

The Week in Travel: A New Hotel in the DR, High-Tech Room Keys in Hawaii, and More

It's Friday, and that means it's time to round up everything that's happening in the world of travel. Here are the things we are all talking about right now.

Hotels

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(Photo: Gansevoort Hotel Group)

It's official – the Dominican Republic is a trendy destination. How do we know? Because [Gansevoort Playa Imbert](#) opened on the north coast. The hotel has 48 suites comprised of one and two-bedroom lofts; three-bedroom apartments with private plunge pools and spacious terraces; and several four-bedroom penthouses. The resort also has a three-tiered infinity pool, restaurant Baia Lounge, La Cantina Wine + Cigar Cellar, a fitness center, and a spa featuring a Hammam-style sauna. Rates start at \$595 per night.



(Photo: Four Seasons)

Techies rejoice: [Four Seasons Resorts Lana'i](#) has launched the use of high-tech wristbands for room access. The RFID bracelets are perfect for all the outdoor activities in Hawaii — no more losing your key at the beach. Currently the bands operate for key entry, but food and beverage charging privileges will be added in 2015, with spa and other retail on the horizon. The resort will still provide old fashioned key cards, too.



(Photo: Prijeko Palace)

Croatia has a new exclusive boutique hotel in Dubrovnik. [Prijeko Palace](#) was opened in the Renaissance palace Isusović-Braichi, which dates back to 1475. Based on documents found in the Dubrovnik Historical Archives, the building was returned to its original grandeur to give the hotel a historic charm. The property boasts nine apartments, each dedicated to a well-known artist. The hotel also offers a rooftop terrace overlooking the Old Town, a restaurant, and a wine cellar.



(Photo: Morgans Hotel Group)

For Christmas Week the [Hudson](#) hotel is making it easier for tourists to shop 'til they drop! Guests who stay at the hotel Dec. 21-26 will be offered V.I.P. discounts at the Time Warner Center mall (located a block away from the hotel). Guests will save at stores from J.Crew to Williams-Sonoma and more.

The Showboat casino may be no more, but the building has just been given a second lease on life. Richard Stockton College [bought the hotel](#) for a cool \$18 million. The school plans to keep some of the rooms functioning as a hotel, and turn the others into dorms. The theaters will house the college's drama and dance programs.



(Photo: Wyndham)

Wyndham opened its first Melbourne property, [Wyndham Hotel Melbourne](#). The hotel has accommodations for both guests and vacation owners. The company first launched this hybrid model in the South Pacific in 2009 with Wyndham Surfers Paradise.



(Photo: Airbnb/KLM)

Royal Dutch Airlines [KLM](#) and [Airbnb](#) have announced a [partnership](#) to enable website users to search for Airbnb stays when they book a KLM flight. KLM has also created a travel guide of Airbnb accommodations in more than 600 destinations worldwide.

Spas



(Photo: Spa Castle Premier)

Have you ever been in an igloo sauna? Well New York City has a [new spa](#) that houses one (the temperature drops to 43 degrees). [Spa Castle Premier](#) also has a sauna lined in gold, rooftop hot tubs, color therapy pools, a salad and juice bar, lounges, and a meditation room among other offerings. Admission is \$65.

Airports



(Photo: Qantas)

[Qantas](#) opened its first international First Lounge in the U.S. at Los Angeles International airport. The 200-plus seat lounge was designed by Marc Newson (who was recently appointed to the Apple design team), and the dining was created by famed Australian chef Neil Perry. Features of the lounge include Californian Knoll furniture, American oak walls, Tuscan Carrara marbled floors, and a 48 foot-long bar. There is an la carte menu that will change seasonally, and an open-style kitchen.

Beijing is getting a new airport – its third. China green-lighted the plan to help improve congestion and delays at the other hubs. The new airport will be located 29 miles from the city center but will be connected to it by a light rail. The project will cost \$13 billion, take five years to complete, and the airport will eventually serve more than 72 million passengers a year.

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