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Travel

Five Design Hotels Worth a Trip

Sometimes, the natural beauty of a destination is matched by the architecture of its best hotels. (Well, almost.) These five design marvels—including a Chilean winery that doubles as a contemporary art gallery, a mid-century modernist dream in Palm Springs, and a serene, *ryokan*-style compound in Japan—prove that if you know where to look, a special hotel is worthy of a trip in itself.



VIK CHILE, MILLAHUE, CHILE

Another wine-country hotel (this one in Millahue, Chile), VIK Chile is an easy two-hour drive south from Santiago. The ultramodern design, which offers wholly uninterrupted views of your surroundings—amid some 11,000 acres of unspoiled land—is reminiscent of Frank Gehry but was conceived by contemporary art aficionados—and hotel owners—Carrie and Alexander Vik. Each of the twenty-two guest rooms is completely different from the others, some with themes (like a room dedicated to the Italian artist Fornasetti, another designed by Japanese painter Takeo Hanazawa), and the common spaces feature pieces from Chilean artists, such as Abstract Expressionist Roberto Matta. Bathrooms, meanwhile, come with black carbon-fiber tubs that appear to hover above the ground. And much of the furniture—like the transparent plexiglass tables filled with discarded computer wires—was designed by the owners. The overall experience is like staying in a very comfortable modern art museum—one with easy access to one of South America's best wineries.

Do/See: To see another side of this Chilean wine region, drive about an hour south of VIK Chile, to the Colchagua Valley, over the mountains. Visit Lapostolle, which produces award-winning Clos Apalta reds.