

Condé Nast Traveler

SPECIAL ISSUE
21 new hotels
for the 21st century

TRUTH IN TRAVEL

APRIL 1999 £2.80



The 1999
hot
hotel list



Plus
Laos, Rio, Dublin,
Caribbean, Dubrovnik,
Ionian Islands,
California, Bologna,
Buenos Aires





Anassa, Cyprus

With its whitewashed walls, clay-tile roofs and duck-egg blue shutters, the 184-room Anassa looks like a postcard-perfect Cypriot village. Set in the undeveloped Akamas National Park, there is nothing around for miles, which is why the owner, former Cypriot Foreign Minister Alecos Michaelides, commissioned an environmental study to look at minimising the impact of building in the area. The result is an utterly luxurious resort which blends well with its surroundings. Interiors are in neutral tones, with masses of marble and mosaic work. Anassa opened in July 1998, but construction continued into 1999 with the completion of an indoor pool, central square, and church bell tower. Landscaped gardens wind down to Asporkremos Beach, where loungers are laid out for guests who prefer their swimming salted (there are two freshwater outdoor pools). The cuisine is palatable, although it can be pricey – there are a number of inexpensive restaurants in the harbour village of Latsi, a short taxi ride away.

WHEN TO GO April–Nov, although Anassa is open all year.

WHICH ROOM TO BOOK The suites with terraces and private plunge pools (from C£370, about £456).

ANASSA PO Box 6, 8830 Polis, Cyprus (00 357 6 888 000; fax: 322 900). Doubles from C£79 (£97).

