

SPECIAL
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THE GOLD LIST 2020

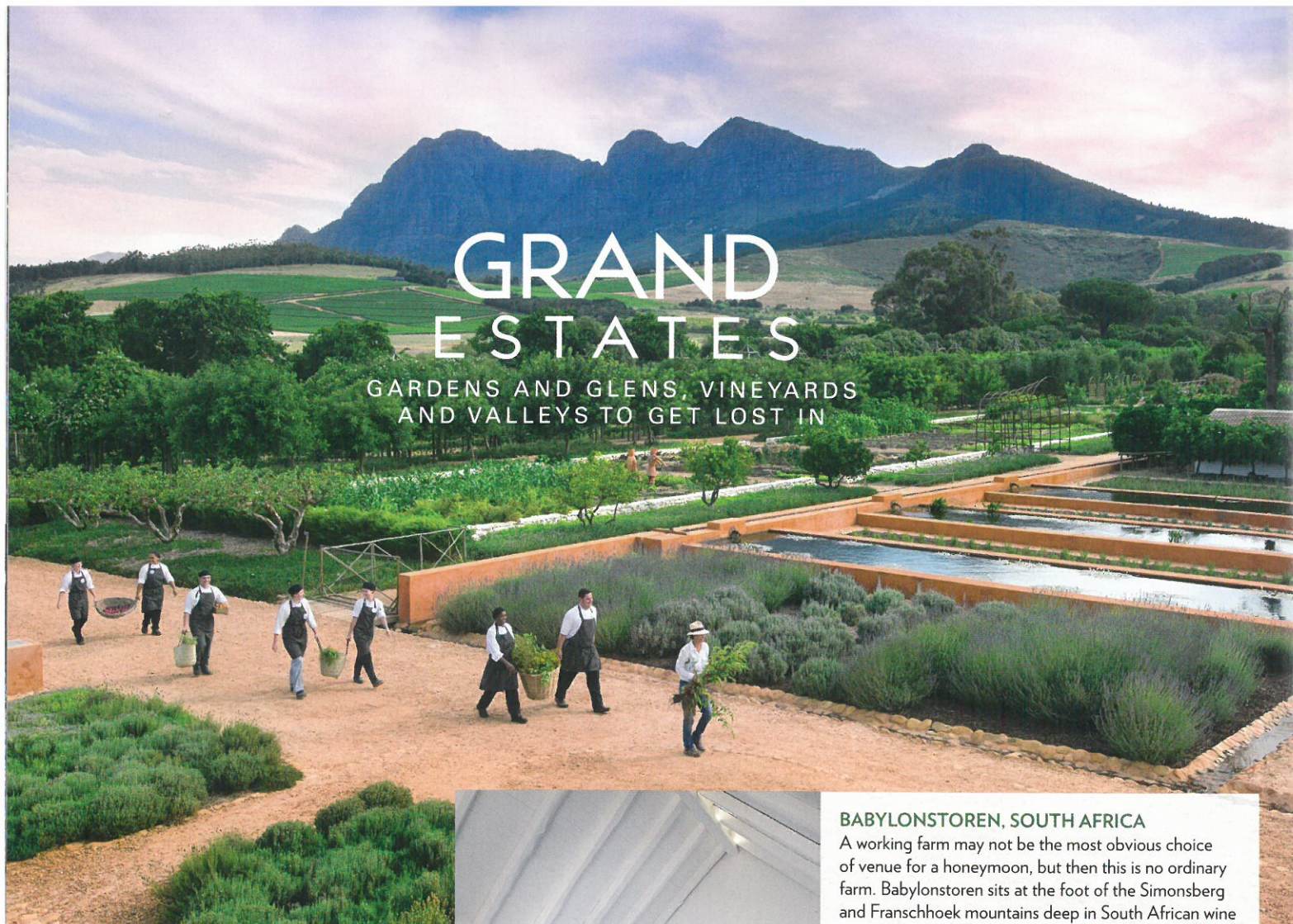
THE EDITORS' ALL-TIME FAVOURITE PLACES TO STAY

