

By [Lois Alter Mark](#) MAY 13, 2019

10 unique hotel experiences that involve more than sleeping

As experiential travel continues to grow, it's not surprising that hotels are jumping on the bandwagon.

It's no longer enough for a hotel to provide high thread count sheets and luxurious bath products. They're now expected to offer unique amenities and activities as well.

Here are 10 hotel experiences that are reason enough to book a room.

Tag sharks at Grand Isle Resort & Spa | Bahamas



Help study and tag sharks at Grand Isle Resort & Spa — Photo courtesy of Sami Kattan

Join leading marine biologist, Dr. Austin Gallagher, to help promote healthy oceans and marine life through the search for, study of and tagging of tiger sharks, hammerhead sharks, nurse sharks and reef sharks.

This is a rare opportunity to get up close and personal with these animals, and you can be as hands-on as you'd like. You can take measurements and tissue samples, collecting scientific data which will help ongoing conservation projects.

Weave your own Gullah basket at Andrew Pinckney Inn | Charleston, S.C.



Take a Gullah basket weaving class with artist Lynette Youson at Andrew Pinckney Inn — [Photo courtesy of Explore Charleston](#)

You can't leave [Charleston](#) without a signature basket celebrating the Lowcountry's Gullah Geechee tradition.

Local Gullah artist Lynette Youson teaches private and group basket weaving lessons in the rooftop solarium of the historic [Andrew Pinckney Inn](#). It overlooks the City Market, where she and her family have been practicing their art for over half a century.

We can't promise your work will join hers in the Smithsonian American Art Museum, but we can guarantee an unforgettable experience as you immerse yourself in the Gullah Geechee culture.

Have your wedding painted live at the ART | Denver



Jennie Lou will paint your wedding live at the ART — [Photo courtesy of Jennie Lou Art](#)

The ART in [Denver](#) is a multi-sensory hotel experience filled with one-of-a-kind pieces of art, so it's the perfect backdrop for any special event.

Couples who marry at the ART can commission resident wedding portraitist Jennie Lou to capture the day with a live painting, adding a unique touch to the occasion. Even if you're not getting married there, you can have her create a bespoke memento of your visit.

Experience Rasta at Zimbali Retreats | Jamaica



Experience true Rasta culture at Zimbali Retreats in Jamaica — [Photo courtesy of Jamaica Tourist Board](#)

Rasta 'Fiyah' gives visitors the ultimate authentic Rastafari experience at the hidden-in-the-mountains Zimbali Retreats, where you'll gain a real understanding of true Jamaican culture and cuisine.

Fiyah has spent 30 years dedicated to natural living and farming, and you can hike with him to his farm, stopping to fill your water bottle with natural water straight from the ground. Follow him to pick fresh foods and spices, then enjoy a meal that will make you feel connected to the earth around you.

Play golf on a glacier at Fairmont Chateau Whistler | British Columbia



Play golf on a glacier at Fairmont Chateau Whistler — [Photo courtesy of Fairmont Chateau Whistler](#)

Golfers looking for a really cool experience should check out – and check into – [Fairmont Chateau Whistler](#), named 2019 North America Golf Resort of the Year.

Their "Heli-va-Game" package takes guests to explore the most exclusive Whistler glaciers via helicopter – with golf club in hand. You can tee off for some glacier golf, then explore the ice caves below before feasting on a mountaintop gourmet picnic.

Dish with the Crazy Plate Lady at Ritz-Carlton Toronto



Let the Crazy Plate Lady custom-paint a plate for you at Ritz-Carlton Toronto — [Photo courtesy of Ritz-Carlton Toronto](#)

Jacqueline Poirier, Artist-in-Residence at [The Ritz-Carlton Toronto](#), began hand-painting charger plates (the ones that act as a base for soup bowls, salad dishes and the main course) to showcase the different seasons while she was working as a server at TOCA, the hotel's signature restaurant.

Seven years later, more than 120 of her designs – which include iconic Toronto landmarks, Canadian landscapes, portraits and food – decorate the dining room. Known as The Crazy Plate Lady, Poirier takes orders for one-of-a-kind custom plates and holds classes to teach guests how to paint their own.

Balance your life and your meals at Miraval Arizona and Miraval Austin



Cook up a storm with Miraval and Williams-Sonoma — [Photo courtesy of Miraval Arizona](#)

Miraval is all about mindful experiences, and it recently introduced two new state-of-the-art Life in Balance Culinary Kitchens in partnership with cookware giant Williams-Sonoma.

Completely equipped with top-of-the-line products from the renowned kitchen retailer, these expansive kitchens host healthy cooking classes like Plant-Based Cooking, The Secret Art of Sauces, Conquering the Blade, Restoring Bone Broth and Wheat-Free Baking.

Plus, guests get a dedicated URL on the Williams-Sonoma website to buy the tools used in these workshops to recreate what you learned at home.

Immerse yourself in the Dead Sea at the Inbal | Jerusalem



Indulge in a healing Dead Sea treatment at the Inbal Jerusalem — [Photo courtesy of Inbal Jerusalem](#)

The Dead Sea is renowned for its unique healing properties. Its rich mud removes dead skin cells while absorbing oil and environmental toxins, replenishing skin with 21 essential minerals.

At the Inbal, you don't even have to leave the property to enjoy these benefits. The hotel's luxury spa is dedicated to using only natural Dead Sea products for pampering treatments that will make you feel like you're blissfully floating, especially with soothing music recorded in the Dead Sea providing the soundtrack.

Toast to rye whiskey at Sagamore Pendry Baltimore



Taste the history of rye whiskey at Sagamore Pendry Baltimore — [Photo courtesy of Sagamore Pendry Baltimore](#)

Drink in the history of one of your favorite spirits by booking The Sagamore Experience at Sagamore Pendry Baltimore.

Baltimore has a storied history with rye whiskey, and you'll get to board a water taxi from the hotel's private dock on the harbor for a personal behind-the-scenes tour of the award-winning Sagamore Spirit Distillery. You'll also enjoy an exclusive whiskey tasting.

To top off your experience, opt for a helicopter tour to give you a bird's-eye view of Sagamore Farm and spring house, the birthplace of every bottle of Sagamore Whiskey.

Commission a custom motorcycle at The Restoration | Charleston, S.C.



Design your own custom motorcycle at The Restoration — [Photo courtesy of The Restoration](#)

You may arrive at [The Restoration](#) by Uber, but you can drive away on your own custom vintage motorcycle.

During a one-hour consultation, you'll describe the motorcycle of your dreams, from the handlebars to the chassis to the fenders. From there, the master craftsmen will get to work, hand-building your bike and sending you regular photo updates so you can follow its progress.

When it's ready – usually four to nine months later – you can have it shipped to the location of your choice or pick it up from The Restoration, where you can ride it into the Charleston sunset.