

LUXURY WITHOUT COMPROMISE

# Robb Report

THE  
TRAVEL  
ISSUE

AUGUST 2025



Rocking chairs from the Grand Hotel on Lake Michigan's Mackinac Island make relaxing souvenirs.

## Suite Treats

You can check out anytime you like, but a wave of clothing collaborations, homewares, and other goods ensures you never really leave your favorite luxury hotels.

**H**otelier Marie-Louise Sciò is glad she didn't know what she didn't know when she joined the family business, which operates a trio of luxury stays in Italy. "I didn't go to hospitality school," says the entrepreneur, whose best-known property is Porto Ercole's Il Pellicano. "It was a very rigid world, with a lot of men running it." Her fresh, out-of-the-box thinking has helped her forge a reputation as an innovator—not least for her approach to the hotel's boutique, which was once just "a little shop with crappy caps and all that."

To bring it up to snuff, she began partnering with a who's who of well-known brands and makers, such as fine-jewelry designer Francesca Amfitheatrof and even Birkenstock. "That was the groundbreaking one, and it was really huge in terms of sales and global reach," she says. "And it came out of a personal necessity, as I was wearing them all the time I was in the hotel."





Passalacqua's menswear collaboration with CDLP.



A throw pillow from Krun, Germany's Schloss Elmau.

That sold-out collaboration—and the store itself— isn't just a loss-leading gimmick. "It does make money for us," Sciò adds. Now, Il Pellicano has expanded beyond just accommodations: It owns and operates a motor yacht, ideal for trips to the nearby Tuscan islands, and has even gotten into online retail via Issimo, where you can buy wares emblazoned with the property's logo.

High-end hotels are no longer content simply to charge you for a room or a sun lounger at a beach club. The best ones are dipping their toes into everything from clothes to accessories to yacht charters. Tuscany's Borgo Santo Pietro operates a 136-foot mahogany schooner, *Satori*, that guests can book for a few days of sailing on the Tyrrhenian Sea; Mexico's Paradero Todos Santos offers a 46-foot sail-powered catamaran to explore the Sea of Cortez. Saint-Tropez's Hotel Byblos teamed up with Globe-Trotter to make a suitcase, while Le Bristol in Paris created a highly wearable capsule collection with Sporty & Rich aimed at injecting some youthful joie de vivre into the sometimes fusty five-star hotel. Back in Italy, Lake Como's Passalacqua hotel recently debuted a jaunty menswear capsule with the Swedish brand CDLP.



But these collaborations aren't just about the way you travel. They're about reminding you of your favorite destinations in your daily life. Need a new rocking chair? Head to the Grand Hotel on Michigan's Mackinac Island, renowned for its massive front porch. Redecorating? Germany's Schloss Elmau will sell you an entire bolt of one of its signature fabrics.

Henry Harteveldt, a travel-industry analyst with Atmosphere Research Group, says there's one strategy underlying such brand extensions. "It's about loyalty outside the construct of a loyalty program," he says. "It's about the direct sale of a yacht charter, but also it maintains a guest's engagement with the brand overall."

Such lifestyle offshoots have been attempted before, but the forms they take are getting more creative and elastic. Like so many other trends in travel, the inflection point was the pandemic. "I remember ordering breakfast from the Berkeley in London, which was delivered to me, so suddenly the hotel wasn't somewhere you went—it was in your home," says Annie Fitzsimmons, who works with travel agency Embark Beyond. Some hotels even launched private members' programs at that time, adding a localized source of revenue less reliant on guests coming from afar. Operators wanted to diversify, even blur, their role in our lives to better safeguard against another time when simply selling rooms was no longer possible—or enough.



Le Bristol's preppy partnership with Sporty & Rich.

This expansion beyond rooms and suites is a marker of a wider shift in luxury writ large. "Hospitality has been the fastest-growing luxury sector overall, and it's only going to get bigger," says luxury expert Winston Chesterfield of Barton Consulting, noting the countless studies showing the prominence of experiences over traditional hard goods. "Travel is the ultimate luxury, because you're prepared to spend thousands, sometimes tens of thousands, to only keep memories or photos. As soon as you've experienced it, it's gone." If you're going to buy something, he adds, why not splurge on an item that comes with innate lifestyle associations?

"Being associated with these hotels, it has an equity value, especially in a social-media age." He pauses. "More than anything, we're being beaten over the head with luxury hotels because people want it, and they love it."