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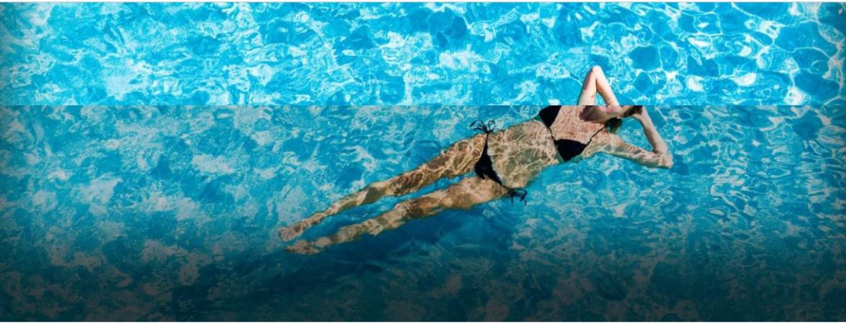

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Our guide to the world's best pools

By
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holiday hotel pools travel

Ever wondered where the best pools are hiding for the hottest Instagram posts? We've dug out the ones that are 100% worth a visit, even if they do seem too good to be true

Africa

If being amongst nature is your thing, pack your bags and binoculars to head to Beyond Phinda Homestead, which is situated north of a reserve. The villa is surrounded by a safari wonderland, with the local nellys as your closest neighbours. Realise your inner safari girl by using the 4×4 included with the lodge, this exclusive and elegant lodge boasts four spacious suites that feature sliding panel windows with sweeping views of the surrounding backdrop.

Have a Lion King moment at Kenya's Sasaab Lodge, where every luxury villa comes with a private pool that overlooks the Buffalo Springs National Reserves. If you swim out to the edge, you'll see stunning views over Laikipia Plateau and its incredible circle of life: think zebras, giraffes, ostriches and antelopes. Keep an eye on the nearby river as well, you *may* just spot a herd of elephants cooling off in the African heat.

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Head further south to Zimbabwe and to Malilangwe Wildlife Reserve, where you'll find paradise hidden amongst the ancient baobab trees in the form of Singita Pamushana. This remote hotel blends tradition with chic modern sensibilities, bringing a touch of Shangaan culture to their design aesthetic. Whether you're gliding through the waters of your own private plunge pool or the main infinity pool, you'll be able to catch a glance of the hippos splashing about in Malilangwe Dam down below.

Bali

Alila Villas Uluwatu is located along the southernmost coast of Bali, close to the Uluwatu Temple on a cliff top overlooking the Indian Ocean. Come night time, the sky turns into a pastel pink dream, with a view of the ocean that seems to go on forever. Bored of the usual 4 brick walls? The contemporary design and ecofriendly architectural framework is inspired by Bali's cultural richness and will leave you wanting to redecorate immediately. With special morning yoga sessions, a 164ft cliff-hanging infinity pool and treatments in the Alila Spa the stresses of everyday life become a distant memory, much like the horizon of the pool view.

Our guide to the world's best pools

The salary for Facebook

Cyprus

Cyprus is fast becoming a popular holiday destination for sun seekers and the massive infinity pool at Almyra is perfect for catching some rays. The main outdoor pool needs to be seen to be believed, with palm trees and an open fireplace for colder evenings surrounding it, all accompanied by the breeze of the Mediterranean Sea.

France

See the French Riviera as you've never seen it before from Hotel du Cap-Eden-Roc's stunning infinity pool, an ideal vantage point over the Mediterranean Sea in Côte d'Azur. With a cocktail bar and even a swimming teacher on hand, it'll be easy to spend hours here watching the sun glide behind the horizon.

India

It doesn't get more regal than The Oberoi Udaivilas, where its gigantic main pool stretches out across the length of the hotel with a view of glittering Lake Pichola and the palace in the background. We're in love with the little cultural design touches such as the elephant fountains and the pool really comes alive towards the end of the day, when the torches are finally lit. If you're staying in one of their swanky suites, you'll even get your own private or semi-private pool for a much more exclusive experience.

How about heading to greater heights at Wildflower Hall? This beautiful retreat in Shimla, tucked away in the Himalayas, is one of the highest flying pools at a whopping 8000 feet up with an unbeatable view of the natural landscape. Their open-air whirlpool is the real belle of the ball with sights over the cedar wood forests below and if it's a little chilly out, you can always slip into their indoor option where sparkling chandeliers cast opulence over the scene.

