

*From the world's largest theme park in New Jersey
to Singapore's Dr. Seussian gardens
to Pablo Picasso's long-awaited return to Paris,
here are 25 new things to see and do* this year*

*(*with places to stay while you're doing them, page 78)*

By Adam K. Raymond, Grant Stoddard and Chris Wright

OUT WITH

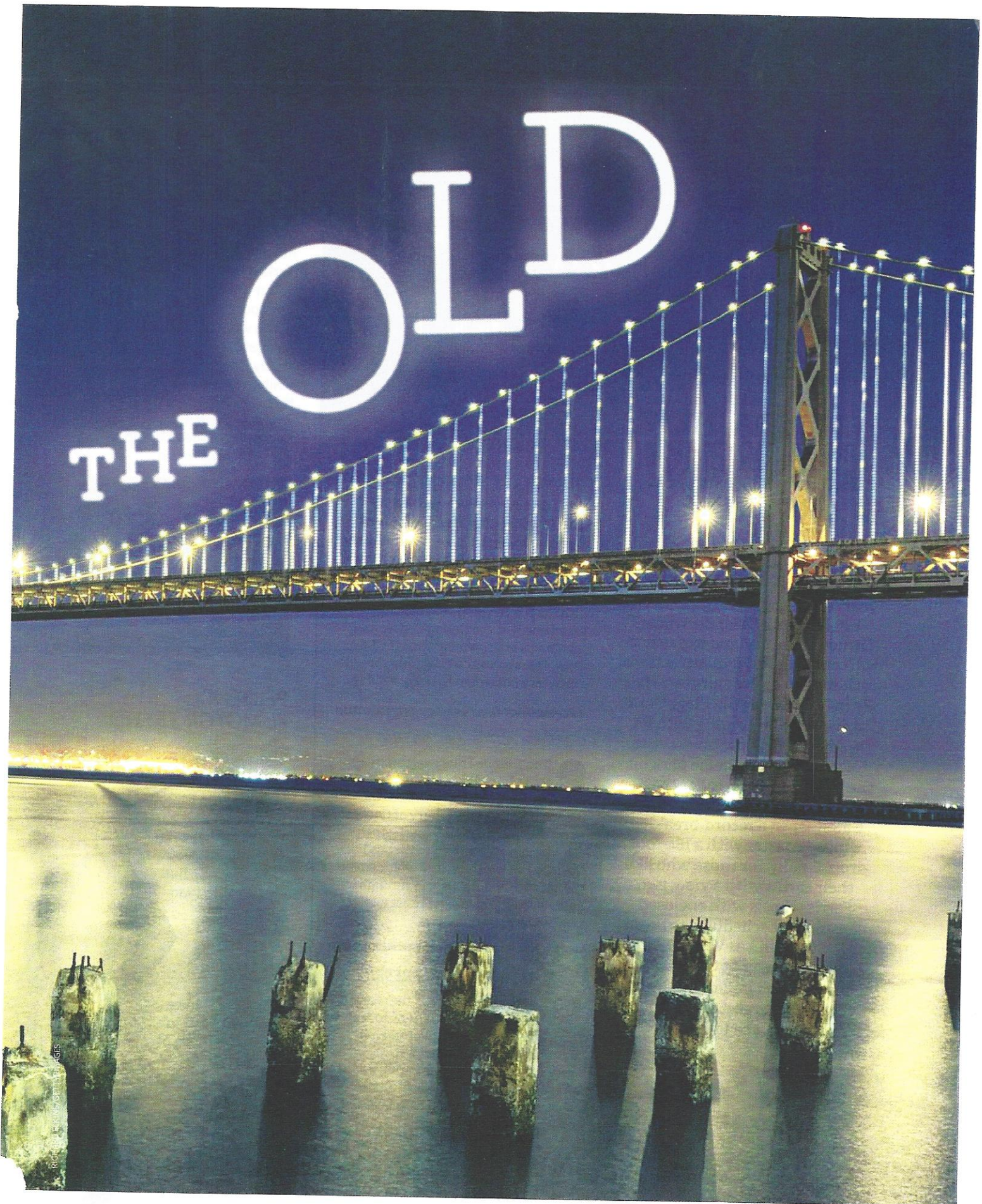
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SAN FRANCISCO: FOG LIGHTS

A 75th anniversary traditionally calls for diamonds, but the city of San Francisco is giving the Bay Bridge something with a lot more sparkle: 25,000 LEDs. Aligned along the bridge's vertical cables, these will form a mesmerizing light sculpture designed by Leo Villareal, a pioneer of illuminated art. The gift is a little late in arriving, as the bridge's 75th anniversary was in 2011 (there were delays in the sculpture's assembly). No matter: When the switch is flipped in early March and the 1.8 miles of lights begin dancing over San Francisco Bay, the wait will have been well worth it.

