

# DEPARTURES

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THE GREAT BIG  
BEAUTIFUL

## *Holiday Issue*

Couture's Grandeur and Wit

New York's Seven Hottest Tables

Skiing Japan, Fishing Argentina, Golfing in Morocco

*Plus* Sweaters, Scooters, Shoes, and  
the Watch He REALLY Wants





# NEW WINTER DESTINATIONS

Where to go to escape the cold this season.

BY MELISSA BIGGS BRADLEY

Almost 10 years after opening its first property in the Caribbean, Aman will open **Amanera** (rooms from \$850; Carretera Río San Juan-Cabrera, auto. 5; 800-477-9180; aman.com) this winter on the northern coast of the Dominican Republic, and the waiting list for reservations is a Who's Who of sophisticated sun worshippers.

What has the **Aman junkies** lining up to snag one of the 25 casitas? Perhaps it's the Robert Trent Jones Sr.-designed golf course that has been called the Pebble Beach of the Caribbean for its ten oceanfront holes, or the mile-long beach, or perfect winds for kite surfing. All these attractions can also be enjoyed from neighboring resort **Playa Grande Beach Club** (rooms from \$800; Carretera Río San Juan-Cabrera, km. 10; 844-589-2070; playagrandebeachclub.com), the pet project of New York-based interior designer Celerie Kemble, who delivers an old-fashioned tropical feel with gingerbread bungalows.

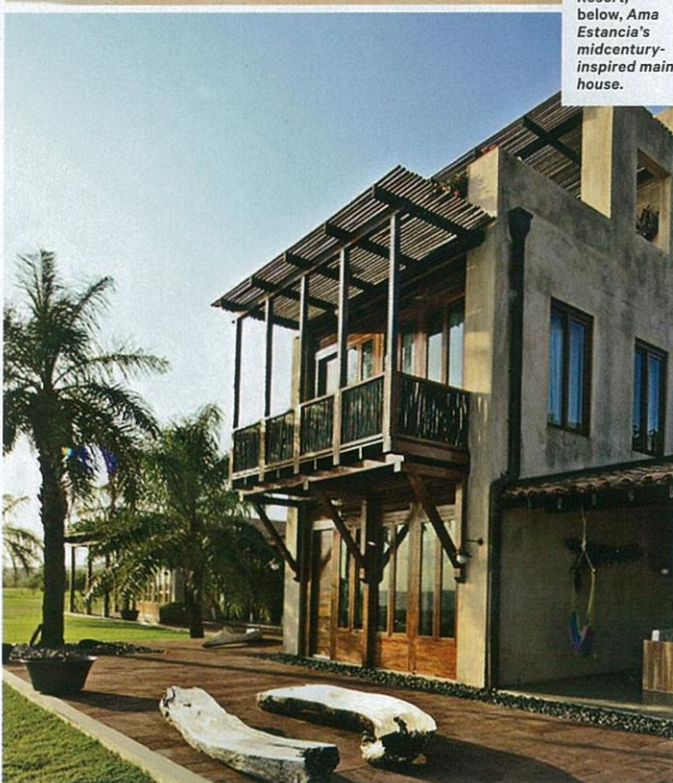
In other Caribbean news, **GoldenEye** (rooms from \$620; Oracabessa Bay; 800-688-7678; goldeneye.com), in Jamaica, is adding 26 octagonal beach huts; it's also hosting its inaugural Nyam-

Jam food festival on November 13 and 14 with a roster of A-list global chefs. St. Kitt's will soon be home to a beachfront **Park Hyatt on Banana Bay**, with suites with rooftop pools and access to a Tom Fazio-designed 18-hole golf course. And with Stone Barns chef Dan Barber consulting at nearby **Belle Mont Farm** (rooms from \$700; Kittitian Hill; 855-846-3951; bellemontfarm.com), St. Kitts is being called the next Anguilla for its mix of glamour, golf, and fine dining. Harbour Island finally has some great rental houses available, and the **Bahama House Inn** (rooms from \$1,000; 970-349-7761; elevenexperience.com) should debut in February.

While most Cabo resorts have reopened after Hurricane Odile's damage—and some, like **One&Only Palmilla** (rooms from \$455; Carretera Transpeninsular, km. 7.5; 866-829-2977; pamilla.oneandonlyresorts.com) and **Esperanza** (rooms from \$500; Carretera Transpeninsular, km. 7, Manzana 10; 866-311-2226; esperanzaresort.com), with major face-lifts—it's the less-developed Punta Mita that has emerged as the new Mexican enclave. West Coasters who don't want to travel as far as Hawaii



Above, the lobby at the St. Regis Punta Mita Resort; below, Ama Estancia's midcentury-inspired main house.



love the surfing, the hip town of Sayulita, and reliable hotels like the **St. Regis Punta Mita Resort** (rooms from \$585; Lote H-4, 200 Carretera Federal, km. 19.5, 52-32/9291-5800; stregis.com) and **Four Seasons Resort Punta Mita** (rooms from \$500; Ramal Carretera Federal 200, km. 19, 52-32/9291-6000; fourseasons.com).

For those who want to find paradise before the crowds or the five-star resorts appear, Panama is emerging as a hot spot. Hedge funder Louis Bacon and Italian photographer Jean Pigozzi, are among those who have been buying swaths of Panama's Pacific coast and pristine islands. Pigozzi's art-filled island retreat **Isla Simca** (price upon request; islasimca.com), which accommodates up to 30 guests, can be rented (see "Jean Pigozzi's Panama" at [departures.com/pigozzi](http://departures.com/pigozzi)), and on the country's northeast Caribbean coast, **Sweet Bocas** (price upon request; Isla Colon, Bocas del Toro; sweetbocaspanama.com) is the property to take over for a low-key event. Another special rental, **Ama Estancia** (price upon request; Puerto Escondido, Pedasi; 507-838-7698; amaestancia.com) is a 1,200-acre ranch on the Pacific side of the Azuero peninsula.