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# *Press kit*

*A new look at Mercure Hotels*



*Mercure Queenstown Resort*

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## “Remarkables” view

*Mercure Queenstown Resort - New Zealand*

Comfortably seated in the *Vista* restaurant, you can lose yourself in the grandeur of the extraordinary landscape before you, where the expanse of Lake *Wakatipu* framed by the *Remarkables* Range offers a sight as invigorating as it is soothing. Between the superb view brightly accented with southern autumn reds and golds and the rich simplicity of traditional local fare, every meal here becomes a memorable experience. To crown the moment, discover the subtlety of wines from the *Central Otago* region, in particular its famous Pinot Noir. Looking out over this wild and magnificent scenery, it's easy to see why it was the source of inspiration for films like *Lord of the Rings* or *The Chronicles of Narnia*.

In autumn a special atmosphere prevails in Queenstown. No matter the time of day or where you happen to be - your room, the restaurant or bar, in a meeting, the fitness center or the swimming pool - the landscape offers a palette of amazing colors. If you're an early bird, enjoy an alpine breakfast at the *Rises* restaurant while watching the sun come up over the *Remarkables* - truly a magical moment! Temperatures begin to fall in March, but the weather is still mild enough to enjoy outdoor activities in the adventure capital of the southern hemisphere: jet ski, bungee jumping, mountain biking, or, for those who prefer more low-key activities, long walks in the hills.

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Renovated in late 2008, the hotel offers: 148 rooms • 2 restaurants • lounge bar with fireplace • outdoor swimming pool • spa, sauna, fitness center

Access: 20 km from Queenstown airport

Mr Paul CLARK

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*Mercure Hotel Koblenz*

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## Enchanting view of the Rhine Valley

*Mercure Hotel Koblenz - Germany*

From the restaurant *Finesse*, you have a brilliant view of the banks of the Upper Rhine, charmingly picturesque with a myriad of castles and fortresses soaring above steep vineyards that stretch as far as the eye can see. Explore this captivating town and experience its multicultural past. By turns Roman, Frankish, Germanic, French, and Prussian, Koblenz boasts *outstanding sites* like Fortress Ehrenbreitstein and Stolzenfels Castle, both proud representatives of the Upper Rhine valley's heritage. The old Roman town of Koblenz is nestled in a verdant setting between the Rhine and the Mosel rivers framed by four mountain ranges. A UNESCO *World Heritage* site, the town is a perfect place for a romantic retreat outside of time.

Koblenz combines the charm of a small town with the attractions of a major city, making it a great choice for lovers of art and culture. It's perfect for wandering around, with its maze of narrow lanes and historic plazas lined with shops, restaurants and friendly cafes. The region's fairly mild climate makes it a good winegrowing area, producing wines appreciated the world over; you'll find a nice selection on the Grands Vins Mercure menu at the hotel. Wine is in the spotlight from April to September at the city's *Wine Village*, and especially in May during the Wine and Flower Festival.

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The hotel offers: 168 rooms and 1 suite • restaurant • bar • fitness center, swimming pool

Access: 3 min from the Koblenz railway station

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## A sweeping view of the Atlantic Ocean

*Mercure Salvador Rio Vermelho - Brazil*

Swim just a few strokes in the overflow pool at the beachfront Mercure Salvador Rio Vermelho and you'll come face to face with the azure blue expanse of the Atlantic Ocean. *The grandeur of the location* does not stop there; from your room, in the restaurant, or in the fitness center, the ocean is your constant companion at all times. Crossing the threshold of the hotel, visitors enter a Bahian-inspired décor. The panel of azulejos at reception and the quartzites in the stone wall of the restaurant are just like the ones you can admire on the facades of the region's Baroque monuments. The city, though, bears *the imprint of Bahia's African* heritage, which shows through in the architecture, handicrafts, the samba, the capoeira, or the spicy, exotic cuisine, all of which delight and intrigue visitors. In Rio Vermelho, *a vibrant quarter* of Salvador de Bahia, discovery means a mix of trendy bars, bohemian restaurants and local artists' studios, the better to fall under the spell of this vibrant, sensual city.

