

REBECCA RECOMMENDS

Inspirational destinations & properties of excellence



Romantic inspiration awaits in Greece.

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Mindful Moments and Romantic Retreats

Dear Friends,

Henry James said in 1902, “Three things in human life are important. The first is to be kind. The second is to be kind. And the third is to be kind.”

Never has there been a more apropos time to focus on kindness, self-care and the people we adore. Whether we’re slipping away for a much-needed, destressing spa treatment or planning a romantic rendezvous with our favorite person, now, more than ever, being kind to ourselves is of utmost importance.

I can think of no better way to bring those I love - and me - joy than to plan a fabulous wellness vacation or romantic getaway. Surrounded by abundant natural beauty, rich culture and decadent cuisine, one can’t help but feel elevated and enriched. Below, you’ll hear from our Rebecca Recommends clients that have curated incredible wellness and romance-centric trips that speak to the soul, whether we crave healing spa treatments on the floodplains of Botswana, long walks in the English countryside or beachside bliss in the Greek Isles.

A short note on one of our most favorite places in the world: Curtain Bluff. The hotel has decided to remain open for the entirety of June and July 2022, due to increased demand for room nights past May 31st. The hotel plans to close on August 1st 2022, and reopen on October 22nd 2022 for their winter season.

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And, breaking news: After almost two years of closed borders, the wait is finally over and Australia will reopen to international travelers in two weeks' time! Starting February 21st 2022, fully vaccinated international visitors can enjoy quarantine-free travel to Australia once again. It's time to start planning your clients' long-dreamt-of Australian vacations.

We look forward to connecting you with our clients.

Fondly,

Rebecca



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Claire Vallée creating a gourmet journey. Image Credit: [Global Times](#)

[Découvertes, France](#): Experience the World's First Michelin-Starred Vegan Restaurant

For those with a discerning palate, Découvertes would love to introduce Claire Vallée and the ONA Restaurant in Arès. It's surrounded by nature and tucked between the Arcachon basin, the salt marshes and the pine woods, and stands out as the world's first Michelin-starred vegan gastronomy restaurant.

Claire Vallée's vision with the ONA is to give an introduction to the vegetable world, allowing visitors to encounter new sensory reactions and taste fresh and thrilling flavors. Grains, fruits, vegetables, mushrooms, as well as wild plants, fragrant herbs, seaweeds and spices, all provide a diverse range of tastes, visuals and olfactory experiences.

This is a gourmet journey built around single meals that prioritize a seasonal menu made with fresh and high-quality local ingredients. In addition to a Michelin star, it also has received a green star for its environmentally friendly efforts. Découvertes can arrange for diners to have a first-hand interaction with Claire Vallée, who is always happy to explain the dishes and answer every question her curious guests may have. It is less about having a meal than gaining an understanding of the process and products involved. Ask about Découvertes other wellness opportunities throughout France.

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Curated Greece: Indulge in the Intimacy of the Isles

With travel dreams becoming reality again, the expert team at Curated Greece offers romantic inspiration in the way of these three Greece destinations that combine beautiful nature and personal wellness.

First on the list, the picturesque mountain villages of Zagorochoria. This unexpected destination eagerly awaits those that wish to discover the unspoiled and natural beauty of the Greek mainland. Local organic mountain products create the most tantalizing dishes while the bounty of Mother Earth satisfies the palate of even the most discerning foodie. A collection of chalets and boutique hotels with exceptional wellness facilities revive both body and mind.

For gastronomy and wellness, Curated Greece suggests Milos. Gourmands are taken by the scrumptious trove of authentic and traditional recipes, based on organic products. The island's innumerable hiking paths through gorgeous, just-rugged-enough scenery are tailor-made for long power walks or early-morning yoga sessions. For those who wish to explore further, the sea caves of Kleftiko and moon-like beach of Sarakiniko provide truly unique photographic opportunities and the chance for off-the-beaten-path sightseeing.

Last, but certainly not least, consider the island of Santorini, considered by many to be the preeminent isle of sunsets and capital of romance. While this certainly rings true, Santorini also features a rich culinary tradition and a variety of irresistible wines - of course, best enjoyed as one gazes at the sunset from the terrace of a white-washed hotel. The numerous upscale properties on the island feature rejuvenating spa facilities for an intimate couple's experience.

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[Xigera Safari Lodge](#): Special Moments Beneath Starry Skies Over the Savannah

Situated on the western edge of the Moremi Game Reserve in the heart of the Okavango Delta, Xigera Safari Lodge inhabits an entirely unspoiled piece of wilderness. A romantic getaway to the enchanting Okavango Delta will leave you with special memories to last a lifetime. Wake up each morning to breakfast on your private terrace, spend your days exploring the reserve on private 4x4 safari drives and return to dine beneath the stars on our expansive al fresco deck.

