

# ELLE

ELLE  
BOOK  
CLUB

25 breezy  
holiday  
reads

DISCOVERIES COPY  
WWW.ELLE.IN

JUNE 2015  
₹ 150

**SABYASACHI  
MUKHERJEE**  
*knows  
what women  
want*

*How to get  
bikini-ready  
in just*  
**4 WEEKS!**

# SUMMER

FLOPPY HATS  
*strappy flats*

SNAZZY SUNNIES  
TINY BAGS

+ *swimsuits for every shape*

**TRAVEL SPECIAL**

*Go Dali-stalking in* **SPAIN**  
*beach-bumming in* **GREECE** *and castle-hopping in* **FRANCE**



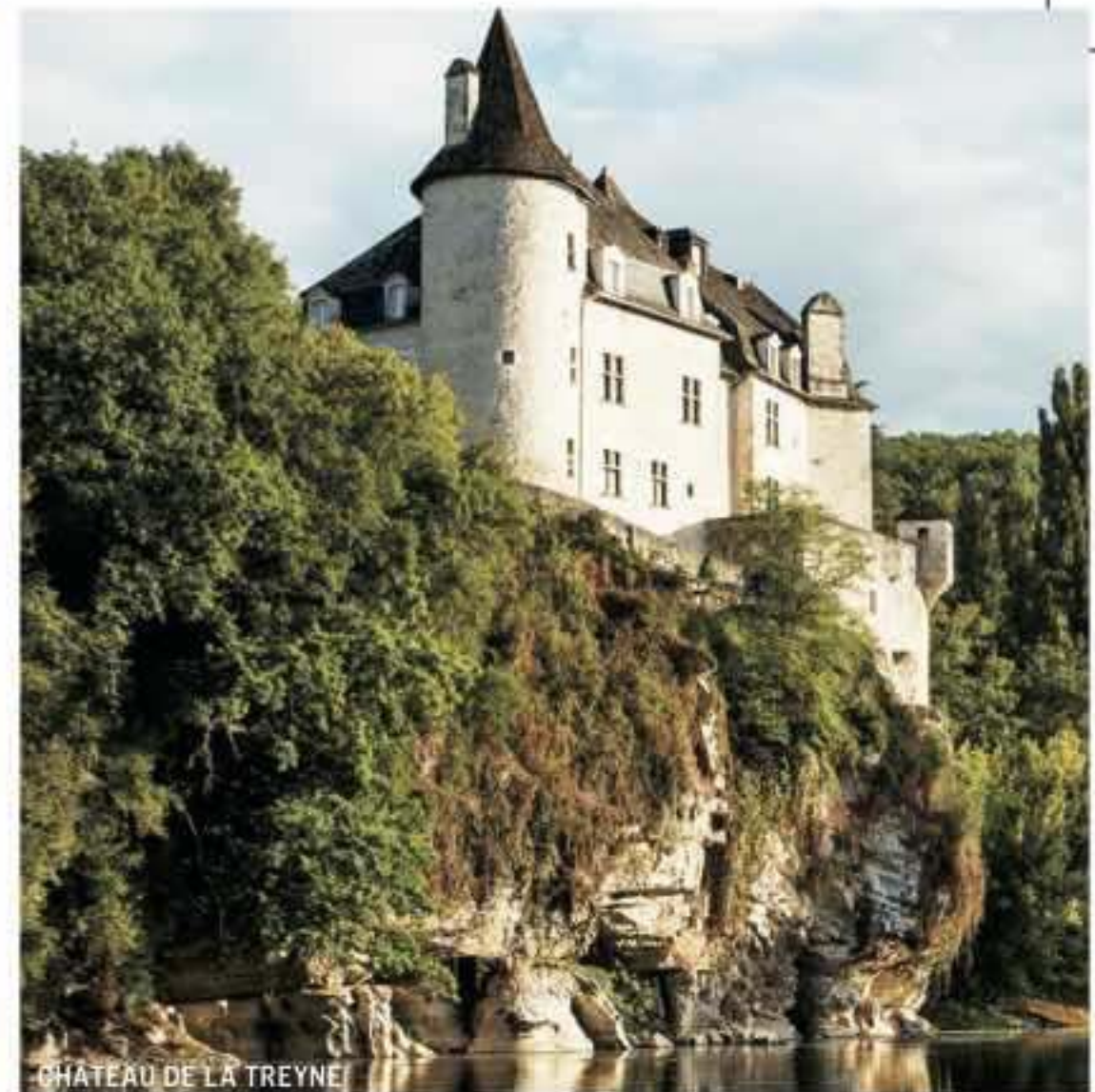


CHÂTEAU DE LA MESSARDIÈRE



# CASTLE ROCK

*The timeworn châteaux, abbeys and manors of France are being given luxury makeovers. Rooksana Hossenally checks in*



CHÂTEAU DE LA TREYNE

into the the ground by renting it out to be a venue of dance and debauchery. It finally became a Mediterranean-style luxury hotel in 1989, after the de la Messardière family was forced to vacate the premises when the structure threatened to collapse. The star feature? Fine dining restaurant, L'Acacia, which offers sweeping blue views of the Pampelonne Bay and classic French food made modern courtesy chef Pierrick Berthier, a legend in these parts.

