

Unique Retreats

WE ARE LUCKY here at Audley to have stayed in some of the most amazing hotels, guesthouses and homestays around the globe, yet we're always excited to find those truly special places that really stand out from the rest. That special 'je ne sais quoi' doesn't always mean expensive though, it can be a breathtaking view, a charismatic host or a building steeped in history. We've chosen six of our and returning clients' favourite properties which we hope will provide inspiration for your next trip.

Manawa Ridge, Coromandel Peninsula, New Zealand

Manawa Ridge is the dream-child of artists and sculptors Willem and Carla van de Veen. Using their creative skills they have hand-built an incredible ecolodge using straw bales, mud bricks and carved beams. Inside you'll find just three luxury units kitted out with hand-carved beds, spa baths, open fires, fine linens and private gardens. Guests can enjoy a native bushwalk to an idyllic private beach or explore the 250-acre property on foot or on horseback, returning each day to relax in the 'pamper unit' with sauna, spa and alfresco massage treatments. Heavenly meals are concocted from the home-grown organic vegetable garden and are accompanied by wine from the underground cellar.

A 14 day tailor-made trip to New Zealand, including three nights at Manawa Ridge, costs from around £3,400 per person including international flights. For more information please contact our New Zealand specialists on 01993 838 820.

Manawa Ridge, Coromandel Peninsula, New Zealand



Saubhag, Delhi, India

Saubhag is a charming guesthouse and has quickly become an Audley favourite. The well appointed and air-conditioned rooms with ensuite bathrooms are clean and comfortable and there is a large shared sitting room and courtyard to relax in. However, the real highlight of a stay here is the charming hospitality of hostess Meera, a retired teacher. Not only will you receive insider tips for exploring Delhi and fantastic home cooking, but you will be welcomed into the family home and treated like a long lost friend. This rare opportunity to experience everyday life in the capital provides a perfect introduction to India, making Saubhag a good first stop on any itinerary.

A ten day tailor-made trip to North India, including two nights at Saubhag, costs from around £1,680 per person including international flights. For more information please contact our India specialists on 01993 838 345.



Delhi

Antigua city and volcano, Guatemala



D'Leiyenda, Antigua, Guatemala

D'Leiyenda is a delightful colonial posada (historic guest house) just a stone's throw from the heart of the atmospheric city of Antigua. This boutique hotel has only six rooms and a wonderful roof terrace with a hot tub and views right over the roof tops of the old capital and across to the volcanic peak of Acatenango. Each room has been individually decorated in Guatemalan style and includes an en suite bathroom, TV and wifi. The hotel owners are typically on-site and pride themselves on offering the best in personalised service. This charming, characterful property represents excellent value for money and is ideally located within easy access of the city's bustling central plaza, fabulous nightlife and wonderful variety of restaurants.

A 12 day tailor-made trip to Guatemala, including three nights at the D'Leiyenda hotel, costs from £2,080 per person including international flights. For more information please contact our Guatemala specialists on 01993 838 695.



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Vinh Hung Merchant's House, Hoi An, Vietnam

This unique property, located right in the heart of Hoi An's UNESCO-protected town, is one of the most atmospheric places to stay in the whole country. Its distinctive style and original antique interior conjure up images of opium dens from the French colonial era. Originally built as a Chinese merchant's house over 200 years ago, this small hotel has simple facilities but all four rooms are clean and comfortable with en suite bathrooms. We only use the two rooms at the front of the hotel, used by Michael Caine whilst filming 'The Quiet American'. The balconies look out over the street providing great views over central Hoi An and the bustling street vendors below. The hotel doesn't have a restaurant but one of the joys of Hoi An is sampling the food in the many different restaurants and riverside cafes. The hotel's central location also offers a great base from which to explore the town's numerous tailors, temples, shops and art galleries.

A 12 day trip to Vietnam, including three nights in Hoi An at the Vinh Hung Merchant's House, costs from £1,795 per person including international flights. For more information please contact our Vietnam specialists on 01993 838 140.



Suite room, Vinh Hung Merchant's House, Hoi An, Vietnam

Grasslands Bushman Lodge, Central Kalahari, Botswana

Grasslands Bushman Lodge is a wonderfully cosy place situated on the western side of the Central Kalahari Game Reserve. Accommodating a maximum of 16 guests in private en suite chalets, it is family-run and surrounded by beautiful scenery, birds and other wildlife. The main lodge overlooks a popular floodlit waterhole where large herds of eland, oryx, kudu and even the secretive brown hyena come to drink at night. What sets Grasslands apart though is the opportunity for guests to learn first hand about the Kalahari Bushmen. Having been brought up alongside the local Bushmen, your host, Neeltjie Bower, has a close affinity with these fascinating tribal people. Walks led by the Bushmen provide an authentic opportunity to learn about traditional skills such as hunting, fire making and, if you are lucky, ceremonial dance.

An 11 day tailor-made trip to Botswana, including three nights at Grasslands, costs from £3,980 per person including international flights. For more information please contact our Botswana specialists on 01993 838 530.



Roof terrace, Al Mamlouka, Damascus, Syria

Beit Al Mamlouka, Damascus, Syria

Damascus is known for its townhouse hotels set in atmospheric old merchants' houses in the historic part of the city. There are plenty to choose from but the Beit Al Mamlouka is one of our favourites. Set in a charming part of what is one of the oldest cities in the world, it is a few steps from the souqs and sights of the old town, yet is quiet and peaceful amongst the courtyards and blossoming plants. Each of the eight rooms has its own unique character, but our favourite feature is the roof terrace. This is one of the few points within the old city where you can gaze over the rooftops and soak up the atmosphere. It's a perfect place to relax at the end of a hard day's sightseeing.

A nine day tailor-made trip to Syria, including three nights at Beit Al Mamlouka, costs from £2,100 per person including international flights, transfers and excursions on a private basis. For more information please contact our Syria specialists on 01993 838 425.



Walking with bushmen in the Kalahari, Botswana