



## VIETNAM AMANO'I, VINH HY BAY

Amanresorts' first hotel in Vietnam is totally off-grid, a two-hour drive south of Nha Trang. The winding coastal road to get here is beautiful and deserted except for the odd cow, or a bride posing for pictures in a canary-yellow dress. Forested mountains are barely interrupted by the smattering of villas designed by Jean-Michel Gathy, with low oak beds and vast bathrooms, private infinity pools and red paper lanterns hanging outside sliding doors. Take a buggy down to the beach club and breakfast at smart round tables covered in putty-coloured cloths. The view is a sweep of sand and sea; the food is fresh fruit, homemade mango jam and a bakery basket of goodies still warm from the oven (pastry chef Arnaud previously worked at the two-Michelin-starred restaurant Taillevent in Paris). Play tennis, sail a Hobie Cat or spend time at the spa: it's a revelation. The yoga pavilion sits on a lotus-flower-filled lake and there are daybeds on wooden platforms hidden among the trees, where you can sip post-treatment ginger-and-lemongrass tea. At night, tuck into seafood rice pancakes in the Central Pavilion as lights from the squid-fishing boat out at sea pierce the ink-black sky. **FLASH POINT** Miles from the east coast's other hotel heavyweights, this is uncharted territory where you can zone out in style. +84 68 377 0777; [www.amanresorts.com](http://www.amanresorts.com). Pavilions from about £540



## ITALY

### LA BANDITA TOWNHOUSE, TUSCANY

New York-raised hotelier John Voigtman has good instincts. When he came across an abandoned farmhouse in Tuscany's Val d'Orcia in 2001, he realised it offered a far better chance of fulfilment than his job as a record-company executive. Six years later, that farmhouse opened as La Bandita, a stylish, eight-bedroom retreat, and it proved hugely popular. Soon Voigtman was scouting for another property, and he found it in the nearby town of Pienza, in the form of an ancient convent. Opened last spring, La Bandita Townhouse takes its cue from another bright idea: that the experience of waking up in a small Tuscan town and tuning into its laid-back rhythms is poorly catered for unless you rent an apartment. That's fixed here: the sounds of chatting neighbours and church bells filter gently into the 12 light-filled bedrooms, their contemporary furnishings contrasting with robust ceiling beams and exposed stone walls. Staying here is like joining a house party; come aperitivo time, you're likely to find yourself swapping advice about things to see, do and drink in the area with Voigtman and his other guests. In the Townhouse Caffè, Glaswegian chef David Mangan puts local ingredients to good use in dishes such as hand-cut tagliatelle with lemon rocket pesto. **FLASH POINT** You know those cool friends of yours? They just bought a house in Pienza. +39 0578 749005; [www.la-bandita.com](http://www.la-bandita.com). Doubles from about £160

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