

The Best Hotels and Resorts in the U.S. and Canada: The 2019 Gold List

This year's Gold List of our editors' favorite hotels, resorts, and cruise ships in the world is the first transatlantic list for *Traveler*, created by teams in New York and London. It spans six continents and 36 countries. They're gold as in exceptional. Gold as in classic. Gold as in brilliant. Gold as in you'd do it all tomorrow. ([Click here](#) to view every Gold List 2019 pick.)



HOTEL

Four Seasons Hotel at The Surf Club, Surfside, Fla. →

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Over the years, guests here have included Elizabeth Taylor, Wallis Simpson, and the Shah of Iran. Winston Churchill used to rent two cabanas, one to paint in and one “for naps.” (And drinks, as during Prohibition spirits were served illegally here.) Set in Surfside at the less-developed northern end of Miami Beach, this hacienda-style hotel has been brilliantly extended by Richard Meier, whose 12-story glass towers seem to float above the terra cotta tiles of the original 1930s Mediterranean-style pantile roofs, and interiors by Joseph Dirand. The cabanas now house part of the charming spa, where even the brushed-brass key pads on the lockers are a thing of beauty, as well as a handful of Cabana Studio bedrooms, each a pale-but-interesting essay in contrasting textures: canvas, rattan, and travertine. Of course, the restaurants are as much of an attraction: The Surf Club by superchef Thomas Keller opened its doors in summer 2018, and Le Sirenuse Miami comes from the owners of its namesake hotel in Positano. Densely planted with exotic palms, the latter evokes a cultivated jungle, a setting that is almost as memorable as Antonio Mermolia’s deft cooking, where the attention to detail extends to dyeing the ice over which they serve oysters the bluish-green of an iceberg. Try the Kumamotos, flown in daily from Washington state and dressed in a zingy citronelle emulsion. “Spectacular” was the word the *Miami Herald* ran in a headline for the Surf Club in November 1959. And so it is, nearly 60 years on.