

TRUTH IN TRAVEL

CONDÉ NAST

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Traveler

Get Down

(UNDER)

DESTINATION
2016

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AUSTRALIA

SEATTLE

Local Hero

At last, a great place to stay that suits this rugged city: a refurbished 107-year-old classic.

Below: The Sorrento's mahogany-paneled Fireside Room.
Right: An ocean bungalow at Travaasa Hana.

Where to sleep in Seattle? The **Sorrento Hotel**—at a safe remove from the tourist bustle of Pike Place but with killer views of Puget Sound—might finally settle this dilemma. Its mahogany walls, wool velvet couches, and roaring fire call to mind a century-old Northwestern clubhouse, offering what so many other hotels here don't: Seattleness. We're not exactly the first to notice—the place has emanated clannish cool since its first guest, then-president William Howard Taft, squeezed through the doors in 1909; local gal Alice B. Toklas frequented the bar. But the hotel's recent \$1 million face-lift brought back just the right amount of nostalgic luster: recovered white oak floorboards, framed old Thanksgiving menus, and vintage bar stools gussied up with rose velvet saddles in the storied Dunbar Room. There's no proof that Toklas and Gertrude Stein sipped their whiskeys from these very perches when passing through from Paris, but barkeep Scott Hadley's new spirits-heavy cocktail list makes them the hottest seat in town. —ERIN FLORIO



IF YOU'RE THINKING ABOUT THE CARIBBEAN...

On Mexico's **Riviera Maya**, a mid-century-inflected Thompson hotel is now the grown-up go-to in downtown Playa del Carmen, and its waterfront Beach House (with 27 suites) is on its way too. • Zemi Beach House opens soon as the first resort in **Anguilla's** remote East End, known for secluded villas and powder beaches. Here, float between whitewashed villas and a spa in a reconstructed Thai home. • This spring, Eleven Experience comes to **Harbour Island** with the Bahama House Inn, whose two cottages share outdoor space and a saltwater pool. Even clubbier? A private atoll hideaway, reserved for guests, is under way. • Colombian fashion designer Silvia Tcherassi unveils a big-sister property and spa around the corner from her tiny, eponymous **Cartagena** hotel; fellow Colombian Richard Mishaan designed the book-lined lobby and airy restaurant, as well as its 42 clean-lined rooms and rooftop pool. —ANDREW SESSA



HAWAII

Super Natural

Travaasa Hana, on Maui's remote eastern shore, has just undergone a \$12 million renovation, but the good news is that I could barely tell. Beloved for its splendid isolation and beauty, the former Hotel Hana-Maui has been in operation since 1946, long before the famously treacherous road to Hana was paved; habitués worried that under new ownership the property might lose its subtle and off-the-cuff elegance. Happily, the ocean bungalows are still free of clocks and televisions—and with the addition of handsome wooden ceiling fans, the same castaway feeling remains. It was tempting to just stay on my lanai and look out over the Pacific, which, against the black lava rock, glows a mesmerizing cobalt blue I've seen only here. But doing so would have meant missing the serene saltwater pool, the hammocks strung between skinny palms—and, above all, the people who make the place run, and who treated me not with the generic deference of touch-screen hotels elsewhere but with sincere and casual warmth. Nearly all of them live locally, and the resort is set on 70 acres in the middle of town, so to be a guest here is to be immersed in its life. One morning as I crossed a quiet street, I saw the spire of Wananalua Church. I walked up the road and stood outside, listening to the congregation sing psalms in Hawaiian, and I felt, for a little while, part of this place. —ALEXANDER MAKSIK

FROM TOP: PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY TRAVAASA EXPERIENTIAL RESORTS; ANDREW GUAMARCO/COURTESY SORRENTO HOTEL