Above, the Bay Bridge as it's expected to look when illuminated; right, the artist Leo Villareal, atop one of the bridge's cables



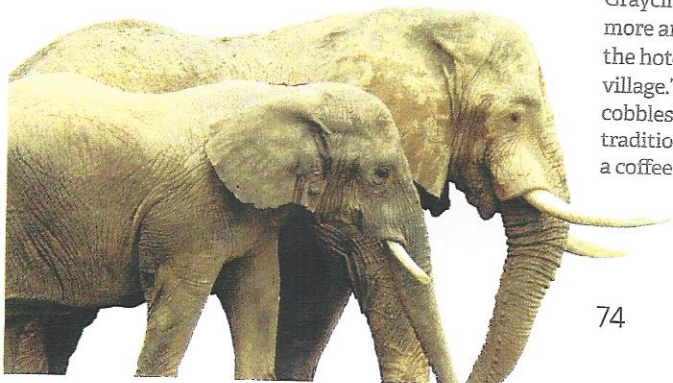


A rendering of Las Vegas' High Roller; below, elephants at Wild Safari

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FLORIDA, NEW JERSEY, OHIO AND NEVADA: ROLL ON

According to the Chinese calendar, 2013 is the year of the snake. According to kids, it's the year of the amusement park. The fun begins in Orlando, where Disney's Fantasyland expansion will continue to debut attractions, including Princess Fairytale Hall. Up in New Jersey, Six Flags Great Adventure is merging with its Wild Safari animal preserve to form the largest theme park on the planet. In Ohio, roller coaster mecca Cedar Point will open GateKeeper, a record-breaking winged coaster with a 164-foot drop. Finally, for those who like their thrills with a view, two Ferris wheels with enclosed capsules are scheduled to begin spinning in Las Vegas. The SkyVue will top out at 500 feet, while the High Roller is poised to become the largest Ferris wheel in the world, at a lofty 550 feet.



CHICAGO: COMPETITIVE STREAK

6 Already sports-crazed Second City is getting a bumper crop of big games this year. It starts in February with two outdoor college hockey games at Soldier Field's inaugural Hockey City Classic, continues the next month with the Big Ten Men's Basketball Tournament at the United Center, and culminates in September with the PGA's BMW Championship. Tailgating should commence immediately. Bring hot dogs.

CORSICA: THE GRAND TOUR

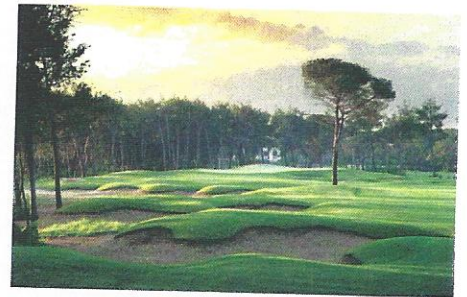
7 The Tour de France celebrates its 100th birthday by doing what all centenarians dream of: fleeing to the islands. The French territory of Corsica hosts this year's Grand Départ—the ostentatious name given to the start of the race—in which cyclists will zoom up the island's mountains, lean through its narrow coastal roads and resist distraction by the gorgeous views.

THE BAHAMAS: PAST, PRESENT

8 The developer behind the recent restoration of Nassau's historical Graycliff Hotel has launched an even more ambitious project: converting the hotel's environs into a "heritage village." The \$20 million plan includes cobblestoned pedestrian malls lined with traditional Bahamian shops and eateries, a coffee roaster and more—all aimed at giving visitors a deeper and more textured understanding of island culture and history.

