

## More Than Just a Bed

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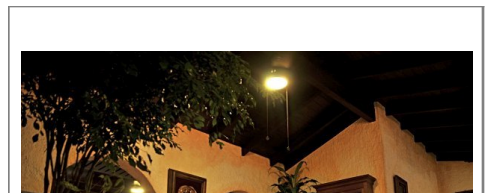
For many years, hotels served the purpose of providing a roof with a basic level of convenience and comfort to travelers who came to spend the night while working or traveling by day. But those days are long gone; now increasing numbers of guests are seeking hotels that are experiences and adventures in themselves, far removed from an association with the term "standard."

Boutique hotels are the answer to this new demand. It is said that this new type of accommodation emerged in the 1980s in the United States and Great Britain, to please the most discerning tourists seeking a personalized experience distinct from those offered by the big hotel chains.

The term "boutique hotel" refers precisely to those known for offering personalized service in a unique and often luxurious setting. They are also small hotels with fewer than 100 rooms; in Latin America, the average is 30 rooms or less.

Upon arriving at a hotel of this class, it is common to find buildings that have high architectural value, and properties that were once charming family residences. Their interiors often sport original signature designs, or classic styles (Tuscan, Caribbean, rustic). The rooms usually also offer unique décor with personal touches like paintings by local artists and beds and accessories made by local craftsmen.

Guests can expect other exclusive amenities, like CDs with a selection of local music and personal hygiene products including natural soaps, shampoos, and creams sometimes made by local women or community groups, while some places offer products



from prestigious and well-known brands. Many hotels also have renowned chefs and bartenders, menus that can be adjusted to the dietary needs of customers, foods with added value such as gourmet coffees, organic fruits, and vegetables, and even produce from their own garden! Many of these also offer luxurious spa services.

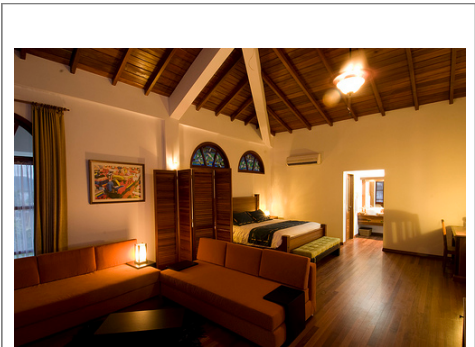


Thanks to their growth and positioning, boutique hotels can be found at most destinations, including beaches, forests, cities, rural areas, etc. Similarly, there are sustainable options that will ensure you a unique stay in a way that is responsible to the environment and communities:

**Casa Ceibo Boutique Hotel & Spa**, Ecuador: located in Bahía de Caráquez, in the coastal region, this hotel features 18 luxurious rooms which have been decorated with furniture of the finest wood of the area, made by local craftsmen.

**Gaia Hotel and Reserve**, Costa Rica: this is a luxury boutique and five-star beach hotel and resort, and a member of "Preferred Boutique" of the Preferred Hotel Group. Its 20 suites and villas are nestled in the magnificent coastal forests of Costa Rica.

**Boutique Hotel Casa Naranja**, Nicaragua: this small hotel is located in a distinctive colonial Nicaraguan home and it's committed to create an atmosphere that shows the talents of Nicaraguan artisans and artists.



Venture out for your boutique lodging experience. See the complete list of **sustainable boutique hotels** at SustainableTrip.org.