



# In the Spotlight

France

Tablet Plus members receive VIP upgrades and amenities at a collection of the world's most exciting hotels. *In the Spotlight* is a regular series dedicated to celebrating these extraordinary spaces – like the hotels below, which represent just a handful of our Plus hotels in France.

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## Hôtel Juana

Cannes, France

Though it's passed through varying degrees of cool, from golden age to slightly passé and back again and again, it's by now clear that the French Riviera is just one of those timeless destinations. The perennial warm-weather migration back to this stretch of the Mediterranean is due in part to the smart recycling of a handful of grand old hotels to reflect the tastes of contemporary sun-worshippers. The Hotel Juana, located in the resort of Juan-les-Pins near Cap d'Antibes, is a product of that particular revolution, infusing traditional luxury and historic architecture with a fashionable modern sensibility and an understated air that's well-suited to its seaside location.

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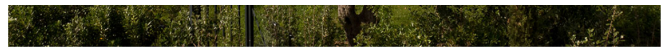


## Five Seas Hotel Cannes

Cannes, France

For all the Riviera's fame as a holiday destination, the boutique hotel revolution was a long time coming. Maybe it's because the archetypal Cannes experience has always been about old-fashioned white-marble luxury. These days, however, the big old palaces are no longer the only game in town – smaller, more design-conscious hotels like the Five Seas Hotel Cannes are meeting the luxury hotels on their own terms.

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## Le Domaine du Mas de Pierre

Saint Paul de Vence, France

These days, with the Riviera as crowded as it is and Provence practically a borough of the city of London, the greatest luxury to be had in the south of France is a little privacy. The most sought-after experience is that of being a guest in a private home – which goes a long way to explaining the appeal of a place like Le Mas de Pierre.

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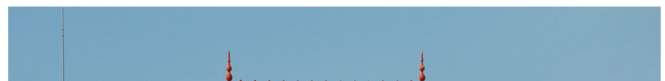


## Castelbrac Dinard

Dinard, France

Located on Brittany's Côte d'Émeraude, the seaside town of Dinard is sometimes referred to as the "Cannes of the north." It's a nickname that tells you practically everything you need to know about the place: it's elegant, historic, exclusive, famous for its glamorous old architecture and white sandy beaches, a longtime getaway for the French and English elite. Naturally, there are a handful of classic hotels, grand dames on the beachfront promenade, to choose from. And then there's the newly opened Castelbrac Dinard.

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## L'Eautel Toulon Port

*Toulon, France*

If you know any French at all you can see L'Eautel Toulon Port's maritime theme coming from a thousand miles away, but as always, it's not the concept that matters so much as the execution – and here the nautical color scheme and the graphic wave motif are applied with a light touch, lending an air of whimsical fun to this 62-room boutique hotel in Toulon, on the Mediterranean coast between Marseille and St. Tropez. This is a working port city, not an idle beach town; L'Eautel is set on the edge of the old town center, right across from the maritime museum and the Arsenal Toulon naval base.

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## Château de Fonscolombe

*Aix-en-Provence, France*

There are castles, and then there are castles. This one dates back to the 1700s, which explains its unusual Italianate style, and only became a hotel in 2017, after three centuries as a private estate. Its setting, just to the north of Aix-en-Provence, endears it to wine lovers, as does the Fonscolombe winery itself, which produces organic reds, whites, and rosés. But the key to its appeal is that it's quite simply the most luxurious hotel for many miles around.

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## Hôtel Sainte Victoire

*Aix-en-Provence, France*

Fine art enthusiasts may be familiar with Mont Sainte-Victoire, a series



## Le Pignonnet

*Aix-en-Provence, France*

French landscapes have inspired countless artists. Van Gogh liked the

of oil paintings by Post-Impressionist master Paul Cézanne. The series depicts one of the most iconic mountain ranges in southern France, and while the paintings are obviously breathtakingly beautiful, it's a whole other story seeing the mountains in person – which brings us to Hotel Saint-Victoire and its front-row views.