Italy

This bold infinity pool is built into the side of one of the Amalfi Coast's many cliffs, providing an unrivalled view of the sapphire waters of the Gulf of Salerno stretching out into the distance. As part of the Monastero Santa Rosa Hotel and Spa, the family-run romantic getaway is steeped in history owing to the fact that it once was a 17th century monastery. Ringed by cobblestones and terraced gardens, the pool is the perfect place to relax for a cheeky sundowner.

TECHNOGYM

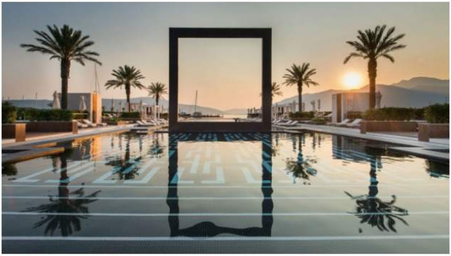
Miami

Miami's known for its sun, sand and laid back beach lifestyle and it's something that carries onto Faena Hotel Miami Beach, a boutique hotel with a gigantic pool just a stone's throw from the beach. The hotel, which has a distinctly artistic feel with rooms co-designed by director Baz Luhrmann, is ultra chic with unexpected design touches – for example, a gigantic mammoth created by Damien Hirst overlooks the pool with its charming striped red umbrellas.

Montenegro

Set against one of the most dramatic backdrops in Europe, Regent Porto

Montenegro sits at the heart of the glitteringly glamorous Porto Montenegro super yacht marina. With its gourmet restaurants and bars and breath-taking backdrop, it's hard to feel bad about clogging up your friends newsfeed with envious holiday snaps. Sorry not sorry.



Maldives

With the news being full up of politics and other goings on in the world, there's no better way than to rest your mind than at The Residence Maldives. Surrounded by endless oceans on the Falhumaafushi Island, it only has space for 94 guests in private villas with three restaurants, which means having a break from the rat race and no long table waits. Lovely. If that's not enough, the Spa by Clarins means The Residence is the ultimate getaway.

Portugal

It's not every day you get to swim in a UNESCO World Heritage Site and the Six Senses Douro Valley offers you exactly that opportunity. Located in the beautifully protected Douro Valley region, Six Senses makes the most of its natural surroundings with a sleek outdoor pool surrounded by the resort's private forest.

Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka is fast becoming one of Asia's hottest travel destinations and the boutique hotel Kahanda Kanda alone is worth the visit. The lakeside getaway is a dreamy sanctuary with private pavillions lined by lily ponds and sundown terraces, however the real star of the show is the new Hibiscus suite and its breathtaking infinity pool. With postcard perfect views over an emerald tea estate and the glittering waters of Koggala Lake, you'll never want to get out of the water.

Thailand

Baba Nest, the world's most stylish and exclusive rooftop bar, is framed by surrounding islands, Andaman Sea and Phuket's South-eastern peninsula. It's not a view your eyes could get tired from and that's a good thing, as the contemporary villas and suites all have panoramic views over the Andaman Sea, many with wrap around private pools. This is a place perfect for escaping busy life and switching off your phone and making the most of an incredibly chic oasis of calm. Four restaurants, the pool club, the spa and the stylish rooftop bar makes Sri Panwa a must-visit destination on the beautiful island of Phuket. You'll consider cancelling that flight home.

Cocktails, food and mesmerizing views, what more could you ask for? The Samui Baan Taling Ngam Resort in Thailand sits on a cliff top framed by tropical gardens and misty mountains, you'll need to pack your favourite sunnies with views like that. Treat yourself to a cocktail in the open-air bar to really make the most of those views and explore different flavours of Thai, Asian and European dishes with the choice of two restaurants. The resort even leads to a private white sandy beach (it doesn't get much better than that, right?)

There's no way at least one Phuket pool wasn't going to make the list and the turquoise pool at Six Senses Yao Noi is it. Located just 40 minutes from the main Phuket drag, the resort is located on a beautiful tranquil island named Yao Noi and features over fifty villas – all of which come with a private pool. Make sure to book a Panorama Pool Villa for a view over the waters of Phang Nga Bay and spend some time in the main infinity pool.

Turkey

The jaw-dropping view from D Maris Bay's not one, not two, but *three* swimming pools is a beautiful one with cerulean waters and islands peppering the horizon. Hidden away in the southern Turkey by the Datça Peninsula, the contemporary hotel is the perfect retreat with a beautiful organic spa you'll want to live in. Grab a sun lounger and dive in – plus if the weather's not too great, you can always jump into the indoor pool.

Absolute holiday goals. Here's to using up every last bit of annual leave and coming home a bronze goddess.

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