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The hotel offers: 175 apartments • restaurant • 2 bars • overflow swimming pool • fitness center

Access: 20 km from Deputado Luís Eduardo Magalhães international airport

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*Mercure Grand Jebel Hafeet Al Ain*

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## A view of *immensity*

*Mercure Grand Jebel Hafeet Al Ain - United Arab Emirates*



The outdoor terrace of the restaurant at the Mercure Grand Jebel Hafeet Al Ain offers a breathtaking panorama. Lose yourself in the endless expanse of the desert, dotted with pleasant oases, as you revel in the cool evening breeze at sunset. Situated at *the top of Jebel Hafeet*, a mountain rising 1340 meters out of the desert, this hotel is a magnificent mountain oasis with one foot in the city and the other in the desert. The magical, mirage-like view of the vast landscape can also be seen from the rooms or the swimming pool.

Al Ain may surprise you. Thanks to numerous underground springs, it is a *garden city* right in the middle of the desert, with luxuriant parks and gardens offering a cool retreat at every turn.

Inhabited continuously for more than four thousand years, Al Ain is a *pillar of the country's cultural heritage*, and because it has carefully preserved its traditions, it has a more authentic Arab look and feel than other cosmopolitan cities in the Emirates. Its attractions include the archeological site of Hili, dating back to the Bronze Age; a reserve for local wildlife where royal falcon racing takes place; and the town market with its traditional camel races.

It is an ideal stopping place to escape the fast-lane life of Dubai, just a two-hour drive away.

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The hotel offers: 115 rooms • 3 restaurants • bar • 3 swimming pools with water slides • tennis • fitness center

Access: 130 km from Dubai airport, 150 km from Abu Dhabi airport

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*Mercure Bristol Leukerbad*

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## Spectacular view of *the mountains*

*Mercure Bristol Leukerbad, Loèche-les-Bains - Switzerland*



Afloat in the warm water of the outdoor thermal pool, surrounded by pristine nature, let yourself be swallowed up by the majestic landscape of mountains and cliffs: this place is an ode to nature. Learn anew *the art of taking it easy*; relax regardless of the weather and recharge your batteries in beautiful surroundings. The Mercure Bristol Leukerbad-Loèche-les-Bains is a sunny little corner of paradise set at 1,411 m altitude. In the finest Swiss tradition, this totally modern hotel offers holistic relaxation thanks particularly to the fact that it has its very *own mineral thermal springs*, one of the 85 scattered throughout in the region. Leukerbad and the benefits and therapeutic virtues of its thermal springs are not recent discoveries; in fact, ancient Romans were regular visitors. Later enthusiasts included the likes of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Guy de Maupassant and even Mark Twain.

Today, this thermal alpine resort is a *destination as popular* with wellness devotees as it is with sports lovers. Many activities are available in springtime, from skiing, of course, to more unusual events like cow fights!

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The hotel offers: 73 rooms • 2 restaurants • 2 bars • thermal indoor and outdoor swimming pools • spa: biotop, hammam, sauna and fitness room

Access: 16 km from the Leuk Susten railway station

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## Stunning view of Kasbah El Glaoui

*Mercure Ouarzazate - Morocco*

Above the historic city, the terrace of the Berber-influenced hotel restaurant, the *Tazerzite*, commands a magnificent view of the Taourirt Kasbah backed by the High Atlas mountains at the gateway to the desert. An infinite panorama, suspended in time. Formerly the palace of the ruling pasha El Glaoui, the Taourirt Kasbah was built towards the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Like an immense sand castle, it rises out of the desert scenery, blessed with the refreshing Fint oasis. This place will work its magic, seducing even the most hyperactive visitors into kicking back and enjoying the mellow Moroccan lifestyle and oriental hospitality.

Hidden behind a huge cedar door, the Mercure Ouarzazate is an *oasis of comfort* at the start of the “road of a thousand kasbahs”; a place to prime yourself before taking on the vast Sahara. Making the most of gorgeous, sunny spring weather, several festivals enliven the scene, such as the festival of roses in Magouna or the Ahouache folklore festival. The more athletic visitors could plan to catch the first rays of the sun on the dunes at Marzouga then hike around the Fint oasis.

