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The Hotel Report: Private Meditation in the Mekong, Wine Tasting in San Francisco

Written by Juliana Shallcross · September 15, 2015



Courtesy Ritz-Carlton

Now on deck at the Ritz Carlton San Francisco: wine tastings.

Your weekly roundup of the best of what's new, what's coming up, and what we can't wait for in the world of hotels.

SEEKING SERENITY

For those seeking a meaningful escape, the [Belmond La Résidence Phou Vao](#) in Luang Prabang, Laos is offering guests a “Meditation on the Mekong” experience. The one-of-a-kind tour ferries guests on the hotel’s private boat to small temples along the Mekong River for meditation moments guided by Ajanh Souk, a former Buddhist monk. Stops include the Pak Ou Caves, a holy site filled with thousands of Buddha statues, and the Muang Kham Monastery.

NOW OPEN

Famed winemaker Jean-Charles Boisset is now hosting wine-tasting inside the [Ritz-Carlton, San Francisco](#). Situated in the hotel lobby, the JCB Tasting Lounge offers tasting flights of limited wines from the Boisset Collection paired with food options from the hotel’s Parallel 37 restaurant. Flights range from \$50 to \$100 per person and are open to the public. JCB Tasting Lounge will also serve as a sort of Wine Concierge for guests, presenting trips they can take to the Boisset Collection of wineries in Napa Valley. A retail shop has also opened and features JCB-branded wine accessories along with select trinkets from Baccarat, Christofle, and Goyard.

As part of the sand sculpture festivals happening in the towns of Sneek and Oss in the Netherlands, two fully-furnished pop-up sand castle hotels have opened up. Each hotel consists of a one-bedroom suite, which is equipped with a king-sized bed, bathroom, windows, electricity, running water and Wi-Fi. [CNN](#) reports an overnight stay costs \$168 a night and includes a tour of the sand festival. (Unfortunately the sand hotels are already booked through the end of the festivals, which conclude on September 28 in Sneek and October 4 in Oss.)

OPENING SOON

This week, [The Quirk Hotel](#), a Destination Hotel, will open its doors in Richmond, Virginia in the city's Broad Street Historic Commercial District. Named for the nearby Quirk Gallery and set in a landmarked Italian Renaissance-style building (which once housed the J.B. Mosby & Co. department store), The Quirk will have 74 guest rooms and suites, an artisan restaurant, bar, and a rooftop terrace. Curated artwork and distinctive design will be found throughout, making The Quirk the first design-driven and art-centric hotel in Richmond.

[Hilton Hotels](#) will open a new hotel at Amsterdam Schiphol airport on December 1. The 433-room hotel will be connected to the international terminal via a covered walkway. A soaring atrium will rise in the lobby with a restaurant, two bars, spa, and an executive lounge. It is believed guests may be able to use their [smartphones as room keys](#). This new hotel will replace the current Hilton hotel that's been in business at Schiphol since 1972.

ON OUR RADAR

The Foundry Collective, the developer behind the boutique resort Ka'ana in Belize, is working on a new eco-luxury resort called [Itz'ana](#) in the beach town of Placencia. The resort is meant to be an "ode to the great Caribbean estates of years past" with a Hemingway-inspired library, a private Rum Room, an open rooftop deck, and a Great House for gatherings. Aside from resort rooms, 39 waterfront residences will also be available to own. Itz'ana is expected to open in late 2016.