

Secret places to stay for under £150



Ireland

Bellinter House **COUNTY MEATH**

Since the Celtic Tiger dropped out of sight a lot of Ireland's finest hotels have had to adjust their rates to suit more modest budgets. But few can match the effortlessly stylish 34-bedroom Bellinter House for value. Opened in 2006 just 30 minutes' drive from Dublin, this restored Palladian mansion continues to enchant with its stripped-back Georgian bones and wonderfully quirky, handmade and antique furniture. Wow factors include massive fireplaces (given to a previous owner by the 18th-century satirist Jonathan Swift) and exceptionally grand staircases. But it feels warm and relaxed, not least in Eden, the cellar restaurant, where locally caught fish, such as salmon from the nearby River Boyne, is among the highlights. The plush quota includes goose-down pillows, Egyptian-cotton sheets and Villeroy & Boch baths. There's an infinity pool, sauna and steam room in the spa (and a hot tub outside), where you can be wrapped from head to toe in hand-harvested Irish seaweed. Or take the country-living route, hunting, fishing and golfing in the land the Irish High Kings once called home.

00 353 46 903 0900; www.bellinterhouse.com. Doubles from about £120

Cambodia

The Pavilion **PHNOM PENH**

It is said that Queen Kossamak built this Khmer-French colonial villa in the mid-1920s so she could stay close to Wat Botum, the Royal Pagoda, where she liked to pray. Today, it is a sanctuary from the heat and sensory assault of the city. Interiors are breezy, with colonnaded open spaces, tiled floors, and local textiles and artworks. There's indulgence in spades – airport pick-ups in a vintage car; complimentary massages – but responsible tourism comes first. Many of the staff are graduates of an NGO-run training programme. The main restaurant, Tepui, is in a restored Chinese house 10 minutes' away by tuk-tuk and serves great dishes such as tuna tartare with wasabi emulsion. Closer to home, the poolside bar serves Western and Khmer food all day, and the charms of the aqua-blue pool are impossible to resist.

00 855 2322 2280; www.thepavilion.asia. Doubles from about £40



Portugal

Fazenda Nova **ALGARVE**

This chic, pared-down boutique hotel has brought a dash of sophistication to the rural eastern Algarve. Set amid carob, almond, olive and pomegranate trees, the 19th-century country house has been beautifully renovated by British owners Hallie and Tim Robinson using driftwood, polished cement and varnished eucalyptus wood. There are three big bedrooms in the main house; all have simple Balinese furniture and duck-egg-blue bathrooms with rain showers and REN goodies. At the heart of the house is a cosy bar with an excellent selection of Portuguese wines and a restaurant where the menu reflects the season and the fruits of the garden; fresh seafood is put to good use in regional specialities such as *cataplana*. Dotted around the gardens are a further seven suites and a penthouse, each with private outside space. Bordered by lavender and rosemary, the swimming pool is a wonderful spot to survey all that surrounds you, which is quite simply bucolic tranquillity as far as the eye can see.

00 351 281 961913; www.fazendanova.eu. Doubles from about £135

