

## Loyal host

I first stayed there 30 years ago and, after many visits, the **Hotel Saint-Nicolas** in the Luxembourg village of Remich (31, Esplanade, [www.saint-nicolas.lu](http://www.saint-nicolas.lu)) still has a special place in my heart. The setting is relaxing and, with Germany just the other side of the Moselle, a salutary reminder of how Europe has changed for the better. Lucien, the owner, is a perfect host: enthusiastic, considerate, multilingual and always looking to improve, already high standards for his guests. The latest addition is an impressive wellness centre.

For me, the hotel's charm is that it gets the basics right: a genuinely friendly welcome, cheerful service, comfortable rooms, really good food and space to unwind in the lovely surroundings.

Rory Watson, news reporter

## Sculptured dreams

Although I'm not one to indulge in out-of-the-way spa resorts, scrumptious luxury and spending the day at the pool, I do have one guilty fantasy: the **Octogone Terre** hotel (Ouaha Sidi Brahim, La Palmeraie, Morocco, [www.terre.com](http://www.terre.com)) in Marrakech. A while back, I met Tourya Othman, a Moroccan-Belgian artist with American husband, who told me about the large bronze sculptures she made for the resort, and how her husband hand-crafted all the wooden furniture, and how the whole building is made of earth. This worked for the eco-conscious tourist in me. The resort is in La Palmeraie, known as the palm tree desert. It is full of citrus trees, bougainvillea, birds high up in the branches, and has a very, very large, and enchanting swimming pool (quiet, eco tourist in me). My last visit to Marrakech was before I met Tourya, but, as you can understand, I'm dying to go to see her. In return, I vow to never eat meat or drive a car again.

Karen Van Godtsenhoven, web journalist,  
vegetarian & bike rider

## Dress up

I'm a sucker for theme hotels, which is why the one I remember the most in more than two decades of travelling is on the Oregon coast in the United States.

A mansion looking out onto the sea, the **Sylvia Beach Hotel** (267 NW Cliff St, Newport, Oregon, [www.sylviabeach-hotel.com](http://www.sylviabeach-hotel.com)) is split into 20 guest rooms, all decorated in the spirit of a famous author. In the Agatha Christie, one finds clues hidden about the room; the magnificent Herman Melville is decked out in richly coloured wood, anchors and spears, while the design of the Colette is based on one of the French novelist's hideaways.

A little closer to home, I have also fallen in love with Martin's **Patershof** in Mechelen (4 Karmelietenstraat) for entirely different reasons. It's less bohemian but heavy on theme – the entire hotel is built inside a mid-19th century Catholic church and its adjoining friary. The only known hotel of its kind in the world, every room contains either an original stained-glass window or vaulted ceiling. It's rare that you step inside a hotel room and pull in your breath. The right room in the Patershof will do that.

Lisa Bradshaw, deputy editor of  
Flanders Today

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