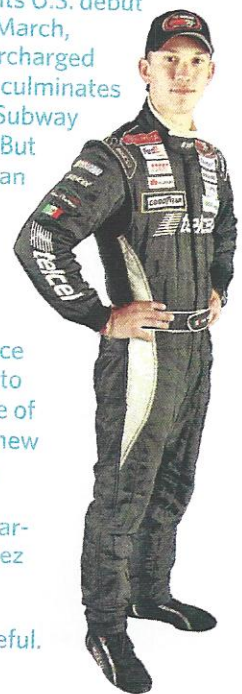
TURKEY: SWING TIME

9 Turkey takes the first step toward Euro golf mania in November when the Montgomerie Maxx Royal in Belek hosts the Turkish Open, the country's debut on the European Tour. The tournament will see 78 of the world's best golfers navigate the pine trees and sandy ridges of the course while trying to play up to the standards of the man who designed it: eight-time European money champ Colin Montgomerie.



PHOENIX: EL MOTOR TREND

10 The 10-year-old NASCAR México Toyota Series makes its U.S. debut in Phoenix in March, part of a supercharged weekend that culminates in NASCAR's Subway Fresh Fit 500. But this is more than a significant achievement in the history of Mexican motorsports. It's also a chance for Americans to catch a glimpse of some exciting new faces from the Toyota Series, including 21-year-old Daniel Suárez (right), 2012 champion and Sprint Cup hopeful.



THE FEST TEST

This year, two of Europe's most illustrious cities are set to have what can only be described as an anniversary-off. For both Amsterdam and London, 2013 will involve a preposterous number of red-letter days, all of them celebrated in lavish style (or at least some sort of style). To determine who will prevail in the Battle of the Milestones, we devised a stringent scientific survey, reproduced here.



AMSTERDAM

LONDON

INFRASTRUCTURE

400 years since: The establishment of the city's canals—165 in all, totaling more than 60 miles—which were awarded UNESCO World Heritage status in 2010.

Celebrations include: Queen's Day, in which barges will be festooned in orange (the royal color) and orange-clad people will dance atop 1,500 canal-spanning bridges.

150 years since: The debut of the Tube, the world's first subway system, which has almost 250 miles of track and plunges to 220 feet below ground at its deepest point.

Celebrations include: A series of commemorative posters designed by leading artists, and theatrical performances at the disused Aldwych station.

WINNER: LONDON. YOU SIMPLY CANNOT TOP A DISUSED SUBWAY STATION.

HISTORICAL INFAMY

150 years since: Slavery, an abhorrent practice in which the Dutch played a key role, was abolished by the Netherlands.

Celebrations include: Slavery-themed photography exhibitions, theater performances and lectures.

125 years since: Jack the Ripper went on a bloody rampage across London, breeding terror on the streets and inspiring hundreds of dodgy conspiracy theories.

Celebrations include: Special Jack the Ripper walks, in which people are invited to follow in the madman's footsteps.

WINNER: AMSTERDAM. SOME CRIMES ARE BIGGER THAN OTHERS.

CULTURAL REDOUBTS

125 years since: The opening of the Concertgebouw, Amsterdam's grand concert hall, renowned for having some of the best acoustics on earth.

Celebrations include: An "enormous range" of events, including the Digital Concertgebouw Project, which will broadcast concerts at venues around the city.

50 years since: The founding of the National Theatre, counterpart to the Royal Shakespeare Company; opening night saw Peter O'Toole playing the lead in *Hamlet*.

Celebrations include: A permanent exhibit outlining the theater's history, and a production of *Othello* starring TV actor Adrian Lester.

WINNER: LONDON. IF ONLY BECAUSE WE CAN'T PRONOUNCE "CONCERTGEBOUW."

EXOTIC CREATURES

175 years since: The debut of Artis Royal Zoo, the oldest zoo in the Netherlands, which boasts more than 6,000 animals representing 900-plus species.

Celebrations include: A series of in-zoo "entertainments" every Saturday evening.

60 years since: Queen Elizabeth II's coronation—not to be confused with last year's Diamond Jubilee, which marked 60 years since Lizzie ascended the throne.

Celebrations include: Not much, given the fuss made over QE2 in 2012. Mainly endless loops of the first-ever televised coronation.

WINNER: AMSTERDAM. THE WORLD MIGHT BE JUST A BIT QUEENED OUT.

