

Where to Go in 2017

The 20 destinations that will be especially hot this year—and the data you need to plan your trip.



The Ancient City of Sigiriya, in central Sri Lanka, is built into the slopes of a granite peak called the Lion's Rock.

Photographer: Sylvain Bouzat/Getty Images

Bloomberg Pursuits

January 4, 2017, 1:00 AM PST

Today's fast-changing, hyper-globalized world has no shortage of incredible travel opportunities. This year, we've done all the legwork for you in rooting out the best, pinpointing the biggest hotel openings and cultural events of the year—along with the places you'll want to see now, before they change forever.

And because it's not enough to figure out where to go, we're also helping you decide when to plan each trip, according to hotel price data from Google and insights from our preferred destination specialists across the globe. The cheapest and most expensive times to go are rarely the best and worst.

So get your passport ready—there's lots of ground to cover in the next 12 months.

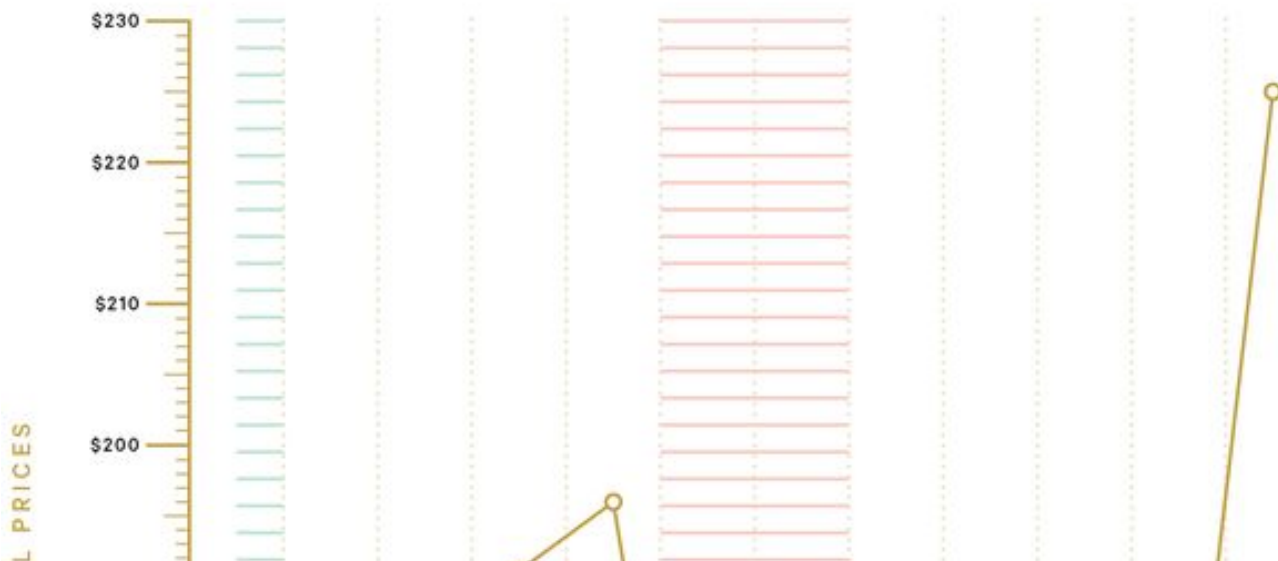


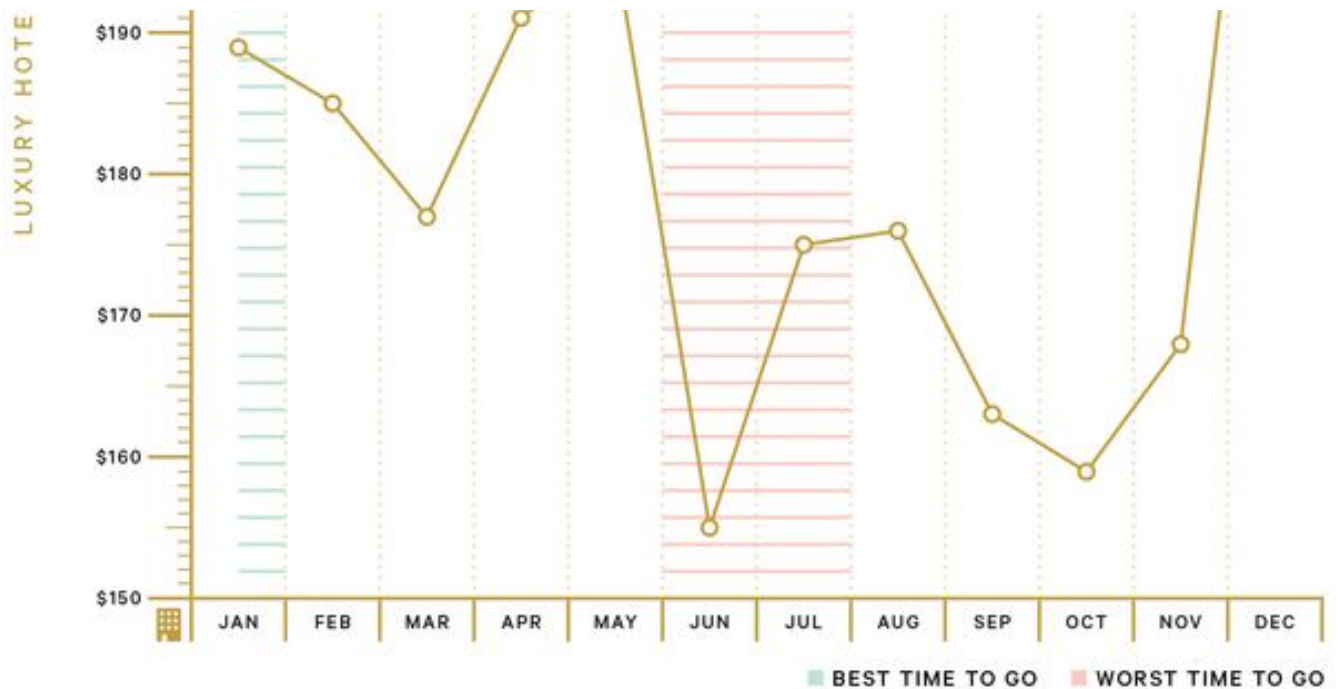
Leopard spotting in Sri Lanka.
Photographer: Byrdyak/Getty Images/iStockphoto

SRILANKA

Leopards are some of the toughest cats to spot on an African safari; in Sri Lanka's Yala National Park, their abundance practically guarantees daily encounters. And that's only one reason to go. Add to the list ruins that rival Angkor Wat and opportunities to see humpback and blue whales off the country's southern coast, and you'll wonder why so few tourists have caught on.

WHEN TO VISIT SRI LANKA





Source: Google (hotel prices)

Chalk up Sri Lanka's short immigration queues to its lack of luxury hotel options—a void that Malik Fernando, founder and owner of [Resplendent Ceylon](#), is hurrying to fill. Already, his first two properties have earned Relais & Chateaux distinction—one is on an old tea plantation in the highlands and the other is built on a jungle-shrouded cliff facing the Indian Ocean. His third project, [Wild Coast Tented Lodge](#), opens this October, with 28 cocoon-like tents on a private beach near leopard-filled Yala; two additional hotels are on the way. It's the luxury travel circuit you didn't know you were waiting for.

When to go: Late January. The weather is cool and the crowds are thin.

When not to go: June and July, when much of the country becomes inaccessible, thanks to nonstop rain and over-the-top heat swells.

Whom to call: [Ashish Sanghrajka](#) from Big Five Tours & Expeditions.



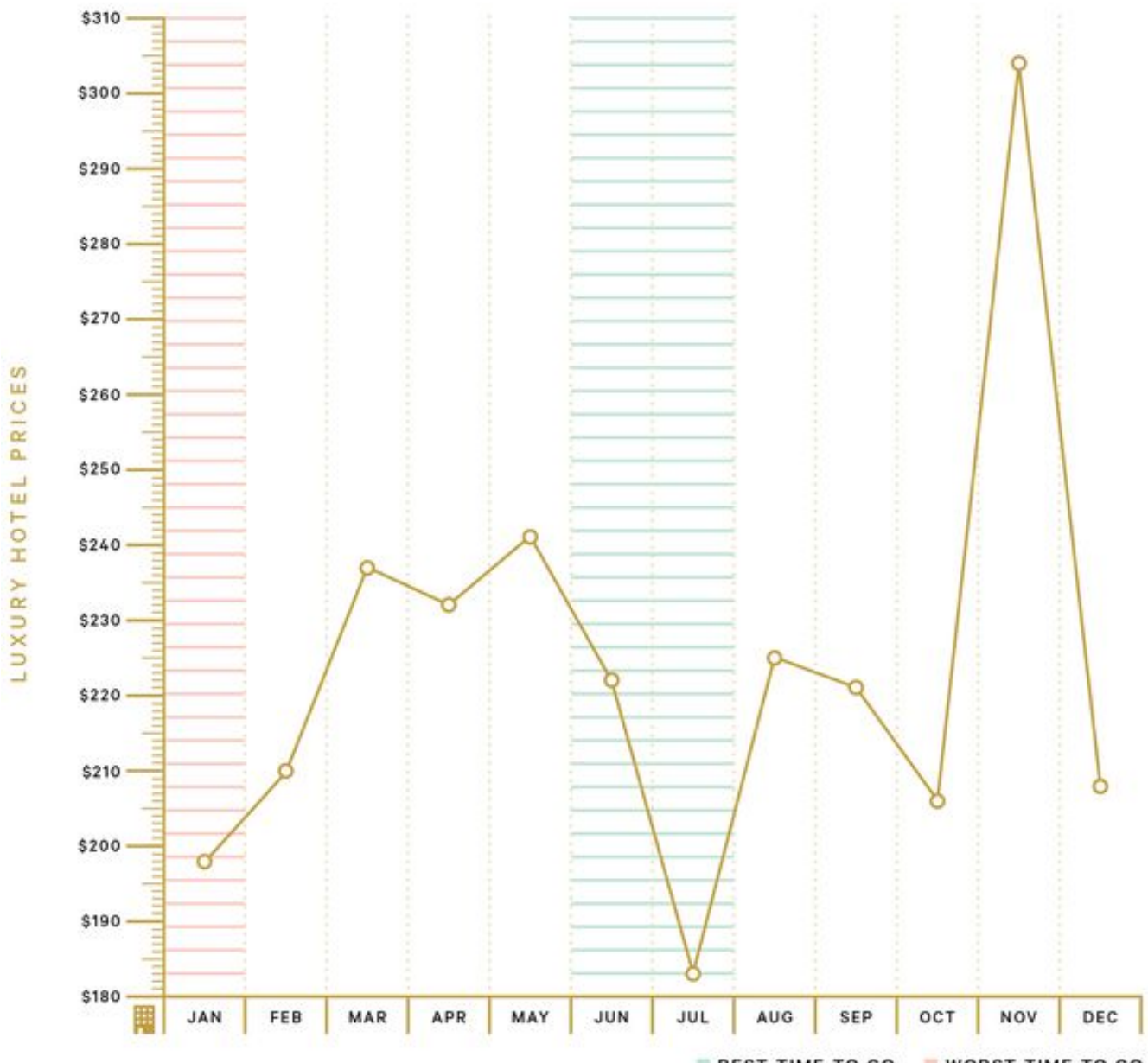


The Northern Lights as seen in arctic Finland.
Source: Visit Finland

FINLAND

The Finnish may be a modest lot, but they will have a bunch to boast about in 2017. Helsinki is buzzing with the energy of the country’s centennial: A grand hotel called the St. George will open this summer in a 19th century landmark building, and a showstopping public sauna by Avanto Architects is stoking the flames of a longtime national obsession.

WHEN TO VISIT FINLAND



Source: Google (hotel prices)

But the real excitement lies in Finnish Lapland, where adventurers on the hunt for “the next Iceland” can find the country’s most magical experiences. Such dramatic arrivals as the ultra-mod [Arctic Treehouse Hotel](#) and the glass-domed [Northern Lights Village](#) make plush spots to witness the Northern Lights, which are said to appear there 200 times a year. Luxe outfitter Abercrombie & Kent is launching a [private jet expedition](#) to the area that includes an Arctic treasure hunt and ice track racing with champion drivers.

In 2017 Finland will celebrate its pristine natural environments—from its many islands and lakes to forests and peat lands—with [elaborate parties in the wild](#) to honor the nation’s 100th year. Our top pick: a series of midsummer choral concerts in hidden crannies of the country’s national parks, set to simultaneously unfold on Aug. 26.

When to go: June, for the amazing festivals, and July, for endless sunshine.

When not to go: January. The beautiful, snow-covered landscapes don’t compensate for the bitter cold and 20-hour stretches of darkness.

Whom to call: [Tom Marchant](#) of Black Tomato.

PORTUGAL

Portugal’s position in the pantheon of European tourism has shot from “obscure” to “over-the-top,” and Lisbon, the charm-packed capital, is poised to keep climbing. This year will see added airlift from Delta and United, along with tons of additional beds for

discerning travelers to sleep in. (Keep an eye out for [Verride Palace](#), opening in February, where almost all the rooms are suites and the outdoor pool is heated year-round.)

The city's arts scene is getting a much-needed injection, too. The paint has barely dried on the [Museum of Art, Architecture and Technology](#), which won't be the new kid on the block for long. Soon it'll gain the company of the [Berardo Museum](#) (dedicated to Joe Berardo's Art Nouveau and Art Deco collections) and the [Museum of Portuguese Jewish History](#); both niche concepts will offer fascinating bodies of work.

WHEN TO VISIT PORTUGAL



Source: Google (hotel prices)

Use your Lisbon trip as an excuse to explore the nearby Algarve region, which is also stepping up its game. That's where you'll find the just-opened [Cascade Wellness & Lifestyle Resort](#) (with its own soccer school) and Europe's first [Anantara hotel](#) (with the brand's signature Thai spa). Bonus points if you make it to red-hot Porto, a [newly crowned shopping destination](#) that's soon to debut [Time Out Market](#), the Portuguese food court of your dreams.

When to go: November through February. Warm weather during the winter is one reason to love its location in southern Europe.