If you like your fairy tales French and sweetly decrepit, you cannot miss the family-run 18th-century **Domaine de la Baume** ([Domaine-delabaume.com](http://Domaine-delabaume.com)), an hour's drive from the Riviera, on the outskirts of the Verdon Gorges. Before it opened in 2013 as a 15-room Maisons & Hotel Sibuet hideaway, it was the home of Expressionist painter Bernard Buffet for the last 20 years of his life. The hotel is an ode to Provençal soul because of all the history it has amassed in its previous lives as a sheepfold, then the homestead of French nobility for centuries before being partly destroyed by a fire in the early '80s. The main apricot-hued stone country house with blue shutters

France practically teems with centuries-old landmark buildings that have been given a second lease on life as spectacular hotels. In their hallowed rooms, you get creature comforts with a side of quintessential French savoir faire.

Take the five-star **Château de la Messardière** ([Messardiere.com](http://Messardiere.com)), for

instance, two kilometres away from Saint-Tropez, by the azure waters of the Mediterranean Sea. Built in the 19th century, it was a wedding gift to the French cavalry officer Henry Brisson de la Messardière and his artist wife Louise Dupuy-d'Angeac. After he died in the (Roaring) '20s, Louise pretty much ran the place

## THE MICHELIN MAP

Discover the France outside of Paris by its best restaurants



You'll love the whole truffles wrapped in Matignon artichoke with truffle pasta caviar at this chic hotel restaurant. (₹20,000; [Jacques-chibois.com](http://Jacques-chibois.com))

**VILLA EU-GÉNIE, HÔTEL DU PALAIS, BIARRITZ**  
Savour the unexpected fusion of Asian-influenced Basque cuisine with their velvety Txangurro spider crab and galangal croustillant. (₹ 19,400; [Hotel-du-palais.com](http://Hotel-du-palais.com))



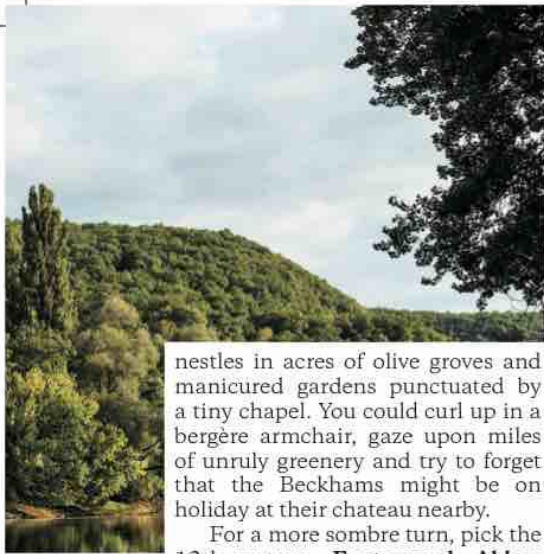
Sample a Provençal staple of seasoned sea bream with a ratatouille and Taggiasca olive coulis, in a delightful village. (₹ 14,400; [Lemascandille.com](http://Lemascandille.com))

**CHÂTEAU DE LA CHÈVRE D'OR, EZE**  
Chef Ronan Kervarrec rustles up a seared duck foie gras with artichokes and black truffle topped with aged parmesan at this cliffside joint. (₹ 28,800; [Chevredor.com](http://Chevredor.com))



A meal at Alain Ducasse's Riviera flagship must include the blue lobster with myrtle berries and ginger. (₹ 33,000; [Alain-ducasse.com](http://Alain-ducasse.com))





nestles in acres of olive groves and manicured gardens punctuated by a tiny chapel. You could curl up in a bergère armchair, gaze upon miles of unruly greenery and try to forget that the Beckhams might be on holiday at their chateau nearby.