FINAL TALLY: 2-2 ... A WELL-EARNED TIE.

NEW ORLEANS

THE TRIUMPHANT RETURN OF A SOUTHERN BELLE

13 When the Saenger Theatre opened in 1927, patrons celebrated with a parade. As the years passed, it was neglected, then revived, then devastated by Hurricane Katrina. Now it's back, thanks to a \$52 million renovation that's restored such distinctive features as an LED depiction of the night sky on the theater ceiling. A stage house expansion will allow for larger productions; a new restaurant is set to open as well.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

WINNER: TYKES, ALL

14 Closed since 2004—or forever ago, in kid years—the only national museum dedicated to America's youngest citizens has returned at last. The National Children's Museum debuted this winter in its new space in scenic National Harbor, and ups the ante in May with the opening of a 60,000-square-foot outdoor learning and play area. Bonus for Big Bird fans: The museum has taken on Sesame Workshop as a "creative tenant."

LOS ANGELES

BEVERLY HILLS SETS THE STAGE

15 Ever since Fairbanks and Pickford ruled Hollywood, the city's most famous faces have lived in Beverly Hills. Yet, oddly enough, the city has long lacked its own performing arts facility. That changes this fall with the Wallis Annenberg Center, which will include a 500-seat theater and a sculpture garden. The adjoining Beverly Hills post office, built in 1933, is also being made over into a café and classroom space for the stars of tomorrow.

STOCKHOLM

DISCO LIVES

16 You can dance, you can jive, you can immerse yourself in the history of Sweden's greatest pop group and have the time of your life. Opening this spring, ABBA the Museum will delight dancing queens and kings with original tour instruments, interactive exhibits, and glittery platform boots and bright-as-the-sun jumpsuits.



DERRY, NORTHERN IRELAND: A ONCE-TROUBLED CITY GETS ITS DUE

This year marks the 400th anniversary of the prefix “London” being bestowed upon the town of Derry, which played a key role in the decades-long Troubles between Republicans and Unionists.

But this is also the year that Derry-Londonderry gets another, less divisive moniker from across the Irish Sea: “U.K. City of Culture.” The Ulster city beat out three English contenders to become the first-ever recipient of the honor, and is pulling out the stops with a full diary of cultural events including the Turner Prize, one of Europe’s most prestigious art competitions—the first time it will be held outside England in its 29-year history.



SONGDO, SOUTH KOREA:
THE VIEW FROM 2030

18 Songdo is a metropolis built from scratch on 1,500 acres of reclaimed land, and in the coming year or so will be the home of the world’s tallest twin skyscrapers: Incheon Tower. But Songdo is more than just a Dubai of the Far East. It’s also one of 15 “ubiquitous cities,” or U-cities, under construction in South Korea. In a U-city, all information systems are linked through such things as wireless networking and RFID tags. What does that look like, you ask? Imagine throwing a plastic bottle into a municipal recycling bin and instantly getting a refund, or taking a nasty spill and having a pressure-sensitive floor call for help. Pretty smart, huh?

