

TRAVEL

DO EUROPE LIKE A LOCAL

From hitting the places free of Insta-hordes, to doing the well-trodden hotspots differently – this is what a Euro vacay should look like in 2019

FRANCE

GOING TO:
PARIS

Just steps from the Louvre, Jardin des Tuileries and Musée de l'Orangerie, the Le Roch Hotel & Spa (leroch-hotel.com) is a Parisian first-timer's paradise. Though it's hard to justify time not spent shopping or snaffling eclairs, hanging in the hotel is well worth it for the incredible interiors (by designer Sarah Lavoine), Michelin-starred restaurant and dark, moody indoor pool complete with a hammam.

THEN TRY:
**A ROAD TRIP
THROUGH THE SOUTH
OF FRANCE**

THE ITINERARY: Fly into Nice, then follow the coastal road west, taking a detour inland for a side-trip to the magical commune of St Paul de Vence, then heading up to the hills of the Alpes-Maritimes, to the pretty medieval village of Tourrettes-sur-Loup, before popping down to the marina in Antibes to ogle the super-yachts. Take a detour for lunch at the hotel La Colombe d'Or (la-colombe-dor.com), a former hangout of Picasso and Matisse – they used to exchange art for rooms and it's still on display there today.

Soak up those South of France vibes at the Hôtel Les Roches Rouges (also pictured left)

THE FINISH: The south of France is synonymous with yachting types and high rollers, but outposts like Hôtel Les Roches Rouges (designhotels.com/hotel-les-roches-rouges) are drawing a younger, cooler crowd (if you hadn't noticed from the French bloggers on your feed). The design is a curated mix of mid-century furnishings and contemporary art that feels wholly now, with boujee touches such as boutique spirits and an exclusive collab with Le Labo. But despite that (and the enviable ocean-side position) the vibe is far from pretentious, with sweet touches such as sun hats and beach baskets to use during your stay. Opt for a sea view room – why else are you here? >

Fall in love with the luxe interiors at Le Roch Hotel & Spa (also pictured right)

