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DESTINATIONS

Vancouver's Top Hotels
New York: Theater and Dining
London for Gen Y

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CULTURE FIX

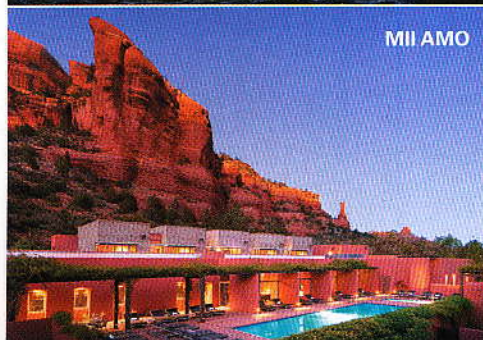
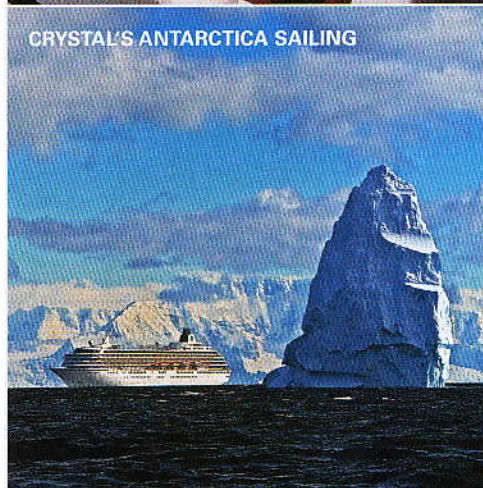
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On the cover, Kate Murphy of Wings Travel

COVER PHOTO BY GARY NEVITT PHOTOGRAPHY





Hidden Gem in Costa Rica Gets Makeover

The former Arenal Nayara Hotel & Gardens, a hidden haven for your nature-loving VIPs in Costa Rica, reports that it has completed a \$10 million renovation to most of the resort and changed its name. Located in the outskirts of the amazing Arenal Volcano, one of the top sights of Costa Rica, Arenal Nayara (www.arenalnayara.com)—under the new name, **Nayara Hotel, Spa & Gardens**—offers a tranquil refuge from the hectic streets of San Jose or nearby La Fortuna with an immersive experience with nature.

The Skinny: The rooms and public spaces have been completely redone and 25 new freestanding bungalows have been added, along with a new concept wine bar, and Sushi Amor, the Japanese/Latin fusion restaurant with a menu created by one of the top chefs in Latin America, Jann Van Oordt.

Nice Touch: An elevated spa has been built on pylons so as not to disturb the lush vegetation in one of the planet's most fragile ecosystems. The spa has four treatment rooms, two open-air massage rooms and two air-conditioned rooms. The

treatment menu, which features a blend of the best in Asian and Latin American beauty and wellness techniques, includes the use of indigenous ingredients like volcanic mud, coffee and chocolate.

Hint: Nayara can arrange romantic dinners for two in a location of the guests' choice where there is a dedicated chef and service team to coordinate a special menu created especially for them.

Nayara can also arrange the unusual if guests should wish, such as a private, guided helicopter tour of the Arenal Volcano, touching down to explore the area and enjoy a private dinner with a dedicated chef and service team.

Luxury travel advisors should contact Resident Manager Jorge Gutierrez (residentmanager@arenalnayara.com; 954-364-8899) with any queries.

The resort is a member of Small Luxury Hotels of the World (www.slh.com).

Fly in to Juan Santamaria Airport (SJO). Travel from the airport takes about three hours to the hotel, which can arrange private transfers in an air-conditioned van.

—Joe Pike

Hotel de Crillon in Paris is rumored to be closing for two years at the end of 2012 for a total overhaul. The palace hotel was purchased by Saudi royalty in 2010 for \$355 million. The renovation will add a spa and increase the event space. Noteworthy: The Hotel Ritz Paris is also shuttering for a makeover this year. With the arrival of several ultra-luxury Asian brands on the Parisian hotel scene, the established palace hotels are on a renovation spree.
www.crillon.com

The Ranch at Rock Creek in Montana named Maja Kilgore GM. She arrives after a four-year role as GM at Laucala Island in Fiji. Her career also includes tenures at several Relais & Chateaux properties, including Burg Schlitz, Alpenhof Murnau and Hotel Geiger in Germany, and the Matahari Beach Resort in Indonesia. She can be reached at Kilgore@theranchatrockcreek.com
www.theranchatrockcreek.com

Trump International Hotel & Tower, Chicago has tapped Thomas Lents as executive chef for Sixteen, where he plans a new culinary program that melds French technique with modern American cuisine. Lents, a protégé of Joël Robuchon, joins the hotel from Joël Robuchon at The Mansion in Las Vegas' MGM Grand.