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Mona Pavillions, Hobart, Australia

Gallery hotels: five of the best to stay in

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28 JANUARY 2020

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Sometimes only a city break will hit the cultural spot, be it wandering around Paris's belle époque galleries or spending a long weekend at New York's Met. But the growing number of gallery hotels shows that there's an appetite for immersing yourself in great works for art for longer periods. Sometimes you want the hotel you're staying at to *be* the gallery, giving you a feast for the eyes while leaving you free to enjoy other, less worthy, activities than queuing all day. We've rounded up five top hotels with amazing art collections, to satisfy your soul and your comfort all in one go...

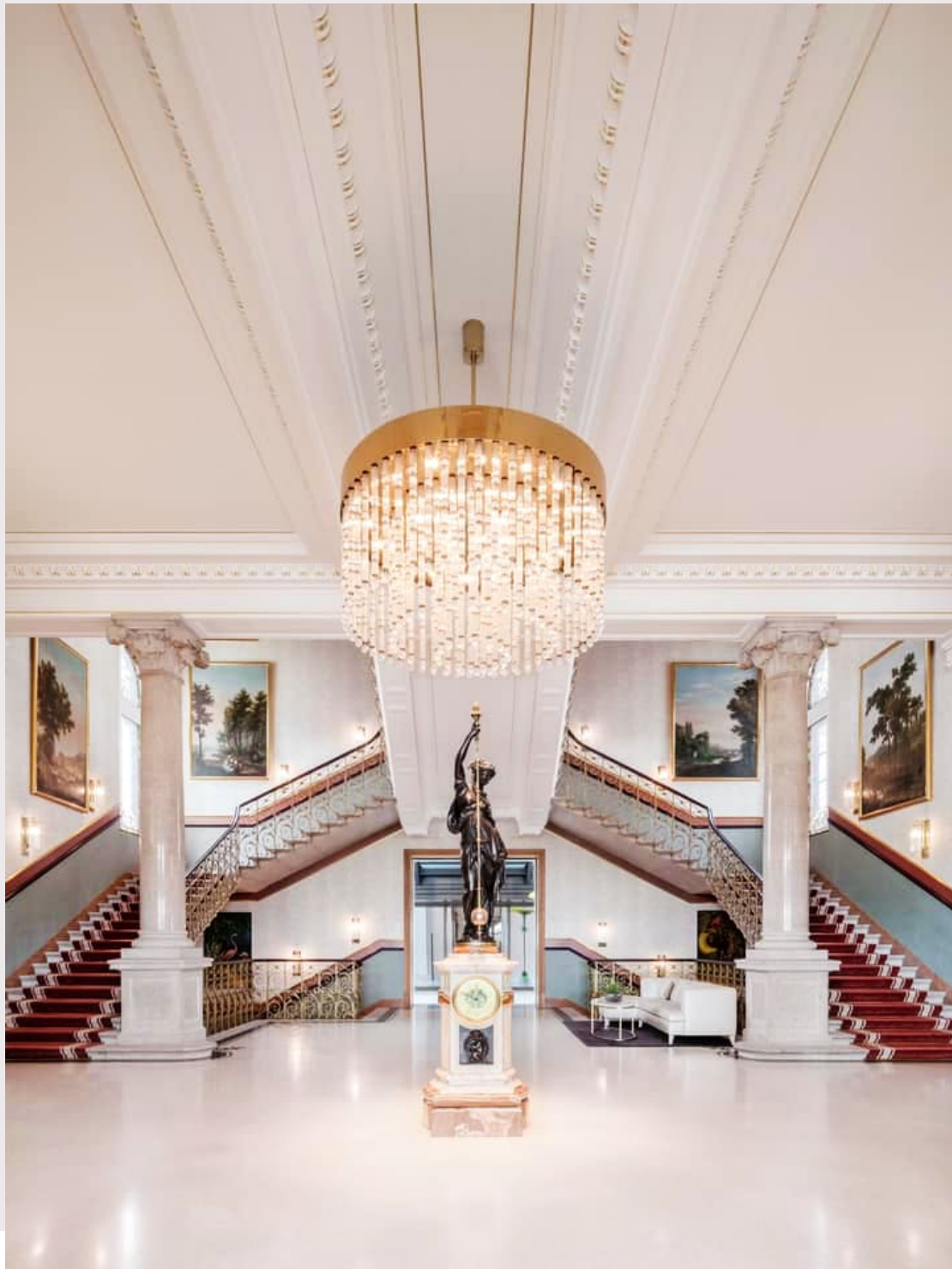
La Colombe D'Or, Provence



Restaurant at La Colombe D'Or, France

The original and arguably still the best, La Colombe D'Or started life in the 1920s as a café in Saint-Paul de Vence. Its owner had an interest in the arts, and would let painters eat for free in return for a picture. Thus a remarkable collection was born: Picasso, Matisse, Miro, Braque, Chagall, Calder... all, and more, are represented here. There are only 25 rooms, but if you can't get a booking, come for lunch or dinner – typically Provencal fare such as crudités and fresh fish. You're likely to spot a Hollywood legend at the bar, or a contemporary artist checking out the Sean Scully installation by the pool. The nearby Fondation Maeght offers yet more art, changing exhibitions and a sculpture park.

Dolder Grand, Zurich



The Dolder Grand in Zurich houses an impressive art collection

Guests arriving at the Dolder Grand are greeted by Andy Warhol's 11-metre 'Big Retrospective Painting' above the reception area – and it's uphill from there. Use your personal Art iPad to locate the 123 other works of art at the hotel, including important pieces by Henry Moore, Niki de Saint Phalle and Zaha Hadid. Elsewhere, enjoy Michelin-starred food from Heiko Nieder, be wowed by the Sir Norman Foster architecture and relax in the award-winning spa.

