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The Hot 100 2012, 76-100

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What do ice-cream sandwiches, amphora-fermented wines, hip London hoteliers and cashmere eye-masks have in common? They're among the new stars in this year's Gourmet Traveller Hot 100. Consider this (in no particular order) your global hit list, from the latest in travel tips to emerging food and drinks trends.

76 MOST INSPIRING MIX OF ANCIENT-MEETS-MODERN

Giant tortoises ambling slowly by. A bird's-eye view of the Galapagos archipelago from atop two extinct volcanic craters. An up-close introduction to the place that inspired Darwin's On the Origin of Species. All this can be found in the middle of Ecuador's UNESCO-protected area at Pikaia Lodge on Santa Cruz Island (pictured left). Pikaia Lodge founder Herbert Frei - a pioneer of scuba-dive touring in the Galapagos - has chosen a former cattle ranch as the site for the new development, and reforested and rehabilitated the area into a reserve for the giant tortoise. Pikaia will be the first carbon-neutral resort in the Galapagos and the first lodge to be built in the area in more than a decade. Definitely one to watch as it draws closer to opening in 2013.

77 FIRST-GLASS SOUVENIRS

Take home a piece of London's legendary Connaught Hotel with a set of Champagne coupes sold through its Connaught Bar. The cut-glass coupes (approximately \$290 for six) are made exclusively for the hotel by John Jenkins

and are almost as beautiful as the David Collins-designed bar itself.

78 BRISBANE'S MAIN-LINE ATTRACTION

Think of it as the perfect antidote to Queen Street Mall. Brisbane's Burnett Lane runs parallel to the city's main pedestrian shopping drag and happily counter to most visitor expectations of what the Queensland capital has to offer. Prop at the bar with a craft beer at the cultish Super Whatnot, get grungy over at Brew café and wine bar, or visit Simon Livingstone's latest venture, Survey Co. And yes, the new kid on the block, Public, is just around the corner on George Street.

79 BEAUTY ALL-ROUNDER

Jao Goe Oil's multi-tasking nature earns it the right to be your permanent travelling mate. The oil, priced at \$40, is a combination of plant, fruit and flower butters and oils, including jojoba and frangipani-scented Monoi from Tahiti, and works as a skin salve, bath oil, hair-styling product and moisturiser. The little tube that could was developed by US pharmacist David Mayron and his daughter Gale and has earned itself a cult following the world over. New to the range is lavender-scented hand refresher, \$8.50, another travel essential.

80 BEYOND BISTRO

By day, he cooks bistro classics with measured aplomb, but by night, Duncan Welgemoed has been conjuring some very unusual dishes at Bistro Dom in Adelaide's CBD. In a concerted effort to inject much-needed life into Adelaide's dining scene, Welgemoed takes bold risks with his special dégustations. At his Wild Dinner, based on foods hunted, scrounged from farmer mates or foraged, he presents "tree rabbit" (rabbit croquettes

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coated in hazelnut and walnut, dusted with fennel pollen and tied to a tree branch sculpture) and barnyard chicken soup with sticky bantam yolk and wild cherry.

81 MOST WELCOME PIGEONHOLING

It started with panini for the café, then baguettes, then a borrowed woodfired oven and sourdough loaves, and now Hobart is home to a bakery spin-off from one of its best-loved breakfast spots. Pigeon Hole Café's Jay Patey sells his slow-fermented organic wholegrain sourdough exclusively to food shops, except on Sundays when the doors at 138 Hopkins Street, Moonah, open to the public.

82 COMING UP FULL-CIRCLE

No doubt you've heard of **Kit and Tim Kemp**, the wildly fashionable British couple whose hotels grace London's chicest neighbourhoods. If not, brace yourself. The unstoppable Kemps have a frantic time ahead with three new addresses set to join their present portfolio of six dazzling London hotels (including The Soho and the film-star-friendly Covent Garden) and the Crosby Street Hotel in New York. First up is The Dorset Square Hotel in Marylebone, which was in fact the couple's first property. The Kemps reacquired the 38-room Regency townhouse last year and will re-launch it in June after Kit kits out interiors with her signature eclectic aesthetic. Their second NYC project, an as-yet nameless property on 56th Street near Fifth Avenue, is slated for an early-2014 arrival. But it's Ham Yard, a derelict block in London's Soho, that's likely to become Firdale Hotels' most buzzworthy new building. Ham Yard makes its debut at the end of 2013 with 90 bedrooms, 24 apartments, cinema, bowling alley, restaurant and bar. It also has that most essential of 21st-century London accessories: a rooftop garden. Guaranteed blue skies ahead. (PS Hardie Grant will release Kit Kemp's style and design bible, *A Living Space*, in October.)