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The hotel offers: 68 rooms and 1 suite • restaurant featuring Moroccan specialties and international cuisine • bar • freshwater outdoor swimming pool • hammam, massages, tennis

Access: 10 km to Ouarzazate airport

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*Mercure Yarra Valley Balgownie*

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## View of *rolling vineyards*

*Mercure Yarra Valley Balgownie - Australia*

At the end of the day, make yourself comfortable on the terrace outside your room. Contemplating the scenery, let your senses come alive. Before you lies the Yarra Valley, one of Australia's finest winegrowing areas, with vineyards stretching over more than 3,800 hectares. In the valley's cool climate, the grapes grown here demand more subtle care than is usually the case for New World wines. *Pinot Noir*, *Chardonnay*, *Cabernet Sauvignon* or *Shiraz*, enjoy this sensual moment whilst contemplating the soft rolling hills in front of you. From the hotel restaurant or the veranda, you can also enjoy picture postcard views of the valley renowned for its *85 vineyards*. To give its guests a truly distinctive wine experience, the hotel has built up its own cellar of regional wines, which you will find on the Grands Vins Mercure wine list.

The valley offers multiple activities for you to get a taste of the area, both scenic and gastronomic, as well as other exciting experiences. Play some tennis, relax in the pool, get a massage at the spa, sample the local wines, or enjoy walking around the vineyards.

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The hotel offers: 65 rooms • restaurant • wine cellar • fitness center and tennis • 2 pools • Natskin spa

Access: 50 km from Tullamarine airport

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*Mercure Castle Hotel Windsor*

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## View on royal *Windsor*

*Mercure Castle Hotel Windsor - United Kingdom*

From the cozy comfort of their room, guests at the Mercure Castle Hotel Windsor enjoy a front-row of British royal tradition. Whether it's the changing of the guard at the doorsteps of the hotel, the view of the historic city center just outside, Windsor Castle, or the famous Guildhall, where Prince Charles and Camilla Parker-Bowles were married, it's almost like taking part in British protocol. Just steps from the gates of *Windsor Castle*, the residence of English sovereigns for some 900 years, the Mercure Castle Hotel Windsor is, itself, an emblematic monument in the town, by virtue of its central location and its architecture.

With a thousand years of history to explore, plus shopping, sports, cultural events and numerous attractions, a wide array of activities awaits you. Besides visiting the castle, you can buy a ticket to Windsor's Royal Theatre where plays starring top actors try out before opening in London. May also has plenty of festivities, such as the Royal Windsor *Military Tattoo*, a military music festival, or the *Royal Windsor Horse Show*, a competition of dressage and jumping. And for a great family adventure, Legoland has just opened brand new attractions.

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The hotel offers: 108 rooms and suites • restaurant • bar lounge

Access: 19 km from London Heathrow airport

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## View of the ocean *from a luxuriant tropical garden*

*Mercure Resort Sanur Bali - Indonesia*

In the restaurant, all *five senses* come to life: the varied flavors of Indonesian cuisine, the fragrance of the trees in the garden, the fascinating view of the sun rising over the ocean, the gentle rustling of leaves in the cool breeze, or the soft feel of exotic wood or batiks.

Renovated in a contemporary Balinese style, the Mercure Resort Sanur Bali is *truly a beauty spot*. Fronting a private white sand beach, it is nestled in a magnificent 5-hectare tropical garden planted with fragrant trees, palms and 100 varieties of flowers.

On the southern end of the island of Bali, Sanur boasts *superb white sandy beaches* that turn fiery red during sunrise. The intense cultural life of the city will enthrall you, as will the scenic beauty of the island's interior, particularly the temples and terraced rice paddies. From the beach you can see Gunung Agung, the island's highest mountain and heaven for hikers, who also won't want to miss climbing up Batur, an active volcano with a fabulous lake at its foot. Coinciding with the full moon of the tenth month in the Balinese lunar calendar, the 9th of April, is the start of the month-long festival of Besakih Temple, one of *the most sacred places in Bali*. Perched on the side of Gunung Agung, it is revered by Balinese Hindus as the "*Mother Temple*".