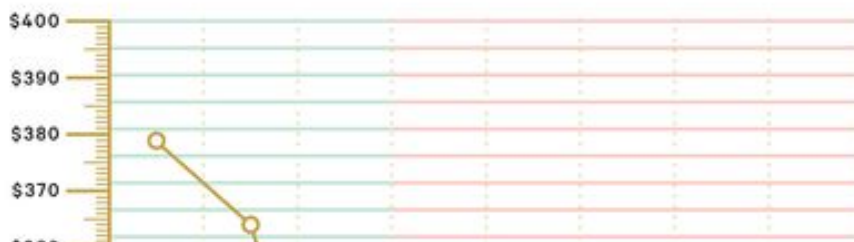
When not to go: July to October. A dearth of luxe hotels means that snagging a decent room during high season can be a challenge. (But that's what Airbnb is for.)

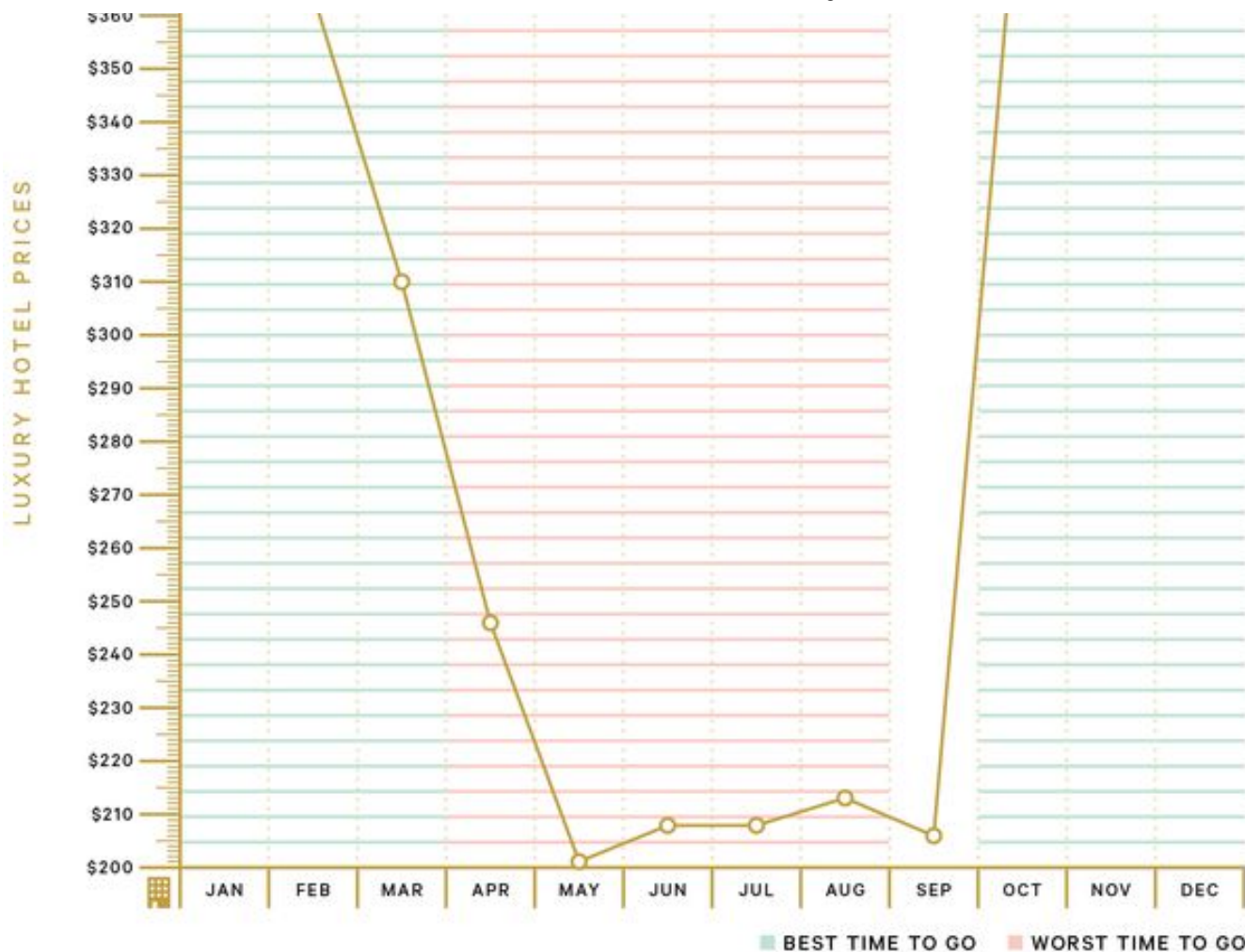
Whom to call: [Virginia Irurita](#) of Made for Spain and Portugal.

MYANMAR

By now, Myanmar might feel like old news. The gorgeously lush country opened up its borders in 2012 after half a century of political turmoil, catapulting to the [top of bucket lists](#). Five years on, though, its romantic, historic cities have hit a sweet spot for travelers.

WHEN TO VISIT MYANMAR





Source: Google (hotel prices)

Gone are the days of paying for everything in crisp-as-linen U.S. dollars; cash machines have finally become commonplace here, as have televisions, internet access, and mobile phones. Yangon's grande dame hotel, [the Strand](#), has reclaimed its luster after a head-to-toe makeover, while small, locally owned B&Bs are blossoming into culture-packed boutique hotels. These days, you can even [sail a colonial-style schooner](#) to Myanmar's least-trod beaches. And the character of the place is as authentic as ever.

But [Red Savannah's](#) Myanmar expert, Edward Granville, cautions that this golden period may be short-lived. "Like Eastern Europe in the 1990s, change is in the air," he said. A Novotel arrived last year, Hilton and Conrad are said to be planting flags, and an entire hillside in Inle Lake has been cleared for a mass-market hotel park. In other words: Go before the country reaches a tipping point. It may never be the same again.

When to go: October to March. The weather is cool and dry, the skies are clear, and the sunrises and sunsets downright epic.

When not to go: April to August. It's extremely hot in the buildup to monsoon season—and then extremely wet when the rains finally arrive.

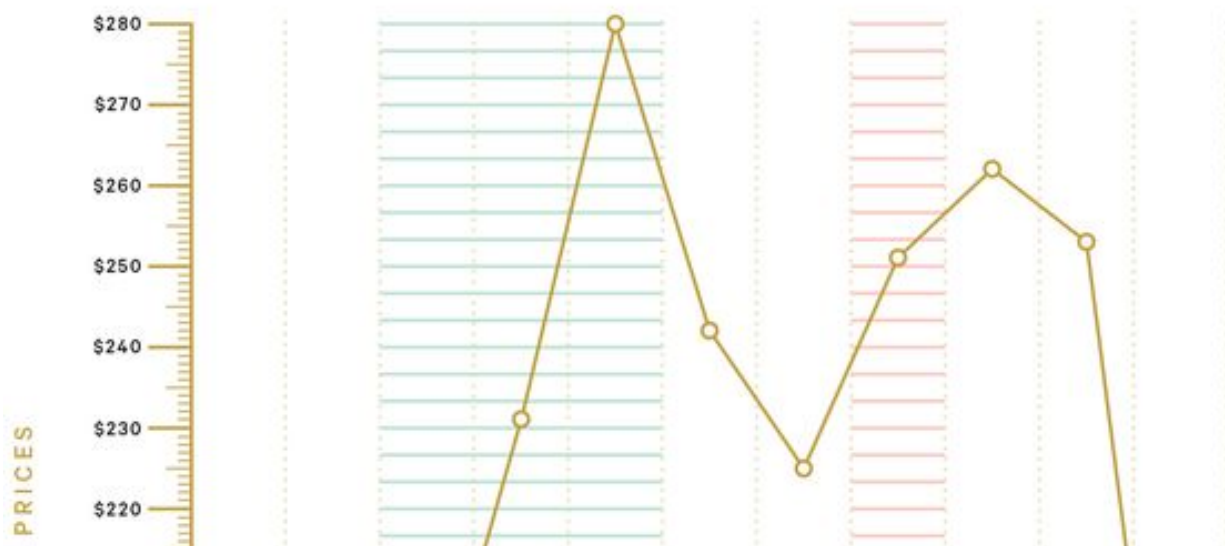
Whom to call: [Edward Granville](#) of Red Savannah.

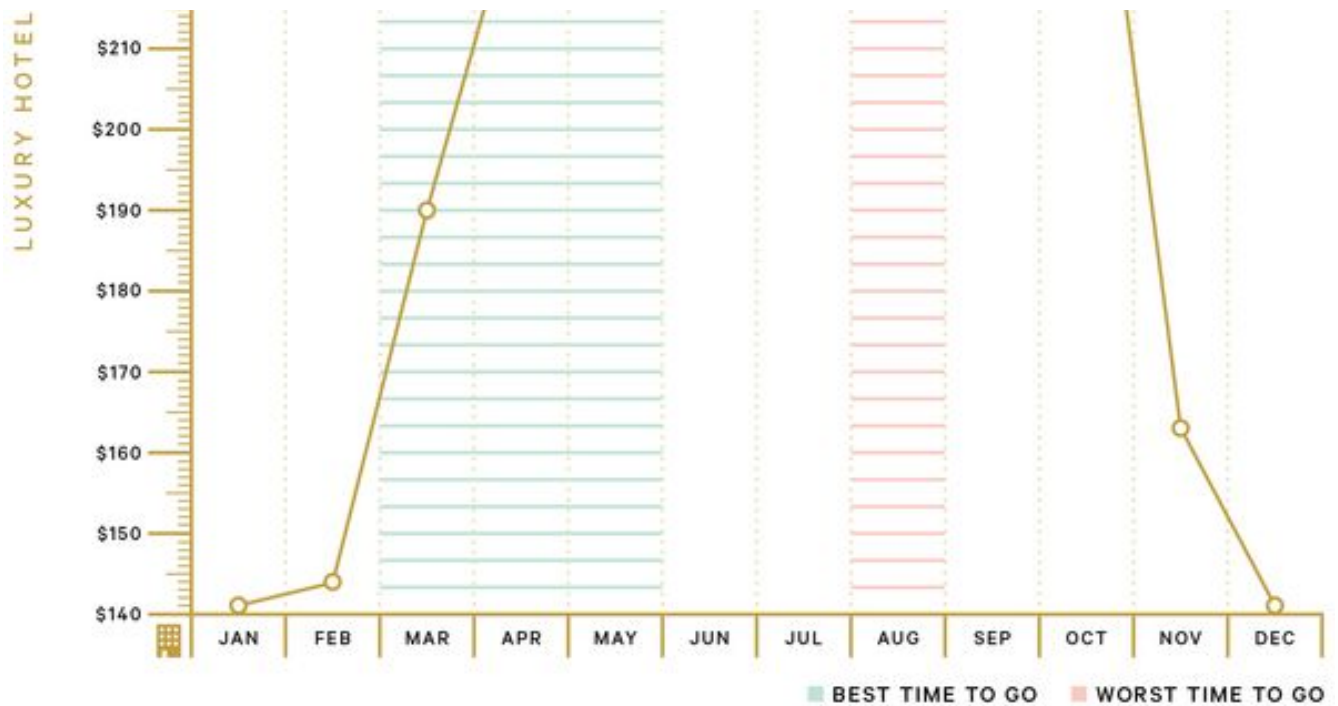
MALTA

Malta has had few reasons to be in the spotlight since its historic Great Siege, a full 500 years ago. This year, the island nation has many.

After it was announced that Valletta would become the [European Capital of Culture](#) in 2018, abandoned Baroque townhouses in the port district became a hot commodity; now they're being reopened as small businesses and stylish inns. The city's Parliament and historic City Gate just got a makeover by starchitect Renzo Piano. And Strait Street, a one-time favorite place for knights to duel, is being redeveloped by the city's architect of the moment, Chris Briffa, who is converting a block of houses at the lower end of the street into bars, restaurants, and (it is hoped) an outdoor theater.

WHEN TO VISIT MALTA





Source: Google (hotel prices)

Given the traditional dearth of good hotel options in town, it's especially exciting news that the grande dame [Hotel Phoenicia](#) will be reopened in January after a tip-toe renovation; its foil, the ultra-sleek [Iniala Harbour House](#), will open later in the year. And while developments like [MUZA](#), Malta's Museum of Art, won't pop until 2018, this is truly the year to go. For one thing, it's still easy to walk in and grab a table at the excellent family-run tavernas you'll find on almost every street. Soon enough, it'll be reservations only.

When to go: Plan for spring, especially Easter, for a true taste of local traditions. Imagine dramatic processions and delicious almond-filled cakes (called *figolla*).

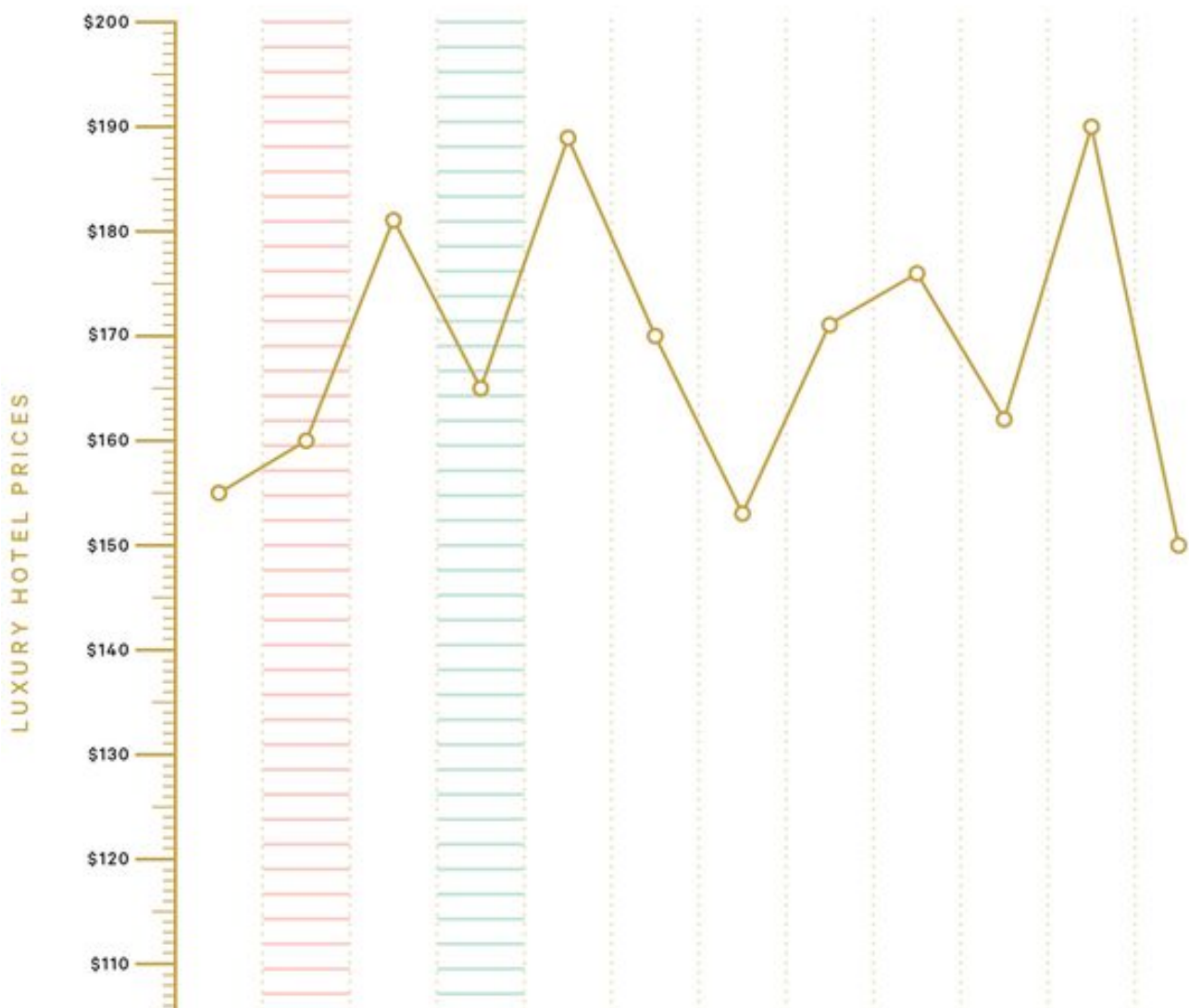
Worst: August. Aside from the intense heat, many of the shops may be closed.

