

*Al Mamlouka (+963 11 543 0445; [www.al-mamlouka.com](http://www.al-mamlouka.com)), from £75 a room a night. Alternatively, book with Steppes Travel (01285 650010; [www.steppes-travel.co.uk](http://www.steppes-travel.co.uk)).*

## Luxe for less

### La Abubilla Yurt Hotel

Andalusia, Spain

This tranquil eco-haven in the heart of the Grazalema mountains, south of Ronda, offers luxurious yurt accommodation amid shady olive groves and spectacular mountain views. Each yurt comes with its own bathroom, solar-powered mod cons and a private garden. You'll be lulled by the sound of clucking hens, crickets and goats' bells.

**X-factor** The unique synthesis of bohemian splendour and camping.

**Yurts to ask for** Hand-painted, gypsy-style Mongolian; or cosy, rustic Afghani.

**The crowd** Eco-chic romantics.

**Treat yourself to...** a massage in the shade; a refreshing dip in the pool.

**Must do** Try one of the tantalising three-course alfresco dinners.

**If only...** the dirt track leading up to the camp were a little less taxing for hire cars.

**When to go** March to October.

**Getting there** Fly to Malaga or Gibraltar; it's a two-hour drive up into the hills from either airport.

*La Abubilla Yurt Hotel (+34 660 668241; [www.yurthotel.com](http://www.yurthotel.com)), from £50 a double a night B&B; or £90 including a three-course dinner for two.*

### Imaret

Kavala, Greece

Crowned by more than a hundred domes, Imaret is the most striking landmark in the northern Greek port of Kavala. Built as a seminary in 1817, this heritage hotel is authentic in every detail, from the hand-washed ochre walls to the stone alcoves illuminated by skylights. Treats such as Frette linen and Molton Brown candles make it feel more like Topkapi palace than a monastery.

**X-factor** Sumptuous bathrooms with sunken marble tubs, beaten copper sinks and pampering bath goodies by Bulgari.

**Rooms to ask for** Any with courtyard views, so you can forget the outside world.

**The crowd** Honeymooners and history buffs. It's a child-free zone.

**Treat yourself to...** an olive-oil and lavender massage and a body scrub in the hammam.

**Must do** Plunge into the womb-like indoor pool – two candle-lit chambers clad in shimmering bronze.

**If only...** the sea-view rooms didn't also overlook the carpark.

**When to go** Spring, when an orchestra of birds swarm the blooming wisteria and the courtyards are fragrant with orange blossom.

**Getting there** From Athens, it's a 45-minute flight with Aegean Airlines or Olympic

Airways to Kavala, then 30-minute drive. Alternatively, Kavala is a 90-minute drive from Thessaloniki.

*Imaret (+30 2510 620151; [www.imaret.gr](http://www.imaret.gr)), from €290 a room a night.*

### The Oberoi Udaivilas

Udaipur, India

Crossing Lake Pichola in a canopied power boat at dusk, leaving the City Palace behind you and arriving at the jetty of the traditionally built, Mewari-inspired palace that is Oberoi Udaivilas has to be one of the most romantic experiences in the world. Set on the shores of the lake, this beautiful 80-room hotel occupies some 30 acres of land, with extravagant, lush gardens, nine swimming pools, and countless courtyards, walkways, arches, domes and alcoves. You'll be impressed by everything, from the comfortable interiors and exceptional service to the renowned cuisine and fabulous spa.

**X-factor** The breathtaking setting, sensational views and traditionally furnished bedrooms; and being brought iced rose tea and chilled towel rolls by the most handsome Indian butler you've ever seen.

**Rooms to ask for**

Always request a lake view. Either go for the outrageous Kohinoor Suite, which has its own pool, a butler, a garden and a steam room; or choose one of the Superior Deluxe rooms, which have their own courtyards and semi-private pools.

