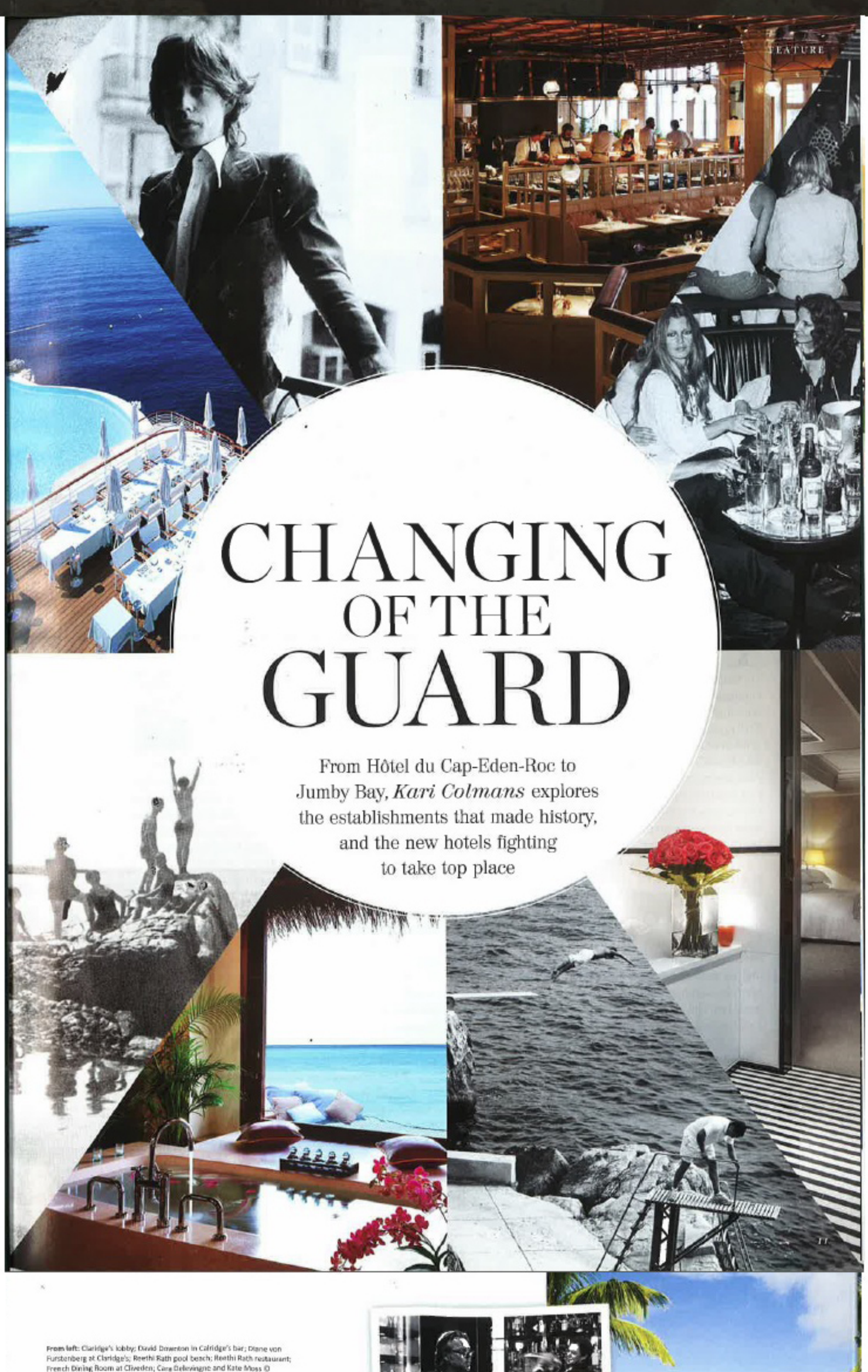


THE TRAVEL ISSUE

EXCLUSIVE GETAWAYS FOR 2015; DETOX RETREATS FOR MIND, BODY AND SOUL; ICONIC HOTELS, PAST & PRESENT; THE RISE OF THE LUXURY PEER-TO-PEER ECONOMY

CHANGING OF THE GUARD

From Hôtel du Cap-Eden-Roc to Jumby Bay, *Kari Colmans* explores the establishments that made history, and the new hotels fighting to take top place



From left: Claridge's lobby; David Dawson in Claridge's bar; Diane von Furstenberg at Claridge's; Beverly Hills pool beach; Herbol's Ritz restaurant; French Dining Room at Cliveden; Cara Delevingne and Kate Winslet; Woburn House; Ian Schrager of Chateau Marmont lobby at The Mark

of *One Thousand and One Nights*. Around 700 members of the glitterati attended its opening on 29 May 1967. "Brigitte Bardot wore a pink and white Pucci headscarf, as was the height of fashion at the time, and was rarely seen without a bloody mary," one bystander remembers (the original guestbook, from 1967-1987, is filled with observational tir-bits to delight even the most jaded of gossip columnists). The year 1971 saw Mick Jagger and Bianca Pérez-Mora Macías married in St Tropez, followed by a honeymoon in one of the Byblos suites, which elevated the establishment to the world stage. Digging through the archives and the hotel has even kept an old answering machine message from Bruce Willis. And while searchers of impeccably designed super spas and the like may not find Byblos ticks every box, there's something about its faded, old-school charm that keeps drawing punters back, year after year.

