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HOTELS Model Buildings

Exceptional style and design — from Georgian architecture to an art deco swimming pool — set the tone at these six hotels.

— Tanvi Chheda

LIBERTY HOTEL, Boston

This former prison is notable for its austere stone façade, in the style known as Boston Granite, and its cruciform shape, including a 90-foot-tall octagonal rotunda. 215 Charles St., 617.224.4000, libertyhotel.com

LA CONCHA, San Juan, Puerto Rico

This 248-room oceanfront tropical icon whose loosely defined post-war modernist style integrates the natural surroundings into the building's blueprint. 1077 Ashford Ave., 787.721.7500, laconcharesort.com

MERRION, Dublin

Among the Georgian-style architectural features of this 142-room hotel are timber sash windows and rococo plasterwork on the ceilings. Upper Merrion St., 353.1.603.0600, merrionhotel.com

RALEIGH, Miami

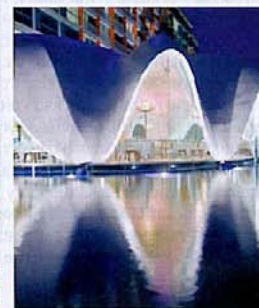
A South Beach landmark, this 1940s art deco hotel and its scallop-edged pool ooze retro glamour — you may even recognize it from the several Esther Williams water ballets that were filmed here. 1775 Collins Ave., 800.848.1775, raleighhotel.com

TAJ MAHAL PALACE & TOWER, Mumbai

Opposite the Gateway of India, this imposing hotel blends Moorish domes with Florentine and Asian elements. Apollo Bunder, 91.22.6665.3366, tajhotels.com

LA MANSIÓN AT THE FOUR SEASONS, Buenos Aires

Built as a wedding gift from a wealthy rancher to his bride, this seven-suite Beaux Arts-style mansion is like a view of Paris through Argentinian eyes. Posadas 1086, 54.11.4321.1200, fourseasons.com/buenosaires



Clockwise from top: La Mansión at the Four Seasons; La Concha; the Merrion; the Liberty Hotel

Before you book your stay, visit continental.com and click "hotel."

MUST-HAVES

Slip Sliding Away

When we were little, snow was a godsend. But somewhere on our way to adulthood (for most of us, when we started trying to drive in the stuff) we tend to lose that sense of magic. Get it back. These sleds will help you rediscover the winter of your youth and keep you racing for the bottom all day long. — A.E.



L.L. Bean Toboggan
Starting at \$139, lbean.com
A classic sled, the toboggan is the Cadillac of downhill transport. L.L. Bean's old-fashioned toboggans, made from steam-bent maple planks, come in three sizes, ranging from 45-by-12.75 inches to 92-by-15.75 inches.



Zipfy Sled
\$39.95, ems.com
This mini luge may look like it's for kids only, but the easily maneuverable, 3.5-pound wonder can support up to 250 pounds. A fast little racer, the sled keeps a low center of gravity, so you won't fall off as easily.



Flexible Flyer Steel Runner
Starting at \$69, lbean.com
The Flexible Flyer sets the standard for all downhill activity. Its springy, finely milled birch slats and red steel runners will get you to the bottom far ahead of the competition.