



ICELAND



KEX HOSTEL

### KEX HOSTEL, ICELAND

A resurrected old biscuit factory in downtown Reykjavik, Kex (meaning biscuit in Icelandic) Hostel is anything but backpacker. Bedrooms are a mix of private and dorms (with space for 142 guests), and have old school gym lockers as wardrobes, ancient maps, battered leather sofas and room numbers salvaged from a bingo parlour in Ohio. Downstairs there's a 1950s-style barbershop, pinball machine and cosy library area. Come evening, put on your best *lopapeysa* sweater and listen to live music, or take a seat at the white-tiled wooden-topped bar with steaming bowls of goulash and a krug of beer, and people-watch some serious style.

#### Kex Hostel

Skúlagata 28, 101 Reykjavik. Enq (00 354) 561 6060; kexhostel.is. Doubles from £105 B&B (single bed in a four-bed dorm from £35 for B&B). Easyjet flies to Reykjavik from London Luton from around £82 return. Enq easyjet.com.



BARCELONA



THE 5 ROOMS

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HOT WEEKENDS

# Jet off for less

Too broke for a swanky break? Not with these affordable crash pads. Budget hotels just got stylish

### THE 5 ROOMS, BARCELONA

The name refers to the five original rooms in a chic Barcelona apartment block that have since spilled out to 12 rooms and suites and two spacious apartments. The labour of love here is evident: it's stuffed with European flea-market finds, velvet armchairs, enormous mirrors and huge railway clocks. Loft-style bedrooms have exposed brick walls hung with quirky artworks, low beds on polished wooden floors and mosaic bathrooms. Continental breakfast is served upstairs among shelves of well-thumbed travel books - and don't forget to leave a Polaroid and a note on the wish tree at check-out.

#### The 5 Rooms

Pau Claris 72, 08010 Barcelona. Enq (00 34 93) 342 7880; thefiverooms.com. Doubles from £108 B&B. British Airways flies to Barcelona from London Gatwick, City and Heathrow from £102 return. Enq ba.com.



HOTEL YASMIN

### HOTEL YASMIN, PRAGUE

Steps from Prague's famous Wenceslas Square, Hotel Yasmin's location couldn't be more central. In contrast to its historic surroundings, the décor is all avant-garde sculptures and Tom Dixon-designed mirror-ball lights. The 196 minimal bedrooms comprise superior and deluxe rooms, junior suites and the 613 sq ft Yasmin Suite (which has its own lounge but is still a purse-friendly £110 per night). The equally contemporary Noodles restaurant serves up, well, noodle dishes from around the world, from Mongolian tsuivan with lamb to Korean glass potto noodles with roasted beef.



PRAGUE

#### Hotel Yasmin

Politických vězňů 913/12, 110 00 Prague. Enq (00 420 2) 3410 0100; hotel-yasmin.cz. Doubles from £87 B&B. British Airways flies to Prague from London Heathrow from £137.10 return. Enq ba.com.



MARRAKECH

### TM NIGHTS, MARRAKECH

A breath of fresh bougainvillea-scented air in the sun-baked walls of Marrakech's northern medina, TM Nights is a trio of beautiful riads with elegant courtyards tucked away in the labyrinth of streets. The 11 bedrooms have handcrafted wooden furniture, tapestries, filigree lamps, cool stone rain-showers, and sink-into beds; slipping between the crisp linen sheets is heaven. Breakfast on the roof with freshly brewed coffee and sweet Moroccan crêpes, soak up the rays on the loungers or take a dip in the inviting pool.

#### TM Nights

35 Derb Ihihane, Sidi Ben Sūmane, 4000 Marrakech. Enq (00 212) 668 760124; tmnights.com. Doubles from £68 B&B. Easyjet flies to Marrakech from London Gatwick and Stanstead from around £82 return. Enq easyjet.com.

Words Sara d'Souza. Photographs Alamy, Getty Images, Robert Harding, Keiron O'Connor



AMSTERDAM



HOTEL V FREDERIKSPLEIN

### HOTEL V FREDERIKSPLEIN, AMSTERDAM

In the trendy De Pijp district of Amsterdam is the sultry Hotel V Frederiksplein. A candlelit reception with a flickering fireplace leads you up to 48 sleek bedrooms, which range from bijoux to very bijoux. Size is more than made up for with the design, though; think woven wallpapers, glass pendant lamps and charcoal grey felt beds. Downstairs the cowhide-clad bar has free tea, coffee and hot chocolate until midnight and a hearty buffet breakfast every morning.

#### Hotel V Frederiksplein

Weteringschans 136, 1017 XV Amsterdam. Enq (00 31 20) 662 3233; hotelv.nl. Doubles from £70 B&B. Easyjet flies to Amsterdam from London Gatwick, Stanstead and Luton from around £78 return. Enq easyjet.com.



TM NIGHTS