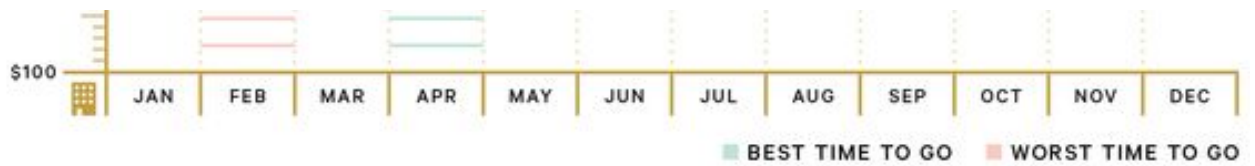
Whom to call: [Uri Harash](#) of Perfetto Traveler.

PERU

In 2017, think beyond Machu Picchu to the Incan salt pans of Maras, the uncharted, snow-capped mountains of Veronica and Sawasiray, and the endless horizon of Lake Titicaca. Thanks to improved infrastructure (and trailblazing travel operators), these places are perhaps even easier to access than the so-called Lost City of the Incas—and with zero trace of the crowds.

WHEN TO VISIT PERU





Source: Google (hotel prices)

The five-star Chilean adventure outfitter Explora, for instance, made [its Peruvian debut](#) with an architectural gem in the Sacred Valley last summer; it's now taking travelers on stunningly remote treks that feel like time warps into simpler times. For those who prefer exploring on two wheels, the luxe bike outfitter [DuVine](#) is offering similarly off-the-beaten-path trips.

Adding to the buzz is Belmond, one of the original luxury hospitality brands in Peru, which will introduce South America's first [luxury sleeper train](#) in May, connecting Cusco to the traditional villages surrounding Lake Titicaca. It all fits in with new President Pablo Kuczynski's mission to expand tourism into Peru's pristine countryside—which may quickly modernize it, for better or for worse.

When to go: April, when the post-rainy season landscape is at its greenest and the summer travelers have yet to descend.

When not to go: February. The rains are at their worst, and this is a place to be outside.

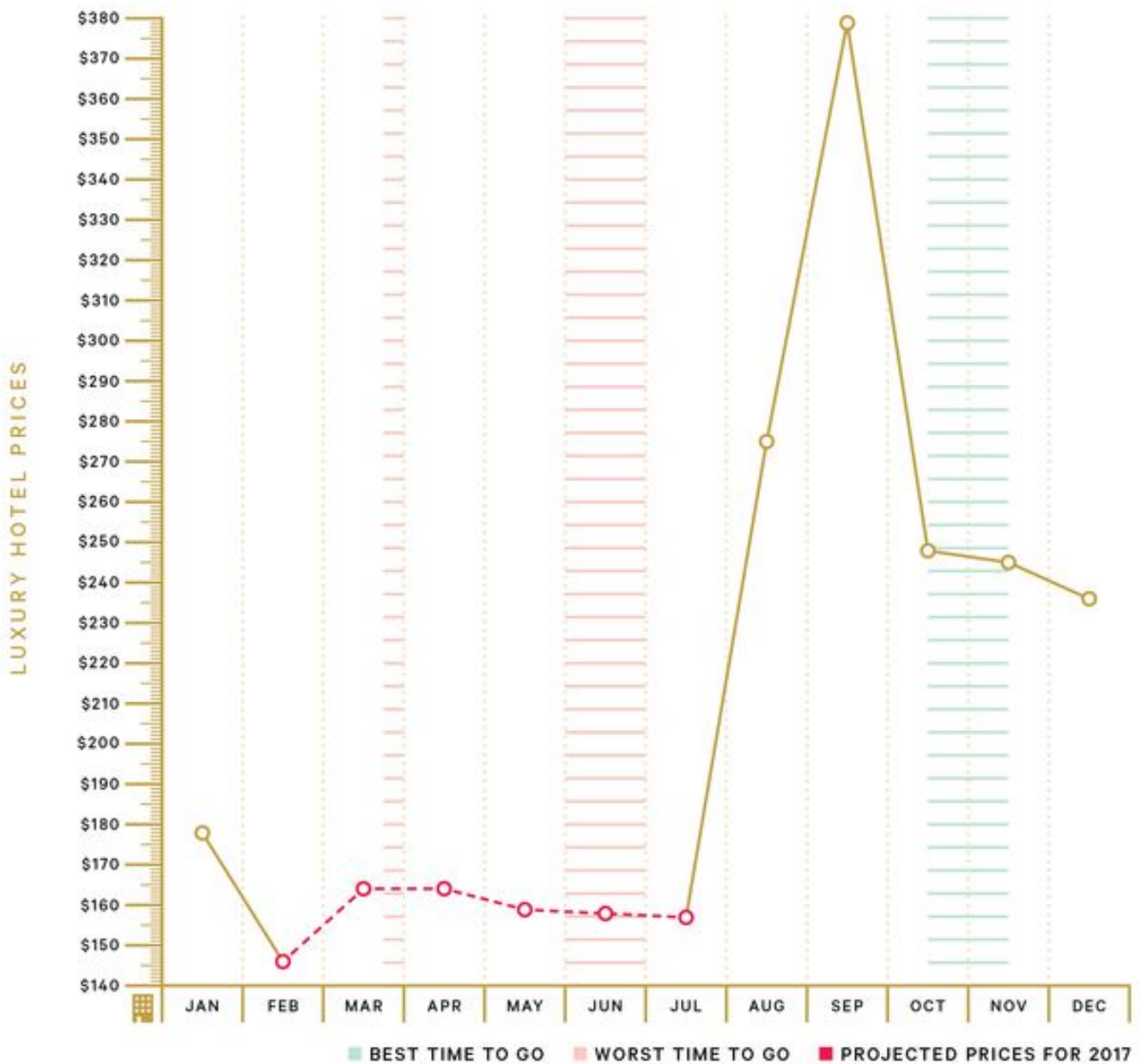
Whom to call: [Emmanuel Burgio](#) of Blue Parallel.

For intrepid travelers, the question is not whether to visit Iran; it's how to get there before an influx of tourists taints the experience. This is no casual undertaking. The visa application process is lengthy and complex; citizens from the U.S., Canada, and the U.K. must be on escorted tours; and travelers have to abide by a government dress code.

Take our word for it, though. The hassle is worthwhile. Since 2015's historic nuclear deal was brokered, several companies have launched itineraries and major European airlines have resumed their flights.

On trips such as Cox and King's [Heart of Persia](#), you'll get to roam the desert bazaar of Kerman, ogle Moorish palaces and mosaic-tiled mosques in Isfahan, and see ancient sites like the royal city of Persepolis, which dates to roughly 500 B.C. "These are the kinds of sites that you can't find elsewhere—and which, in places like Afghanistan and Syria, have been tragically destroyed," said Brian Allen, Asia specialist for [Mountain Travel Sobek](#), which has been leading tours to Iran for four years.

WHEN TO VISIT IRAN



Source: Google (hotel prices)

Then there's the legendary Persian food and hospitality. "There is a cultural norm in Iran that guests are from god," Allen said. "I frequently hear people say they've been all over the world and never received a welcome like they got there."

As always, please check your government's travel alerts website (like [this one](#) for the U.S.) before going to a country that shares complex diplomatic relations with your own.

When to go: Late October or early November, when the climate is just right for outdoor sightseeing.

When not to go: Iranian holidays clog the streets with traffic, and Ramadan makes a trip extra-complicated; this year, avoid the last two weeks of March and the month of June.

Whom to call: [George Morgan-Grenville](#) of Red Savannah.

SAINT BARTHÉLEMY

The Caribbean's ritziest island is showing its laid-back side this year, with several long-in-the-works openings set back from the posh Gustavia port.

WHEN TO VISIT ST. BARTS



Source: Google (hotel prices)

Of the bunch, [Villa Marie](#) is the most intimate, giving a French plantation house a vibe that skews more gypset-boho than buttoned-up. After a four-year-long, \$40 million renovation, [Le Guanahani](#) has put the focus on fun, barefoot luxury. It's on a private, 18-acre peninsula with 67 guest cottages, all done up in a riot of colors with teak floors that blend seamlessly with the lush landscape. And the old St. Barts Beach Hotel has given way to [Le Barthélemy](#), where the high/low lifestyle includes an option to take the house car to your preferred beach for no-fuss picnic lunches, with or without Champagne.

It gets even better the farther you get from the yacht crowd. Case in point: At the privately-owned [Le Toiny](#), catch a jeep from the hotel in the hills to a pop-up restaurant on the sand. Dishes such as black truffle pasta and lobster linguini are ample proof that you don't have to be aboard the Seven Seas to live large in St. Barts.

When to go: May and June. Amazing weather without the high-season price tag.

When not to go: September, when everything is closed for hurricane season.

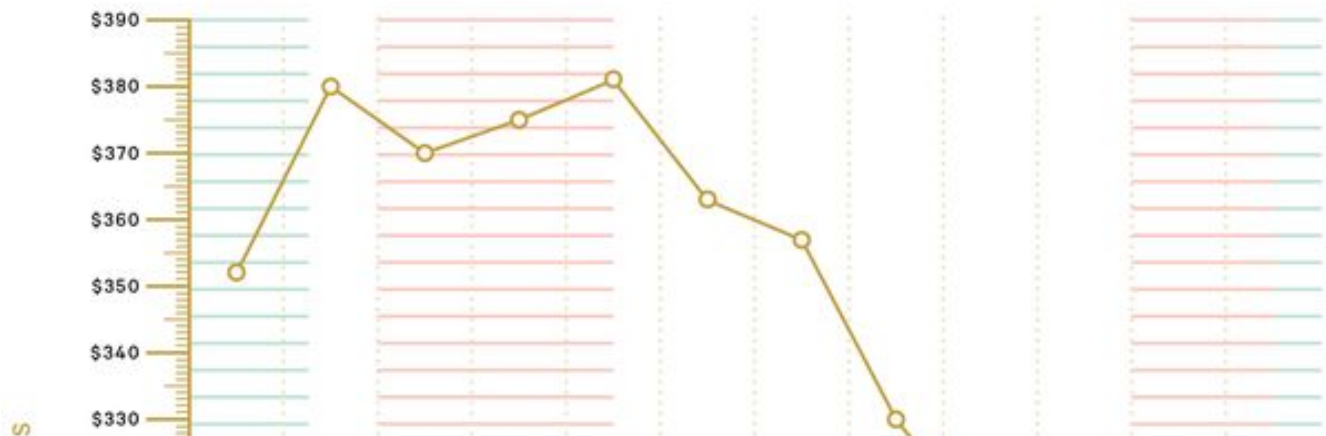
Whom to call: [Marla Schaffer](#) of Leaders in Travel, Ltd.

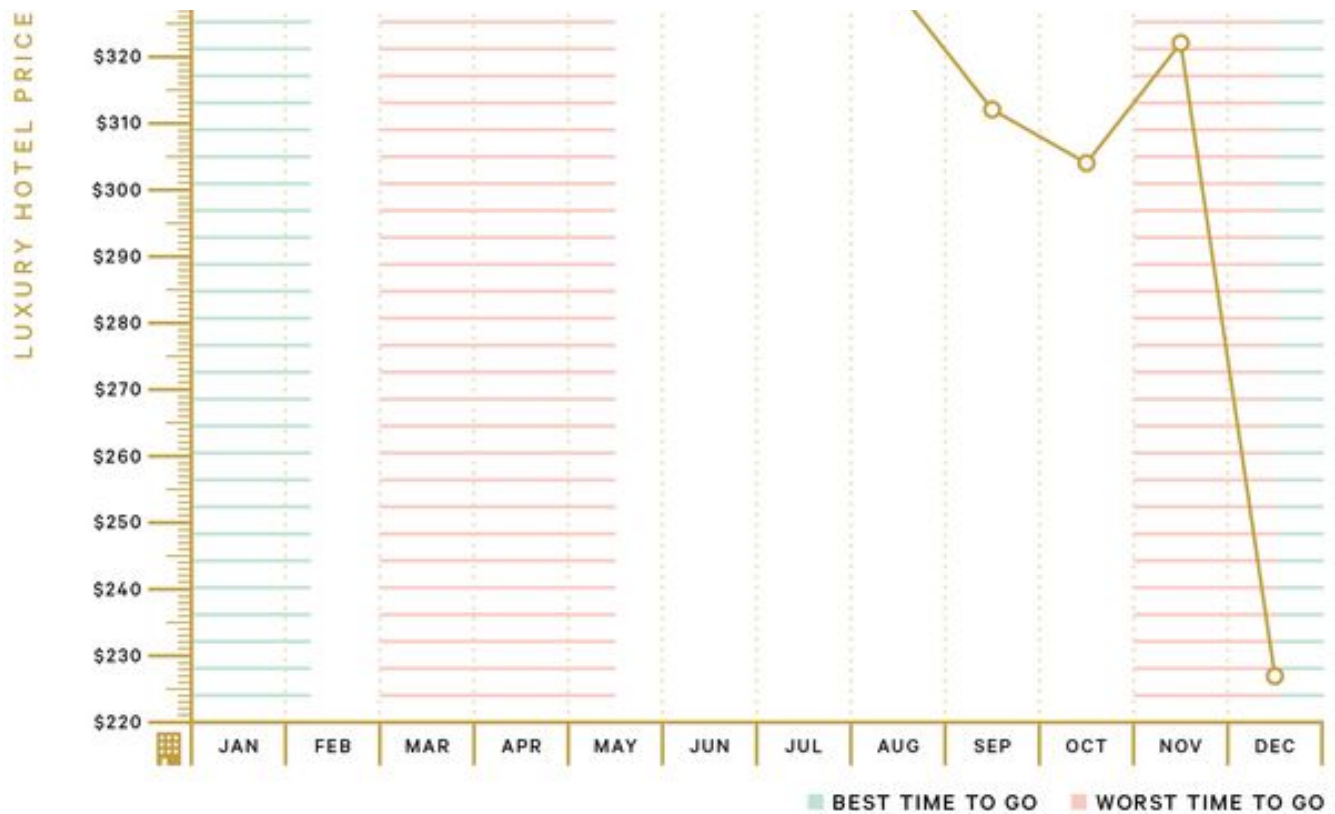
RWANDA

Wilderness Safaris is like the Tesla of African tourism. They're safari trailblazers at the top of their game, leading the industry in both conservation and community work and offering no-holds-barred luxury out in the field. So when the company announced it would move into Rwanda this year, Africa enthusiasts immediately took notice.

