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## TRAVEL

# What are the Coziest Hotels in America?

The 10 best getaways for becoming reacquainted with the endangered art of slowing down—ideally near a fireplace, and in supersoft slippers



Scarp Ridge Lodge SCARP RIDGE LODGE

By Jackie Cooperman

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**"AH! THERE IS NOTHING LIKE** staying at home, for real comfort," Jane Austen wrote. That may have been true in 1815, but today, legions of hotels supersede the pleasures of home, providing both five-star indulgences and what might be the ultimate luxury: an excuse to explore the sweetness of doing nothing, or at least to hang the "out of office" shingle and slow down.

"My home is swanky and glamorous, but in a hotel I want to feel some kind of protection, like a gerbil," said Simon Doonan, a frequent traveler and the creative ambassador at large for Barneys New York. For Mr. Doonan, who shares an apartment with his husband, designer Jonathan Adler, successful hotel escapes include a retreat from his usual glossy aesthetic. "I don't mind if the design is granny or twee," he said. "As long as it's full-on, vigorous twee."

Though the idea of cozy is subjective, the fundamental quality underlying our search for the 10 coziest hotels in America was, in Mr. Doonan's parlance, a "full-on" approach to relaxation. We sought hotels that are true destinations in themselves, and chose only places on whose premises we could happily exist for days, no matter how alluring or nearby the off-site attractions.

These idylls, from a luxurious 88-room clubhouse in downtown Manhattan to a working cattle ranch in the mountains of Montana, allow for the unapologetic enjoyment of idleness. They promote sitting by a fire, taking a long bath, getting a massage, reading a book (remember those?), lingering over a meal and finishing it all off by having a deep sleep. Among the winners are a city hotel with an underground Japanese spa, a Southern mansion with fireside brandy and a California coastal aerie with heated pools and spectacular stargazing.

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PHOTOS: THE COZIEST HOTELS FIT FOR YOU

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We're all for vacations that get your heart racing or stretch your mind, and these places may indeed do that, but it would be a shame to forget how good, and good for you, a little tranquillity can be.

### **Mosey Down to Cozy Town**

*Foot massages, fondues and fireplaces aplenty: Ten of the best hotels for snuggling up*

### **The Urbanite**

*The Greenwich Hotel, New York*



The Greenwich Hotel THE GREENWICH HOTEL

A hushed retreat in the middle of Manhattan's lively TriBeCa neighborhood, the Greenwich Hotel is extremely design-oriented, built of handmade bricks and full of handsome touches such as cast-bronze medallions and reclaimed wood. Although Robert DeNiro is one of the owners, the Greenwich feels more like an eclectic country manse than a Hollywood estate. Each of the 88 rooms and suites is unique; some feature Tibetan silk rugs and you'll find Moroccan tiles in others. The decadent one- and

two-bedroom corner suites have working fireplaces and deep soaking tubs; the hotel's drawing room has large couches and, seasonally, a roaring fire. Star chef Andrew Carmellini runs the property's delicious Italian restaurant, Locanda Verde, where guests are afforded priority reservations (you can also have room service deliver pasta and maple budino to your door). The hotel's serene Japanese-style Shibui Spa has a lantern-lit heated swimming pool.

*Rates from \$525, [thegreenwichhotel.com](http://thegreenwichhotel.com)*

### **The Homey All-Inclusive**

*Twin Farms, Barnard, Vt.*

A pioneer in rustic extravagance, Twin Farms calls itself "beyond inclusive," which means that the Vermont resort caters to guests' every whim, and the fee includes everything from same-day laundry to all food and drink and international phone calls. Set on 300 acres, Twin Farms offers a long list of activities, from skiing on the resort's own trails and fly fishing to soaking in a Japanese bath and gourmet picnicking—but the cottages are so inviting you may choose to spend the weekend inside. Each of the hotel's 20 rooms has a wood-burning fireplace, and the solicitous staff will bring martinis and five-course meals to your door. The main house's communal dining room offers a single seating each night. In November the hotel hosts a puzzle weekend using locally made Stave jigsaw puzzles, which are given as gifts to every hotel guest year-round. And in the winter, Twin Farms creates its own ice skating rink.