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## Château d'Audrieu

*Audrieu, France*

You couldn't ask for a more picture-perfect example of a French castle hotel than Normandy's Château d'Audrieu, an 18th-century monument set on a 60-acre estate between Caen and Bayeux. The rooms and suites combine throwback opulence with modern comforts, and the Sothys spa is accompanied by a lovely outdoor pool. Chef Olivier Barbarin is in his second decade of service at the restaurant, Le Séran, whose cellars contain some 200 wines. Meanwhile the 1715 Bar, named for the year of the Château's construction, is open all day for light bites, petits fours, and anything from whiskey to Champagne.

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light of Arles, while Monet's backyard garden in Giverny was the subject of his famous Water Lilies. Paul Cézanne lived and worked in Aix-en-Provence: back when Hotel Le Pignonnet was a private estate, he used to carry his easel through the gardens, taking his own painterly snapshots of the old chestnut trees and the views of Sainte-Victoire mountain in the distance.

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## Hôtel & Restaurant LALIQUE – Château Lafaurie Peyraguey

*Bommes, France*

You don't have to know the whole backstory to have a guess at what kind of place Hôtel & Restaurant Lalique – Château Lafaurie Peyraguey is going to be. But this collaboration between Lalique, the venerable glassmaker, and Lafaurie-Peyraguey, the Sauternes winery that's now owned by the Lalique Group's chairman, is a unique one. With just thirteen suites, it's modestly sized, but in terms of luxury, its ambitions are sky-high.

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## Château de Courcelles

*Courcelles-sur-Vesle, France*

At the foot of the Alpilles, Provence's pocket-sized mountain range, and just outside of the village of Eygalières, is where you'll find one of the most tranquil boutique hotels in all of France. Domaine la Pierre Blanche may not reinvent Provençal hospitality, but who says it needs reinvention? Sometimes excellence is about taste and execution, the contrast of rough-hewn stone walls and weathered wooden doors with well-chosen modern furnishings and light, breezy contemporary décor.

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## Domaine la Pierre Blanche

*Eygalières, France*

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## Baumanière Les Baux de Provence

*Les Baux de Provence, France*

Les Baux de Provence is perhaps one of the most spectacular and unsettling of nature's creations. These whitewashed cliffs, dotted with medieval houses, will stun you with their proportion and their sublime beauty. And should it all prove to be a bit overwhelming, it's always nice to know that you can retreat to the Baumanière, perennial retreat of royals, statesmen and other leading lights since the day it opened for business in 1945.



## Boscolo Lyon Hotel & Spa

*Lyon, France*

You know we're fans of small-scale boutique hospitality, but we're not closed-minded about it – there's a time and a place for a proper, full-scale luxury hotel. One of those places happens to be Lyon, specifically the Presqu'île, the narrow peninsula between the the Rhône and the Saône rivers, in the heart of one of France's biggest cities. Here you'll find the luxury hotel you're looking for, with just a hint of a surprise: for within this heritage building, which is classically, unmistakably French, Boscolo Lyon's interiors come with a subtle Italian accent

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## Domaine des Etangs

*Massignac, France*

To the extent that there is such a thing as the “typical” castle hotel (arguable, but bear with us), Domaine des Étangs is a departure. The storybook stone château, flanked by fortified towers, is present and accounted for. But rather than shoehorn a dozen modern hotel rooms into a medieval floor plan, inevitably leaving some unlucky guests with circular rooms, or staring out at the countryside through a three-inch-wide arrow-slit, here they’ve done something slightly more clever.

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## Chateau de la Resle

*Montigny la Resle, France*

Even if Château de la Resle were simply another elegant French hotel in the Burgundy wine country, the world would be a richer place – there’s no such thing as too many. But Château de la Resle is something far more special. On the outside it’s as classic as can be, its white-shuttered façade laced with climbing vines and standing above a perfectly tended garden, but inside it’s a genuine contemporary art and design showcase, curated by a pair of collectors with a burgeoning high-end home furnishings business. The result is a French château hotel like no other, where the romantic atmosphere of a 19th-century country manor combines with the plush comforts and visual style of a high-end modern design hotel.