That's not to say Rwanda is hurting for tourism: It's one of the few places where you can go gorilla trekking, and a new joint-visa program with Kenya makes it easy to come here after a few days in iconic Masai Mara.

WHEN TO VISIT RWANDA





Source: Google (hotel prices)

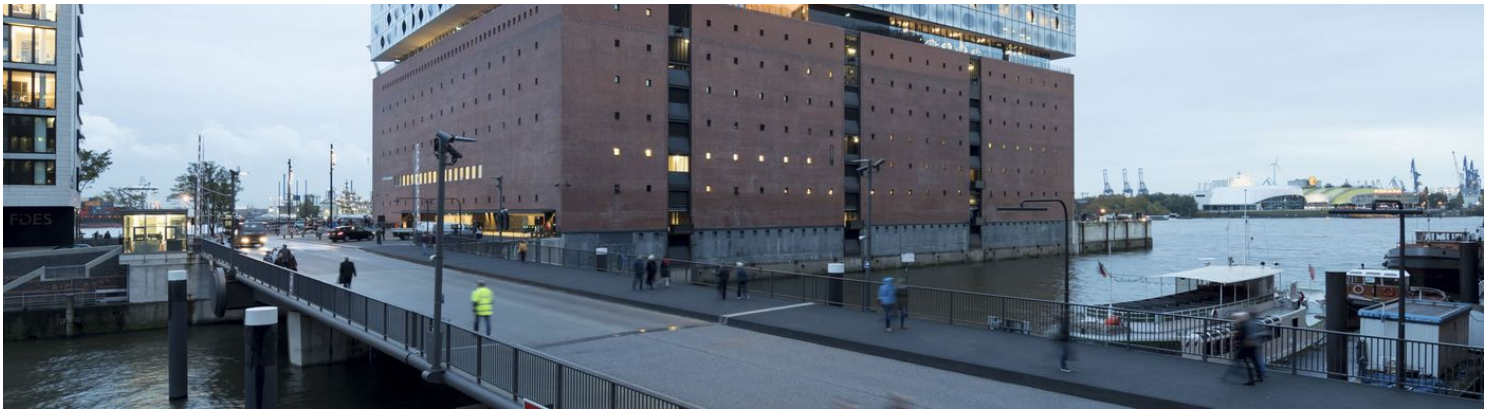
Still, Wilderness Safaris' Bisate camp, which will debut in a secluded stretch of Volcanoes National Park in June, will make it easier than ever to spot silverbacks without sacrificing a single creature comfort. The complex comprises six dome-shaped forest villas, each designed to evoke a traditional Rwandan domicile; inside, you'll find 1,000 square feet of private space, all swathed in traditional local textiles and animal throws. Stay tuned for more: Wilderness already has plans to open a second lodge nearby in 2018.

When to go: Dry season spans from mid-December to early February. Hit the tail end, when early rains attract tons of gorillas and chimps.

When not to go: Gorilla treks are tough enough when the trails aren't covered in mud, so avoid the rainy stretches in the spring and late fall.

Whom to call: Cherri Briggs of Explore Africa.





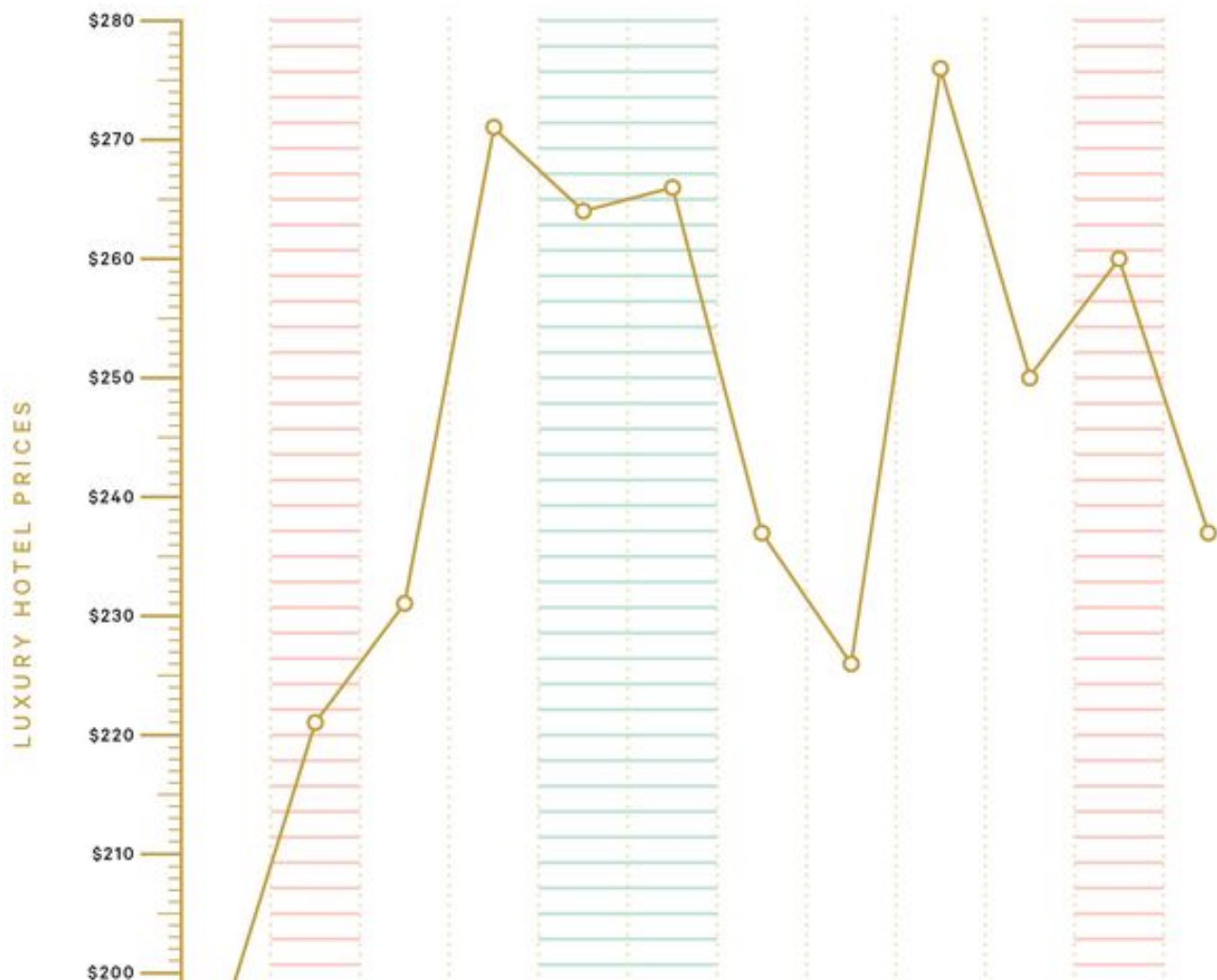
The Herzog & de Meuron-designed Elbphilharmonie arts complex, in Hamburg.

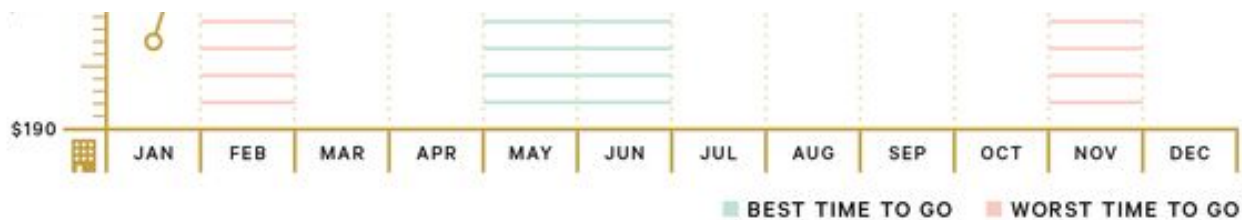
Photographer: Iwan Baan/Elbphilharmonie

HAMBURG

After more than a decade of controversy and a budget that ballooned tenfold, Hamburg's [Elbphilharmonie](#) is now complete. The striking Herzog & de Meuron-designed performing arts complex—built out from a mid-century brick warehouse on the city's historic harbor—isn't just an eye-popping landmark, it's the symbolic crescendo for HafensStadt, a massive, new neighborhood that's been unfolding across 400 acres of unused docklands.

WHEN TO VISIT HAMBURG





Source: Google (hotel prices)

There, you'll find luxury apartments, shiny office buildings, and destination restaurants such as [Carl's Bistro](#) and [Kaiser Perle](#). You'll want to check out a concert at one of Elphilharmonie's three stages; the inaugural lineup includes celebrated dancer Sasha Waltz and contemporary jazz pianist Brad Mehldau. And feel free to spend the night: The just-opened [Westin Hamburg](#) has 244 rooms and an elaborate spa right inside the building. You'll be even more comfortable at the upcoming [Fontenay](#) hotel, which will open next summer, with views of stunning Alster Lake from its 131 sumptuous rooms.

When to go: May or June, when you can cruise the city's canals.

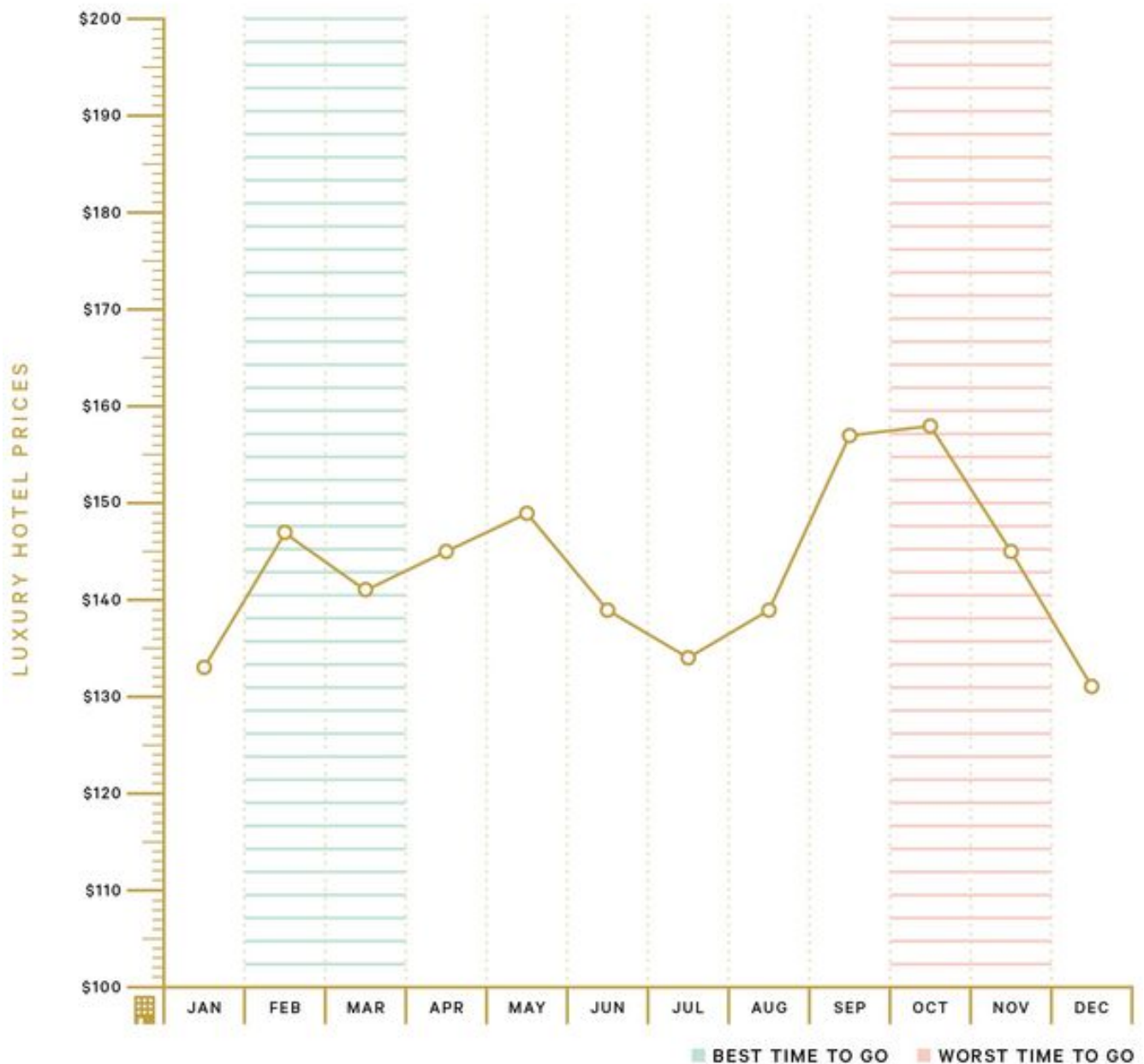
When not to go: February and November. Rain, rain, go away.

