

marie claire



SPREEV STEAL

10 KEY
BUYS FOR
WINTER

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FOR YUMMY
DADDIES**
AND WHAT IT
MEANS FOR US

STORIES OF
TRIUMPH FROM
WOMEN IN
A WAR ZONE

US MURDER REPORT
**THE GOLDEN
COUPLE WHO
PREYED ON
VIRGINS**

**SARAH
JESSICA
PARKER**
Turning
her
dream
into a
reality

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for the
perfect
coat?
YOUR SEARCH STARTS
(AND ENDS) HERE



Check in, chill out...

Whizzing around the world for the best-selling Mr & Mrs Smith hotel guides, Juliet Kinsman's mission was to find 'intimate, homely and utterly sexy' places to stay. Here she shares her top five destinations



Honeymooners will love Villa Bordonni's pool, above, which has double loungers. Juliet Kinsman, right, also found it within easy reach of the romantic city of Florence

Villa Bordonni, Tuscany

Set amid olive groves and terraced vineyards, the ten-roomed Villa Bordonni only opened in March and offers a delightful escape into the Chianti countryside. Just 45 minutes' drive south

of Florence, it stands above the pretty town of Greve and took Scottish owners Catherine and David Gardner three years to restore what was previously the home of impoverished aristocrats. ▷





The hotel's rooms successfully mix chic and rustic, giving them a quirky grandeur



Kick back from the glamour and glitz of Copacabana beach, top, by checking into Relais Solar, above and below, in Santa Teresa, the more traditional area of town



Relais Solar, Rio

Few cities are as vibrant and exhilarating as Rio de Janeiro, with its favela-dotted hills, Sugar Loaf mountain and endless white sands. A wild melange of cultures, lively nightlife and super-friendly inhabitants make it buzz with energy.

Ipanema and Copacabana are stunning beaches to flaunt your itsy-bitsiest bikini, but they've long been on the tourist radar. A more interesting part of town is Santa Teresa, where you can get into the Carioca lifestyle.

Take a tram through the scenic cobblestone streets of this historic Portuguese quarter and you'll find Relais Solar, a modern-minded, five-room guesthouse that's also a hub for homegrown creative arts, with furnishings

handmade by locals, crafts for sale and a colourful calendar of cultural offerings.

The French-Canadian owner, Gwenaël Allan, was one of the founders of the Cirque du Soleil theatre and calls his new concept 'creative tourism'. This means that as well as a cheap-chic room for the night, there are activities such as food and drink tastings, music workshops and community tours. And when you want to kick back, there's a tranquil garden and honesty bar with all the cachaça and limes you need to blend that perfect caipirinha. ▷

BOOK NOW

Double rooms at Villa Bordoni (00 39 055 884 0004; www.villabordoni.com) cost from £159 including breakfast. For information on visiting Tuscany, see www.intoscana.it.

BOOK NOW

Double rooms at Relais Solar (00 55 21 2221 2117; www.relaisolar.com) cost from £94 including breakfast. For information on visiting Rio de Janeiro, see www.ipanema.com.