

This Week: New York, Rio, Savannah, San Diego, Vail



Fodor's

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In Rio de Janeiro, an ultra-hip new hotel...

Crazy for Crêpes? Go

to Paris

Breizh Café. Eating a crêpe in Paris might seem a bit clichéd, but not at this Paris offshoot of a crêperie in Cancale, Brittany. The pale wood décor is refreshing, but what really makes the difference are the ingredients — unpasteurized Gruyère, shiitake mushrooms, Valrhona chocolate, homemade caramel, and extraordinary butter from Breton dairy farmer Jean-Yves Bordier. You'll find all the classics here, but it's worth choosing something more



adventurous, like the *cancaleaise* (traditionally smoked herring, potato, crème fraîche, and herring roe). You might also try a few Cancale oysters, a rarity in Paris. There are 20 artisanal ciders as well. 109 rue Vieille du Temple. Le Marais. 01-42-72-13-77. www.breizhcafe.com. Closed Mon., Tues. and 3 wks in Aug. MC, V. Median entrée price: €10 (approximately \$15.32 USD).

In NYC, Don't Miss Mia Dona

Mia Dona. When Dona abruptly closed last year, leaving legions of fans disappointed, restaurateur Donatella Arpaia and chef Michael Psilakis vowed a comeback. This warm Italian joint with a distinctive menu proves they've returned in full force. The long and narrow space has three dining rooms: one with a zebra theme, another with a library theme, and a third with banquettes and exposed brick. The menu includes all the dishes one would expect in a typical Italian restaurant, but they're presented in Psilakis' unique style. Instead of standard buffalo mozzarella, for example, he serves up a Burrata, a version of the cheese so soft it melts in your mouth like ice cream. Meat lovers shouldn't miss the crispy rabbit with salt and vinegar chips or the Florentine meat loaf, and pasta fans will coo over comforting options like bucatini carbonara with smoked chicken legs and radicchio. The wine list is heavy on Italian varietals, but there are French and American vintages as well. 206 East 58th St., between 2nd and 3rd Aves. Midtown East. 212/750-8170. www.miadona.com. AE, D, DC, MC, V. Median entrée price: \$20.

Vail's Luxury Lodge

The Arrabelle at Vail Square, A Rock Resort. Arrabelle, which opened its doors in January 2008, is the latest and

most elegant addition to Vail's collection of ski-in, ski-out luxury lodges. It's located in Vail Square, surrounded by shops, restaurants, and galleries, and is just steps away from the Eagle Bahn Gondola (which runs right to the top of Vail Mountain). The décor of the 36-room hotel looks like a sophisticated, warm, and cozy chalet — much more “European Alps” than “western USA.” Rooms at the hotel are spacious (averaging 500 square feet) and romantic, featuring fireplaces and a lavish floor-to-ceiling drapery canopy over the bed. French brasserie Centre V serves delicious steak frites, duck confit, and incredible cheese plates, while the Great Room is a fabulous, relaxing space for après-ski. Besides the rooftop pool and two hot tubs, the Arrabelle has a 10,000-square-foot wellness center with 11 treatment rooms, whirlpools, steam rooms, saunas, and a state-of-the-art fitness center. Pros: ski and boot butler service and storage; new room amenities (high threadcount linens, DirecTV); great location; and fabulous onsite spa and restaurant. Cons: because of its location in the center of pedestrian-friendly Vail Square, the valet entrance can be a challenge for visitors to find by car. 675 Lionshead Place. Vail. 970/754-7777 or 866-662/7625 (ph.). 970/754-7755 (fax). www.arrabelle.rockresorts.com. 36 rooms. In-room: safe, refrigerator, DVD, Wi-Fi, kitchen (some). In-hotel facilities: 1 restaurant, room service, bar, gym, spa, laundry service, public Wi-Fi, parking (fee), pool. AE, MC, V, D. Rooms start at \$850.

Rio's Ultra-Hip Hotel

Hotel Fasano. Designed by Philippe Starck and inspired by bossa nova's heyday in the 1960s, Hotel Fasano cleverly marries glass and marble with period tropical-wood furnishings. There's nothing like it in Rio. Rooms are sleek and boast everything from Wi-Fi to Egyptian cotton. The Brazilian-Italian seafood restaurant is one of Rio's best, while the cozy-chic bar is Rio's top place to be seen. The guests-only rooftop pool, however, is Fasano's pièce-de-résistance. Pros: terrific ocean views; located near the action; award-winning design. Cons: service not always up to the prices; views from street-facing rooms are uninspired. Avenida Vieira Souto 80. Ipanema. Rio de Janeiro. 021/3202-4000(ph.). 021/3202-4010 (fax). www.fasano.com.br. 81 rooms. In-room: safe, refrigerator, DVD, Ethernet Wi-Fi. In-hotel: 1 restaurant, room service, 2 bars, pool, gym, spa, beachfront, laundry service, concierge, public Internet, public Wi-Fi, airport shuttle, parking (fee), no-smoking rooms. AE, DC, MC, V. Rooms start at \$550.

In Savannah, a Sheraton Option

Four Points by Sheraton. Soothing monochromatic rooms feature spacious desks, Wi-Fi, and microwaves, attracting travelers on extended business trips and those looking for a hip getaway. Guest laundry, free bottled water, and hypo-allergenic pillows make everyone feel more at home. A lively lobby and a bar area make the Four Points a fun place to hang out as well as crash. The location, on the edge of Downtown Savannah near the Central Market, is convenient to many top attractions. Rooms with odd numbers are larger. Attentive staff members address questions and requests quickly. Pros: outdoor pool on a large second floor terrace; empty in-room refrigerators. Cons: pungent odors from the nearby paper mill; sometimes sloppy housekeeping. 520 West Bryan Street. Historic District. Savannah. 912/790-1000. 127 rooms. In-room: safe, refrigerator, Ethernet, Wi-Fi. In-hotel: 1 restaurant, room service, 1 bar, pool, gym. laundry facilities, laundry service, concierge, public Wi-Fi, parking (fee), no-smoking rooms. AE, V, MC, DC, D. Rooms start at \$170.

A Grand Stay in San Diego

The Grand Del Mar. Mind-blowing indulgence in serene surroundings sets the Grand Del Mar apart from any other luxury hotel in the San Diego area. The opulent Mediterranean-style resort, set in a secluded canyon surrounded by 4,100-acre Los Penasquitos Canyon Preserve, is just 12 miles north of urban San Diego. The hotel is drop-dead beautiful, done up in marble, crystal, and gold. Large rooms feature brocaded corner love seats, fine

European linens, crystal lamps, and marbled bathrooms with separate soaking tubs and showers. Every window, deck, patio, balcony, and lawn affords a view of the surrounding mountains, where you can hike tree-lined trails and dip your toes in streams, fish-filled ponds, or waterfalls. Take advantage of the resort's four cabana-flanked pools and the Tom Fazio-designed golf course. Topping the resort's amenities is complimentary limousine service within the area. Pros: ultimate luxury; secluded; onsite golf course. Cons: pricey; service can be slow; hotel is not on the beach. 5300 Grand Del Mar Ct. Del Mar. 858/314-2000 or 888/314-

2030. www.thegranddelmar.com. 218 rooms, 31 suites. In-room: safe, refrigerator, DVD, Ethernet, dial-up, Wi-Fi. In-hotel: 6 restaurants, room service, bars, golf course, tennis courts, pools, gym, spa, bicycles, children's programs (ages 5-12), laundry service, concierge, public Internet, public Wi-Fi, valet parking (fee), some pets allowed (fee), no- smoking rooms. AE, D, DC, MC, Rooms start at \$430.

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