Whom to call: [Virginia Giordano](#) of Culture Trip.

COLOMBIA

On the heels of an historic peace agreement, Colombia is finally shedding its security concerns once and for all. That means this should be the year that travelers discover its extraordinary countryside, from the Corcora Valley—home to the tallest palm trees in the world—to the little-known Tatacoa Desert, an ochre-colored expanse of wind-carved dunes. (Stay at Tatacoa's cutting-edge Bethel Bio Hotel for its egg-shaped pod rooms: They have retractable roofs for stargazing.)

WHEN TO VISIT COLOMBIA



Source: Google (hotel prices)

The natural splendor makes it easy to understand why Colombia was the birthplace of magical realism—which you'll definitely tap into if you visit the mystical tribes of Tayrona National Park or Cartagena, where a stylish inn by fashion maven Sylvia Tcherassi has just flung open its doors.

Don't disregard the capital, either. Bogotá is embracing its position as a booming financial hub and has become deft at catering to the jet set. Just look at its two new Four Seasons hotels and the countless chefs waking up to the country's edible biodiversity.

When to go: Colombia is a year-round destination, but February and March are particularly appealing because peak season has died down and the weather is still top-notch.

When not to go: October and November are slightly rainy—but not terribly wet.

Whom to call: [Marc Beale](#) of Amakuna.



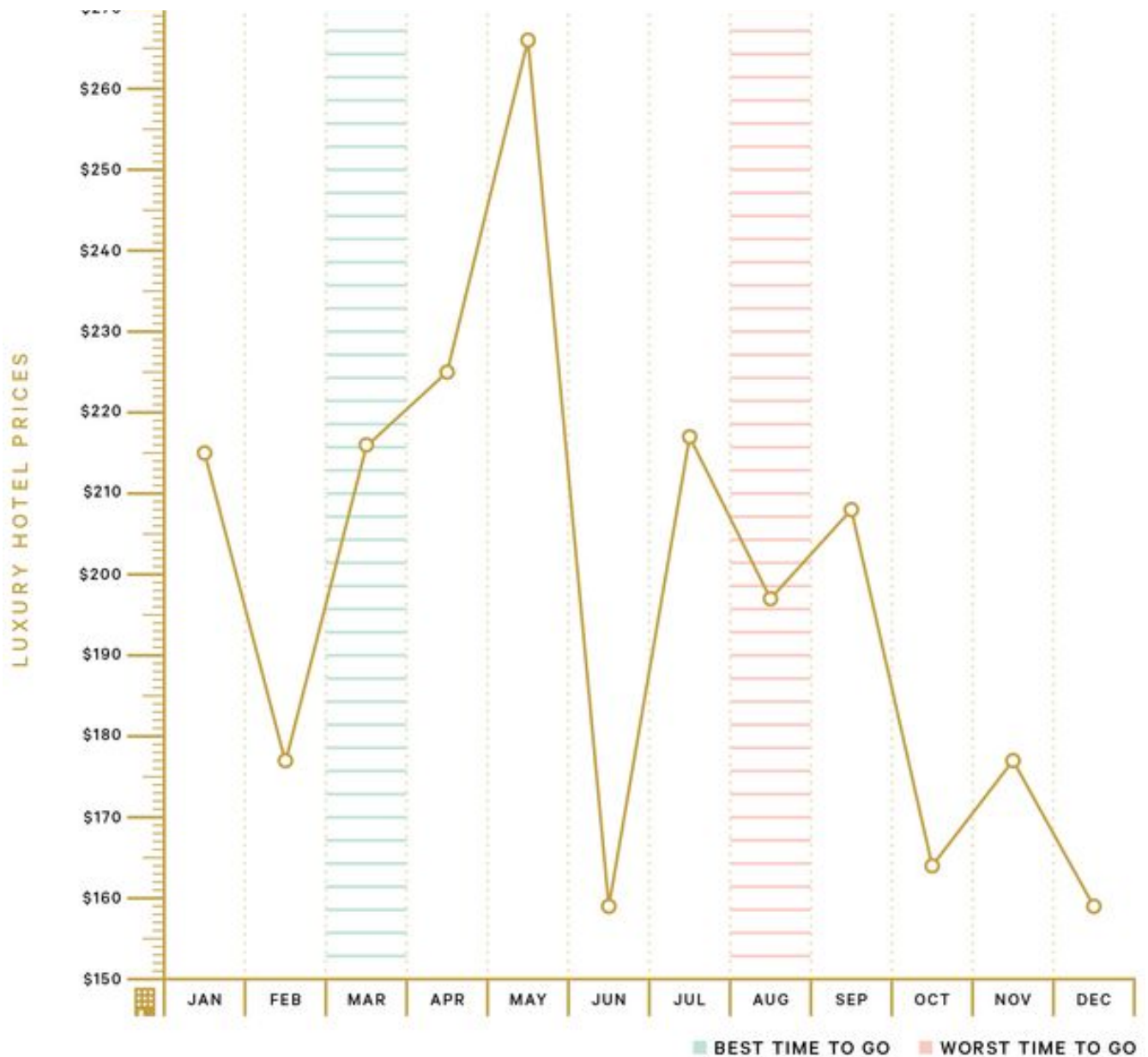
This year, you can have the pyramids of Giza all to yourself.

Photographer: Pius99/Getty Images/iStockphoto

EGYPT

Want to get the pyramids all to yourself? Now's the time to go to Egypt, which has shed its years of social and political unrest but has yet to regain the crowds that long plagued its iconic sights. "Locals are now more inclined to talk about their lives, hopes, and fears," said Geoffrey Kent, founder of luxury tour operator [Abercrombie & Kent](#), which is launching two itineraries here in 2017. "Travelers will find the country offers a more rewarding experience than ever before."

WHEN TO VISIT EGYPT



Source: Google (hotel prices)

In addition to heightened safety, many brand-name hospitality firms have started recommitting to Egypt. In 2015 [Ritz-Carlton](#) opened right on the Nile, and more recently, [Oberoi](#) [launched a luxury river cruise](#) between Luxor and Aswan. This April, [St. Regis](#) will open a 39-story hotel—also overlooking the Nile—in a Michael Graves-designed, mixed-use complex. Plus the government is finally opening the lush tombs of both Queen Nefertari and Pharaoh Seti I, after years of closed-door restorations.

When to go: March. Even in high season—with its perfect temps in the low 70s—there's amazing value to be found. At least for now.

When not to go: August. Because who does deserts in August?

Whom to call: [Malaka Hilton](#) of Authentic Escapes.



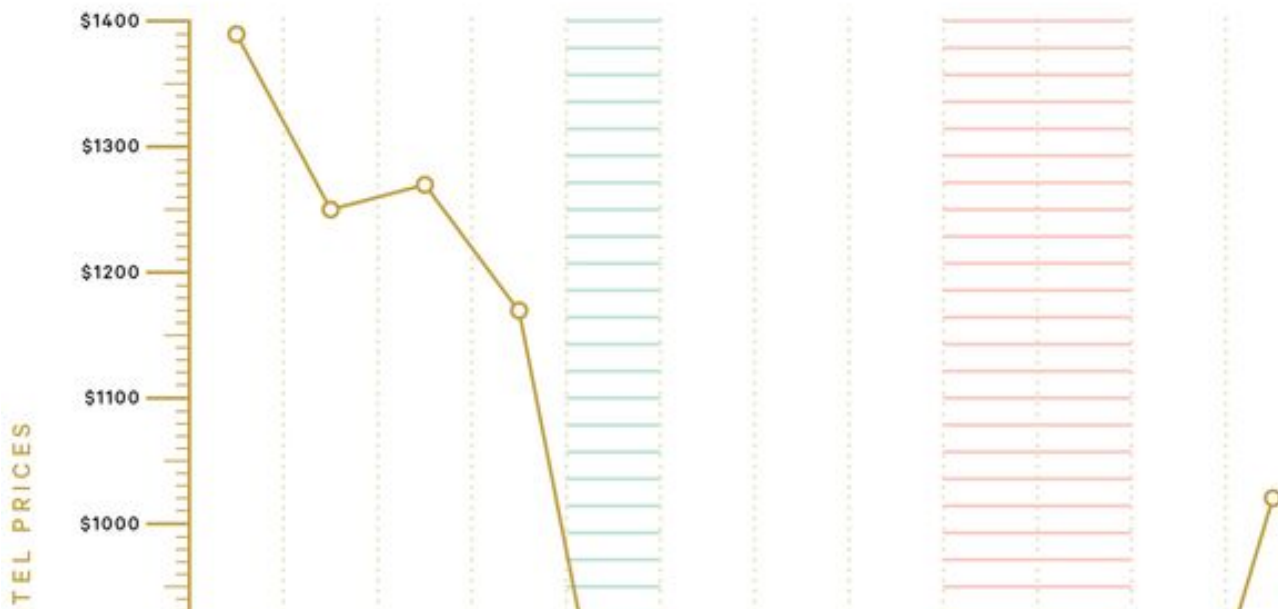
Turks and Caicos' signature blue waters, as seen from the new Sailrock resort.
Source: Sailrock

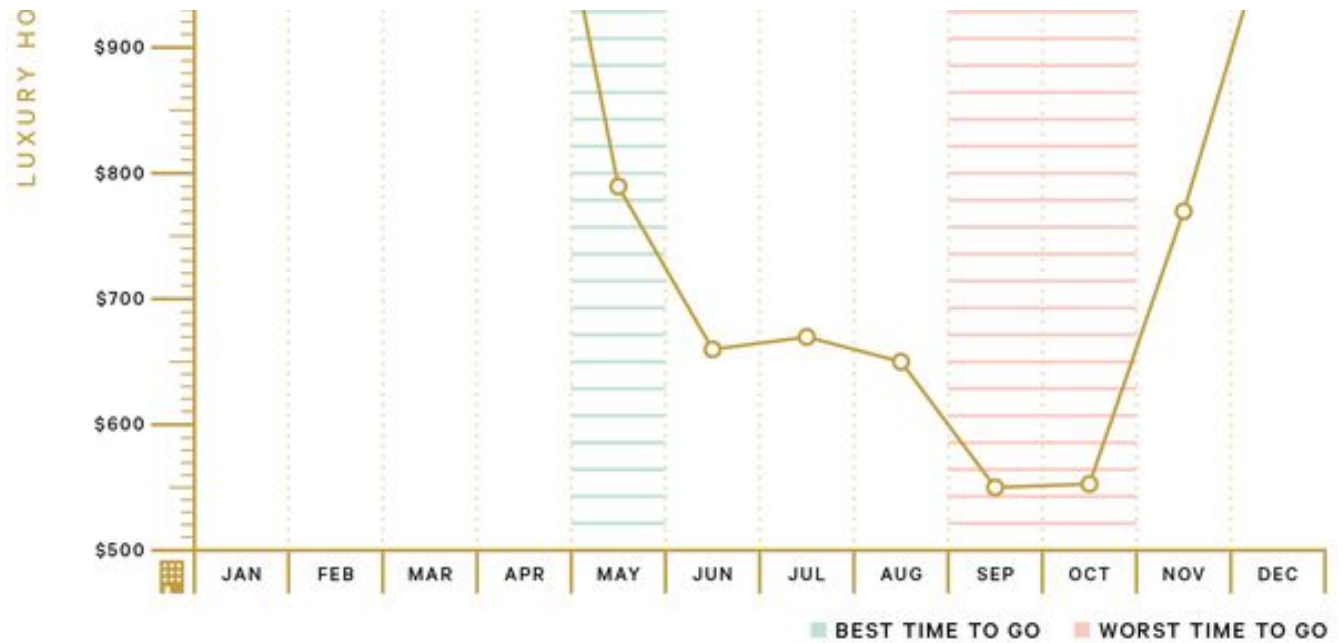
TURKS AND CAICOS

Best beaches in the world? Check. Amazing luxury hotels? Check. Non-stop flights from major U.S. cities? Turks and Caicos already had it all, but the arrival of its first new luxury properties since 2009 is injecting a family-friendly energy to a tried-and-true honeymoon spot.

In January, [Sailrock](#) opens on largely undeveloped South Caicos, where you'll find three nature reserves and the world's third-largest coral reef. It's a plush retreat for adventure-packed days: Think whale watching, scuba diving, and secluded fishing trips.

WHEN TO VISIT TURKS AND CAICOS





Source: Google (hotel prices)

Then there's the [Shore Club](#), the only hotel on turquoise-watered Long Bay Beach in southeastern Providenciales. It's a riff on the plantation-style resort so commonly seen in the West Indies—except its kids club is in a treehouse, and its light-filled rooms ditch colonial-style shutters in favor of modern, glass-walled terraces. It promises a no-need-to-leave experience.

Finally, for the multi-gen set, there's [Beach Enclave](#), a collection of four- and five-bedroom homes on a seaside cliff just west of powdery Grace Bay Beach. It couples the privacy (and square footage) of a vacation rental with the amenities of a resort—such as snorkeling classes for the little ones and family outings on a Hinckley Picnic Boat.

When to go: May, for nice weather and great value.

When not to go: September and October, when the risk for tropical storms outweighs all else.

Whom to call: [Jim Augerinos](#) of Perfect Honeymoons.





Hoshinoya's Kyoto property—an idyllic urban oasis.

