



## AAA announces Five Diamond hotels for 2011

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By [Barbara De Lollis](#), USA TODAY

Whether we get to stay in AAA-rated Five Diamond hotels fairly regularly - or dream about staying in one of them, many of us love to know which hotels AAA considers the "best of the best."

AAA today will announce its Five Diamond Award winners for 2011, and Hotel Check-In has an exclusive rundown for you (see link below).



 CAPTION

By Four Seasons Houston

AAA has awarded Five Diamond status to 179 hotels and restaurants in the USA, Canada, Caribbean and Mexico - which is just 0.3% of the 59,000 that its inspectors personally visit and rate each year.

Most of the 124 *hotels* on the 2011 Five Diamond list have had the coveted status for at least two - if not multiple - years, but 15 are new to the list this year (see list below).

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A year ago, 15 hotels were new to AAA's 2010 Five Diamond list.

The newly added hotels for 2011 include both older hotels - such as the Trump International New York - that recently completed an extensive renovation, as well as fancy, newer hotels, such as the Ritz-Carlton hotel in Charlotte, the Elysian in Chicago and Aria in Las Vegas.



▶ CAPTION

By Trump International Hotel New York

Of the 15 newly added Five Diamond hotels, four are outside the USA. They are:

- Dominican Republic - Tortuga Bay Punta Cana Resort and Club in Punta Cana
- Mexico - Le Blanc Spa Resort in Cancun
- Mexico - Grand Velas All Suites and Spa Riviera Maya in Play del Carmen
- St. Lucia - Jade Mountain Resort in Soufriere

The additions of both Tortuga Bay, at the Punta Cana Resort, and Jade Mountain Resort represent the first Five Diamond Award winners for both the Dominican Republic and St. Lucia, respectively.

#### **New U.S. hotels added to list this year**

Below are the names of the 11 U.S. hotels that made AAA's Five Diamond this year. Note that Ritz-Carlton is the chain that add the most new Five Diamonds this year (three), while Donald Trump's hotel organization has two.

- Ritz-Carlton - Denver
- Ritz-Carlton, Boston Common - Boston
- Ritz-Carlton - Charlotte
- Trump International Hotel and Tower - Chicago
- Trump International Hotel and Tower - New York
- Aria Resort and Casino - Las Vegas
- Mandarin Oriental - Las Vegas
- St. Regis Atlanta - Atlanta
- Winvian - Morris, Ct.
- Elysian - Chicago
- Four Seasons Hotel - Houston

### **Las Vegas: City with most Five Diamond hotels**

This year's additions of both the Mandarin Oriental and Aria Resort puts Las Vegas into the lead when it comes to being the U.S. city with the most Five Diamond hotels. Vegas now has nine hotels with AAA's top honors.

Who did Las Vegas bump? New York City, which - even with the addition of the Trump hotel - still "only" has eight Five Diamond hotels.

### **Longest running Five Diamond hotels?**

Three luxury hotels have maintained AAA's Five Diamond stats for a whopping 35 consecutive years, since 1976 when the Diamond ratings were introduced for hotels. They are: the Broadmoor in Colorado Springs, Colo.; Camelback Inn, the JW Marriott Resort and Spa, in Scottsdale, Ariz.; and the Greenbrier in White Sulphur Springs, W. Va.

Interested in seeing AAA's full list? [Here it is.](#)



New Five Diamond Award winner, Tortuga Bay, is the first hotel in the Dominican Republic and one of only four hotels in the Caribbean to ever receive AAA's top honors. The resort, which opened at the PUNTACANA Resort and Club in 2006, features luxurious design by Oscar de la Renta and VIP treatment that includes transport from the airport, access to an exclusive restaurant and a spa, and ability to play the resort's two golf courses.

▲ CAPTION

By Tortuga Bay