

# Where to go...

## FOR A CHEEKY WEEKEND ESCAPE



### HOTEL EXCELSIOR Dubrovnik

It's an icon, the Excelsior, sitting majestically above the shiny, winding limestone streets of Dubrovnik. The visitors' book is as illustrious as they come: Liz Taylor, Sir Roger Moore, the Queen... they've all passed through these doors, drawn to the grand old dame of the Adriatic. And to mark its longevity, there's been a loving overhaul. Everywhere has been nipped, tucked and made as elegant as the guest list, bedecked in shades of blue, with polished brass and art-deco flourishes to offset the sparkling cobalt of the sea below. It's a labyrinth of breezy, modern loveliness, with sunny terraces and staff as sleek as the rooms. The cossetting spa is the perfect balm after hours spent horizontal on the sun-soaked deck, while the food is light and fresh and just plucked from the sea. It gets it all right, as every icon should.

**BOOK IT** Double, from £170, including breakfast ([adriaticluxuryhotels.com](http://adriaticluxuryhotels.com)).

### LE MEURICE Paris

You cannot help but see people at Le Meurice. The hotel is a magnet for Paris's great and good – Salvador Dalí lived here for decades (with his pet ocelots), and Charlotte Casiraghi was propping up the bar when we last visited. It is that kind of place. Location is everything, and Le Meurice's couldn't be better: within poodle-flinging distance of the Louvre, on colonnaded Rue de Rivoli, overlooking the Tuileries. The suites (they are as large as a tennis court and a dream in Louis XVI opulence) have balconies overlooking the gardens, perfect for sneaking a very Parisian cigarette. Ceilings are sky-high, bathrooms are marble, fabrics are pastel silks and velvets, and chandeliers and gold leaf are plentiful. It is classical without being dowdy; time-honoured but still totally sexy. Like Paris, come to think of it.

**BOOK IT** Double, from £630 (dorchestercollection.com).

### COWORTH PARK Ascot

It is slightly surreal, to be under an hour from London and to gaze from your spacious, calm, refreshingly feminine room at rolling fields and manicured gardens. Not so much a place to be seen, but a place to disappear. To spend an afternoon in your enormous rolltop bath reading a paperback or practising somersaults (really, it's big). To stroll out in the grounds and admire the handsome polo ponies mooching about. To pad along the silent corridors of the spa for a delicious Kerstin Florian facial before a snooze by the languid pool. And then to eat: afternoon tea is very much encouraged, but do save space for the modern British fare (sautéed duck's liver, Dingley Dell pork) by new executive chef Adam Smith at the smart Restaurant Coworth Park. Or just hide away in your wrought-iron four-poster made to look like the branches of a tree. It's a fairytale.

**BOOK IT** Double, from £294, including breakfast ([dorchestercollection.com](http://dorchestercollection.com)).

### SUBLIME COMPORTA Portugal

A one-hour dash from Lisbon brings you to Comporta, a remote, salt-washed slice of seaside chic. Miles of white-sand beaches, vast pine and cork forests, wildflowers and endless dunes – and Sublime, a boldly named hotel that is so relaxed it positively encourages you to do very little at all. Squidgy sofas, a huge fireplace, soft lighting, mojitos at all hours... and all-white, minimalist cabanas, where light floods through the floor-to-ceiling windows and warm wood softens the sharp design. There's a seductive adults-only pool and a little spa (have the shiatsu massage), and the coolly stylish restaurant serves grilled local black pork and fish steamed in salt, all livened up with herbs and vegetables grown in their garden. Naming a hotel Sublime calls for serious confidence, but, boy, do they pull it off.

**BOOK IT** Double, from £180, including breakfast ([sublimecomporta.pt](http://sublimecomporta.pt)).