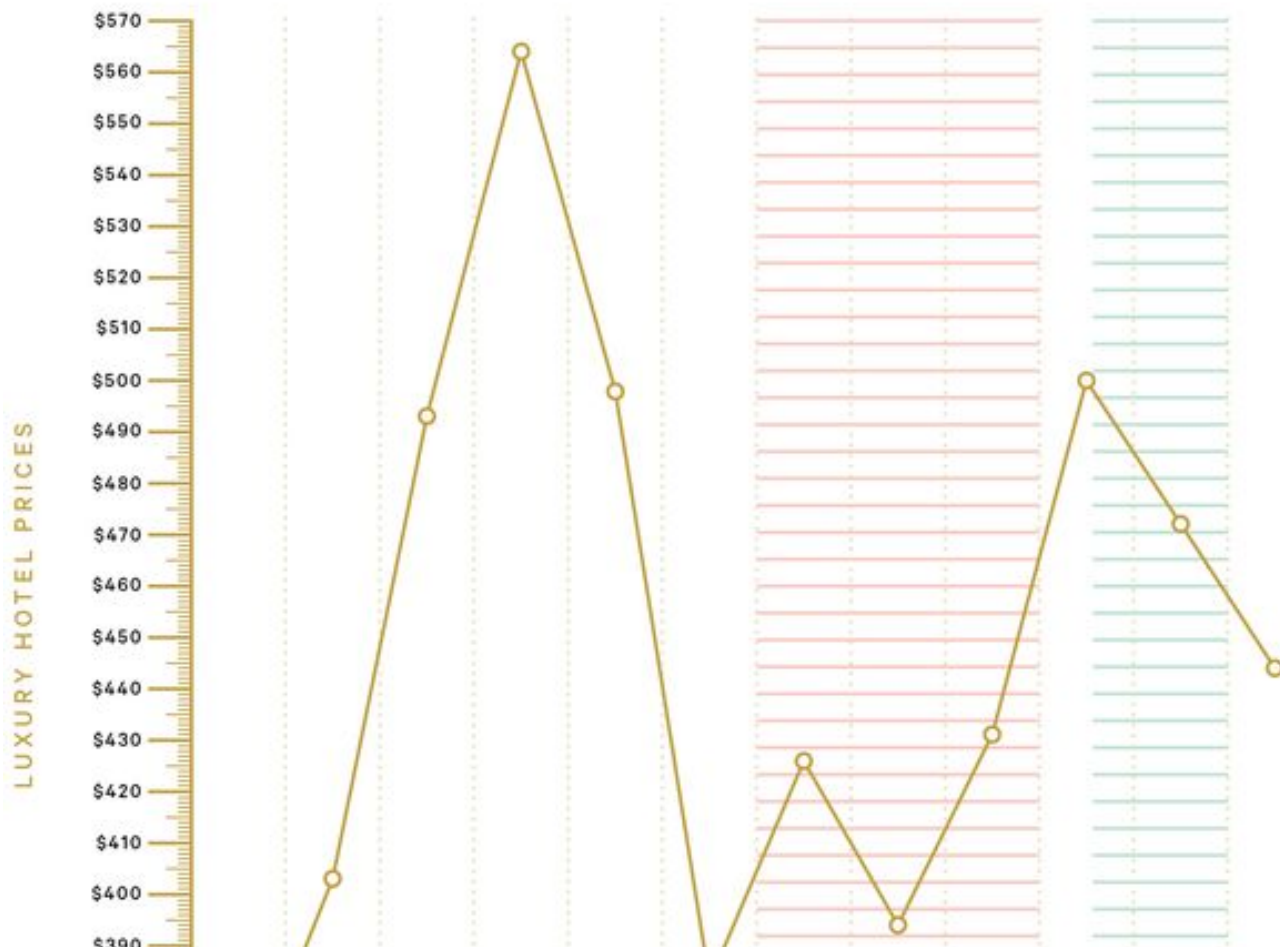
Source: Hoshino Resorts

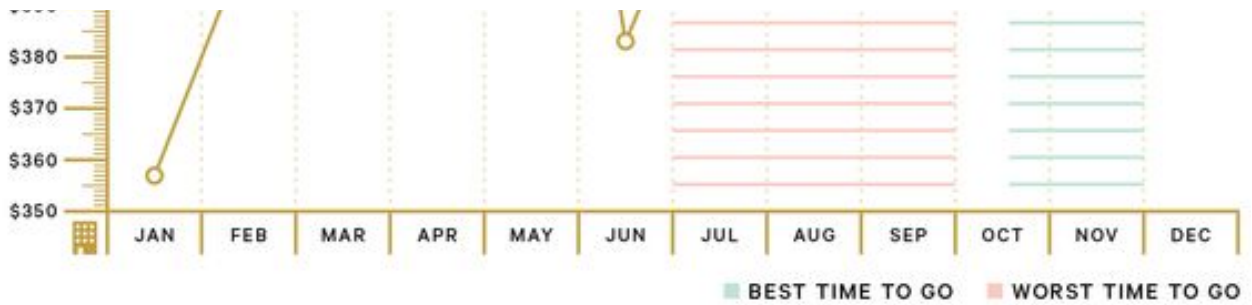
JAPAN

Despite an abundance of talented concierges and hospitable locals, traveling in Japan without speaking Japanese can leave you feeling as if you've barely scratched the surface. In the run-up to the 2020 Olympics, though, the country is shaking off its *Lost in Translation* vibe.

The Ryokan Collection, a just-formed consortium of more than 30 properties, is making it easier to find traditional inns that cater to foreigners, even in off-the-beaten-track destinations. Celebrity chef Hiroyuki Hiramatsu is also overseeing a brand-new line of high-end ryokans that combine the exquisite service and meticulously prepared, hyper-seasonal meals of old-style properties, but with rooms that nod to Western luxury ideals of mattresses, instead of sleeping mats, and walls, rather than paper screens. The first locations are in the hot springs town of Sengokuhara and Atami, which lies in the shadow of Mount Fuji.

WHEN TO VISIT JAPAN





Source: Google (hotel prices)

Two high-end rail experiences are on the horizon as well. The [Twilight Express Mizukaze](#), an Art Deco-inspired sleeper train that travels through the western regions of Sanyo and San'in, and the [Train Suite Shiki-Shima](#), a jewel box-like, 10-car train that takes guests on multi-day itineraries in northern Japan, both pass through coastal and country towns most people never see.

Even if you stick to the well-trod tourist trail, [Kyoto Artisans Concierge](#) can give you unprecedented access to renowned workshops that were long closed to tourists. Now, with a few clicks, anyone can arrange a visit to an atelier that makes fans, lacquerware, or knives.

When to go: Mid-October to the end of November. The stunning, fiery red fall leaves (*koyo*) are on full display and the weather is great, to boot.

When not to go: July to September. Popular destinations such as Tokyo and Kyoto are in full-on hot, sticky summer mode.

Whom to call: [Mark Lakin](#) of Epic Road.

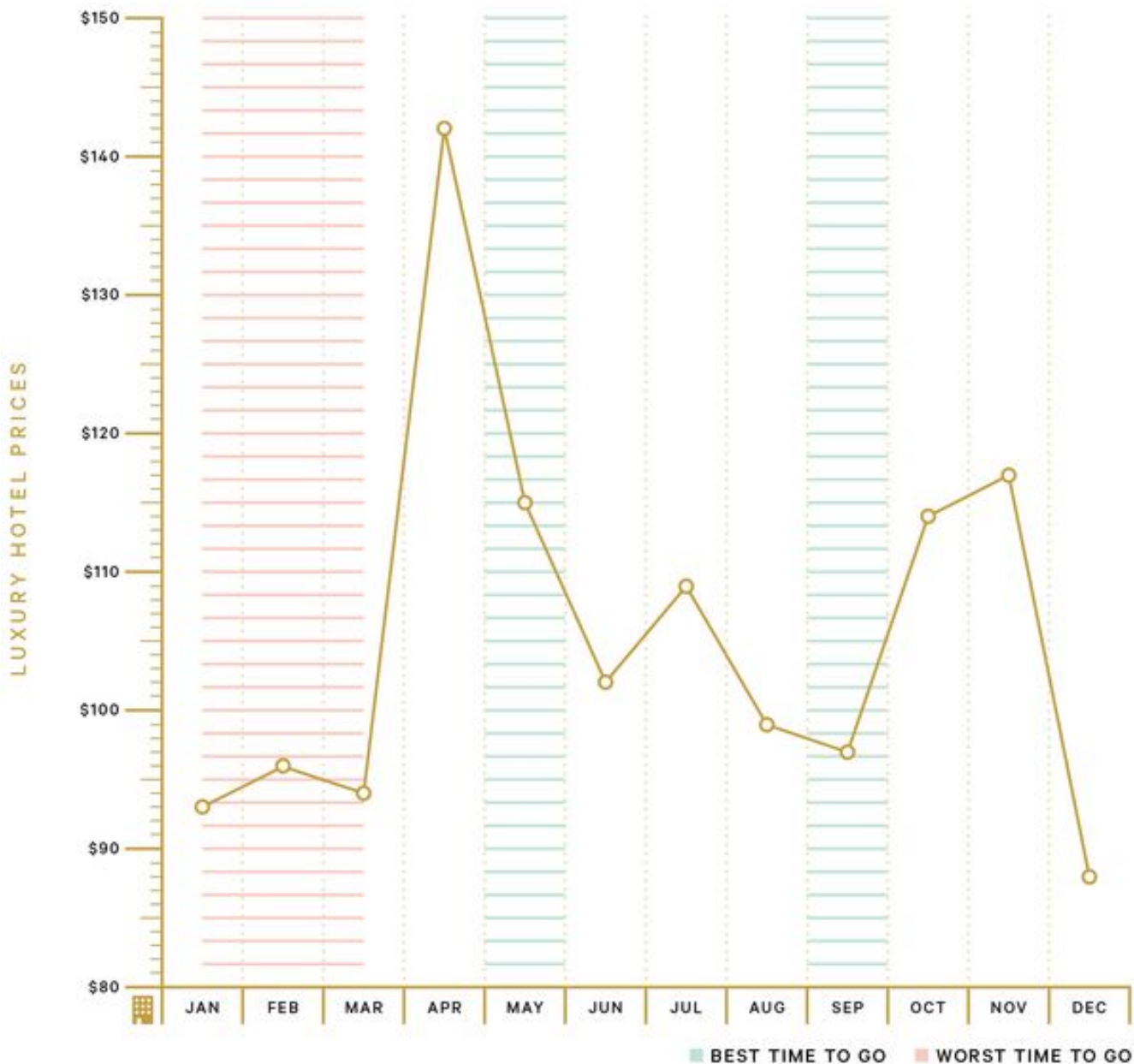


An aerial perspective of Madagascar, which some refer to as the "Galapagos of Africa."

MADAGASCAR

Suspended off the coast of Mozambique in the Indian Ocean, the island of Madagascar is hardly a secret among the adventure-seeking set. Its extraordinary biodiversity has rightly earned it comparisons to the Galapagos Islands. But before this year, its rainforests and untouched beaches were largely accessed only by the truly intrepid, due to a void of high-end lodging options.

WHEN TO VISIT MADAGASCAR



Source: Google (hotel prices)

But now this naturalist’s paradise—which is home to more than 250,000 endemic animal species—is poised to become a luxury traveler’s bragging right, thanks to the April opening of the ultra-exclusive, 14-villa [Miavana](#) resort. For \$2,500 per person, per night, you’ll get full run of Nosy Ankaos island, off the country’s northeastern tip. While you’re there, check these two things off your to-do list: snorkeling through the archipelago’s turtle-filled lagoons (you can literally dive in from the deck of your villa), and sailing to the mainland for an up-close look at Madagascar’s famed lemurs.

When to go: May and September, when lemur safaris are less crowded. For divers, September gets an edge because high plankton levels attract loads of whale sharks and dolphins.

When not to go: Mid-January to mid-March. Bad things come in threes: rain, wind, and cyclones.

Whom to call: [Teresa Sullivan](#) of Mango Safaris.



The Cauliflower Jaffa Style at Barbary, one of London's hottest new restaurants.
Photographer: Carol Sachs

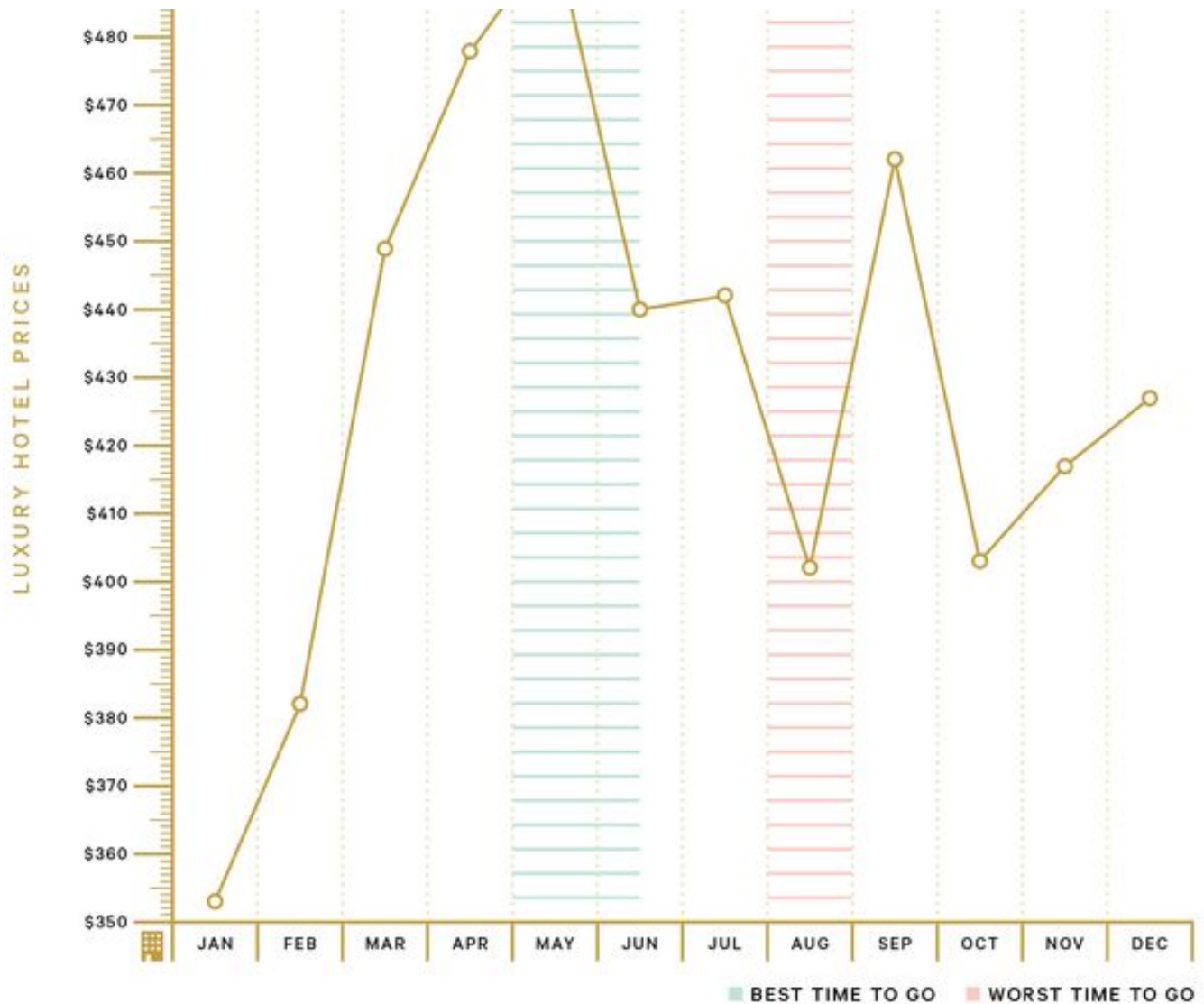
LONDON

There's no need to worry about your London travel plans, post-Brexit. On the contrary, a soon-to-open boutique hotel and private club is reason alone to visit. Called [The Ned](#), the project is set in a former 1920s bank in the City and is the first collaboration between the Soho House and NoMad hotel teams. On the docket is a rare-for-London rooftop pool, with glorious views of St. Paul's and a bar in the old vault.

