

# TRAVEL+ LEISURE



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the  
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# Upgrade



## RESERVE, STAY, REPEAT

When it comes to hotel rewards, playing favorites pays off. These 10 leading loyalty programs offer exceptional benefits that will keep you coming back. BY SHIVANI VORA

### CLUB SC

Relais & Châteaux guests are invited to become club members after they have stayed at least 15 nights—or dined 15 times—at any of the portfolio's more than 550 properties worldwide. Perks include room upgrades and free experiences like a private guided hike at Vermont's Twin Farms. American Express Centurion cardholders can waive the minimum-stay requirement, while Chase Sapphire Reserve card members can join after staying at a property for two nights.

### HILTON HONORS

In addition to the new benefits highlighted on

page 134, members are guaranteed the lowest available rate and can check in with the Honors app, which allows them to pick their room. They also get late checkout and a free fifth night when booking a reward stay of five nights or more. Members earn 10 points per dollar spent on stays.

### IHG REWARDS CLUB

The loyalty program for 12 hotel brands, including Crowne Plaza and InterContinental, awards free stays starting at 10,000 points (with no blackout dates). Points can also be redeemed for flights on more than 400 airlines. Every dollar spent

at an IHG property reaps 10 points (except at Staybridge and Candlewood Suites, where guests get five points per dollar). IHG Rewards Club Select Chase MasterCard holders earn extra points on stays and get a free night every year.

### IPREFER

Preferred Hotels & Resorts, which has 600 luxury hotels worldwide, including the Post Ranch Inn in Big Sur, California, and the Opposite House in Beijing, gives its frequent guests room upgrades and late checkouts. Members bank 10 points for every dollar spent during their stay, while elite-status

holders get 15 points. Every 12,500 points earns a \$25 certificate that can be used toward rooms, dining, and spa services. Those who book a Last Minute Escape get double points and up to 35 percent off room rates.

### KIMPTON KARMA

The loyalty program from the pet-friendly boutique chain, which includes 58 hotels in the U.S. and new properties in Grand Cayman and Amsterdam, doesn't operate on points. Rather, guests earn a free stay after 20 nights. Members can get room upgrades, spa discounts, and vouchers to use on mini-bars (\$15 in New York City and \$10 elsewhere).

### LEADERS CLUB

Repeat visitors to the Leading Hotels of the World's collection of 375 independent luxury properties pay a \$150 annual fee to

join its loyalty program, which has wide-ranging benefits, including access to members-only sales, breakfast for two, room upgrades, one free night for every five stays, and early check-in and late checkout. Plus, members can have luggage shipped to any property for free.

### MARRIOTT REWARDS & STARWOOD PREFERRED GUEST

Though the Starwood and Marriott programs won't be fully integrated until 2018, members can already link accounts to reap similar benefits for both. Perks include the lowest available rates and a great app that allows self check-in and checkout and the ability to make special requests, such as airport transfers and extra pillows, and even room-service orders. They can also book thousands of

local experiences and activities curated by PlacePass in 800 destinations for a fee.

### OMNI SELECT GUEST

Travelers who stay at one of Omni's 60 properties at least nine nights per year can qualify for elite status and get 10 benefits, such as free ironing service, and earn a free night after 20 nights. Members who stay 30 nights or more a year get 25 benefits, including suite upgrades and a dedicated concierge.

### PRESIDENT'S CLUB

Frequent guests at Fairmont's 70 hotels, including the Plaza in New York and the Savoy in London, have access to a members-only reservations line, earn airline miles from every stay, and have free use of TaylorMade golf clubs in certain locations. Elite members receive spa and dining credits, suite upgrades, and two-for-one rounds of golf at some properties. The club recently introduced special member discounts on rooms.

### WORLD OF HYATT

Hyatt's recently revamped loyalty program allows members to earn five points for every dollar spent during a stay, which can be redeemed for free nights with no blackout dates. Guests who stay 60 nights or earn 100,000 points get upgrades, early check-in, and late checkout. Hyatt Visa cardholders receive one free night per year, earn three points per dollar spent at any of its hotels, and receive two free nights after spending \$2,000 with the card.