

TRAVEL+ LEISURE

Your Picks

THE WORLD'S BEST

AND THE
WINNERS ARE...

Hotels

Airlines

Cruises

Islands

Cities

+ More

WORLD'S BEST

It's that time of year again. Our astute readers—more than 200,000 of them—have spoken, naming these destinations, hotels, and operators the very best in travel. From a luxurious train winding through the Andes to a Thai island beloved for its health and wellness offerings, this year's winners create unforgettable experiences that linger long after the trip has ended. Here's to where we've been—and where we're headed next.

**EDITED BY
JESS FELDMAN**

**GRAND HOTEL
TREMEZZO,
LAKE COMO**
SEE PAGE 93



AWARDS 2026

PHOTOGRAPH BY FEDERICO CIAMEI

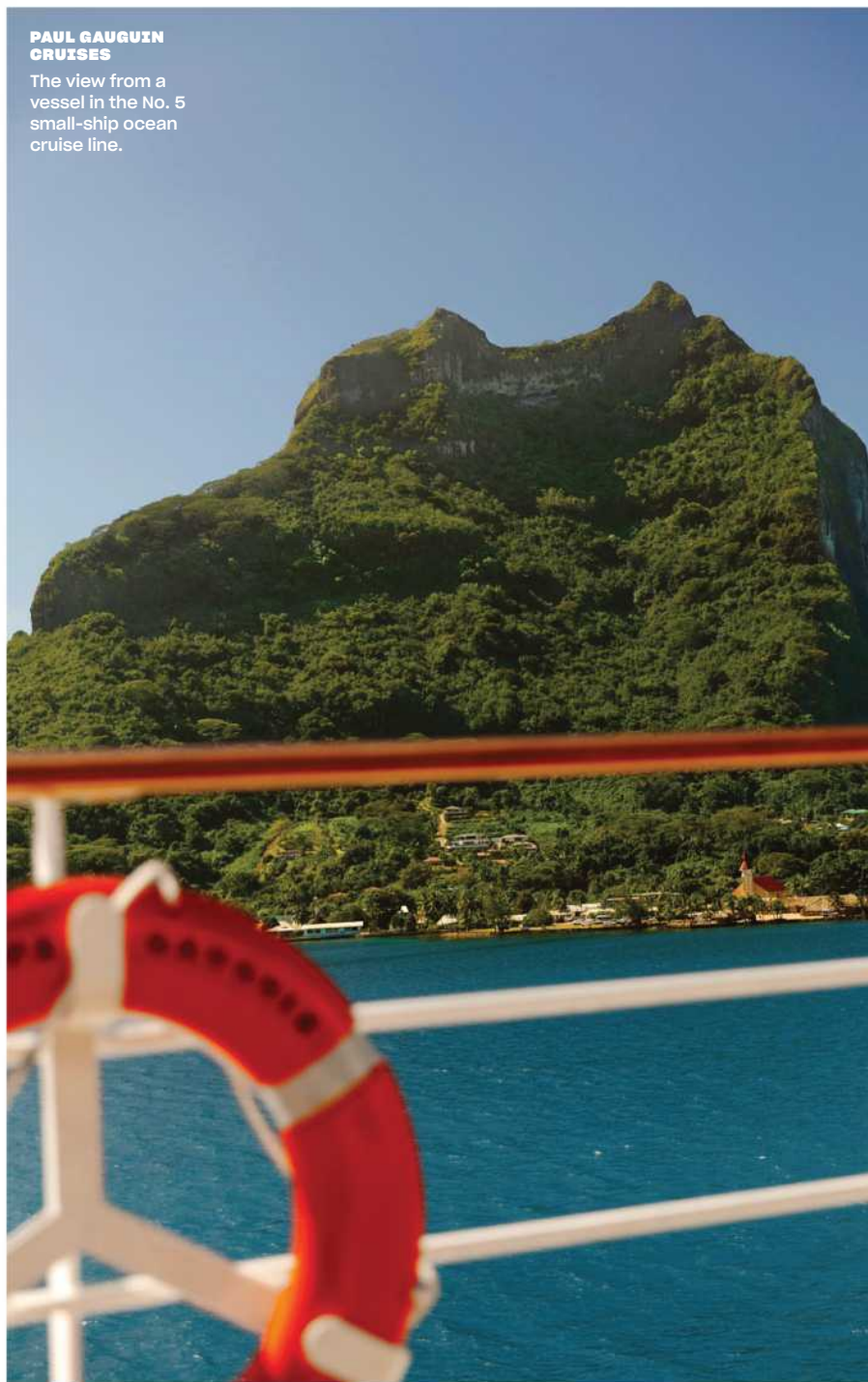
TRAVELANDLEISURE.COM **61**

CRUISE LINES

While new itineraries and refreshed fleets continue to entice, this year's list reaffirms the enduring appeal of longtime favorites—every No. 1 winner has held onto its title from last year.

