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Top 10 new U.S. hotels
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It's inevitable: every year, New York races in ahead of the pack with the most new hotel openings. This year its offerings were even greater than usual, so choosing was especially difficult. After picking a pair of New York hotel openings, we spread out across the country to round out our list with a balance of tried-and-

true luxury hotel groups, trendy new hotel brands and notable independents and boutiques. While quality is our number-one criterion, we're also interested in originality, whether it's in the form of amenities (skateboards) or design (a high-rise "wave"). It's time to hit the road and check out our top ten hotel picks for the year.

NEW YORK, New York **Mondrian SoHo**

It took a while for the Mondrian to make it to Manhattan, but the wait was well worth it. Lovers of the L.A. flagship will appreciate the sleek look at this SoHo locale. The décor is inspired by Jean Cocteau's fantastical film "La Belle et la Bête" — though it's safe to say that you'll find mostly beauties hanging out at Imperial No. Nine (serving sustainable seafood) and Mr. H bar (inspired by visions of old New York). Designer [guest rooms](#) feature custom furniture and skyline views, the best of the latter to be had from the Penthouse, which sits atop this tallest building in SoHo. Its south-facing terrace alone measures in at 1,100 square feet, making it one of the most decadent ways to splurge in the city. For more information, visit www.mondriansoho.com

NEW YORK New York **The Nolitan**

The area north of Little Italy is by no means a new Manhattan neighborhood, but its trendy "Nolita" designation makes it feel that way. Let's just say this area is experiencing a rejuvenation that is bolstered in part by The Nolitan. With just 55 guest rooms (most with private balconies), this hotel offers an intimate experience. We like the personal touches, from bath products by a local boutique to the free use of bikes and skateboards for exploring the city. Rounding out the reasons to stay here: an exclusive rooftop sundeck, pet-friendly policies and ellabess restaurant, serving seasonal American cuisine in a light and airy space — the perfect complement to the area's iconic pizza and pasta joints. Read a complete hotel review of [The Nolitan](#)

ILLINOIS, Chicago **Radisson Blu Aqua Hotel Chicago**

Long known for its position on the [budget](#) end of the chain hotel range, Radisson is making a new name for itself with its high-concept "Blu" hotels. The first Radisson Blu in the U.S., this Chicago property was designed to grab attention. The wave-like façade is already a landmark in a city known for its architecture, and a shorefront location means beautiful views over Lake Michigan and the city. With their contemporary vibe, the guest [rooms and suites](#) are notable, as is Filini restaurant, the house basketball court and the on-site running trail. But what we really like about this place is its 80,000-square-foot rooftop recreation deck and garden, making the hotel a true urban retreat. Read a complete hotel review of the [Radisson Blu Aqua Hotel Chicago](#)

FLORIDA Fort Lauderdale **B Ocean Fort Lauderdale**

With its endless collection of cute phrases, from "B indulged" to "B adventurous," this property has the art of B-ing down. But B Ocean Fort Lauderdale has more to offer than just the gimmick of its name. The Stunning, Chic and Captivating guest rooms and suites deliver on the expectations they raise, with a fresh, clean style that matches the views of white sands and the Atlantic Ocean. Just steps away, the shore offers activities such as jet skiing and parasailing. Dining includes SAIA sushi restaurant and B'stro on the Beach. The hotel also has some quirky programs that we love. B Humane supports sea turtle conservation, while B Sensitive emphasizes green initiatives. For more information, visit www.bhotelsandresorts.com

CALIFORNIA Los Angeles **The Hotel Wilshire**

There was a time when having drinks with a view meant schlepping to one of the overcrowded, overpriced hotels on the Sunset Strip. But that changed with the arrival of The Hotel Wilshire. Set on the Wilshire Corridor between Beverly Hills and downtown L.A., this LEED-certified property does its competitors one better by boasting views of the city skyline and the Hollywood Hills from its rooftop bar. This perch is also where guests will find The Roof on Wilshire, with a menu of innovative American cuisine by chef Eric Greenspan. The pool is up here too, an intimate retreat with cabanas done in a relaxed yellow-and-taupe color scheme that extends to the 74 guest rooms and multi-media suites below. As for our accommodation of choice, it's the Penthouse Suite with — you guessed it — amazing views. Read a complete hotel review of **The Hotel Wilshire**

NEVADA Las Vegas **Ravella at Lake Las Vegas**

For those who find the Italian vibe of The Venetian appealing, but aren't so hot on staying right on the Strip, Ravella is a great alternative. Just seventeen miles from the action, it enjoys a beautiful, tranquil desert setting. And although you won't find gondoliers drifting around the property, you can steer your own paddleboat on Lake Las Vegas, right outside the hotel's front door. Ravella is also adjacent to MonteLago Village, which means its own restaurants and facilities (day spa, pool, lagoon with white sand beach) are complemented by a wealth of upscale shops, fine dining, a marina and championship golf courses ... all within walking distance. For more information, visit www.ravellavegas.com

ARIZONA Phoenix
The Westin Phoenix Downtown

It's not that we mind southwest style. It's just that we like to have choices, no matter what region we're visiting. Although this Westin features tasteful desert shades throughout its guest rooms and public spaces, it is (at heart) a contemporary urban property. Complementing the eclectic selection of restaurants in the surrounding business and entertainment district, casual on-site Province offers a menu influenced by the flavors of Spain and Central and South America. For relaxation, The Library provides a classy, quiet indoor setting, while the terrace pool is the perfect place to soak in the Arizona sun. For more information, visit www.starwoodhotels.com

MARYLAND Baltimore
Four Seasons Hotel Baltimore

Though we love the new hotel brands popping up these days, we're always happy when a Four Seasons comes to town. Along with signature luxury, this one offers a terrific shoreline location in Baltimore's trendy Harbor East neighborhood — making it feel like a destination resort right in the city. Done in handsome shades of brown, guest rooms and suites overlook the harbor and downtown skyline through floor-to-ceiling windows. A nice local touch: abstract artworks from the Washington Color School. The European-style spa features a VIP specialty suite, and the property's highlight is Michael Mina's Wit & Wisdom, A Tavern, offering modern interpretations of classic tavern fare. For more information, visit www.fourseasons.com

INDIANA Indianapolis
JW Marriott Indianapolis

If we had to pick one hotel from this year's list for conferences, this would be it. The largest JW Marriott in the U.S., with one of the biggest Marriott ballrooms in the world, this property anchors the \$450 million Marriott Place, a development of five of the brand's hotels connected to the Indiana Convention Center. Just steps from museums, the zoo and White River State Park, this property features 100,000 square feet of event space, 343 guest rooms with floor-to-ceiling windows and two excellent dining venues — Tavern on the Plaza and Osteria Pronto, serving Tuscan-style cuisine in a relaxed setting. For more information, visit www.marriott.com

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