Preserved ... (clockwise from left) the Hotel San Souci, Vienna, has four-posters; the 1872 building; the lavish interior renovation.

Old and new meet under the chandeliers

AH, VIENNA. Next to the Museum Quarter, a stone's throw from the Museum of Fine Arts, across the street from an underground station and at the entrance to hip suburb, the 7th district, lies the newly minted Hotel Sans Souci.

A project of the You Studio, founded by Philippe Starck and developer John Hitchcox, Egg Chairs by Arne Jacobsen sit with antiques in the 63 suites and rooms. Original artworks by Roy Lichtenstein are in the three master suites that have marble bathroom floors and free-standing circular baths.

Rooms have four-poster beds along with balconies, two with wheelchair access. Located in a building erected in 1872, the original brickwork has been preserved during the two-year renovation.

Outside visitors are welcome at the three saunas, steam bath, women's spa and lap pool, where you can simultaneously backstroke and gaze at the crystal chandeliers overhead.

Rooms cost from €209 ($270) a night twin share, including breakfast.

See sanssouci-wien.com.

Mountain escape

THE Swiss alpine village Gstaad, noted for the skiing jet-set, has a new star in The Alpina, the first luxury hotel to open in the area in 100 years.

In the heart of the Bernese Alps and a seven-minute walk to the traffic-free village centre, the subterranean entry to the lodge passes carved stone and a waterfall.

A fire burns in the stone hearth made of boulders from local rivers; century-old fir from farmhouses lines the walls of public spaces; and the gabled roof is slate.

Now open ... (from top) The Alpina, Gstaad; Holiday Inn Express, Phuket; Cicada Lodge.

There are 56 rooms and suites, all with balconies to take in the fresh mountain air or conversely, head to the cigar room for a Montecristo.

Quartz from alpine crevasses has been fashioned as lamp bases, glass pendant lights resemble Swiss cowbells, and throws are made of goat hair.

Rooms cost from CHF650 ($680) a room a night twin share, including breakfast.

See thealpina@gstaad.ch.

Holiday saver

FOR the budget-savvy with an eye on Phuket, the first Holiday Inn Express has opened at Patong Beach Central on the Thai island.

The hotel is within walking distance to shopping and dining, and Phuket airport is a 45-minute drive. All 277 rooms have private balconies and 200-thread-count sheets on beds, docking stations and work space.

Rooms cost from THB2338 ($76) a night twin share, including breakfast and wi-fi.

See holidayinnexpress.com.

Comfort in the wild

SEARCHING for luxury in the wilds? There's double happiness in the Top End with the opening of Cicada Lodge within the Nitmiluk (Katherine) Gorge.

A typical day might involve a helicopter flight to anywhere along the gorge system to cool off in waterfalls and view remote rock art sites interpreted by an Indigenous guide, then back to the lodge for sunset canapes by the pool.

There are 18 rooms with views, complimentary bar, wi-fi and valet parking. The lodge is owned by the Jawoyn people, Aboriginals Benefit Account and Indigenous Business Australia.

From $645 a night twin share, including breakfast, sunset drinks and canapes.

See cicadalodge.com.

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