

TRAVEL CURATOR

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Perhaps you've seen the 1920s photo of [Agatha Christie](#) wearing Jazz Age swimwear on a beach in Hawaii posing beside a surfboard. For lovers of her cozy noir, it gives not just pause, but a sort of exultation. After all, haven't many of us learned to surf on Waikiki Beach, albeit decades later, just like Agatha? Apparently, though – and who knew? – she was one of the first “western women” to stand on a surfboard in Hawaii. She'd already practiced the sport in South Africa, and by all accounts she was a lover of rough water when bathing at the English beaches of Torquay in her youth.

Not “just an author,” she toured around the world, surfing along the way. Of course, those of us who love her books already knew that she wove worldly tales – stories that unveil a moment in an exotic place with the flair and cunning of a carpet seller in Istanbul unfurling an ancient rug to point out the intricacies of its design. She spun amusements that made us long to walk in her character's shoes – whether that meant Egypt or the tiny village of St. Mary Mead. Her perpetual travels informed her work and her life. On myriad trips, she traipsed to every corner of the globe from [Italy](#) to [Florida](#) to [Africa](#) to [Australia](#). She wrote some of her books at hotels I've visited: Pera Palace Hotel in Istanbul, Yorkshire's Old Swan Hotel or the Sofitel Old Cataract Hotel in Aswan.

For bibliophiles, holing into a hotel where a favorite author drew inspiration or wrote a book brings the story to life – or, even better, connects us more deeply to the writer. It bridges the gap between our imagination and something real, it imbues fiction with a whiff of reality. It's like meeting the chef who made your Michelin-starred meal or seeing a painting you've admired only in books hanging on a museum wall. To help you combine your penchant for reading with travel, we've rounded up some of our favorite “literary” hotels on earth from Hotel d' Angleterre in Copenhagen to newly opened The Longfellow in Portland Maine. Grab your favorite tome and check in.

HÔTEL BELLES RIVES FRANCE FOR F SCOTT FITZGERALD



Courtesy, Hôtel Belles Rives

F. Scott Fitzgerald began writing *Tender as the Night* in a glamorous villa in Antibes overlooking the Mediterranean Sea. That villa eventually expanded to become a bijoux haven, Hôtel Belles Rives, with 43 Art Deco-infused guest rooms and suites. Many rooms, in fact, flaunt sublime terraces that seem to hover over the Mediterranean Sea. Stand on one, and you'll see the sort of views that surely fueled the author, who took refuge here after momentous success with *The Great Gatsby*. Extravagant, but nevertheless laced with Cote d'Azur's timeless casual elegance, the hotel features a Michelin-starred restaurant, a spa, and a private beach, complete with pier. Book the Zelda Suite and tipple in the Fitzgerald Bar.

Feature image courtesy of Manoir Hovey

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