

Robb Report

TRAVEL / RESORTS

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11 Unforgettable Hotel Dining Experiences Designed With Safety in Mind

From a Scandinavian-inspired yurt to a “Hobbit house”, these new dining set-ups are both safe and photo-worthy.

While private dining is hardly a new concept in the restaurant and hotel worlds, ever-changing pandemic restrictions have forced businesses to get creative when it comes to how they can best accommodate guests, help them feel safe and still provide a memorable hospitality experience. In cities, this challenge has translated to purpose-built sidewalk and curbside structures (with varying degrees of insulation) that afford restaurants more outdoor seating. But at hotels and resorts—which enjoy the luxury of more space and, often, scenic locations—necessity has resulted in a slew of inventive set-ups.

Many luxury resorts already offer “dine anywhere on property” options (think torch-lit dinners on the beach or on a pier), but these pandemic-born opportunities take a slightly different approach by aiming to adhere to current guidelines while still feeling like some type of “normal” shared dining experience, with all the bells and whistles that we miss. From transformed guest suites and a European-inspired hidden alley to a bourbon-fueled homage to Middle-earth, here are 11 dining venues that are both fun and Covid-compliant.

The Preserve Sporting Club & Residences



Set on 3,500 rolling acres in Richmond, Rhode Island, this year-round resort, which opened in 2020, specializes in getting guests out to enjoy such activities as ATV riding, ziplining, kayaking, skiing and rock climbing. Once you've worked up an appetite, retreat to one of the two Maker's Mark Hobbit Houses recently launched in partnership with the bourbon brand. Built into hillside boulders and around tree trunks, the two Middle-earth-inspired houses have round wooden doors, stone floors and walls, and a cozy, whimsical design that takes its cues from the writings of Tolkien. The houses can accommodate up to four or eight diners, respectively, for a multi-course lunch or dinner that will start with bourbon-infused cocktails by the fire, then continue with dishes artfully presented in Le Creuset cookware. An option to pair each course with bourbon—including the Preserve's exclusive Maker's Mark blend—is also available. *Starting at \$660 for four guests.*