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The hotel offers: 189 rooms and 2 suites in bungalows • restaurant • 3 bars • swimming pool, tennis • spa and massages  
Access: 15 km from the Ngurah Bali international airport

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## View of lakes and castles

*Mercure Hotel Potsdam City - Germany*

From the terrace of the restaurant *Oscar*, a succession of lakes and rivers opens in front of you, the waters reflecting the gardens and buildings of former royal residences. Potsdam, a verdant islet in the midst of a chain of lakes formed by the Havel, is ravishingly beautiful with its many forests and idyllic lakes and waterways, together with its magnificent castles and gardens, a legacy from its past as home to the Prussian royal family. Another claim to fame is its unique place in the history of cinema: located here is the *prestigious Filmstudio Babelsberg*, where movie giants and film legends worked, and where masterpieces like Fritz Lang's *Blue Angel*, starring Marlene Dietrich, and more recently *The Pianist* and *The Reader*, were made.

There's no time to get bored in Potsdam as it always has a full calendar of exciting events. Take advantage of the first warm days of spring and visit the city on foot: *baroque houses with rococo interiors*, Sans Souci Palace and its Neuer Garten (new garden), Cecilienhof castle where the Potsdam Conference was held in 1945, as well as the historic Dutch quarter.

Spring is also the time of the tulip festival in the Dutch quarter. Taking place this year on April 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>, it is a colorful event that people flock to. Music lovers will thrill to the unique acoustics of the *Nikolaisaal* at concerts of works by composers like Franz Schubert and Joseph Haydn.

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The hotel offers: 210 rooms and suites • restaurant • bar

Access: 35 km from Berlin Tegel and Berlin Tempelhof airports and 1.5 km from the Potsdam railway station

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*Mercure Aix-en-Provence Sainte-Victoire*

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## View of *Mount Sainte-Victoire*

*Mercure Aix-en-Provence Sainte-Victoire - France*

Lounging on the terrace outside your room, enjoy a cool, fruity drink and let your gaze wander over the *magnificent panorama* of hills and vineyards in the Aix countryside. Here, all is color and sensation: the bright sky, the golden stone facades, the red color of the clay soil, the clear green of the fountains, the dark green of the vines, the coolness of the shade under the hundred-year-old plane trees... A former postal relay, the Mercure Aix-en-Provence Sainte Victoire invites you to explore the rich heritage of the region. Set amidst Côtes de Provence vineyards, at the foot of Mount St. Victoire, a *paradise* for hikers, climbers and nature lovers, and at the gates of Aix-en-Provence, city of Water and of Arts, this is the perfect home base to discover this outstanding region and its well-preserved treasures.

Take advantage of the mild springtime weather to discover sites related to the region's own "child prodigy", the painter Cézanne. Just 10 minutes from the hotel, you can see the original settings for many of the artist's works, like the Atelier des Lauves, the Maison du Jas de Bouffan, or Carrières de Bibémus, and gain a new understanding of them.

At the end of May, don't miss the *Picasso-Cézanne exhibition* at the Musée Granet in Aix, which takes the visitor on a journey to the very heart of the artist's creative process.

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Fully renovated in 2008, the hotel offers: 29 rooms and 1 suite • restaurant La Galinière with terrace • bar • outdoor swimming pool

Access: 45 km from Marseille-Provence airport and 30 km from the Aix-en-Provence TGV railway station

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*Queenstown Resort - New-Zealand / Salvador Rio Vermelho - Brazil / Hotel Koblenz - Germany / Grand Jebel Hafeet Al Ain - United Arab Emirates / Yarra Valley Balgownie - Australia / Ouarzazate - Morocco / Bristol Leukerbad, Loèche-les-Bains - Switzerland / Castle Hotel Windsor - United Kingdom / Resort Sanur Bali - Indonesia / Hotel Potsdam City - Germany / Aix-en-Provence Sainte-Victoire - France*

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