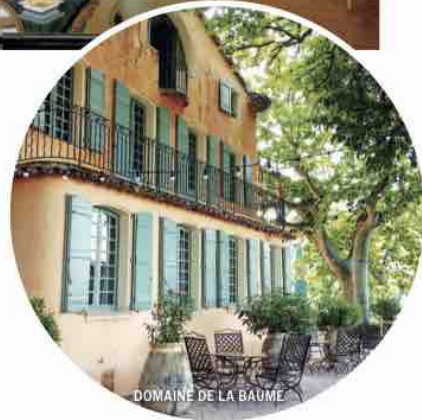
For a more sombre turn, pick the 12th-century **Fontevraud Abbey** ([Fontevraud.fr](http://Fontevraud.fr)) in the romantic Loire region. Design duo Patrick Jouin and Sanjit Manku have rehauled the drab hotel of this former cloister, which has also spent time as the burial site of Richard I, 'Lionheart King of England', a hospice for lepers and later a prison hospital during the French Revolution. Keeping in line with its monastic history, the interiors are designed for the modern ascetic — minimal, super-luxe and washed with neutral beiges, greiges and eggshell blue. Case in point: the old chapel with vaulted ceilings, which is also a very cool iBar.

If you're still bent on a castle, the genuine article, with turrets and moats and what have you, drive two hours away to **Château de la Treyne** ([Chateaudelatreyne.com](http://Chateaudelatreyne.com)) by the idyllic Dordogne river in southwestern France. The 14th-century castle swapped hands countless times, housing kings and knights, as well as French writer André Chamson, former custodian of the Louvre's Egyptian Antiquities art collection, a part of which was temporarily stored at the chateau. In 1982 it was snapped up by its current owners and converted into a



hotel surrounded by cedar gardens and a private forest. The inhouse Michelin-star chef Stéphane Andrieux serves tasty odes to local classics — cut into foie gras done four ways and the succulent Quercy lamb cutlets — in a venue that opens onto a terrace that appears to hang precariously over the Dordogne river. (Don't look down!)

You don't care about any of it, just lead you to the wine? Bordeaux, naturally. Try Bernard Magrez and Michelin-star chef Joël Robuchon's 18th-century mansion, **La Grande Maison** ([Lagrandemaison-bordeaux.com](http://Lagrandemaison-bordeaux.com)). They offer a princely experience — Napoleon III-style interiors made by French craftsmen, along with Hermès-sponsored bath and beauty — with the added bonus of a vineyard that produces four of the country's Grands Crus Classés (the highest qualification for regional wines). It was here that Léon Duguit, the prominent lawyer who built the manor, would host parties for intellectuals from across the globe. Robuchon, who abandoned early religious vocation for French gastronomy, leads you to sin with his signature caviar jelly and crispy truffle tart with smoked bacon. The snoring food coma that follows is decidedly un-French.



Push your liver further at Relais & Châteaux's **Les Crayères** ([Lescrayeres.com](http://Lescrayeres.com)) in Reims in the Champagne-Ardenne region. Sip on world-class bubbly in the cellars of this stylish late-19th-century manor built for her daughter by champagne icon Louise Pommery. Les Crayères was the residence of her descendants and the meeting place for the local bourgeoisie for almost a century before it turned opulent hotel in 1983. By now, you know a Michelin-star restaurant is par for the course and Le Parc, with its unrivalled Wagyu beef and lengthy wine list, will not disappoint. They'll have to call security to prise you away once your holiday is done. ●



**LA BALETTE, LE RELAIS DES TROIS MAS, COLLIERE**  
Bask in the Catalonian sun as you devour Tarbourieh oysters done three ways with pear, mint and Pyrenees caviar. (₹ 12,800; [Relaisdestroismas.com](http://Relaisdestroismas.com))

**LA RÉSERVE RIMBAUD, MONTPELLIER**

The Moorish roasted pigeon on a bed of salmis polenta and seared foie gras hot pot is a must when visiting this riverside restaurant. (₹ 10,480; [Reserve-rimbaud.com](http://Reserve-rimbaud.com))



**BUERHIESEL, STRASBOURG**  
Feast on a Franco-German mash-up of schniiderspaetzle egg pasta and seared frog's legs under a conservatory roof. (₹ 12,200; [Buerhiesel.com](http://Buerhiesel.com))

**LA BASTIDE DE MOUSTIERS, PROVENCE**

Another Alain Ducasse winner is the delicious rabbit casserole with seasonal vegetables in this charming Provençal setting. (₹ 11,600; [Bastide-moustiers.com](http://Bastide-moustiers.com))



**LE FIGUIER DE SAINT ESPRIT, ANTIÈRES**  
Go for Christian Morisset's truffle and potato crust-roasted turbot fish with Xères meat jus at this courtyard restaurant. (₹ 17,200; [Christianmorisset.fr](http://Christianmorisset.fr))

All prices are approx for a meal for two