

A room with a (Med) view

These places to eat, drink and be merry are a joy for all the senses

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Castro, Santorini, The Cyclades, Greece

Santorini sunsets draw admirers from around the world. The Cycladean volcanic island exudes drama from the off and its black, red and white beaches are something of a novelty. But the truly show-stopping scenes take place in the north-coast village of Oia, where, late each afternoon, the sun descends into the caldera – the isle's underwater basin – causing vivid pink light to bounce around marble streets and whitewashed houses.

Avoid the scrumming crowds by heading to Castro, where diners have been known to book a roof-garden table months before their holiday. A decent, simple menu of mezze, pomegranate and feta salad, meatballs and walnut cake won't break the bank (around £22 per person) while the views are priceless (kastro-ia.gr).

Eat more: Santorini's finest raw ingredients are cherry tomatoes (try them fried in batter as tomato *keftedes*), tangy wild capers and their leaves, and intriguing white aubergines. Koukoumavlos restaurant in Fira puts them all to creative use (koukoumavlos.eu).

Stay: Sunvil has a selection of holidays to Santorini on offer, starting from £670 per person for seven nights' b&b at the Kalimera Hotel in Akrotiri, including flights from the UK and transfers in Greece (sunvil.co.uk).»



Flavours from the azure sea and hillside citrus groves find their way into dishes such as pasta with clams

Gourmet Bosquet Restaurant, Grand Hotel Excelsior Vittoria, Sorrento, Italy

The sight of Mount Vesuvius brooding darkly across an exuberant Bay of Naples has bewitched Brits visiting Sorrento since the days of The Grand Tour. The seafront terrace restaurant of the 19th-century Grand Hotel Excelsior Vittoria, in the town's cliff-top centre, is just the place to reproduce that experience. Flavours from the azure sea and hillside citrus groves find their way into dishes such as pasta with clams, seaweed and sea urchins, and iced lemon mousse (four courses, £69).

Eat more: The Amalfi Coast's famous citrus digestif limoncello is a must, but you can also buy strawberry and fennel liqueurs from the Fattoria Terranova farm shop in Sorrento's Piazza Tasso (fattoriaterranova.it). Get adventurous with gelato at Gelateria David – the tomato and basil flavour is wonderfully refreshing on a hot summer's day (gelateriadavidSORrento.it).

Sleep: Doubles at the Grand Hotel Excelsior Vittoria start from £348 b&b (exvitt.it).

The Korsan Fish Terrace, Kalkan, Turkey

Kalkan is the Lycian peninsula's prettiest harbour town. A haven for sun-worshipping villa dwellers, it lights up at dusk when everyone folds up their loungers and heads through the sloping alleys for dinner.

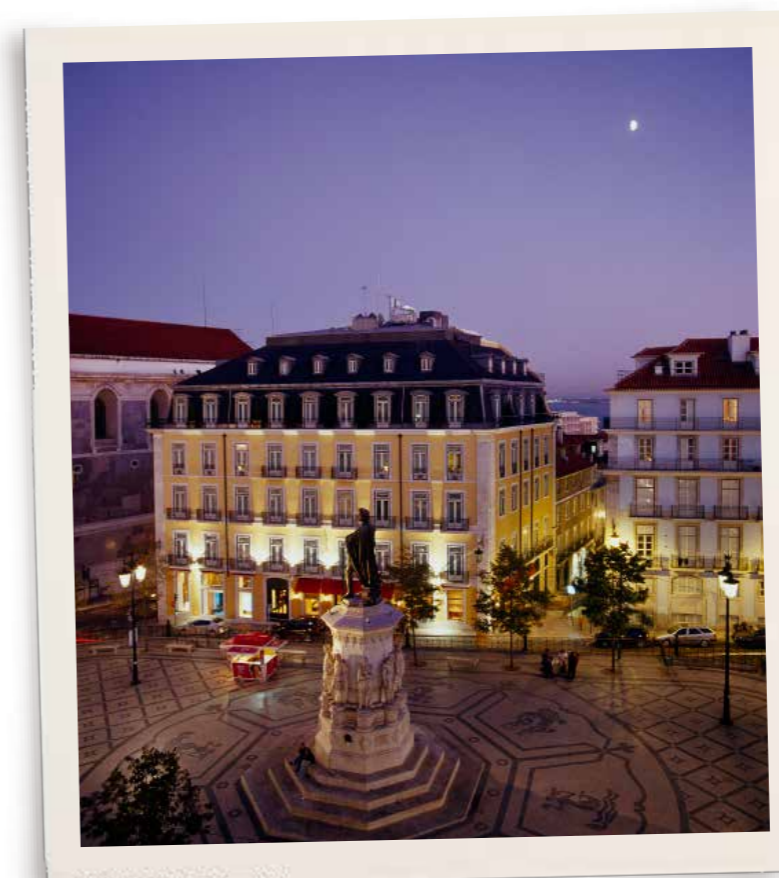
Around 200 restaurants compete to offer the best atmosphere and vista. The Korsan Fish Terrace is a good bet, enhancing its harbour-fronted assets with a tempting cocktail menu and live music thrice weekly. You get to gaze out to Kalkan's small beach as you down skewered prawns and calamari with feta salad (korsankalkan.com).