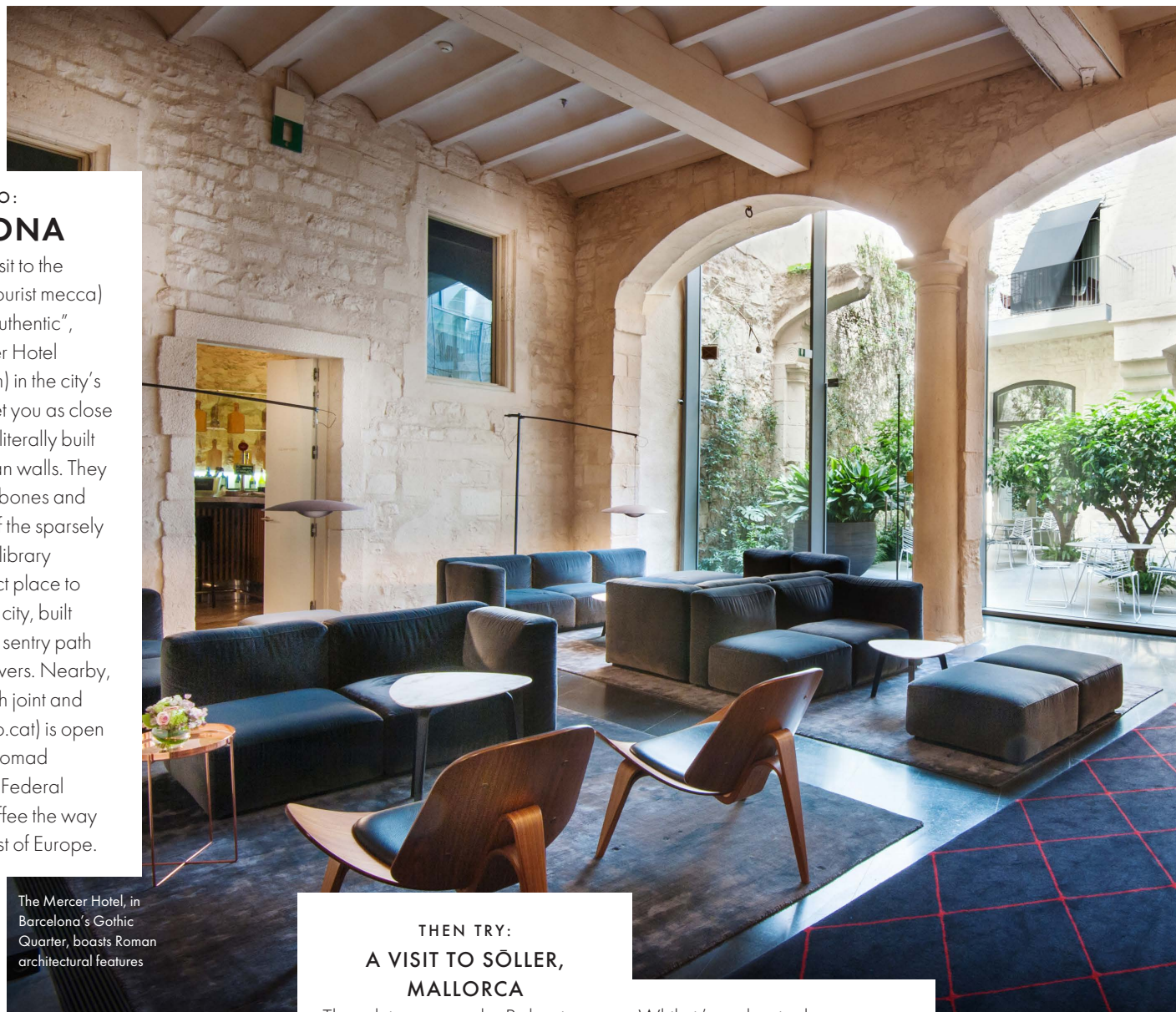
SPAIN

GOING TO: BARCELONA

It's no easy feat for a visit to the Catalan capital (and tourist mecca) of Barcelona to feel "authentic", but a stay at the Mercer Hotel (mercerbarcelona.com) in the city's Gothic Quarter, will get you as close as you can come – it's literally built within the historic Roman walls. They form part of the hotel's bones and even feature in some of the sparsely decorated rooms. The library downstairs is the perfect place to chill after exploring the city, built on what used to be the sentry path between two watchtowers. Nearby, achingly cool sandwich joint and bar Paradiso (paradiso.cat) is open until 3am, and cafes Nomad (nomadcoffee.es) and Federal (federalcafe.es) do coffee the way we like it, a rarity in most of Europe.

The Mercer Hotel, in Barcelona's Gothic Quarter, boasts Roman architectural features

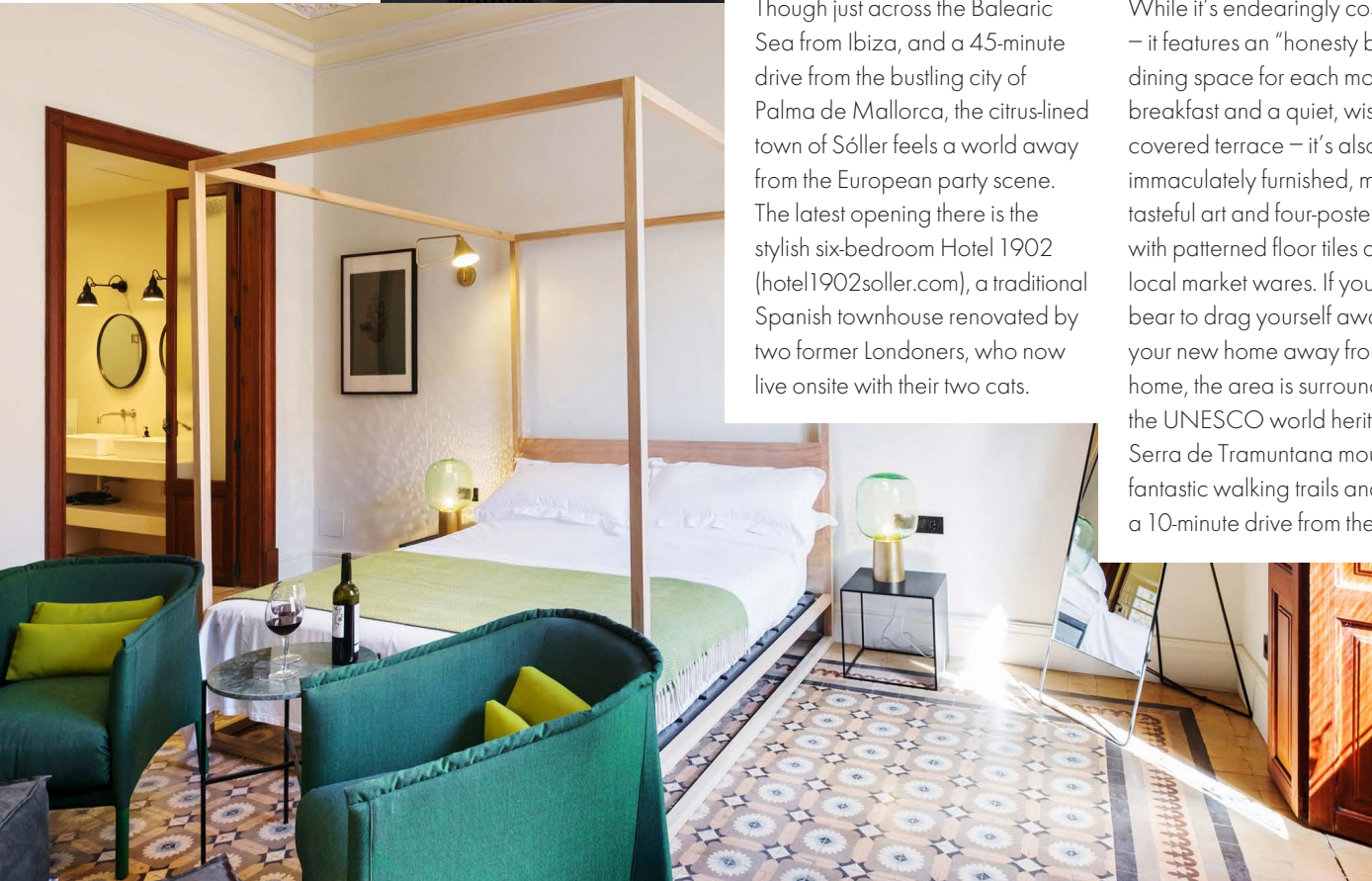
Balance beach time with relaxation at Mallorca's Hotel 1902 (below)