Fierce competition is brewing near the Tower of London, at the [Four Seasons Ten Trinity](#): it's likewise set in a portentous 1920's building with a French restaurant by three-Michelin-starred chef [Anne-Sophie Pic](#).

WHEN TO VISIT LONDON





Source: Google (hotel prices)

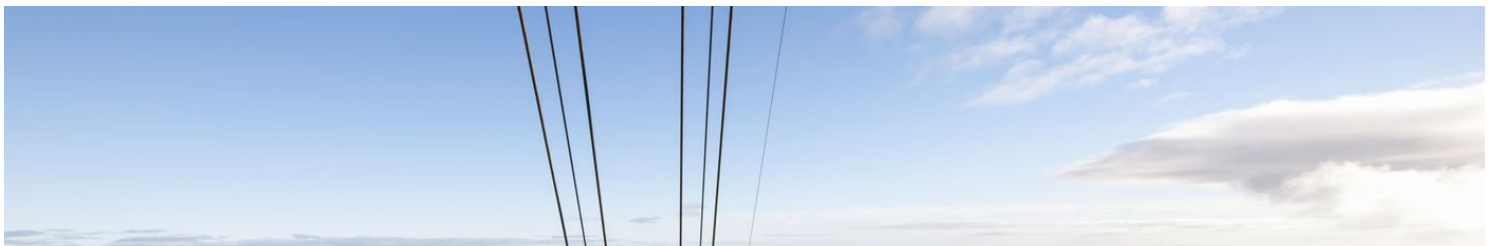
Old-meets-new is playing out elsewhere, too. Claude Bosi of the Michelin-starred Hibiscus is opening in the fabulous [Art Nouveau Bibendum](#) structure this spring. And Jean-Georges Vongerichten will create [his version](#) of a comfortable neighborhood restaurant in the grand Connaught Hotel in Mayfair. Plus Marcus Samuelsson will soon bring his Harlem comfort food hotspot, [Red Rooster](#), to Shoreditch.

But the hottest dining 'hood is Soho, where [the Barbary](#) showcases the flavors of North Africa. With the exchange rate more in favor of travelers than it's been in decades, splurging on meals is just the beginning of your best London trip yet.

When to go: May and early June, when the gardens are in bloom and several royal birthdays fill the city with pomp and circumstance.

When not to go: August. Londoners decamp—and tourists replace them, leaving the Tube and streets completely clogged.

Whom to call: [Ellen LeCompte](#) of LeCompte Travel.



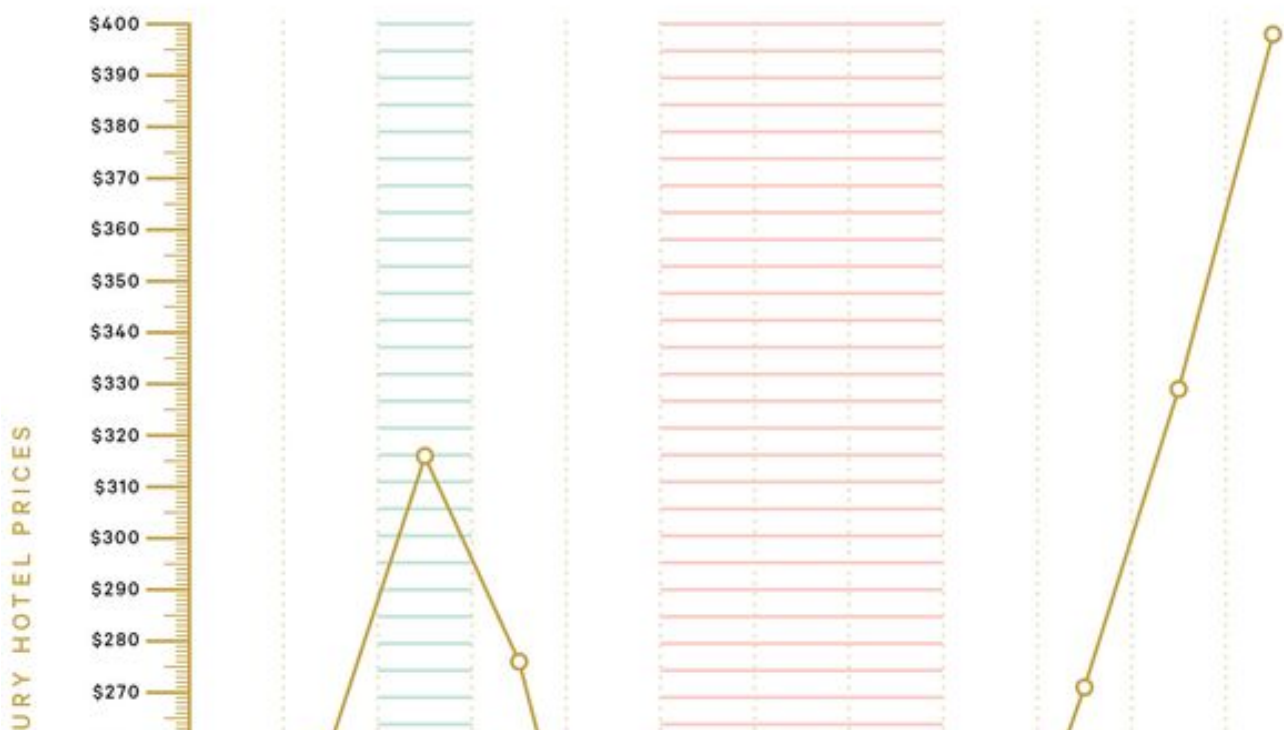


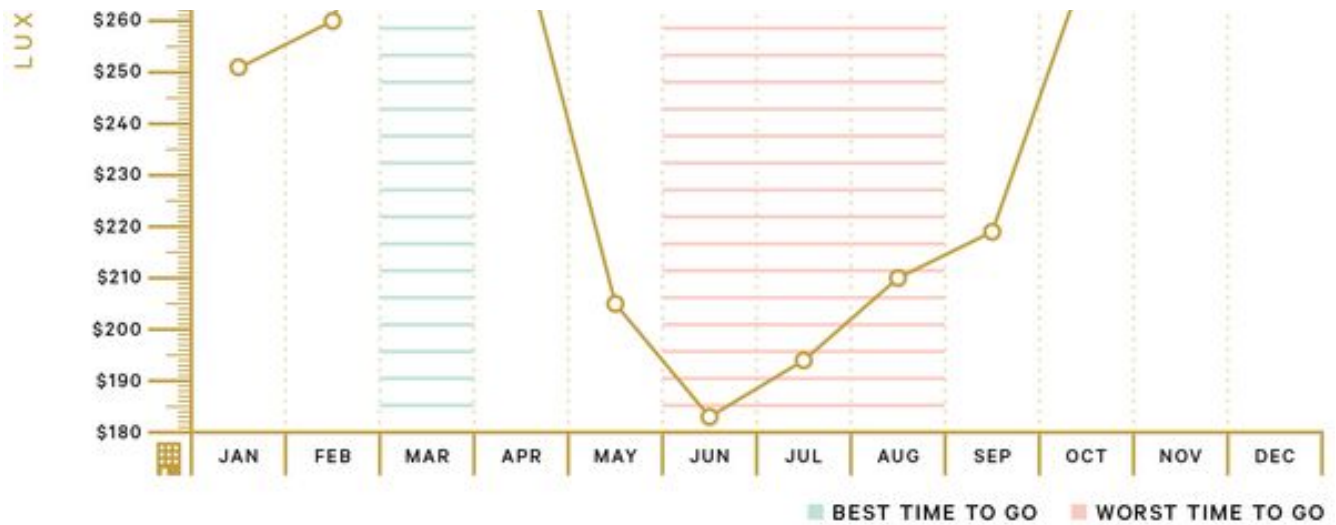
The aerial cableway that leads to the top of Table Mountain.
Photographer: Neil Austen/ Getty Images/Gallo Images

CAPE TOWN

Cape Town has found its way onto travelers' bucket lists for many reasons, including its natural beauty, its cutting-edge design sensibility, and most recently, its exceptional food scene. But in 2017, expect the city to make a star turn as the hottest art capital in the Southern Hemisphere.

WHEN TO VISIT CAPE TOWN





Source: Google (hotel prices)

Come September, the long-anticipated [Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa](#)—aka the Zeitz MOCAA—will become the world's largest museum dedicated to modern art from across the continent. The collection will occupy an erstwhile grain silo at the V&A Waterfront that was once the tallest building in sub-Saharan Africa and was since reimagined for the 21st century by famed U.K. architect Thomas Heatherwick. Those involved with the project hope to make it as influential as New York's MoMA and London's Tate.

What's more, Cape Town's art galleries are upping their game in anticipation of the inevitable influx of patrons soon to descend on their city: Current highlights include [StateoftheArt](#), [Ava](#), [Whatiftheworld](#), and [Gallery Momo](#). And where's a discerning art aficionado to stay? The new [Silo Hotel](#) crowns the MOCAA's glass-clad tower, promising stellar views and unrivaled museum access.

When to go: March, for harvest-time day trips to the nearby wine lands.

When not to go: June through August. South Africa's wet winters are ideal for Great Migration safaris, not urban explorations.

Whom to call: [Julia Douglas](#) of Jetset World Travel, Inc.



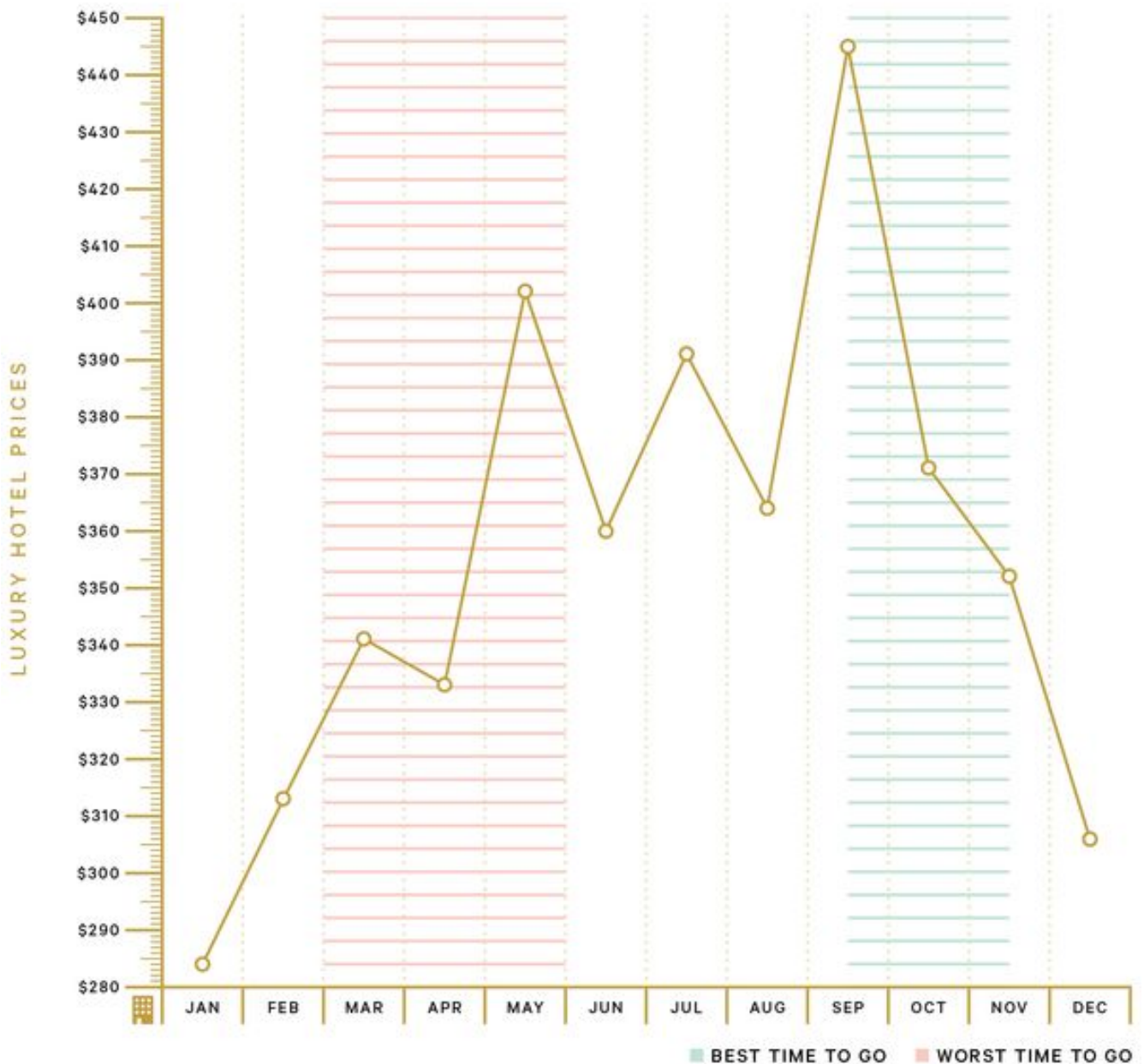


Nathan Phillips Square, a public plaza that anchors Downtown Toronto.
 Photographer: Edwin Chang/Getty Images

TORONTO

Canada's largest city has decisively shed its image as a staid also-ran, thanks to its flourishing food scene, an abundance of new green spaces, and lots of homegrown creative energy. It's become one of the fastest-growing metropolitan areas on the continent.

WHEN TO VISIT TORONTO



Source: Google (hotel prices)

On the cultural front, the [Museum of Contemporary Art](#) will unveil its expanded location in fast-changing Junction Triangle. And the city's splashy \$25-million [Bentway](#) project, Toronto's answer to such repurposing initiatives as the High Line in New York, will transform a one-mile stretch beneath the elevated Gardiner Expressway into a vibrant recreational space—just in time for Canada's 150th birthday celebration.

