

THREE OF THE BEST

EUROPEAN LAKESIDE RETREATS



ALBERGO MILANO



HOTEL PALAFITTE



FALKENSTEINER SCHLOSSHOTEL VELDEN

» This little hideaway in the sleepy Italian town of Varenna couldn't get much closer to Lake Como. Rising above its higgledy-piggledy streets, **Albergo Milano** has cosy rooms in both the main house and a nearby annex, with balconies-for-two poised above the lake, while dishes such as chicken marinated in truffle oil, and ricotta and salmon ravioli, are served on a terrace beside the water. www.varenna.net

» The lion's share of the Swiss **Hotel Palafitte's** 40 suites hover on stilts over Lake Neuchâtel, with views of Mont Blanc. Originally a showcase for sustainable architecture and futuristic technology, its design proved so popular it was developed into a hotel with private terraces, ladders dipping into the water, and unobstructed views of the lake — even from the bath. www.palafitte.ch

» With its own private beach and members' club, the **Falkensteiner Schlosshotel Velden**, on the shores of Austria's Lake Wörthersee, is a dazzling retreat that smacks of glamour and old-school splendour. Its 103 rooms are nothing short of elaborate, as is its spa, while exhilaration comes in the form of hiking, cycling and skydiving on the 'Austrian Riviera'. www.falkensteiner.com

ROOMS UNDER £100: CHICAGO

WINDY CITY WINNERS

Check into these chic, boutique hotels that won't break the bank



01 HOTEL LINCOLN

Set in a 1920s building in Lincoln Park, this hotel is all about the views — select a room between floors nine and 12 to get the most out of the location. All 184 rooms are modern in design, with bespoke furniture, flatscreen TVs and iPod docking stations. Rise early for sunrise yoga on the roof, before enjoying an indulgent breakfast in the restaurant, run by a Michelin-starred chef. Pets welcome. Rooms from £82. www.jdvhotels.com



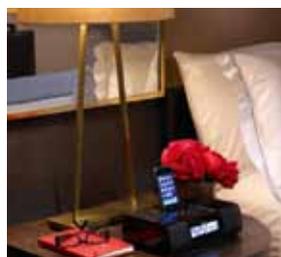
02 HOTEL FELIX

With its downtown location, city skyline views and stark design, Hotel Felix means business. All 225 rooms are high-tech and fuss-free, with a stylish neutral decor. But the hotel is green too, being the first in Chicago to gain Gold LEED certification for its eco initiatives. Guests shouldn't leave without eating in Elate, a classic US restaurant, before enjoying a nightcap in the comfy bar. Rooms from £73. www.hotelfelixchicago.com



03 HOTEL BURNHAM

Housed in a National Historic Landmark Building, everything about the Hotel Burnham screams opulence, except the price tag. All 122 rooms and suites have lush carpets, velour drapes and dark wood furnishings. Navy features heavily — from the luxury bedding to the plush chaise lounges — while mahogany writing desks and open fireplaces complete the regal feel. Rooms from £100. www.burnhamhotel.com



04 PUBLIC CHICAGO

The 'no colour palette' (lots of beige, slate grey and cream) at Public Chicago creates a clean, inviting feeling. Its 285 rooms and suites have oversized beds and 42" flatscreen TVs, while extras include a living room with sofas and iMacs; a library; a coffee bar designed like a 1950s US coffee house; an after-hours, 1940s-style supper club; and a movie room with a 110" screen. Rooms from £86. www.publichotels.com

BALI THROUGH A LENS: Fancy brushing up on your camera skills? The Alila Manggis on Bali's east coast will run a series of photography workshops in June, taking budding photographers across the island to capture everything from sunsets to spiritual ceremonies. www.alilahotels.com

Images: Martin Child/Getty; Joie de Vivre Hotels/Paul Dyer; Kimpton Hotels & Restaurants/David Pheips; David Pheips/Cris Molina; Falkensteiner