Eat more: Kalkan harbour was once used to export the excellent wine from its hinterland – which is well worth tasting. Likya Arykanda chardonnay is a good place to start.

Sleep: Exclusive Escapes has a range of Kalkan villas including one-bed sea-view Korsan Taş Bahçe, from £1,600 per person for seven nights' self-catering, including flights, transfers, a Turkish bath and a day's gulet cruise (exclusiveescapes.co.uk).



Gaze out to Kalkan's small beach as you down skewered prawns and calamari with feta salad



The Terrace, Bairro Alto Hotel, Lisbon, Portugal

The sun-baked Portuguese capital lends itself to a languorous city break. Sink into one of the canopied wicker sofas in the BA Terrace, atop chic boutique Bairro Alto Hotel, to take in the vistas of the Tagus River and Old Lisbon. Come summer it's open from lunchtime to midnight, so you can intersperse glasses of *vinhos brancos* and platters of meats and cheeses with forays out to the cobbled streets. Return for sunset drinks and dinner downstairs in the Flores do Bairro restaurant – curd cheese pastry with chard and almonds (£4), perhaps, followed by roast cod topped with a cornbread crust (£16).

Eat more: Catch the train to the seaside suburb of Cascais for some grilled sardines at the beach cafés or cultivate an addiction for cinnamon-dusted *pastéis de Belém* (custard tarts) at Atiga Confeitaria de Belém (pasteisdebelelem.pt). Made to a 19th-century monastery recipe, they're just that bit superior to the ubiquitous *pastéis de nata*.

Sleep: Doubles at the Bairro Alto start from £181 b&b (bairroaltohotel.com). »



Blu, Rovinj, Istria, Croatia

Istria's loveliest seaside city, Rovinj, charms with an island-style old town topped by a baroque church. While the city's own restaurants sparkle, it's also worth heading a few kilometres north to Blu, a restaurant with rooms that sits on a rugged stretch of the Rovinj Bay. Sophisticated seafood dishes take centre stage, but since Istria is Croatia's gastronomic heart, the malvazija wine and local extra virgin olive oil are as enjoyable as the black cuttlefish risotto and sea bass in a black olive crust.

Hire a bike and cycle the coastal path to visit at lunch, when a table on the rocky terrace has a backdrop of gambolling children and splashing swimmers. From sunset, Blu transforms into the epitome of romance, lit by candles, Rovinj's twinkling lights and the moon's reflection on the rippling water. (Two courses around £34).

Eat more: The lively food market near the harbour is the place to snap up olive oil, wine and prized white truffles (which you'll also find flavouring salt, vinegars and cheeses).

Sleep: A selection of modern, airy apartments are attached to the restaurant, from £55 per night; breakfast £7 per person (blu.hr; croatia.hr).

Restaurante Balcón del Adarve, Priego de Córdoba, Andalusia, Spain

Inland Andalusia's soaring sierras – home to wild boar and eagles – make an exciting extension to a holiday on the Costa del Sol. Fill your days with remote walks and mountain biking, followed by a hearty meal with arresting views.

You'll find both of the latter at Restaurante Balcón del Adarve, which stands on a cliff bordering the Moorish market town of Priego de Córdoba.

A peaceful, 180° panorama sweeps across the Rio Salado valley to olive grove-speckled mountains – squint for Córdoba and Granada on the horizon. Accompany the view with generous platters of oxtail fritters, and quince with walnuts and Zuheros goat's cheese for a taste of the 'real' Andalusia. (Two courses around £19; balcondelarve.com).

Eat more: Local dishes to look out for include *salmorejo* (Córdoban gazpacho with serrano ham, boiled egg and olive oil). You can also buy local hams, cheese and fino sherry from the Mercado Victoria in Córdoba (mercadovictoria.com).

Sleep: With gorgeous sunset views from its terrace and a handy location between Córdoba and Granada, boutique b&b Casa Olea makes an ideal base. Doubles from £98 b&b (casaolea.com).



Above: Le Candille, Côte d'Azur, France.
Below: boutique b&b Casa Olea, Spain

Le Candille, Le Mas Candille, Côte d'Azur, France

With the lights of Grasse beckoning from the pre-Alps and Cannes glittering in the south, the views from this luxury spa hotel with Michelin-starred restaurant capture the laid-back charms of the Provençal hills.

It's a place to celebrate a special getaway. Drink champagne on the lavender-scented bar terrace and splurge on a £76 menu that nods to the Côte d'Azur, with sea bream served with lettuce and mussel cream, then heads for the hills with rabbit accompanied by artichoke stew and gnocchi.

Stay over and you'll fall for simpler pleasures too, including browsing the art galleries of nearby medieval Mougins village, where Picasso lived in his final years.

Eat more: Hit Forville Market in Cannes (half an hour away) for Provençal olive oil, honey and tomato tapenade, plus everything for a beach picnic. The area's awash with unfussy bistros, too; try Aux Bons Enfants (80 Rue Meynadier).

Sleep: Doubles from £260 room only; breakfast £25 per person (lemascandille.com).



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