**The crowd** Rich and glamorous Mumbai socialites, including the Bollywood posse, plus the European jet-set.

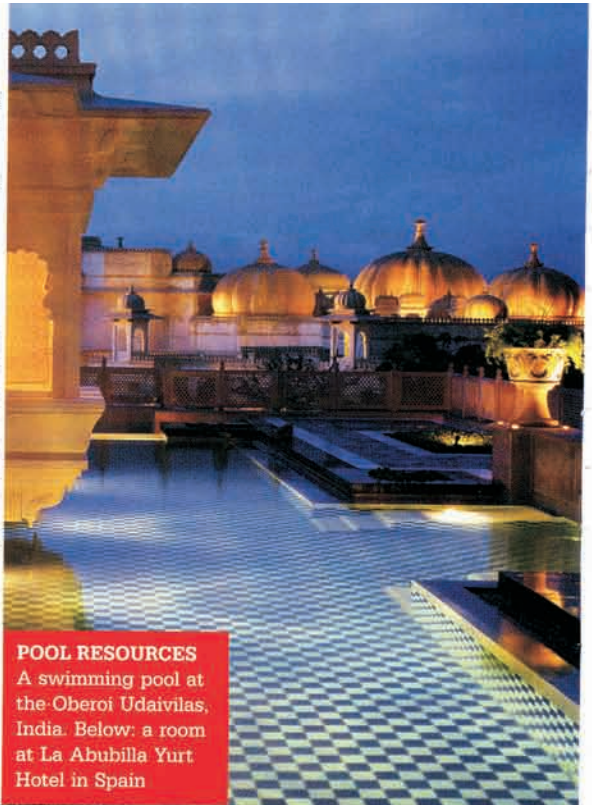
**Treat yourself to...** one-to-one yoga and meditation sessions with Guru Vетtri; top-line ayurvedic consultations and holistic treatments; or private Indian cookery lessons with chef Manish Chandna.

**Must do** Take a private boat trip round Lake Pichola; enjoy the fading splendour of the City Palace, still home to the Maharana of Mewar; or take a day trip with a picnic to visit the Ranakpur Temples, one of the holiest Jain sites in India.

**If only...** Agra and Jaipur were a little closer: the sights of Rajasthan are too good to miss.

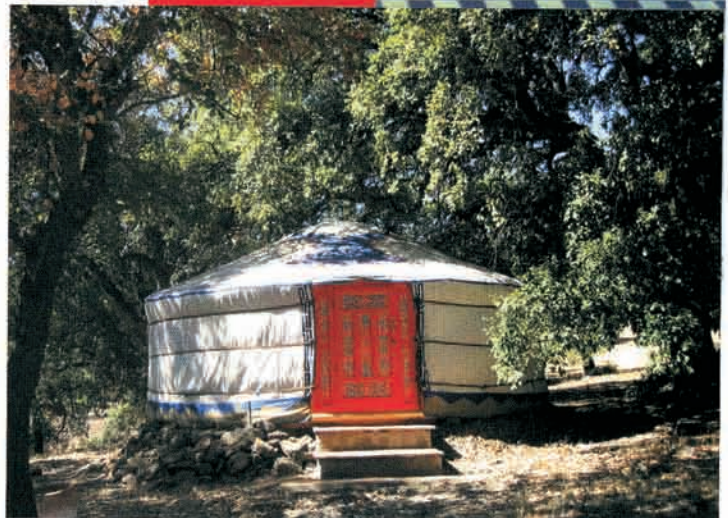
**When to go** August to September, or November to December.

**Getting there** British Airways flies from London to Delhi in under nine hours; then



#### POOL RESOURCES

A swimming pool at the Oberoi Udaivilas, India. Below: a room at La Abubilla Yurt Hotel in Spain



either fly Jet Airways to Udaipur (90 minutes), or charter the Oberoi's luxurious private jet. From the airport, it's a 30-minute boat ride. *The Oberoi Udaivilas (+91 294 243 3300; [www.oberoiudaivilas.com](http://www.oberoiudaivilas.com)). Greaves Travel (020 7487 9111; [www.greavesindia.com](http://www.greavesindia.com)) offers seven nights room only from £2,030 a person, including flights and transfers.*

## Luxe for less

### Java Moon

Bolgoda Lake, Sri Lanka

With its lakeside location and palm-filled garden, this tantalising villa provides a romantic escape for two; a hedonistic pleasure dome far from prying eyes. Bolgoda Lake is only 45 minutes from bustling Colombo, and yet it feels incredibly remote.