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## Château Cordeillan-Bages

*Pauillac, France*

There are larger and more spectacular castles in France, but Château Cordeillan-Bages makes the most of its relatively intimate size. It's set in the village of Bages, in the heart of Bordeaux's Haut-Médoc wine region, on the left bank of the Gironde estuary – just a half-hour down the river from the city of Bordeaux itself, on the same estate that produces Château Lynch-Bages' wines.

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## La Maison d'Estournel

*Saint-Estephe, France*

Why shouldn't every wine estate also be a luxury boutique hotel? They've got all the ingredients, and then some: gorgeous grounds, a mild climate, a habitual attention to wine and food, and, at least in the case of the Cos d'Estournel estate, a beautiful house that's practically begging to be shared with overnight guests. This, of course, is where La Maison d'Estournel comes in.

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## Aethos Corsica

*Corsica, France*

This rustic island isn't exactly known for fashionable hotels, but Aethos Corsica breaks the mold in every way. Based in a 17th-century converted nobleman's house, this chic property, now flying the flag of the Aethos "conscious exploration" brand, is a surprisingly sophisticated luxury boutique hotel – and one with an impressive art collection, featuring works by contemporary stars like Anish Kapoor, Daniel Arsham, and Paul de Pignol.

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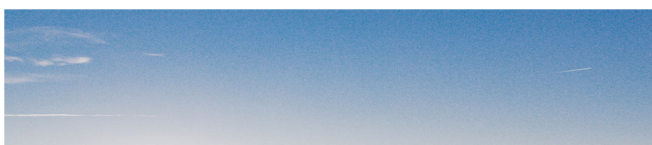


## Hotel Belles Rives

*Antibes, France*

An Art Deco mansion by the sea where champagne flows freely and a green light blinks at the tip of a wooden jetty – you'll only need one guess at the famous person who once lived here. In 1925, Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald decamped to a waterfront villa on the Côte d'Azur, and between up-all-night parties and swims in the ocean, he wrote his final novel, *Tender is the Night*. The villa was expanded and turned into a luxury hotel in 1929.

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## La Villa Douce

Rayol-Canadel-sur-Mer, France

Not far down the coast from St. Tropez, in the seaside villages of Rayol-Canadel-sur-Mer, is a hillside escape that promises a respite from the see-and-be-seen atmosphere of some of the French Riviera's busier locales. La Villa Douce promises a gentle life, and it delivers it, though with perhaps a dash more modern style than you might expect – its interiors are almost Nordic in their minimalism, decorated in blues and grays that mirror the Mediterranean seascapes outside.

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## SO/ Paris

Paris, France

Paris still features more than its share of antique-style grand hotels, so something like SO/ Paris is a welcome note of contrast. It's set right on the Right Bank of the Seine, between Bastille and the Marais, in a structure that was, before its redevelopment, a high-rise municipal building dating back to 1966 – and which, in its present guise, retains its imposing silhouette but adds architectural features that clearly mark it as a contemporary update of the Parisian luxury-hotel tradition.

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## Château de Montcaud

Sabran, France

Provençal farmhouse hotels are perhaps familiar enough, but Provençal chateau hotels are still something of a rarity, the supply of castles being naturally somewhat constrained. The Château de Montcaud dates back to 1848, but its most recent renovation was just



## Le Damantin

Paris, France

Paris already has so many extraordinary hotels that it's downright shocking when another one opens. Le Damantin Hotel & Spa occupies a stunning red-brick 19th-century Louis XIII-style mansion on a corner overlooking the Right Bank of the Seine, and its recent



completed in 2018, and the result is an impeccably styled, impressively outfitted luxury boutique hotel.

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## La Demeure Montaigne

Paris, France

It's not every day a new hotel opens in the top tier of the Parisian hospitality market, and when it does, it's big news. La Demeure Montaigne takes its name from its location, just off the Avenue Montaigne, and from its atmosphere – however opulent it may be, this Haussmannian mansion retains a distinct residential aspect that makes it all the more improbable that such a place should exist, especially on a side street so close to so many of the city's most desirable locations.

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conversion from a private house into a high-end boutique hotel is a substantial boon to the Parisian hospitality scene.

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