83 FROM THREE STARS TO SEVEN EUROS

It might seem an unlikely spot for a restaurant but a former auto tyre shop on the outskirts of Modena, in northern Italy, has become one of the country's top food destinations. Colourful designer plates adorn the walls where inner tubes once hung, and a fiery red Berkel meat slicer has replaced the air pump as the shop's most important equipment. Three-star chef Massimo Bottura's new bistro, **Franceschetta 58**, offers a democratic concept in gourmet eating. Every dish on the menu costs seven euros, from antipasti to desserts. Diners are encouraged to mix and match courses in a relaxed way that's more like a tapas bar than a traditional Italian restaurant. "We wanted to encourage people to continue eating out despite the economic hard times," says the award-winning Bottura. "Not just with food they know and love but giving them new input. Our clients' ages range from 17 to 70. They touch elbows and share plates at our table. The informal atmosphere puts everyone at ease." Franceschetta 58 is just a few streets from Bottura's celebrated **Osteria Francescana**, currently the top-ranked Italian establishment in the World's 50 Best Restaurants, and a place known for its imaginative food and innovative techniques. Franceschetta 58 retains Bottura's devotion to modernity while offering classical dishes from throughout Italy. "We studied our mothers' well-worn cookbooks and put ourselves in an Artusian state of mind," he says, referring to the 19th-century Italian cookery writer Pellegrino Artusi. Here Piedmontese raviolini del pin comfortably share the table with Sicilian orange and fennel salads and Parma hams. Not to be missed; be sure to book ahead.

84 MOST REFRESHED ISLAND RENAISSANCE

It's not quite the phoenix rising from the ashes but after 12 months' toil to repair the devastation wreaked by cyclone Yasi, **Bedarra Island Villa** is looking fresher and more fabulous than ever. The villa and neighbouring artist's pavilion are two of the handful of exclusive properties on the island's eastern side, and were reconstructed afresh on their private beachfront acreage. Original features such as the studio's bottle wall and stone fireplace have been integrated into the new design and lend an eclectic twist to the property's sleek beach luxury. Both houses open onto the sandy crescent of Doorila Cove where swimming, snorkelling and fishing are positively encouraged.

85 BEST HIDDEN PIECE OF PARADISE

Just north of Australia lies a pristine region regarded as the richest coral reef ecosystem in the world, with a seascape of ethereal karst islands to rival Vietnam's Ha Long Bay or Thailand's Phang Nga Bay. Chances are you've never heard of Raja Ampat. Partly because it sits at the north-west tip of New Guinea in Indonesia's wild West Papua province, and partly because it was only last decade that scientists documented the wealth of marine species within its waters – including 75 per cent of all the world's known corals and more than 1300 reef fish species. Adventurous divers have started taking the plunge off Papua and exclusive resort group Aman is about to add Raja Ampat to the itineraries of **Amanikan**, its 32-metre, three-berth teak cruiser.

86 BEYOND TEQUILA

"Good mezcal has a really amazing masculine yet delicate flavour profile," says Jason Williams, the masculine yet delicate cocktail manager for Sydney's Keystone Group, just one of the growing number of mezcal enthusiasts in the ranks of our bartending elite. What's mezcal? Broadly speaking it's the family of distillates made from the agave plant. Tequila is just one member; some are made from single varieties of agave, others from agave found in the wild, others again involve fruits in the distilling process, and some, in the case of the rare pechuga style, also involve chicken or turkey breast (yes, really). Expect smoke, complexity, vegetal notes, and a bit of a wallop.

87 JUICIEST WINE TREND

Young grape-treader Abel Gibson shot to fame last year with a new range of grenache- and shiraz-based wines from the Barossa called Ruggabellus. And what set him apart from the crowd? Whole-bunch fermentation, that's what. It's long been de rigueur in cool-climate pinot noir circles to throw complete clusters – berries and stems – into the fermenting vat, but now an increasing number of Aussie winemakers such as Gibson are discovering how the technique can also enliven fuller-bodied reds.

