



A gloriously exuberant London house by Nicky Haslam and Studio Q



The ceramic artist Freya Bramble-Carter is one to start



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DESTINATIONS

Where to eat, stay and shop in Lisbon and the Alentejo region of Portugal

Mary Lussiana explores two areas of Portugal at its peak, recommending places to stay, eat and shop in Lisbon and the Alentejo region



BY MARY LUSSIANA
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The special light that those who know Portugal hold so dear is shining even brighter right now, as the burst of creativity born out of the deep recession earlier this century continues. It brings a new level of sophistication in the hotel and restaurant world and a celebration of home-grown, artisanal talent in the shops. Design has never been at its current dizzy heights before, nor has Portugal ever looked quite as good.

Where to stay

Lisbon

Bucking the trend for globalisation, Lisbon remains resolutely Portuguese, with its trams and tiled façades. But interwoven with these charms is a new breed of Portuguese hotel that offers immersion in the soul of the city from an as-yet-unseen level of authentic luxury. At Santa Clara 1728, six rooms are housed in a skilful blend of eighteenth-century walls and twenty-first-century design, which stands atop one of Lisbon's seven hills.



Santa Clara 1728 hotel in Lisbon is furnished with modern pieces by designers such as Carl Hansen.

DEAN HEARNS



Santa Clara 1728 hotel in Lisbon.

DEAN HEADLINE

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The work of architect Manuel Aires Mateus, this is the fourth property he has designed for owner João Rodrigues, after their initial Casa na Areia in Comporta was chosen to represent Portugal at the Venice Biennale in 2010. This is their first urban project. Furniture comes from Carl Hansen or Aires Mateus. Lighting is by Davide Groppi and beds are from B&B Italia. But best of all are the huge stone bathtubs in which you can soak at night while watching the moon dapple the dome of the National Pantheon.