THEN TRY: A VISIT TO SÖLLER, MALLORCA

Though just across the Balearic Sea from Ibiza, and a 45-minute drive from the bustling city of Palma de Mallorca, the citrus-lined town of Söller feels a world away from the European party scene. The latest opening there is the stylish six-bedroom Hotel 1902 (hotel1902soller.com), a traditional Spanish townhouse renovated by two former Londoners, who now live onsite with their two cats.

While it's endearingly cosy – it features an "honesty bar", tiny dining space for each morning's breakfast and a quiet, wisteria-covered terrace – it's also immaculately furnished, mixing tasteful art and four-poster beds with patterned floor tiles and local market wares. If you can bear to drag yourself away from your new home away from home, the area is surrounded by the UNESCO world heritage Serra de Tramuntana mountains, fantastic walking trails and is only a 10-minute drive from the sea.



PORTUGAL

GOING TO: LISBON

The Portuguese city is Europe's current capital of cool, and the hilly area of Bairro Alto is its buzzing, beating heart. A short walk from one of the city's prettiest viewpoints, Miradouro de São Pedro de Alcântara, is the Memmo Principe Real (memmohotels.com/principereal), which – like many of Lisbon's best-kept secrets – is innocuously located down a laneway, but has an incredible view of the city below. The surrounding area is peppered with chic boutiques (like the neighbouring Bisset Shop) and low-key wine bars, but because the property faces away from the street below, your stay will be pin-drop quiet. In a city made up of in-the-know hangouts, Principe Real is the one you'll want to keep to yourself.



Do Lisbon right at the achingly hip Memmo Principe Real hotel

THEN TRY: A DETOUR TO FONTE DA TELHA

Artist André Saraiva's Hotel Grand Amour is top of most Paris hotel wish lists, and his latest venture, Miramar (petitemiramar.com), is a three-bedroom home away from home in the small fishing village of Fonte da Telha (35 minutes south of Lisbon). Designed as a "commune for friends and family" throughout summer, it's the ultimate lo-fi meets cool bolthole to run off to after time spent conquering Lisbon's seven hills.

Stay out of town at the intimate Miramar



LISBON'S FOODIE MUST-DOS TABERNA DA RUA DAS FLORES

This hole-in-the-wall eatery is certainly not a secret – go early to put your name on the waitlist, then let the staff serve you a glass of organic wine on the street while you wait. [@tabernadasflores](https://twitter.com/tabernadasflores)

SANTA BICA

Perch yourself on the terrace out the back at sunset – with its tealights, trees and glimpses of the city below – to feel like you've landed at a local's place for dinner. santabica.com

SOL E PESCA

Head to this little nook of an eatery for gourmet tinned fish (Lisbon's specialty) served up in inventive ways, or take home the kitsch tins that line the walls. >

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