Fife Arms, Scotland



The Fife Arms, Scotland

Owned by Iwan and Manuela Wirth, co-founders of the Hauser & Wirth empire, The Fife Arms is a highlands hotel with a difference – it contains some 14,000 pieces of art. Among them is a sketch of a stag by Queen Victoria, a carved chimney-piece depicting the work of Robert Burns, a Louise Bourgeois spider and work by Man Ray, Gerhard Richter, Lucian Freud and Martin Creed. Each quirky room is stuffed with treasures: the artist's studio is inspired by Charleston and the Bloomsbury group. But there's a traditional side to the hotel, too: roaring fires, tartan blankets and venison on the menu.

Badrutt's Palace, St Moritz



Badrutt's Palace, St Moritz

Not strictly speaking a gallery hotel itself, Badrutt's Palace has nevertheless teamed up with Hauser & Wirth, whose gallery is bang opposite, to explore the cultural side of the Engadin Valley. Visit the extraordinary Calder show, on until 9th February, for some après-ski with a difference. Nearby, the Susch Museum is showing seminal work by the avant garde Carolee Schneemann, as well as contemporary work inspired by her. And if you need even more of a culture fix, the Engadin Art Talks will be celebrating their 10th anniversary from 25th – 26th January. The hotel itself is a real grande dame: open since 1896, it was a firm favourite of Alfred Hitchcock and Andy Warhol.

Mona Pavilions, Tasmania



MONA art collection, Tasmania

A private gallery housing Australia's largest collection of art, MONA is the brainchild of David Walsh and is an immersive experience like no other: visitors are given an 'O' (a sort of tablet / audioguide mashup) which replaces wall text and on which you can listen to interviews with artists or curated playlists, rate the work and browse the collection. As pieces include work by Anselm Kiefer, Sidney Nolan and the burial chamber of the Ancient Egyptian Pausiris, there's plenty to keep you occupied. Each architect-designed pavilion room comes with unique video art, as well as more trad touches like Aesop products and 400 thread-count sheets.

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