Xigera's Baobab Treehouse offers you the opportunity to sleep beneath the stars, enveloped by the calls of nature and the magic of the wilderness. The treehouse rises 10 meters above the floodplain, giving you unrivaled views across the reserve while allowing a profound connection with nature. Featuring an open-air viewing deck and luxurious indoor-outdoor bedroom, the treehouse of your dreams provides an unforgettable night in the treehouse of your dreams. Choose to arrive after lunch for sundowners and a picnic-style dinner on the deck or depart Xigera Safari Lodge after dinner.

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[Bushmans Kloof](#): A Romantic Retreat Tailormade for Nature Lovers

The intimate and secluded setting of Bushmans Kloof Wilderness Reserve & Wellness Retreat provides a true escape from the everyday, with plenty of opportunities to share tender moments within the magical natural surroundings and the luxurious comfort of the lodge.

It's hard to beat Bushmans Kloof's River Boma for romantic private dining beneath the broad sweep of southern Africa's starry skies. The low stone walls of the River Boma are set just above the rushing waters of the seasonal Boontjies River, with fireside tables laid for an intimate dining experience to remember.

Stroll down to the riverbank, following the winding, lantern-lit pathway. An immaculately set table for two awaits, as does a dedicated waiter who looks after your every need. You'll enjoy an impressive a la carte menu showcasing seasonal produce from the hotel's walled garden, lovingly paired with wines from Red Carnation Hotels' very own [Bouchard Finlayson winery](#).

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[The Twelve Apostles](#): Stay, Spa and Sip with a View

The restaurants at The Twelve Apostles Hotel and Spa consistently rank among Cape Town's best. The dining experiences at The Twelve Apostles certainly set the mood for romance, with plenty of options to personalize your experience to your specifications. Romantic meals at the award-winning Azure Restaurant provide a softly candlelit, fine-dining experience, or arrange to collect a lovingly curated picnic basket, packed full of tasty picnic fare, and head out onto the trails directly from the hotel for an open-air adventure.

The award-winning, upscale spa at The Twelve Apostles Hotel offers a cocoon of wellness and rejuvenation, surrounded by the natural beauty of the Table Mountain National Park, while looking out across the Atlantic Ocean. Discover the serenity of a calm and restorative indoor space, with seven elegant treatment rooms, two of which offer couples' treatment spaces. Two additional Mountainside Spa Gazebos offer the unique opportunity for a wellness journey with panoramic ocean views.

Elevated Experience: This bonus experience is just in and perfect for those clients looking for a special something extra. Guests will enjoy a one-way helicopter flight between The Twelve Apostles and the V&A Waterfront, a scheduled transfer back to point of origin and a choice of the following: a two-course lunch and wine pairing; a seafood platter to share, with wine; "tea by the sea," with a gin cocktail; a sushi platter, with wine; or a 60-minute massage at The Twelve Apostles Spa.

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[Beyond Times Square, United States](#): Creating the Perfect Setting for an Urban Romance

What do the 1908 version of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* and 2007's Walt Disney's "Enchanted" have in common? Both are romances filmed in Manhattan's Central Park - along with countless other films - making it the perfect destination to visit on Valentine's Day. Take a charming [Private Walking Tour of Central Park](#) in New York's "backyard," where you and your sweetheart will have plenty of photo ops in some of the most famous spots.

When the night draws in, it's time to embark on the city's most romantic dinner cruise - our [2022 Valentine's Day Luxury Dinner Cruise](#). There's no better way to celebrate love than onboard a luxurious yacht with spectacular views of the NYC skyline. From your private table with a guaranteed window view, you will enjoy a scrumptious three-course plated meal. Afterwards, take a romantic stroll in the moonlight on the Upper Deck, dance your heart away and enjoy live entertainment. Your driver and a luxury vehicle will be waiting for you as you disembark to take you back to your hotel. Now that's *amore!*

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[Ashford Castle](#): Couples Spa Treatments and Decadent Dining Will Lead to Romance

With rooms and suites tucked away in turrets, plush beds and incredible views, there is no doubt why Ashford Castle has been named the most romantic hotel in Europe on more than one occasion. Take a stroll with your loved one through the ancient woodlands before returning to Champagne by the fireside and an eight-course tasting menu in the magnificent surroundings of the elegant George V Dining Room.

A romantic stay at Ashford Castle would not be complete without a visit to the award-winning spa; The spa was crowned “Ireland’s Best Hotel Spa” in 2021 for the sixth year in a row by World Spa Awards. The talented spa therapists are dedicated to restoring beauty and balance through treatments and spa journeys, personalized for each guest. Couples can enjoy a B|Together massage ritual, where therapists will craft the perfect massage for you to B|Together with your mind and soul. This journey is completed with the assistance of rose quartz crystals and rose quartz-infused B|Africa Massage Oil.

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[The Hari](#): Spa Days and Candlelit Dinners with Your Favorite Person

Celebrate Valentine's Day with your loved one at [The Hari](#), a five-star hotel in London. This gorgeous hotel is perfectly positioned for enjoying a romantic stroll in Hyde Park, or a luxurious pamper session in one of the many spa establishments in Belgravia, from the elegant [Errol Douglas](#) MBE hairdressing salon to [Teresa Tarmey's](#) world-class skincare clinic.