One sure marker of knowing you fit the hotels-of-all-time bill is having a book published about, and for,

This year, *Condé Nast Traveller's* Readers' Travel Awards still rated Hôtel du Cap-Eden-Roc as the best place to stay in Europe, Turkey and Russia, despite the number of new openers on the scene, while Four Seasons Hotel George V, Paris, another old favourite since its inception in 1928, was voted best hotel in the world for service. From Paris's L'Hôtel Le Bristol and The Ritz, to London's Claridge's, Buckinghamshire's Cliveden, New York's Plaza, Venice's Cipriani, Barbados's Sandy Lane and Marrakech's La Mamounia, these are the institutions continuing to attract the rich and famous as much for the secrets they hold, and the glamour they project,

Across the pond, The Mark, The Mercer and the Edition have garnered a following across the fashion and music industries

your clientele. Hôtel du Cap-Eden-Roc has not one but two tomes to its name, courtesy of Assouline, while the same publisher has run an entire series of *Hotel Stories* compendiums, laying bare those "what happens in -insert relevant destination here- stays there" tales. They're published by continent and class, with the North American edition making particularly good reading. West Hollywood's Chateau Marmont, first set up in 1927, was acquired and restored by hotelier André Balazs in 1990 - an institution in his own right - and has since seen everybody who's anybody pass through its doors, as well as providing the backdrop to a number of blockbusters and sparking, if not sometimes sordid, soirées. As Balazs says: "All good hotels tend to lead people to do things they wouldn't necessarily do at home."

as for the actual facilities on offer. But as the chintzy upholstery begins to fade on the old European and North American establishments, a new flock of elite hotels is being bred in much the same manner as this time last century.

Across the pond, residences such as The Mark, The Mercer and the Edition have garnered a following across the fashion and music industries. The first certainly made its mark on *Gossip Girl* (die-hard Blair Waldorf followers could pick out The Mark's monochrome lobby out of an extensive line-up of minions). And it's the same handful of players who are also making history a little closer to home. Balazs' Chiltern Firehouse, Ian Schrager's London Edition and Chris Corbin and Jeremy King's The Beaumont are all, by any standards, extremely new to London, yet it



hasn't taken long for them to be absorbed and heralded as an intrinsic part of the capital's elite culture. Much like their long-established relatives, it's not the notoriety of the décor that everyone's shouting about, or the fluffiness of the towels (though impeccable standards go without saying). Nor will it be the room service menu that goes down in history, when someone comes to write a similar article in 50 years' time, and stumbles upon a retro not-so-ironic-now shot of Cara Delevingne and co with their tongues lolling out.

Of course, the hotel habits of the A-list aren't confined to the capital. One of fashion's most powerful Italian design duos is reported to have bought a property in Jumby Bay, Antigua, cementing the private island up there with Branson's Necker Island as one of the most exclusive places to sun-worship the world over. The Rosewood's Mayakoba erected a beach bar to host Sir Philip Green's last big birthday bash (complete with a rumoured spat between Kate Moss and the not-yet uncoupled Gwyneth Paltrow). The 'shack' has now been turned into a grill-to-order restaurant, complete with live lobsters on ice. Head to One&Only Reethi Rah, and you won't be surprised to see Naomi Campbell slathering on the cream alongside everybody else.

And while best overseas spa and design awards are all well and good for the luxury holiday maker, it's that added *je ne sais quoi* that will cement a hotel's place in history. Whatever your background, the right hotel will provide the backdrop for those with the money, connections, and desire to be seen, to slip into society through an opportune crevice. As the American author and journalist Joan Didion observed: "Great hotels have always been social ideas, flawless mirrors to the particular societies they service."

- | OLD GUARD | |
|-----------|---|
| 1. | Hôtel du Cap-Eden-Roc, Cap d'Antibes, hotel-du-cap-eden-roc.com |
| 2. | Byblos, St Tropez, byblos.com |
| 3. | The Ritz, Paris, ritzparis.com |
| 4. | Claridge's, London, claridges.co.uk |
| 5. | Cliveden House, Taplow, clivedenhouse.co.uk |
| 6. | The Plaza, New York, theplazany.com |
| 7. | Chateau Marmont, California, chateaumarmont.com |
| 8. | Sandy Lane, Barbados, sandylane.com |
| 9. | Hotel Cipriani, Venice, beilmond.com/hotel-cipriani-venice |
| 10. | La Mamounia, Marrakesh, mamounia.com |
| NEW GUARD | |
| 1. | Chiltern Firehouse, London, chilternfirehouse.com |
| 2. | The Mark, New York, themarkhotel.com |
| 3. | Jumby Bay, Antigua, rosewoodhotels.com |
| 4. | Rosewood Mayakoba, Mexico, rosewoodhotels.com |
| 5. | Viceroy, Anguilla, viceroyhotelsandresorts.com |
| 6. | One&Only Reethi Rah, Maldives, oneandonlyresorts.com |
| 7. | The Palm, Dubai, oneandonlyresorts.com |
| 8. | Necker Island, British Virgin Islands, neckerisland.virgin.com |
| 9. | W. Verbier, wverbier.com |
| 10. | Mandarin Oriental, Shanghai, mandarinoriental.com |