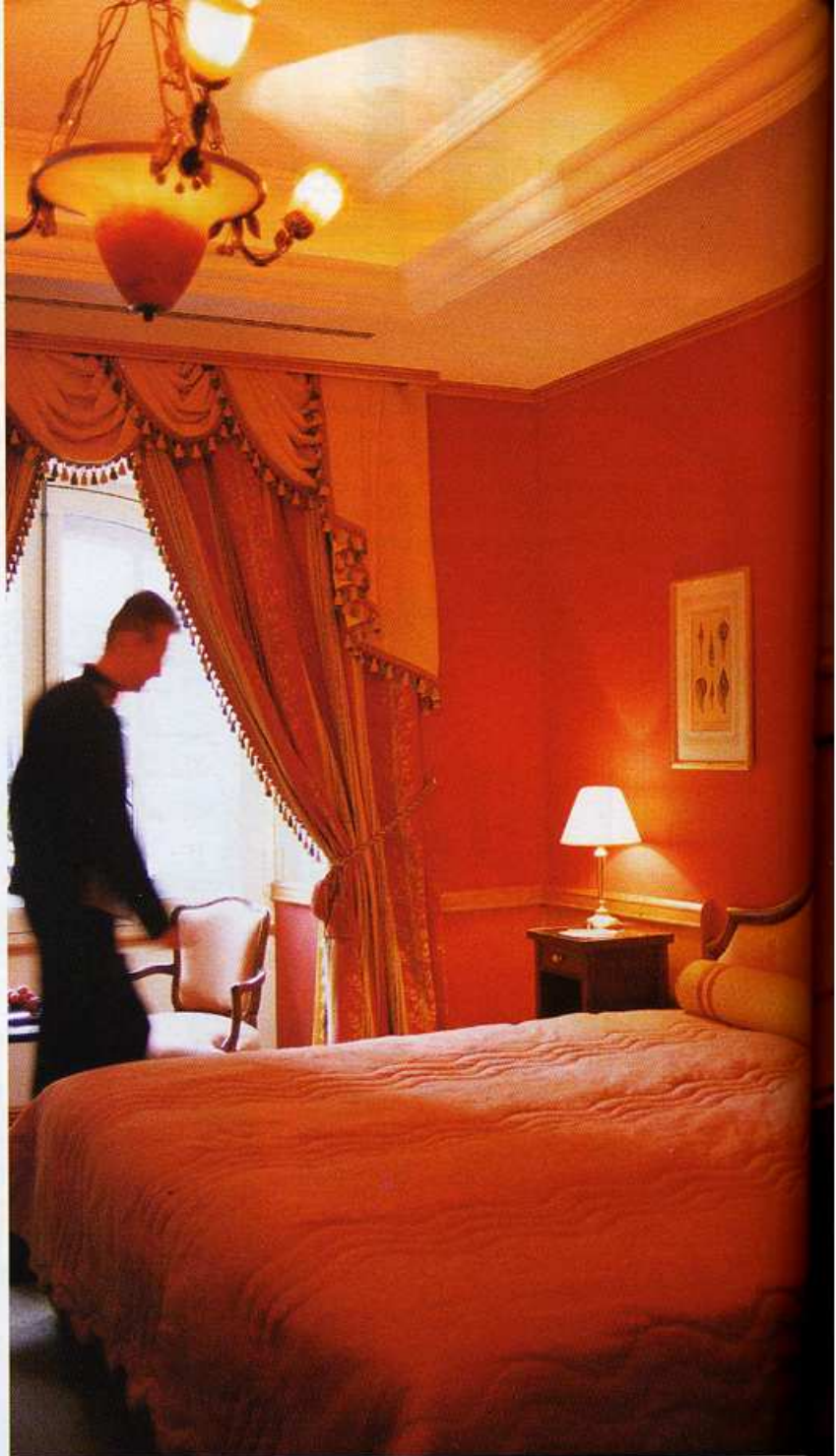
Gran Hotel Son Net, Mallorca

May 1998 saw the soft opening of this 21-room hotel. A 17th-century mansion, on a hill overlooking Puigpuñent, it is decorated in a luxurious, country-house style. There are oversized marble bathrooms and vaulted ceilings, original art on the walls and fine tissue paper in the drawers. A good alternative to Richard Branson's La Residencia, to stay here is to understand the value of cossetting. The predominantly French cuisine in the Sa Tafona restaurant is exceptional, although there were teething problems with service. But remember this is a retreat: although there is a gorgeous infinity pool, the nearest beaches for swimming are at Palma, a 20-minute drive away.

WHEN TO GO Off season (Nov–March, excluding Christmas).

WHICH ROOM TO BOOK You can't go wrong with the Royal Suite (110,000pts, £472).

GRAN HOTEL SON NET 07194 Puigpuñent, Mallorca (00 34 971 147 000; fax: 147 001). Doubles from about £139; suites from £408.



Hôtel de Vendôme, Paris

If you're after a prestigious address in Paris, look no further. The Hôtel de Vendôme opened in July 1998 after a massive overhaul by its new owners, which included shunting the entrance from 14 rue de Castiglione to the infinitely more desirable 1 Place Vendôme. Behind the classic 18th-century façade (it was built as a sort of mini-palace for Louis XIV's secretary and once served time as the Embassy for the Republic of Texas) lies an ornate fresco-fuelled fantasy which just falls short of, well, the Arabesque. Thirty individually decorated bedrooms run the gamut from campy Art Deco to Louis XV filigree, and the bathrooms are bright with brass and silver and lots of coloured marble. But there's something comforting about the plush hush that descends as soon as you enter, and in-room privacy is assured with video-phone entry and personalised voice mail (you can also draw the curtains, or switch on a 'Do Not Disturb' sign, from the bedside control panel). The hotel restaurant, Café Vendôme, on the corner of Place Vendôme and rue St-Honoré, attracts a fashionable lunchtime crowd and the refined brasserie menu has won it a good reputation. The hotel has made a very grand entrance; if you choose to stay here, you should be prepared to make one too.

WHEN TO GO Spring (but before the May public-holiday season).

WHICH ROOM TO BOOK Any overlooking the courtyard (3,200FF, £345).

HOTEL DE VENDOME 1 Place Vendôme, Paris 75001, France (00 33 1 55 04 55 00; fax: 49 27 97 89). Doubles 3,200FF (£345).