Indulge in a candlelit dinner at Italian restaurant [il Pampero](#), accompanied by a specially designed Valentine's cocktail, "The Hidden Lover." Taking inspiration from the masked characters of the Venice Carnival (in particular, Colombina and Arlecchino, who have long been rumored to be love interests), the menu features a starter of char-grilled radicchio with a citrus dressing, aubergine purée and pumpkin seeds, followed by a main of pan-seared duck breast, pear chutney and savoy cabbage served with a burnt orange and Cointreau sauce. For those who dare, enjoy a selection of aphrodisiac truffles to complete the meal.

Finish the evening with an overnight stay in one of The Hari's decadent guestrooms or suites with a glass of bubbly and breathtaking views of London's skyline - the perfect end to a perfect Valentine's with the perfect person. If you have gin-loving clients, be sure to mention The Hari's own gin, debuting on February 17th.

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The Milestone: Making Memories in the Grandest of Settings

The Milestone Hotel & Residences is well known for its grand frontage and its uniquely elegant rooms and suites but that is certainly not all this outstanding luxury hotel offers. The Milestone's regular experiences are a true standout, providing one-off opportunities to pair fine dining with journeys of extraordinary discovery. This year, The Milestone is beginning 2022 with two once-in-a-lifetime events, presented in partnership with Beyond Curated and filled with romance and wonder.

Their "From Russia with Love" experience runs over Valentine's weekend and offers guests the option of an overnight stay, paired with an evening of romance in The Milestone's elegant surroundings. You'll enjoy a Taittinger Champagne reception, a private jewelry showing with Bond jeweler Sophie Harley, anecdotes from filming from ex-Bond girl Valerie Leon, and a six-course meal in Cheneston's Restaurant. The Milestone's next event, "Night at the Gallery," taking place on the 22nd of February, features an opportunity to enjoy a private visit to the National Gallery after hours. Following a private tour with one of the gallery's art historians, you'll return to The Milestone to enjoy a three-course meal with paired wines.

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Summer Lodge: Connecting in the Countryside

Summer Lodge's idyllic location in the heart of the Dorset countryside provides the perfect base to explore, alongside an excellent opportunity to get back to nature. A stay amid the beautiful Dorset countryside is the perfect place to focus on reconnecting with yourself. Relax by the pool overlooking the beautiful gardens, enjoy one of our rejuvenating spa treatments, or work towards your fitness goals in our fully equipped gym with personal trainers available upon request.

There are plenty of private spaces within the hotel gardens to simply unwind, practice yoga or relax and be mindful in nature. An abundance of outdoor activities awaits you, no matter the season. Winter at Summer Lodge brings crisp walks, striking sunsets, roaring fireplaces and hearty seasonal menus to indulge in after working up an appetite in the great outdoors.

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[The Torridon](#): High on Love in the Highlands

Guests of The Torridon - situated in 58 acres of parkland at the terminus of a magnificent sea loch - can rest, recharge and re-discover romance every day of their stay. From dreamy walks around the resort to discovering the beautiful Arcturus gin garden where time melts away, there are countless opportunities for reconnection.

For the more adventurous, suggest a ride around [The Torridon Trails](#) on [mountain bikes](#) taking in the majestic scenery of the surrounding [UNESCO Wester Ross Biosphere](#). Later, guests are drawn back to the hotel by the opportunity for [whisky tastings](#), featuring The Torridon's own [Highland Gin](#), and delicious meals in the [1887 restaurant](#), starring produce from the kitchen garden. At the end of the day, all that remains is to return to one's contemporary, individually designed bedroom, some of which feature free-standing in-room baths - the perfect end to a romantic day in a place like no other.

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[Great Fosters Estate](#): Celebrated Experiences for Two

Nestled in 50 acres of formal gardens and parkland near Windsor, Great Fosters is a Grade I-listed building originally built as a hunting lodge for King Henry VIII. Oozing history and romance, the estate offers myriad cozy corners and secret gardens in which to enjoy a cocktail or two - and each other.

Step back in time during a romantic horse-drawn carriage ride through some of the 4,000 acres of Windsor Great Park, Her Majesty The Queen's estate. Afterward visit the Queen's favorite residence, Windsor Castle, to tour the state rooms and St. George's Chapel. Later, return to Great Fosters for a relaxing couples' massage side by side in the new, poolside, medieval teepee.

For the ultimate romantic rendezvous, reserve the beautiful Tapestry Room, which spans the width of the house. It has three huge, 16th-century, Flemish tapestries adorning the walls, an impressive original fireplace, plus an emperor-size bed sitting proudly in the center of the room. The bathroom boasts sweeping views across the gardens as well as a tub for two. Enjoy an aperitif by the Saxon moat amidst the heady perfume from the rose garden before a romantic dinner in the Michelin-starred Tony Parkin at The Tudor Room. With only seven tables, it's an intimate dining experience with a modern British tasting menu accented with Tony's signature Thai influences.