

MR PORTER

ON THE ROAD

THE BEST LAST-MINUTE ESCAPES

From Swedish snow to Costa Rican surf, here are the spots that Tablet Hotels recommends for a holiday chill-out

Words by Mr Laurent Vernhes, co-founder and CEO, and Mr Michael Davis, co-founder and chief creative officer, Tablet Hotels

If you're like us, you begin every autumn with good intentions about planning a holiday. Then you find yourself waiting for some sort of sign, be it a pay rise or that greenish-hued version of yourself staring back from the shaving mirror, to spur you into action. But even if you have left it to this impossibly late date, don't panic. We at [Tablet Hotels](#) are here to help.

Back in 2000, we opened Tablet Hotels as a hotel curation/ booking site for jaded travellers. Before launching the site, Mr Laurent Vernhes' career in business had taken him from his native France to living in seven countries on three continents and Mr Michael Davis had been working on the creative side of e-commerce at the Razorfish agency and with the hotelier Mr Ian Schragger. In the mid-1990s we noticed that for the first time since the gilded age of the grand old dames, hotels were becoming interesting places for design, food and culture. And the insight prompted us to create a site for people in search of a cure for boring travel, and an antidote to the internet's most common affliction: an overdose of options.

We keep the list tidy by having scouts visit hotels anonymously and report back for final selection. Hotels only stay on the site if they're making users happy. Only real Tablet guests are allowed to submit reviews, and we remove any hotel with a less than stellar rating or a less than competitive price. So, where to go?

VIÑA VIK, CHILE



If you've already toured the vineyards around Mendoza in Argentina, with the Andes in the background, it's time to see them from the other side, in South America's other great wine-growing region. Owners Mr Alexander and Mrs Carrie Vik already had a couple of very good small hotels in Uruguay, near Punta del Este, but they seem to have set their sights a bit higher in recent years. Viña Vik is a small hotel in terms of the number of rooms, but there's something almost monumental about it. The Viks have always been fans of modern architecture and this hotel looks like something from another planet that's landed in the middle of a Chilean vineyard. They are also huge fans of contemporary art, and Viña Vik's artwork puts most hotel collections to shame.