


American Airlines 

Celebrated Living

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THE PLATINUM LIST

THE WORLD'S BEST HOTELS,
RESORTS, RESTAURANTS AND
TRAVEL EXPERIENCES

THE PLATINUM LIST

2018 EXPERTS

Meet the 19 connoisseurs who nominated this year's world leaders in hotels, resorts, restaurants and bars, and travel experiences. Their choices were posted online, and *CL*'s readers selected the winners.



Prosper Assouline is known for merging the modern and the classical in publishing and creative design. Bringing luxury into the realm of print, he founded Assouline Publishing with his wife, Martine, in Paris in 1994, creating a world of exclusivity in books and brand identity.



The co-star of the Travel Channel series *Caribbean Pirate Treasure*, Ashlan Cousteau dives into maritime mysteries alongside her husband, Philippe Cousteau. For more than a decade, she appeared as a correspondent and anchor on E!



New York native Stacey Bendet founded Alice + Olivia in 2002. Since then, the company has grown into a full contemporary lifestyle brand, including ready-to-wear, gowns, shoes, handbags, accessories and eyewear, with 36 boutiques from Los Angeles to Bangkok.



The Emmy Award-winning television host of the Food Network's *Everyday Italian*, *Giada at Home* and *Giada Entertains*, Giada De Laurentiis is a judge on *Food Network Star* and a *Today* show correspondent. Her ninth cookbook, *Giada's Italy*, debuted in April.



A world-renowned floral and fragrance designer, Los Angeles-based Eric Buterbaugh has created arrangements for fashion and film celebrities, studios and hotels. His fragrance line, EB, is available at his Melrose boutique. He was the first American to design florals for Windsor Castle.



The founder of the award-winning management agency Glow Global Events, Cheryl Gentry has produced functions around the world for influencers and charities, including the foundations of Pierre Omidyar and Bill Ackman.

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A co-founder of Casamigos Tequila with George Clooney and Mike Meldman, **Rande Gerber** has been a leader in the nightlife industry for over 25 years. The country's fastest-growing premium tequila, Casamigos recently released a mezcal.



Barbara Hulanicki founded the legendary boutique Biba, which became one of the haunts of '60s London. She designed interiors for the Rolling Stones' Ron Wood and hotelier Chris Blackwell, and is the subject of the film *Beyond Biba*.



Born and raised in Mumbai, **Naeem Khan** launched his eponymous fashion brand in 2003, with clients including Beyoncé, Jennifer Lopez, and Kate, the Duchess of Cambridge. Based in New York, he is a member of the Council of Fashion Designers of America.



Host of the Cooking Channel's *Beach Bites* and co-host of the Food Network's Emmy-nominated *The Kitchen*, **Katie Lee** released *The Comfort Table* in 2008, followed by *Endless Summer Cookbook*. She is an ambassador for the animal-rights group 96 Elephants.



MAD Architects founder **Ma Yansong** is the first Chinese architect to design an overseas landmark building with the Lucas Museum of Narrative Art in L.A. He was called one of the Most Creative People in Business by *Fast Company*.



Designer **Eugenie Niarchos** is the founder of Venyx, described by *Vogue* as "a cult fine-jewelry label that has seen the fashion crowd flocking to snap up her brand of retro-futurism." A scion of the Niarchos shipping family, she launched her line after working at Christie's in New York.



The chairman of The Related Group, developer and collector **Jorge Pérez** was named one of *Time's* top 25 most influential Hispanics in the United States and has twice appeared on the cover of *Forbes*. He donated more than \$40 million to the Pérez Art Museum Miami.



The founder of both the South Beach and New York City Wine & Food Festivals, **Lee Brian Schragger** is the senior vice president of communications at Southern Glazer's Wine & Spirits. He serves on the board of trustees for Food Bank for New York City.



A co-founder of Frasca Food and Wine, James Beard Award-winning master sommelier **Bobby Stuckey** co-launched Scarpetta Wines in 2007. He is leading American Airlines' premium wine program for Admirals Club and Flagship lounges, Flagship First Dining and in-flight.



As American Airlines' senior vice president of global sales and distribution, **Alison Taylor** heads a team of 1,100 associates. She also leads the airline's distribution strategy, ensuring American offers value-added booking options that customers use to gain products and services.



Jeremiah Tower began his career in the '70s as co-owner of Berkeley's Chez Panisse. In 1996, he received a James Beard Award as Outstanding Chef in America. A patron of The Oxford Cultural Collective, he is the subject of the film *The Last Magnificent*.



A three-time NBA champion and Olympic Gold medalist, **Dwyane Wade** has played for the Miami Heat, Chicago Bulls and Cleveland Cavaliers. He is a style leader, founder of the fashion charity A Night on the RunWade, and best-selling author of the book *A Father First*.



A contributing writer for *The New York Times Magazine*, *GQ* and *Elle*, style expert **Molly Young** served as the creative leader for the eyewear company Warby Parker. Her illustrated book about New York City, *D C-T!* (with Joana Avillez), was released in May.