Base yourself at the [Hotel X](#), an “urban resort” with two movie theaters, two rooftop swimming pools, and a 3,000-square-foot children's play area. Or spring for a room in the 44-story project [Bisha Hotel & Residences](#), in the centrally located Entertainment District, where an entire floor has been designed by Lenny Kravitz. And don't overlook the dining—not that you could, with options such as French-influenced dim sum at [DaiLo](#) and pine-smoked mussels at [Boralia](#).

When to go: The crowd-free, foliage-filled window between the Toronto International Film Festival and the onset of winter—from late-September to mid-November—is largely underrated.

When not to go: Spring, which is uncomfortably cold and rainy.

Whom to call: [Elke Hinson](#) of Merit Travel.



A look at the soon-to-open Aman Shanghai.

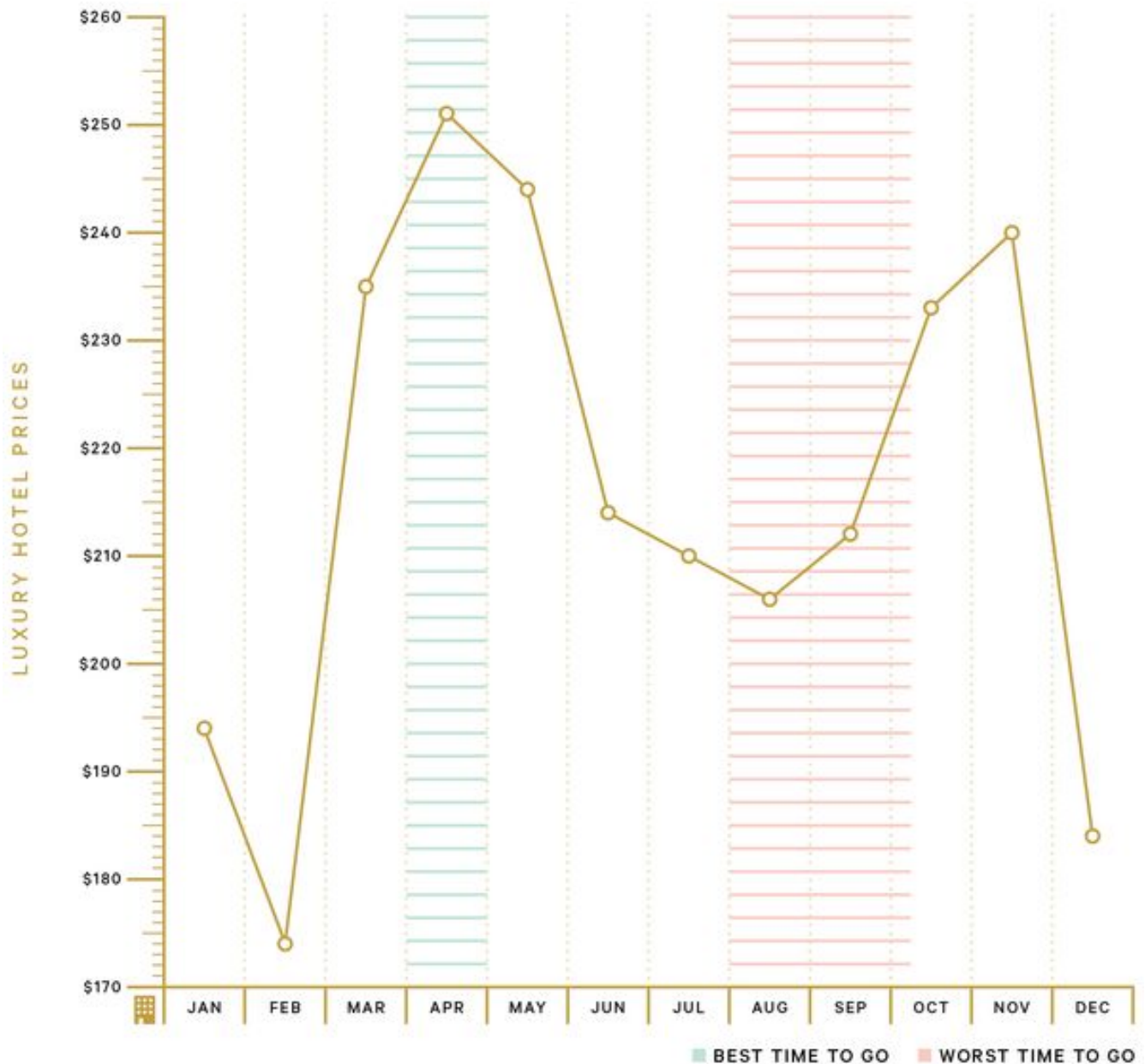
Source: Aman Shanghai

SHANGHAI

A cooling economy? Weakening yuan? In glitzy Shanghai, China's woes seem [worlds away](#) amid all the city's splashy development projects. Put aside the \$5.5 billion Shanghai Disney Resort that [finally opened its doors](#) in June—it's the steady influx of five-star

hotels and celebrity-chef restaurants that most excite us.

WHEN TO VISIT SHANGHAI



Source: Google (hotel prices)

On the ever-glamorous Bund, an Art Deco gem of a building will transform into an Edition Hotel, set to open early next winter. The [Capella Shanghai](#) will open sooner, in March, with a restaurant by acclaimed Frenchman Pierre Gagnaire; he's joining a crew of recent imports, such as Spanish chef Diego Guerrero and Joël Robuchon, to further boost a culinary scene that earned Shanghai its inaugural Michelin Guide in 2016.

The capstone will be [Aman Shanghai](#), the group's fourth mainland resort, bowing this spring. It inhabits a centuries-old traditional village that was painstakingly transplanted from rural Jiangxi province, 500 miles away—giant camphor trees and all.

When to go: April, when the weather is pleasant and dry—important in a city that gets twice as much rain as London.

When not to go: Skip the end of summer (typhoon season) as well as Golden Week, in the beginning of October. It's when domestic

tourists come flocking, packing local attractions and public spaces.

Whom to call: [Guy Rubin](#) of Imperial Tours.



The newly-christened Faena Forum, in Miami Beach.

Photographer: Nikolas Koenig

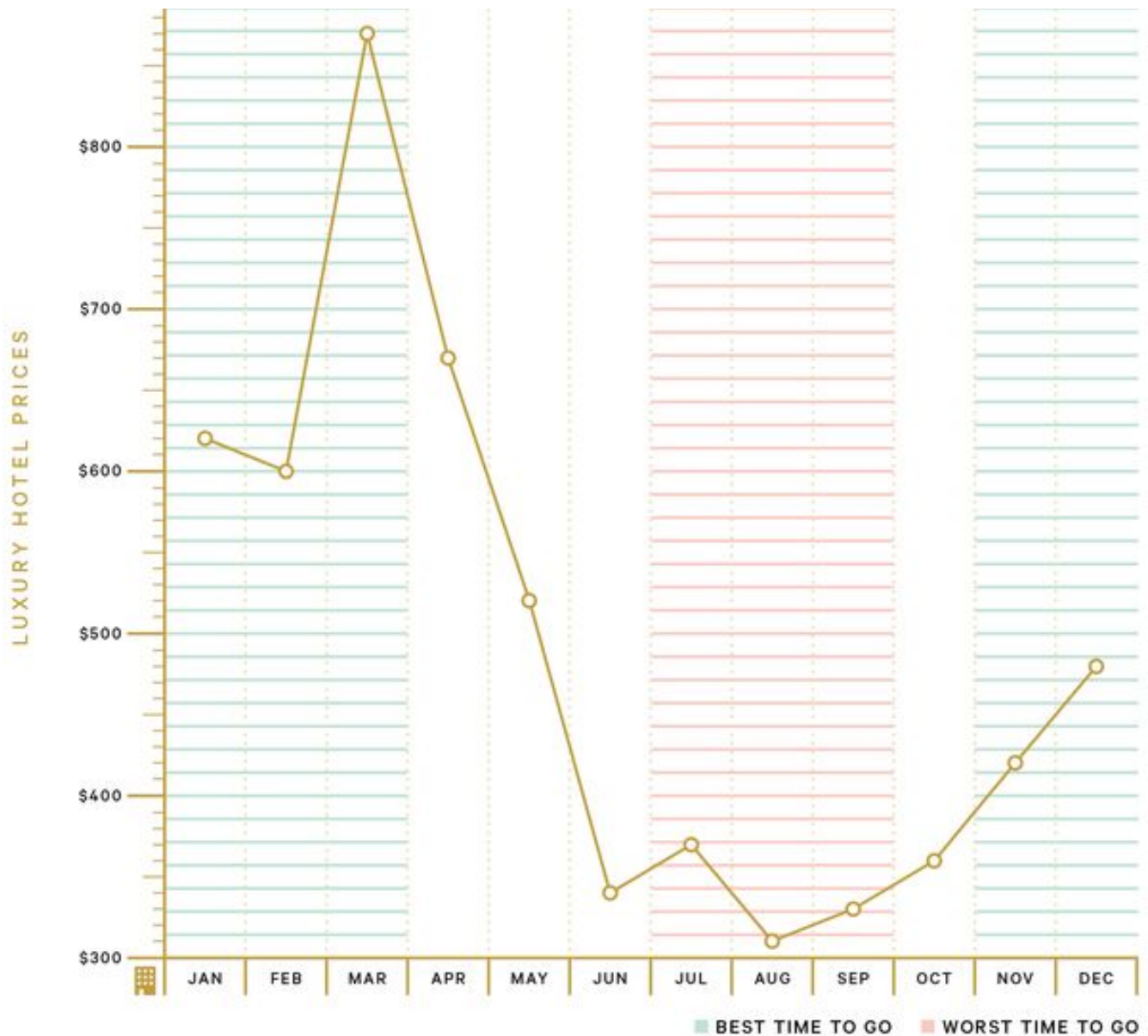
MIAMI

Save for one party-filled weekend each December, Miami's culture scene has been as skimpy as the bikinis on South Beach. No longer.

The tide began to turn with the arrival of the [Perez Art Museum Miami](#) in 2013; it proved that the high-concept spirit of Art Basel can thrive year-round in this sun-filled capital. Now, the [dramatic statement piece](#) that is the [Faena Hotel](#) has spawned a 43,000-square-foot cultural center designed by Rem Koolhaas/OMA. It [opened last month](#) with a lineup that includes funk trumpeter Spencer Ludwig and weekly performances of its Latin jazz-centric revue show, "C'est Rouge."

WHEN TO VISIT MIAMI

\$900



Source: Google (hotel prices)

The [Frost Science Museum](#), which has been delayed and bailed-out countless times, will finally open in the spring, with 250,000 square feet of LEED Gold-certified galleries, all designed by a “technologist” who spent years developing pieces for artist James Turrell. It’s anyone’s guess whether the Frost or the significantly expanded [Bass Museum](#) will win the race to ribbon-cutting day.

And that’s to make no mention of South Florida’s first food hall, Central Fare (with a restaurant by *Top Chef* alums Bryan and Michael Voltaggio) or [Brickell City Centre](#), a retail complex of staggering proportions that’s steadily expanding the city’s appeal beyond its sandy shores.

When to go: November to March. Chances of rain: slim. Chances of amazing weather: high.

When not to go: July to September. The lowest hotel prices of the year don’t make up for the fact that it’s brutally hot and muggy.

Whom to call: [Greg Guiteras](#) of Lorraine Travel.

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Design & Development: Bernadette Walker

(Corrects hotel ownership of Le Toiny in the 35th paragraph.)

Betrayed by Banks, 40,000 Businesses Are in Limbo

A banking meltdown in wealthy Veneto has wiped out the life savings of many residents.



The former headquarters of Veneto Banca SpA, right, in Dall'Armi square in Montebelluna, Italy.
Photographer: Federico Bernini/Bloomberg

By **Sonia Sirletti**, **Luca Casiraghi**, and **Tommaso Ebhardt**

October 19, 2017, 8:00 PM PDT

The Most Serene Republic, as the area around Venice was known for a millennium, is now the troubled epicenter of a banking meltdown that's threatening to derail one of globalization's great success stories.

The base of brands like Benetton, De'Longhi, Geox and Luxottica, Veneto has also become home to as many as 40,000 small businesses suddenly stranded without access to financing since a pair of regional banks collapsed in June.





Posters in support of a referendum for the autonomy of the Veneto region are displayed in Asiago, Italy.
Photographer: Federico Bernini/Bloomberg

The implosions of [Popolare di Vicenza](#) and [Veneto Banca](#), which also wiped out the life savings of many of their 200,000 shareholders, set off economic and political tremors felt from Rome to Frankfurt. Anger over what many view as lax oversight by national authorities is animating a movement for more autonomy that's already emboldened by Catalonia's efforts to split from Spain.

"The pain for Veneto's banks may be over, but the pain for Veneto's businesses is just beginning," said Andrea Arman, a lawyer advising some of the companies and individuals who've been hit the hardest. "We're just starting to see the consequences of the collapse and what we're seeing is alarming."

Nestled between the Alps and the Adriatic, Veneto is home to about 5 million people. Like Catalonia, it has a seafaring heritage, its own language and incomes far above the national average. Veneto President Luca Zaia, who's called Italy and its 64 governments in 71 years a "bankrupt state," plans to use the results of a nonbinding referendum on Oct. 22 to press Rome for more autonomy. Three out of four Veneti want more local power and 15 percent would support complete independence, according to a Demos poll published by [La Repubblica](#) this week.

While [Intesa Sanpaolo SpA](#), Italy's second-largest bank, paid a [symbolic sum](#) to acquire the healthiest parts of the two Veneto lenders, the state entity that's absorbing the 18 billion euros (\$21.3 billion) of troubled debt the banks amassed, called SGA, isn't fully operational yet. That has left small and midsized companies in the lurch—in many cases unable to do business.

"Many of these borrowers are profitable companies, but they're stuck in limbo," said Mauro Rocchesso, head of Fidi Impresa e Turismo Veneto, a financial firm that provides collateral to companies seeking lines of credit. "They don't have a counterparty anymore and can't find fresh capital from a new lender because of their exposure to the two Veneto banks."

A developer near Padua, who asked not to be identified, thought he'd solved his funding problem when he found a buyer for a commercial building along the highway linking Venice and Verona—only to be forced to halt the sale after a Veneto Banca loan tied to the property was assigned to SGA.