PAUL GAUGUIN CRUISES

The view from a vessel in the No. 5 small-ship ocean cruise line.



5 BEST

MEGA-SHIP OCEAN CRUISE LINES

1. **Virgin Voyages**
94.01
Unabashedly fun and adults-only, Virgin is proudly one of a kind, with four vibrant ships that caught the attention of voters for the fourth year running.
2. **Celebrity Cruises** ★
84.26
3. **Princess Cruises** ★
81.93
4. **Royal Caribbean International** ★
80.13
5. **Costa Cruises**
78.60

5 BEST

LARGE-SHIP OCEAN CRUISE LINES

1. **Disney Cruise Line** ★
86.79
With a growing fleet of state-of-the-art ships, this legendary brand knows just how to wow families and multigen groups, whether through its varied entertainment or its top-tier food.
2. **Holland America Line** ★
84.79
3. **Celebrity Cruises** ★
83.58
4. **Cunard** ★
83.41
5. **MSC Cruises**
80.42

10 BEST

MIDSIZE-SHIP OCEAN CRUISE LINES

1. **Crystal**
93.20
This luxury stalwart with two stunning ships continues to elevate: its new partnership with Abercrombie & Kent brings superb on-land excursions that complement a compelling onboard experience. ▶

AMANDA VILLAROSA

MIDSIZE-SHIP OCEAN CRUISE LINES *continued*

- Explora Journeys
92.53
- Viking ★
92.40
- Silversea ★
89.69
- Seabourn ★
88.97
- Regent Seven Seas Cruises ★
88.58
- Azamara
88.20
- Oceania Cruises ★
86.33
- Holland America Line ★
85.34
- Celestyal Cruises
85.33
- Aqua Expeditions
98.81
- Metropolitan Touring
98.68
- Ecoventura
97.41
- Overseas Adventure Travel
95.66
- Variety Cruises
94.00
- Silversea ★
93.99
- National Geographic-Lindblad Expeditions
93.53
- Atlas Ocean Voyages
92.96
- The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection
91.42

5 BEST

SMALL-SHIP OCEAN CRUISE LINES

- Viking ★
96.04
Though it also has a large fleet of river and ocean vessels, Viking won plaudits this year for its twin expedition ships that take adventurous travelers to the ends of the earth.
- The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection
91.80
- Windstar Cruises ★
90.38
- Silversea ★
89.76
- Paul Gauguin Cruises
89.08

10 BEST

INTIMATE-SHIP OCEAN CRUISE LINES

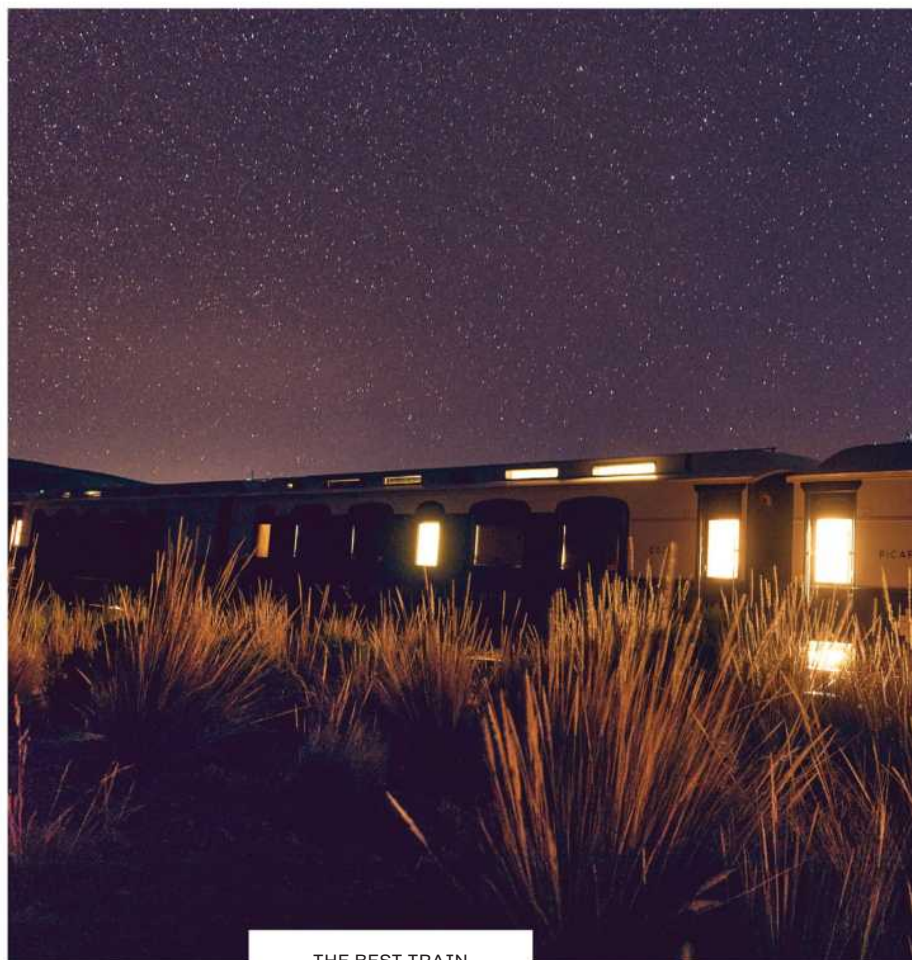
- Quasar Expeditions
98.88
A longtime favorite of T+L readers, this Ecuadorian-owned company is the one to call on for a superlative trip in the Galápagos

Islands that lets you take in the wildlife without skimping on luxury.