THE
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RESORTS

PHOTO: TYLLIE BARBOSA, STYLING: KELLY MCKAIG

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LUXURY TRAVEL

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BEST WELLNESS RESORTS

Golden Door

When she needs an escape from her globe-trotting television adventures, Platinum List expert Ashlan Cousteau heads to this exclusive California retreat renowned for its personal attention to guests

Ashlan Cousteau's day job might look like a vacation to most people. She and husband Philippe Cousteau—grandson of pioneering ocean explorer Jacques-Yves Cousteau—scuba-dive in some of the world's most spectacular locations for their Travel Channel series, *Caribbean Pirate Treasure*.

But when Cousteau wants to unwind, she heads home to Southern California and the exclusive hideaway Golden Door. Nestled in an agricultural neighborhood just north of San Diego, the luxury spa brings new meaning to the term “all-inclusive resort.”

“It really is this beacon of light,” says Cousteau, who even finds the 110-mile drive down from Los Angeles relaxing. She treated herself to a brief visit recently after wrapping production on the second season of her pirate adventure show. Beyond the fitness classes and spa treatments you might expect—daily massages and facials are standard services—Golden Door provides all the workout clothes you need, calorie-controlled meals fresh from various gardens on the property, an array of healing experts from acupuncturists to shamans, and a feeling of fellowship.

“It's just one of those places where you can get whatever you want out of it,” she says. “If you want to go for weight loss, you can do that. If you just want to go on a nice hike and hang out, you can do that. If you really want to go and do more soul-searching within yourself, you can do that, too. It's awesome.”

Cousteau learned about the spa—long favored by stars such as Barbra Streisand and Oprah Winfrey—while working as a correspondent for *E! News* and *Entertainment Tonight*. “They used to give spa packages in



Ashlan Cousteau at Golden Door. Below: The namesake portal



ASHLAN COUSTEAU PHOTOS BY ZACH ANDERSON (2); HAIR & MAKEUP: DONNA GAST; GOLDEN DOOR PHOTOS BY RHIANNON TAYLOR (3)

the Oscar [gift] bags,” she says. “I remember thinking, This place sounds magical.”

She never had the opportunity to visit while working as an entertainment reporter, which she did for a decade before a chance meeting with her future husband inspired her to aim her journalistic curiosity underwater instead of at the stars. She went to a talk he was giving in L.A. about the 2010 BP oil spill “and we’ve been together ever since,” Cousteau says. They married in 2013. Now she blends her reporting skills and entertainment know-how with her husband’s



ocean experience and legacy of exploration to make engaging educational programs.

Besides *Caribbean Pirate Treasure*, the couple produced and starred in the Discovery Channel documentary *Nuclear Sharks*, about how sharks in the Marshall Islands adapted to survive American nuclear testing during the Cold War; they made *Treasures of the Terai*, a takepart.com series about animal poaching; and created a collection of online shorts called *The Aquatic World of Philippe Cousteau*. The duo also works directly with children to get them excited about science, technology, exploring the planet and improving life for its inhabitants.

“If it’s not going to create a positive change, then it’s not the right project,” Cousteau says. “Now I feel like everything I do is exciting and different, and I wake up with a smile on my face.”

Encouraging conservationism and solving maritime mysteries with her husband doesn’t often feel like work to Cousteau, but long days filming can take a toll on even the most enthusiastic explorer. That’s when she heads to the spa to recharge.

Established in 1958 by wellness trailblazer Deborah Szekely (who co-founded the still

Body products, jackets, yoga mats and even artisanal cookies and honey are available to bring the Golden Door experience home.



The lounge at Golden Door. Left: The 40-room property is modeled after a traditional Japanese ryokan



RIGHT CENTER: JAMES BAIGRIE

thriving Rancho La Puerta spa in Mexico nearly 20 years earlier), Golden Door is an intimate retreat on 600 acres of gardens, groves and wooded hills in San Marcos, California. The Japanese-style inn houses just 40 guests, who are individually accommodated in every way. Each receives a personalized daily schedule that includes an in-room massage, private sessions with a personal trainer and aesthetician, and free time to choose from scores of classes and lectures, from yoga and Zumba to meditation.

**“GOLDEN DOOR
REALLY IS THIS BEACON
OF LIGHT.”**

Golden Door caters almost exclusively to women, with just a few weeks a year set aside for men’s camps and coed events, like an upcoming food-and-wine week in November. Cousteau’s globe-trotting job keeps her from ducking behind the Door as often as she might like, but she keeps its lessons with her, even when things get hectic.

“It’s so important for everyone just to take that time for themselves,” Cousteau says. “Everything is competing for our attention—our co-workers, our family, our electronics, media—and it’s nice when you can bring that attention back to yourself, even if it’s just for a few moments a day.” —SANDY COHEN
goldendoor.com



**MORE
SOOTHING
SANCTUARIES**



ARO HĀ

Glenorchy, New Zealand
“The view is breathtaking and the food is *divine*,” says TV cooking host and PL expert Katie Lee about this resort, which promotes the “essentials of wellness.”
aro-ha.com



MIRAVAL
Tucson, AZ

Equine therapy sessions, honey tastings at an on-site apiary, and outdoor floating meditations on silk hammocks are among the rejuvenating methods at this luxury retreat on 400 acres at the base of the Santa Catalina Mountains.
miravalresorts.com



VENTANA
Big Sur, CA

On 160 acres along the scenic Pacific Coast, this bucolic resort allows guests to recharge through spectacular guided hikes featuring panoramic ocean views and paths under the towering redwoods, as well as daily yoga and a range of spa options.
ventanabigsur.com