

# How to spend it

FEBRUARY 2013

## CAPTURING THE MOMENT A NEW UNDERSTATED ELEGANCE

→ Another classic entering the new year with a facelift is **The Gritti Palace** in **VENICE** ([www.luxurycollection.com/grittipalace](http://www.luxurycollection.com/grittipalace); from €843). Original Rubelli Venetian textiles, rococo-inspired couches and Murano glass chandeliers all feature, along with a new Acqua di Parma Blu Mediterraneo Spa, a refreshed restaurant and the Gritti Terrace overlooking the Grand Canal.

→ While St Katharine's Docks in **LONDON** doesn't quite have the watery glamour of Venice, it does have the cool new 42m-long **Houseboat** ([www.chicretreats.com](http://www.chicretreats.com); from £200). Moored less than a minute's walk from Tower Bridge, this former coal-carrying barge has been reconfigured to include three ensuite bedrooms, a cinema room and sauna. The style merges library-style leather sofas with wood-panelled walls and a log-burner.

→ A fixed mooring is one way of dealing with poor sea legs. Another, in the **GALAPAGOS**, is to combine short cruises – the function of luxury 100ft *M/Y Pikaia I*, which lets you swim, kayak and snorkel amid the wildlife – with somewhere to stay on land, which is the purpose of the new **Pikaia Lodge** ([www.pikaialodgegalapagos.com](http://www.pikaialodgegalapagos.com)), opening in June on Santa Cruz Island. This 14-room eco-lodge sits within a secluded giant-tortoise reserve, beside an extinct volcano crater, and its seven-night sea-and-land packages (from \$7,500 per person) are entirely unique among the islands. +



Above: The Gritti Palace on the Grand Canal, Venice



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