to build what became one of the first luxury hotels, now the Belmond Maroma Resort & Spa, on this coast. It will face its first real local competition on September 10, when Chablé Maroma opens just beyond the bay's southern headland on a 180m-stretch of the same pale quartz sand. Under the management of locally based Hamak Hotels the development of 70 thatched suites (each with its own pool) promises a 1,570 sq m spa and a restaurant (one of four) under the direction of Mexico's celebrated chef, Jorge Vallejo of Quintonil in Mexico City, which was ranked 22nd in the 2018 World's 50 Best Restaurants, announced last week. From about \$600 a night. www.chableresort.com

Champagne

Between the villages of Champillon and Hautvillers, home of the abbey where Dom Pérignon is said to have invented champagne in 1693, the Champagne region's first contemporary five-star opens on July 6. The 49-room Royal Champagne Hotel & Spa is the creation of the team behind Le Barthélemy in St Barths. Rooms from €495. www.royalchampagne.com

Greece

This year Greek tourism minister Elena Kountoura said she expected visitor arrivals to Greece to increase by 2m this year, driven in part by a proliferation of new hotels. The past month has seen the opening of Katikies Mykonos (from €345) in the Cyclades, a sister property to the infinitely Instagrammable Katikies on Santorini. Skiathos, in the Sporades, has its first properly design-conscious new five-star in EliviSkiathos, from €217. elivihotels.com

Shanghai

Having opened in Beijing last year, the Italian jewellery and luxury goods brand Bulgari has opened a hotel in Shanghai, on the top eight floors of a 48-story tower designed by Antonio Citterio Patricia Viel, part of the Suhe Creek development in the Huangpu District. The hotel incorporates the city's former Chamber of Commerce, a Neoclassical building dating back to 1916, which now houses its Chinese restaurant, Bao Li Xuan, while the Italian chef Niko Romito, whose Abruzzo restaurant has three Michelin stars, will oversee the restaurant. bulgarihotels.com

Tbilisi



Inside the Hotel Stamba

For years the obvious place to stay in the Georgian capital was the Radisson Blu (for the views as much as everything). But then Rooms opened, launched by the locally based Adjara Group and the city's first design-conscious boutique. Last month Adjara opened a second property under the Rooms brand, Stamba. Centrally located in a landmark 1930s Brutalist building that began life as a Soviet-era publishing house and printworks, it has 42 spacious rooms (there'll be 150 eventually), as well as a rooftop, glass-bottomed swimming pool, a grand café and a five-storey atrium filled with trees. From €220. roomshotels.com/stamba-hotel