*Rates from \$1,400, [twinfarms.com](http://twinfarms.com)*

### **The Whimsical Cottage**

*Winvian, Litchfield Hills, Conn.*



Twin Farms TWIN FARMS

With 18 cottages built by 15 different architects on land that was an 18th-century farm, Winvian (the name is a tribute to the initial owners, Winthrop and Vivian Smith) exudes high-end quirkiness. Woodlands cottage has more than a dozen ceiling-high tree trunks inside and a small waterfall and pond in the bathroom; the Library cottage's burgundy leather sofa faces a fireplace and rows of well-stocked bookshelves; and the Camping cottage has two fireplaces, one indoors and one on a screened-in porch. All cottages have fireplaces as well as bathrooms with Jacuzzi tubs and two-person steam showers. There are loads of activities including hot air ballooning, snowshoeing and cooking classes run by Winvian chef Chris Eddy, who trained with Alain Ducasse and Daniel Boulud and has an organic garden on the property. Adventurous spa-goers can book a session of Ashitsu, an Asian massage treatment during which the therapist holds onto a ceiling-suspended birch-wood bar and uses his or her feet to massage back muscle and tissue.

*Rates from \$549, winvian.com*

### **The Ski Bunny**

*Stein Eriksen Lodge Deer Valley, Park City, Utah*



Winvian WINVIAN

Luxury ski-in, ski-out Stein Eriksen Lodge is set up with serious skiers in mind (Deer Valley slopes prohibit snow boarders). Valets take care of cumbersome gear in the hotel's ski locker room, cleaning boots and drying wet clothes. The hotel also has plenty of options for less active guests. The recently renovated 23,000-square-foot spa is full of nooks and crannies, with day beds and soft blankets and a fireplace that flanks the outdoor heated pool. The hotel itself has a European-lodge feel, with dark wooden beams and plush leather furniture. Three versions of fondue (traditional cheese, chocolate, beer-infused) are served daily all winter in the main lodge's Troll Hallen lounge. Twice nightly, a 30-minute horse-driven sleigh ride departs from the

main lodge, in an open vehicle outfitted with cozy blankets (a setting so romantic that the hotel estimates about 15 couples get engaged on the ride every winter).

*Rates from \$700, steinlodge.com*

### **The Rancher**

*Triple Creek Ranch, Darby, Mont.*

Part of a working cattle ranch set on 26,000 acres, the property offers guests all of the glory but none of the drudgery of the cowboy life. From June to mid-October, visitors can participate in cattle drives (with pre-saddled horses); dog sledding with a top Iditarod racer is on offer starting next month through February. In addition, guests can ride horses on a moonlit trail, and the area has terrific hiking and skiing. For those who prefer to stay indoors, there are wine



Stein Eriksen Lodge Deer Valley STEIN ERIKSEN LODGE DEER VALLEY

tastings and art workshops, a gourmet restaurant, in-room massages and an extensive activity center (fly fishing, anyone?). The main lodge has cozy decks, a fireplace and a wine cellar, and the 23 cabins have wood-burning fireplaces, which are lit while guests are at dinner. After the meal, guests return to their rooms to find chocolates and cowboy poems on their pillows.

Rates from \$950,  
triplecreekranch.com

### The Family-Friendly Den

Scarp Ridge Lodge, Crested Butte, Colo.



Triple Creek Ranch TRIPLE CREEK RANCH

Many luxury properties discourage guests from bringing children, but the Scarp Ridge Lodge is ideal for multigenerational carousing.

The seven-bedroom luxury property includes a private chef, a small spa, an indoor saltwater lap pool with underwater music, a game room, a cinema and even piped-in oxygen (not a trivial matter when a property is 9,000 feet above sea level). Lodge manager Sibby Schlaudecker creates bespoke itineraries and takes care of everything from arranging gear and guides for Snowcat skiing to keeping the property stocked with guests' preferred linens and food. The rental also includes a personal photographer who accompanies guests on outdoor adventures (in



Scarp Ridge Lodge SCARP RIDGE LODGE

addition to skiing, the area is known for mountain biking, fishing and hiking) and creates a daily slide show and a coffee-table book to bring home.