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88 HIP NEW QUARTERS

News just in: QT is coming to Sydney, taking over the upper floors of the beloved former Gowings department store as well as offices in the adjoining State Theatre building in Market Street. The new brand, from the team behind Rydges, launched itself onto the local scene last year with **QT Gold Coast** in Surfers Paradise, and what was the Gold Coast International Hotel is now a colourful drawcard for coastal crowds. **QT Sydney** is on its marks for a September opening, with the hotel's designers promising to retain the period elegance, gargoyles and deco touches of the original inhabitants, while infusing its 200 rooms with a modern spirit. And as if that's not enough excitement, UK high-street superstar TopShop will take up residence in the ground-floor retail space.

89 TURNDOWN TREATS

In the red corner there's the undeniably pretty **Park Hyatt Sydney**, where a year-long makeover has seen it embrace its Australian-ness right down to the turndown treats, which include miniature lamingtons. And in the blue corner there's Melbourne's impressive **Crown Metropol**, keeping its tongue firmly in cheek with chocolate-coated licorice and freckles left bedside for VIP guests. Good clean fun.

90 BEST "NEW" MANHATTAN

Is Brooklyn the new Manhattan? A flurry of hot restaurants, burgeoning neighbourhoods and on-point nightspots certainly make a persuasive case. Sure, Williamsburg has long been a byword for artsy hipster New York, but lesser-known 'hoods such as Carroll Gardens, Cobble Hill, Fort Greene, Park Slope and Bushwick are making their own plays for glory. Name-chefs such as Zak Pelaccio – whose Williamsburg outpost of his Fatty 'Cue empire draws barbecue-happy crowds – share postcodes with ma-and-pa pizza meccas Franny's and Roberta's, and Buttermilk Channel in Carroll Gardens, which serves down-home comfort foods such as duck meat loaf and slow-roasted pork sparerib. Tipplers will be in heaven at cult Sixpoint Craft Ales in Red Hook, a boutique distillery producing idiosyncratic handcrafted beers, while night owls should head to The Brooklyn Social with its pressed tin ceilings, speakeasy-inspired cocktail list and studied air of Ye Olde New York. Then there's Aussie transplant Toby's Estate in Williamsburg, busy introducing eager Brooklynites to the heretofore-unknown joys of flat whites and Tim Tams.

91 THE NEIGHBOURHOOD MOST LIKELY

Brunswick, in Melbourne's inner north, has been giving off Next Big Thing rumbles for a while now, mostly from Lygon Street where the likes of Rumi, Hellenic Republic, Kumo Izakaya, Bar Idda and L'atelier de Monsieur Truffe have been nudging the strip towards precinct status. Then there was Pope Joan and The Bishop of Ostia, and now with Albert St Food & Wine opening on Sydney Road, raising the bar and packing 'em in ever since, it seems as if Brunswick is truly ready for its close-up.

92 BANGKOK BOUNCES BACK

The Thai capital's recent history of riots, floods and a general run of bad luck has done nothing to deter hoteliers from staking their reputations (and cash) on the enduring appeal of exotic Bangkok. New to the City of Angels are the 227-room **St Regis** with its panoramic pool views and Elemis spa, the **Sofitel So** with interiors "art-directed" by couturier Christian Lacroix, and the 400-plus-room W Hotel, which is opening on Embassy Row in October. There's also the brand-new eight-room boutique gem **Cabochon Hotel & Residence**, in the Walpole building on Sukhumvit Road. Leading the pack, however, is **The Siam**, a collaboration between Thai pop sensation Krissada Sukosol Clapp and resort king Bill Bensley, the design brain behind Anantara's tropical retreats. The Siam is finally set to open next month, and sells itself as an urban resort of art deco-accented suites and pool villas, occupying more than a hectare of prized Chao Phraya river frontage. It even has its own Muay Thai boxing ring.

93 MELBOURNE'S LATEST SLICED-WHITE OBSESSION

First there was the pork belly number at Earl Canteen. Then came the mighty lobster roll at Golden Fields. Now it's the Bishop of Ostia, the after-dark offshoot of Brunswick brunch favourite Pope Joan, with its deep-fried pig's ear, a silk purse of sauce gribiche, chilli and rocket. Boo-ya.