EXCEPTIONAL TRAVEL EXPERIENCES
EVERYTHING CLASSIC. EVERYTHING OUTSTANDING



GRAND ESTATES

GARDENS AND GLENS, VINEYARDS AND VALLEYS TO GET LOST IN



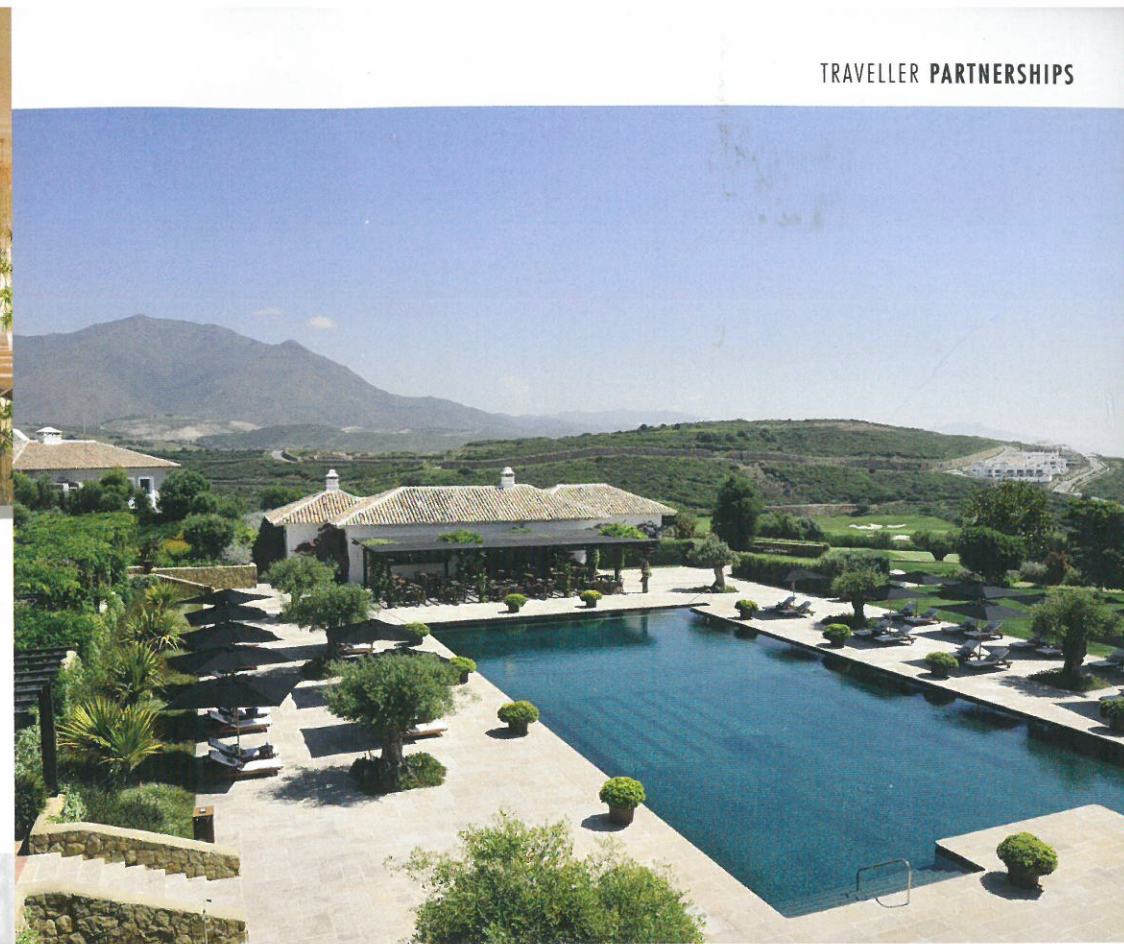
BABYLONSTOREN, SOUTH AFRICA

A working farm may not be the most obvious choice of venue for a honeymoon, but then this is no ordinary farm. Babylonstoren sits at the foot of the Simonsberg and Franschoek mountains deep in South African wine country. Chickens, donkeys and even tortoises roam the paths, the swimming pool is fashioned in the style of a dam and all the fruits, vegetables and plants grown on the eight-acre estate are either edible or medicinal, plucked by chefs in the cool of the morning and going straight to the kitchens (the main restaurant, Babel, has a two-month waiting list) or the spa. The Cape Dutch-style farmhouses are simple but elegant, and the new Fynbos Cottages have sleek glass extensions with incredible views. Be sure to bring home Babylonstoren's award-winning wines as a memory of your stay. babylonstoren.com. *Turquoise Holidays offers three nights' bed and breakfast in a one-bedroom Fynbos Cottage from £1,299 per person, including international flights and car hire. Visit turquoiseholidays.co.uk*