Rates from \$12,500, [elevenexperience.com](http://elevenexperience.com)

### The Southern Charmer

Wentworth Mansion, Charleston, S.C.

This 21-bedroom 1866 mansion exudes Southern hospitality and charm, and, despite what its august furnishings might suggest, welcomes both children and dogs. The grand common spaces are bedecked with original plaster moldings, crystal chandeliers, English ceramic tiles and a



Wentworth Mansion WENTWORTH MANSION

fireplace. Guests gather in the parlor for daily refreshments like tea and lemonade, and later in the day, for wine and hors d'oeuvres, Sherry, port and brandy. Bedrooms are large, most have fireplaces and some have daybeds set under large bay windows to facilitate brilliant daydreaming. Though the hotel is located in the historic district of Charleston, a popular tourist destination, those who don't leave the grounds can be forgiven. One can spend some lazy hours in the spa (which is in a former horse stable) or on the roof, where there's a lovely cupola accessed by a spiral staircase and offering 360-degree views of the city. Every night, the turndown staff delivers chocolate truffles from the hotel's restaurant, Circa 1886, to guest rooms.

*Rates from \$390, wentworthmansion.com*

### **The Wine Country Retreat**

Farmhouse Inn, Forestville, Calif.

Set in a wooden glen across from a vineyard in the middle of California's Russian River Valley, the 12-year-old Farmhouse Inn is about as idyllic as it gets. Run by brother and sister Joe and Catherine Bartolomei, the inn has 18 rooms and six concierges. The spa offers treatments with carrots, apples, honey and lavender from the Bartolomeis's fifth-generation ranch and vineyard. There's a Michelin-starred restaurant (with a master sommelier who brings equal enthusiasm to helping novice wine drinkers and expert oenophiles) and a driver who chauffeurs guests to the nearby wineries in Sonoma and Napa Valleys. The property's butterfly garden has a fire pit where guests can roast s'mores with Valrhona chocolate and the hotel's homemade marshmallows. All of the guest rooms have saunas and fireplaces, and some come with private outdoor patios. For those who find it a bit too sybaritic, the Bartolomei siblings organize cycling expeditions with customized bikes and itineraries.

*Rates from \$345, farmhouseinn.com*

### **The Romantic Hideaway**

Post Ranch Inn, Big Sur, Calif.

Popular with privacy-seekers, Post Ranch Inn is best known for its expansive ocean views and its policy banning television and guests under the age of 18. Each of the 39 rooms has a fireplace and spa bathtub. The hotel holds daily yoga classes in a yurt, offers guided hikes on the surrounding trails and has two infinity pools heated to 104 degrees (a hotel employee described the experience of soaking in them as akin to being rendered a "poached salmon"). At night, guests can use the inn's high-powered telescopes for stargazing. Dinner (organic and local) is served in the glass-walled Sierra Mar restaurant, or privately on ocean-view decks that come with most of the rooms. The spa, open only to hotel guests, has a couple's suite, and this being California, there's a certain kooky quality, too: The health and wellness services include consultations with a resident shaman to read guests' spirits and past lives.

*Rates from \$650, postranchinn.com*

### **The Smoky Mountaineer**

The Swag Inn, Waynesville, N.C.



The Swag Inn JUMPING ROCKS PHOTOGRAPHY

Named for the shape of the dip in the mountain ridge on which the resort sits, the Swag Inn has some of the most dramatic hiking and views in the Smoky Mountains. Owners Diane and Dan Matthews are transplanted New Yorkers (he was the rector of Trinity Church) who bought the land in 1969 and converted it to an inn in 1982. They designed a lodge with individual cabins that vary but have wood-burning fireplaces, cathedral ceilings,

steam showers and saunas, as well as the occasional black-bear sighting (through the windows). The common areas feature rocking chairs, a 2,000-volume library and a roadkill taxidermy collection. The property also has an underground racquetball court, nature trails, hammocks, a spring-fed pond and a player piano that's been in the Matthews family since 1902. Upon arrival at the Swag, all guests are given personalized walking sticks to bring on easy hikes or intense treks through the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. One thing to note: The Swag does not sell alcohol, but will happily serve anything you bring yourself.

*Rates from \$495, [theswag.com](http://theswag.com)*

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