10 BEST

RIVER CRUISE LINES

- The Oberoi Luxury Nile Cruisers
97.82
Best known for its five-star hotels, India-based Oberoi brings that same level of polish to its stunning river ships that travel along the Nile.
- Aqua Expeditions
97.31
- Tauck ★
96.56
- Viking ★
95.43
- Grand Circle Cruise Line
95.23
- AmaWaterways
95.06
- Uniworld Boutique River Cruises ★
94.97
- Avalon Waterways
90.72
- Scenic Luxury Cruises
86.89
- Emerald Cruises
86.58



THE BEST TRAIN

ANDEAN EXPLORER, A BELMOND TRAIN



COLLIN HUGHES

THE METHODOLOGY

A look at how this year's World's Best Awards survey was conducted, and how the results were compiled.

A SURVEY DEVELOPED by the editors of *Travel + Leisure*, in association with research firm Proof Insights, was made available at tlworldsbest.com from October 20, 2025, through February 23, 2026. Readers were invited to participate through *Travel + Leisure* magazine, travelandleisure.com, T+L tablet editions, newsletters, and social media. Proof Insights maintained the survey, ensuring its security, and also collected and tabulated responses. To protect the integrity of the data, after the survey closed, *Travel + Leisure* and Proof Insights screened the responses to identify fraudulent votes, which were eliminated from the final tallies.

Respondents were asked to rate airlines, airports, car-rental companies, cities, cruise ships, destination spas, hotels, hotel brands, islands, luxury villa-rental companies, tour operators, trains, safari outfitters, and U.S. national parks on a number of characteristics (see right). For each characteristic, respondents could choose a rating of excellent, above average, average, below average, or poor. The final scores are averages of these responses. Scores shown have been rounded to the nearest hundredth of a point; in the event of a true tie, winners share the same ranking. In most categories, respondents could also rate optional characteristics; these ratings are not included in the overall scores.

Hotels were categorized as city, resort, or inn based on their locations, amenities, and number of rooms. For resorts, the U.S. was divided into 18 states and regions: Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Greater Miami Beach, Hawaii, Montana, New York, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Texas, Utah, Wyoming, the Mid-Atlantic (Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania), the West (Alaska, Idaho, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Washington), the Midwest (Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin), New England (Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont), and the South (Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia). Inns were categorized as having 40 rooms or less and also an intimate, historic feel, as well as fewer amenities than a property listed as a resort.

For the cruise category, respondents were asked to rate individual ships; the results were combined to generate scores for cruise lines in each of the six categories. They are: mega-ship ocean cruise lines (capacity of 1,400 cabins or more), large-ship ocean cruise lines (800 to 1,399 cabins), midsize-ship ocean cruise lines (300 to 799 cabins), small-ship ocean cruise lines (150 to 299 cabins), intimate-ship ocean cruise lines (149 or fewer cabins), and river cruise lines. Some cruise lines may appear in multiple categories, depending on the makeup of their fleet.

A minimum number of responses was necessary for a candidate to be eligible for inclusion in the World's Best Awards. Some companies were eligible to be rated in multiple categories; they were scored independently for each category.



CATEGORIES & CHARACTERISTICS

AIRLINES

Cabin comfort, in-flight service, customer service, value.

AIRPORTS

Access, check-in/ security, restaurants/ bars, shopping, design.

CAR-RENTAL COMPANIES

Vehicle selection, vehicle availability, car-rental locations, service, value.

CITIES

Sights/landmarks, culture, food, friendliness, shopping, value.

CRUISE SHIPS

Cabins/facilities, food, service, itineraries/destinations, excursions/activities, value.

DESTINATION SPAS

Accommodations/ facilities, treatments, service, food, value.

HOTELS

Rooms/facilities, location, service, food, value.

HOTEL BRANDS

Locations, rooms/facilities, food, service, value.

ISLANDS

Natural attractions/ beaches, activities/ sights, restaurants/food, people/friendliness, value.

LUXURY VILLA-RENTAL COMPANIES

Service, locations, amenities, range of properties, value.

TOUR OPERATORS & SAFARI OUTFITTERS

Staff/guides, itineraries/ destinations, activities, accommodations, food, value.

TRAINS

Accommodations, food, service, itineraries, destinations, value.

U.S. NATIONAL PARKS

Natural attractions, activities, lodging, wildlife, accessibility.



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