RIO DE JANEIRO: PREP RALLY

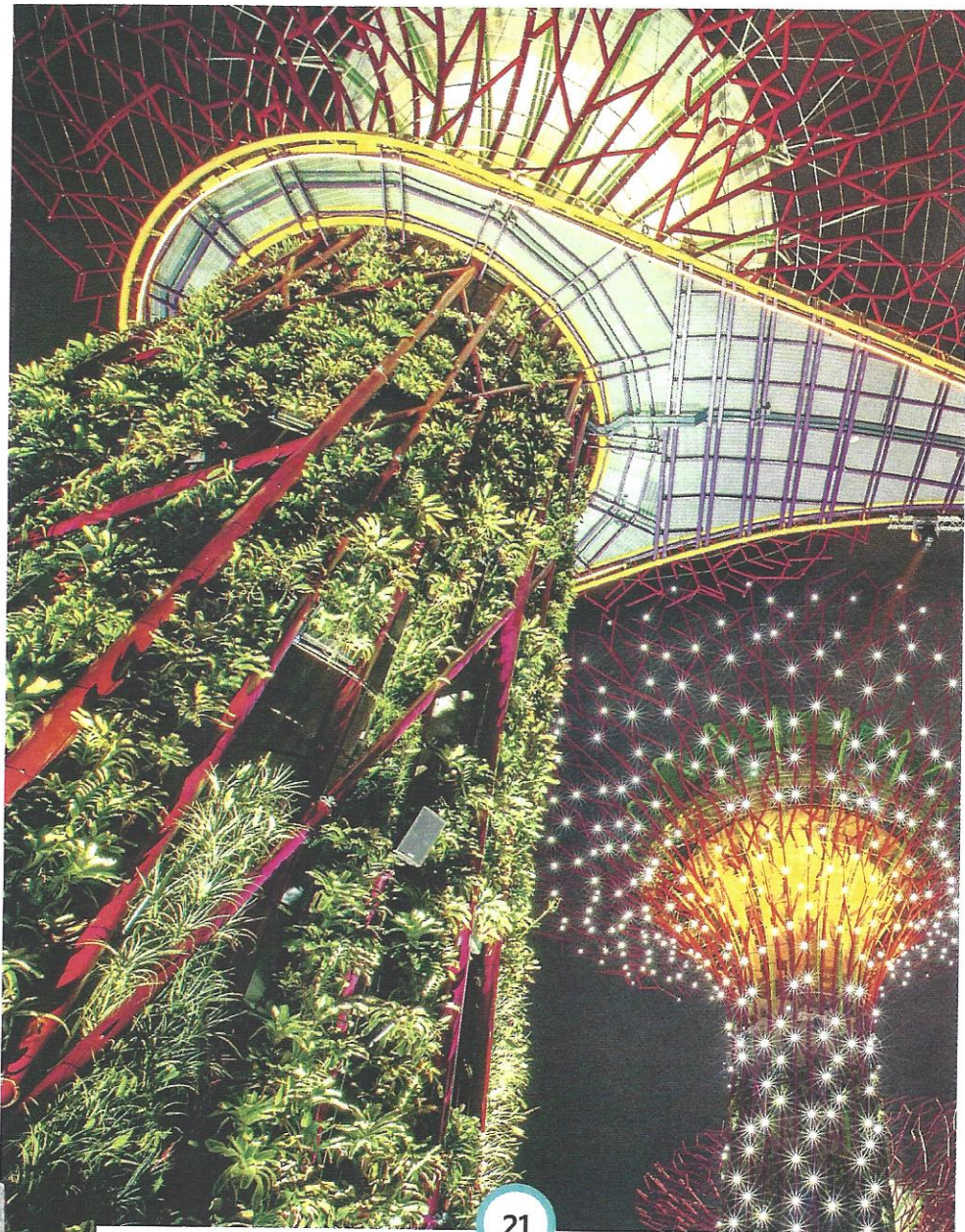
19 The 2014 soccer World Cup hotly followed by the 2016 Olympic Games means that Rio is getting a face-lift. Take Lapa, the city’s gritty nightlife district, in which salsa was born and every proper night out in Rio ends. Improvements here include an outdoor exhibition space, a cultural center and performing arts school, and better security and organization. The hope, says Rio’s mayor, Eduardo Paes, is not to scrub Lapa of its personality but to smooth its rough edges. “There can be lively disorder,” he said recently. “It’s part of the locale.”

NEW YORK CITY: FASHION ANARCHY

20 From the beginning of the punk movement, there’s been little daylight between the music and the fashions. What started as a snarling underground sensibility in New York migrated to London, where it was refined into an enduring “look” by Malcolm McLaren et al. Starting in May, a new exhibit at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, “Punk: Chaos to Couture,” will examine punk’s impact on style, from its birth in the 1970s through its influence on high fashion today.