FINCA CORTESIN, SPAIN

There's a reason this glorious property was just voted best hotel in Spain and Portugal at the 2019 *Condé Nast Traveller Readers' Choice Awards*, and it's all to do with space. A rarity among hotels, it's one that can genuinely call itself boutique (with only 67 rooms), yet also has an overall footprint so big that getting lost in its beautiful gardens is a frequent occurrence. But it's not just the grounds that are vast: every cool marble or dusky-pink-painted corridor is a giant curved wonder; the standard rooms feel larger than any city suite; and a lap in one of the several pools takes an eternity. The spa is also enormous, with imposing Grecian-style pillars and even a snow chamber piled high with real snow. Even when the hotel is running at 75% capacity, you'll be hard pushed to bump into more than a handful of other guests. fincacortesin.com



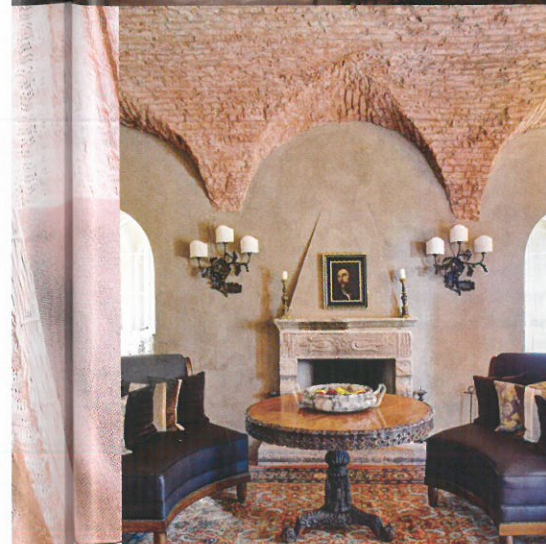
BELMOND CASTELLO DI CASOLE, ITALY

It doesn't get much more extravagantly romantic than this: a 1,000-year-old castle, framed by cypress trees that taper upwards to point at the deep blue sky and surrounded by more than 4,000 acres of valleys and vineyards in the heart of Tuscany. From its elevated vantage point there are views for days across an undulating patchwork of olive groves, oak forest and wild meadows. Soak it all up from the infinity pool as behind you the castle's ancient stone walls glow golden in the brilliant light and fellow guests sip spritzes beneath cream parasols. For extra romance, be sure to arrange a special feast in a forest glade, lit with fairy lights, at a table that 'floats' beneath the boughs. Magical. belmond.com



GLENEAGLES, SCOTLAND

Since it opened in 1924, this Highlands hero hasn't put a foot wrong. Home to three championship golf courses, an award-winning spa, Scotland's only two-Michelin-starred restaurant and more country pursuits than you can shake a fishing rod at, it's little wonder Gleneagles styles itself as 'the glorious playground'. Train a dog, play tennis, go riding or even learn to fly a Harris hawk before unwinding in the exquisite spa. The hotel's brooding exterior is magnificently set against the beautiful Ochil Hills, while inside is all art deco elegance with plush velvets in earthy shades, polished wood, glittering chandeliers and huge silver trugs brimming with Champagne bottles. The Birnam Brasserie's twinkling winter garden is a particularly lovely spot for dinner. gleneagles.com



CHEWTON GLEN, UK

Where the forest meets the sea lies one of the most quintessentially English country-house hotels you could hope to find. This multi-award-winner is both fabulously old school and elegantly modern: think croquet, cricket and a cookery school; fine dining, world-class spa and plush treehouse suites. Borrow a pair of wellies for walks through the 130-acre Hampshire estate before aperitifs in the sumptuous jewel-box bar. chewtonglen.com