94 FOOD-FRIENDLIEST SOCIAL MEDIUM

Somewhere between Twitter ubiquity and Pinterest early adoption, you'll find Instagram, an app-based service built on the public sharing of smart-phone photos. "Like Twitter, but for pictures" is just the tip of the iceberg, and IG culture has been embraced by eager diners, home cooks and chefs alike.

95 DOMESTIC BLITZERS

Its code name at head office is **Baillies on the Rocks**, the latest, top-secret project by lodge supremos James and Hayley Baillie. Details remain scarce but we do know that Baillies, Sydney's keenly awaited new hotel, will occupy a row of four heritage terraces in The Rocks and offer 10 suites and a fleet of chauffeured town cars. Tonkin Zulaikha Greer architects have been engaged to transform 19th-century interiors into 21st-century bespoke. "We see this property as unique, secret Sydney, like staying in our wonderful city with wealthy friends," says James. "It is the antithesis of a major chain hotel." It's a bold ambition but if anyone can realise it, it's the Baillies. The exquisite beauty of Southern Ocean Lodge on Kangaroo Island and Capella on Lord Howe are testament to the couple's game-changing approach to Australian hospitality. The Sydney property, says James, will be a similarly opulent lodge experience but in a vibrant urban setting. Once they've conquered Sydney, the Baillies will transfer their energies to Tasmania – the forecast "six-star" Remarkable Lodge on the Tasman Peninsula – and Victoria, where they're planning a destination lodge for the Great Ocean Road.

96 BEST USE OF A FORMER FACTORY

A one-time factory in sparse Patagonia seems an unlikely place for a bold new boutique hotel, but **The Singular**'s clever fusion of past and present dispenses doubts in an instant. The hotel was nearly 10 years in the making and lives inside a heritage-listed former gold storage plant in Puerto Barrios, close to the fiords

the making and lives inside a heritage-listed former Cold Storage plant in Puerto Bories, close to the fjords and fields of Torres del Paine National Park. Public areas are in the restored Victorian-era building, while accommodation is in the newly added glass cube, providing uninterrupted views of the Antonio Varas Peninsula.

97 MEXICO'S MOMENT

Finally, there's a reason to linger in Mexico City's Centro Historico rather than beating it back uptown to Polanco or Condesa after a quick zip around the Zócalo. Downtown is the latest addition to **Grupo Habita's** boutique hotel collection; behind the imposing brick walls of a restored 17th-century palace, this 17-suite property preserves classic elements of Spanish baroque architecture (handmade tiles, iron balustrades, wooden beams) while introducing a muted Nuevo Latino aesthetic to streamlined bedrooms. One of the interior courtyards features a rare mid-century mural by Manuel Rodríguez Lozano. As with all Habita hotels, the rooftop pool bar has some of the hottest views and coolest cocktails in town.

98 HOT WHEELS

Ice-cream vans, the original food trucks, are about to get fancy. Alistair Wise and Teena Kearney have been working on a mobile version of Sweet Envy for Hobart, while Shaun Quade, the talented pastry chef late of Urbane, Biota and The Brix says his next step, Harvey Rabbit Ice-Cream, in Melbourne, will also involve wheels.

99 PLEASE DO TOUCH THE MERCHANDISE

We've all seen displays of cookbooks for sale in restaurants, and branded sauces aren't news, but now chefs step that one bit closer to rock-star trappings (or fast food) with more inventive brand-extensions. T-shirts are no longer the sole preserve of the big chains, and this badge, \$5 from Brisbane's **Harajuku Gyoza**, is a must for any dumpling groupie.

100 ALTERNATIVE HEALTH INSURANCE

Detox, wellness retreat, bootcamp... call it what you will, but our appetite for escapes that quell that very thing shows no sign of waning. Super-slick **La Réserve at Ramatuelle**, on the fringe of St-Tropez, has just added a new series of Rethinking Bootcamp retreats to its summer roster. Walk the French Riviera coastline in the morning; in the afternoon, it's balneotherapy, jet showers and body wraps in the spa. It's a similar philosophy at **The Ranch at Live Oak**, in the hills above Malibu, California: a set six-night program of yoga, resistance work, long hikes through the local canyons, and minimal outside contact. The rustic-luxe rooms are a beautiful place to crash after The Ranch's challenging days. Closer to home, **Mesastila** is a newly re-branded wellness retreat (formerly Losari Spa Retreat) set on a Javanese coffee plantation, the charm of its central Dutch colonial homestead setting the tone for its restorative programs.

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