Punk chic
by Karl
Lagerfeld
for Chanel,
at the Met

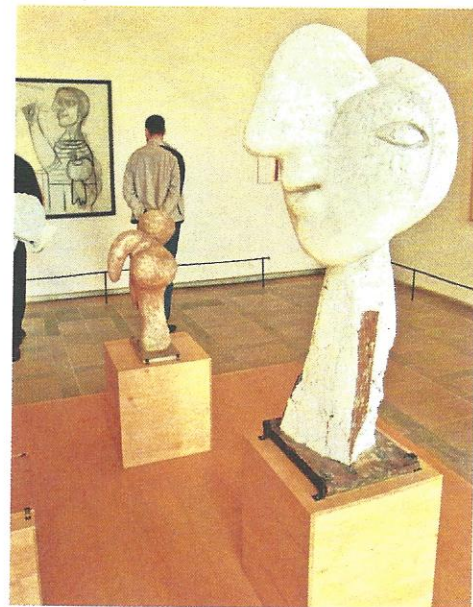




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SINGAPORE: GARDEN PARTY

If Dr. Seuss, Willy Wonka, Steve Jobs and Cirque du Soleil were given 250 acres of reclaimed land on Singapore's waterfront and tasked with building an urban park of the future, their creation might look quite a bit like Gardens by the Bay. The colossal and otherworldly project—whose climate-controlled conservatories won the 2012 World Building of the Year Award—boasts all manner of wonderments: 100-foot waterfalls, carnivorous plants, a cloud forest and a grove of "supertrees," enormous vertical gardens that provide a shady canopy by day and come alive with music and lights by night. There are also myriad dining spots in the park, including IndoChine, a bistro that sits atop a 164-foot supertree.



PARIS: A CULTURAL REAWAKENING

22 While there's always a lot to see, do and eat in Paris, culture vultures have long missed out on two significant points of interest, due to renovation and remodeling. By the time the National Picasso Museum reopens its doors this summer, it will have been closed for almost two years. The exhibition space has been vastly improved, allowing for more than 500 of Pablo Picasso's works to be displayed throughout the building's four levels. Just a few months later, Paris will see the return of the Musée Galliera, formally known as the Musée de la Mode de la Ville de Paris (Museum of Fashion in the City of Paris). In the four years since the museum's remodeling began, its embarrassment of fashion-related riches have been scattered across the City of Light and beyond. Fashion aficionados will rejoice that the artifacts are coming back to their beautiful home in the 16th Arrondissement.



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CLEVELAND: GO FISH!

Since 1985, the Buckeye State's second largest city had been tragically bereft of an aquarium. That changed with the debut of the Greater Cleveland Aquarium, a world-class attraction with a touch of local history (it's housed in a former 19th-century power station). The facility's 10 exhibition areas include "Ohio Lakes and Rivers," "Tropical Reef," "Key West" and something called "Weird and Wonderful." A 145-foot-long walk-through shark tunnel offers surefire thrills, as does a tank where brave souls are permitted to lean in and actually touch rays, baby sharks, starfish and other marine life.

MONTREAL: SPACE SHOT

24 This spring marks the grand opening of the Rio Tinto Alcan Planetarium, an ambitious project that has joined Montreal's famous biodome, insectarium and botanical garden in Canada's largest natural science museum complex. Creators hope the new planetarium—featuring two theaters, multimedia exhibits, lab workspaces and more—will inspire visitors to reach for the stars (rather than spending all their time making cooing noises at the nearby biodome's beloved river otter).

CANCÚN: UNDERWATER REAL ESTATE

25 You're looking at a nondescript suburban house when something strange happens: An eel pops out of the chimney. You're at the Underwater Museum of Art in Cancún. Artist Jason deCaires Taylor's latest work, *Urban Reef*, comprises a group of incredibly detailed houses that provide sanctuary for all manner of undersea creatures (none of which display any inordinate suburban angst).

WHILE YOU'RE THERE...

19 NEW OR
NOTABLE
PLACES TO LAY
YOUR HEAD



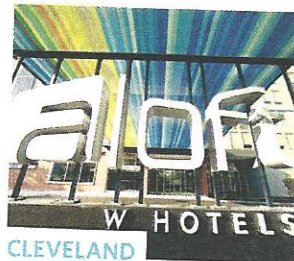
CHICAGO

With an eye toward becoming the city's most luxurious five-diamond hotel, **The Langham Chicago** opens this year near the Magnificent Mile in one of the last U.S. buildings designed by acclaimed German architect Mies van der Rohe.



CORSICA

Commanding a prime position on Ajaccio Bay, the recently unveiled **Radisson Blu Resort & Spa** is a design-forward respite whose refined rooms are as effortlessly calming as the sea outside.



