

# 5 Spectacular, New Ways to Experience the French Countryside



By BLOOMBERG June 28, 2018

It's usually a sense of old world tradition that draws visitors to the French countryside: châteaux with impeccably preserved stucco and stone exteriors, lavender farms tended by families for generations, or Champagne houses in operation since the reign of Henry IV.

This summer, all those charms are being married to exciting new developments—namely, exquisite hotel openings scattered through the country's most alluring towns. To help you plan a trip, we've coupled these debuts with exclusive local experiences, all curated and bookable with the luxury tourism outfit, 1889 Travel France. Whether you pick one or string several into a leisurely road trip, you're bound to have an unforgettable escape.

## 5. Winery Hopping in Champagne



**The Place to Stay:** Incredibly, Champagne has never claimed its own world-class hotel—until now. On July 15, the Royal Champagne Hotel & Spa, a sibling to the excellent Le Barthélemy resort on St. Barths, will debut with 49 contemporary rooms and suites. Counterintuitively, perhaps, the resort will specialize in all things wellness: Its 16,000-square-foot spa, run in partnership with Biologique Recherche, will have its own yoga studio, sauna, hammam, and a set of indoor and outdoor pools. Consider it all the more reason to indulge in the fizzy stuff, whether in the surrounding vineyards or at the ambitious, on-site restaurant, run by a chef who hails from the two-Michelin-starred Le Chantecler in Nice.

**The Can't-Miss Experience:** In this region, you'd be crazy not to focus on the bubbles. Make a bee-line for Ruinart, which has recently debuted a series of avant garde Champagne-paired dinners, where an all-white dining room serves as a projection screen for thematic videos. Watch as the region's culinary history plays itself out on your plate through cinematic animations that dance around the table and walls and, of course, with the food itself.