CLEVELAND

Touted as C-town's first-ever boutique hotel, an outpost of the hip, tech-friendly brand **Aloft** is set to open early this year as part of a highly anticipated \$500 million development overlooking the Cuyahoga River and Lake Erie.



AMSTERDAM

Debuting later this year—conveniently opposite Amsterdam Centraal, the city's main rail hub—**Art'otel** earns its moniker with a dedicated 3,230-square-foot art gallery and original works scattered throughout its rigorously chic spaces.



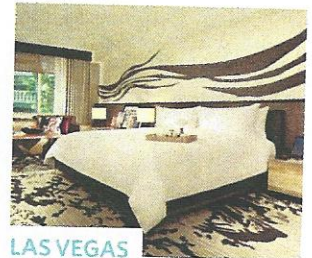
LONDON

Five-star newcomer **ME London** pays homage to next-door neighbor Marconi House, the historical home of the BBC, with its most striking amenity: 10th-floor rooftop bar Radio, from which you can get an eyeeful of London landmarks.



RIO DE JANEIRO

The stately **Windsor Asturias** is a mere stroll from the colonial Lapa district and its iconic aqueduct. If the beach is on your agenda, hop on the subway at the nearby Cinelândia station and you'll be whisked to Ipanema in no time.



LAS VEGAS

Known worldwide as simply "Nobu," celebrity chef Nobuyuki Matsuhisa lends his name and creative vision to hotel-within-a-hotel **Nobu Hotel Caesars Palace**—and like his food, this oasis promises a sophisticated blend of East and West.



SCOTTSDALE, ARIZ.

The only thing brighter than the generous pops of Kool-Aid color throughout **The Saguaro** is the desert sun beating down from above. Luckily, there are two large outdoor pools at this natty year-old property to help with that.



STOCKHOLM

With its cozy feel, indulgent marble baths, uniquely crafted furniture and communal fridge full of wine, the 8-month-old 12-room guesthouse **Ett Hem** ("At Home") truly lives up to its name.



NEW YORK CITY

The 145 rooms at **The Standard, East Village** boast floor-to-ceiling windows that provide an impressive view of the East Village; just a few blocks south is the site of punk landmark CBGB (now a John Varvatos store).



MONTREAL

If you can tear yourself away from the plush rooms, glass-bottomed pool and farm-to-table French-Canadian cuisine at **Le Westin Montréal**, a brief amble down cobblestone streets will bring you to the heart of historic Old Montreal.



NEW ORLEANS

The French Quarter landmark that started life in 1909 as the Audubon Building has returned as **The Saint Hotel**, which balances the grandeur of its beaux arts history with inspired touches of leading-edge modern design.



DERRY-LONDONDERRY

Situated on Queen's Quay by the beautiful River Foyle, the four-star, 146-room **City Hotel Derry** puts you within easy reach of local attractions—most notably, Derry's fully intact 17th-century city walls.



SINGAPORE

When you're done hanging out in the supertrees at Gardens by the Bay, repair to the more down-to-earth pleasures at the nearby 240-room **W Singapore-Sentosa Cove**, including a sleek poolside bar and a terrace with marina views.



CANCUN

Blending luxury digs with sustainable tourism, the eco-friendly resort **Hacienda Tres Ríos** offers exclusive access to the surrounding 326-acre Tres Ríos Nature Park and its cenotes: limestone sinkholes that visitors are invited to snorkel.



WASHINGTON, D.C.

Nestled against the historic C&O Canal, the **Capella Georgetown** is one of the U.S. capital's most inviting new retreats. And with the sweeping city views it affords, you can take in some of D.C.'s most iconic sights without waiting in line.



SONGDO, SOUTH KOREA

Stay at the 321-room **Sheraton Incheon Hotel** and experience a bit of history in the making. Songdo's first-ever hotel opened its doors in 2009, and provides a commanding view of the city of the future.



PARIS

Conveniently located about halfway between the National Picasso Museum and the Musée Galliera, the **Hôtel Duc de Saint Simon**—comprising 34 well-appointed rooms in an 18th-century townhouse—exudes Parisian charm.



SAN FRANCISCO

Back when the Presidio was an active military base, Pershing Hall housed unmarried officers. As the freshly minted **Inn at the Presidio**, it'll house anyone lucky enough to snag a reservation for one of its 22 highly coveted rooms.