

March 2013

VANITY FAIR

ON TRAVEL

MARCH 2013

PANAMA
IT'S A *JUNGLE* OUT THERE

By STEVE KING

KASHMIR
BEAUTIFUL BEYOND DISPUTE

By TREVOR FISLOCK



Plus

Tom Parker Bowles *HITS THE ROAD* in Search of *STREET FOOD*
Nigel Tisdall *GOES OFF THE RAILS* in *STATION HOTELS*

BEST LIST

BY
Victoria
MATHER

Grace Kelly on location
in Monte Carlo in
To Catch A Thief, 1955.



THE BEST LOCATIONS (I)

HÔTEL DE PARIS, MONTE CARLO

When Grace Kelly stepped out into the sun at the Hôtel de Paris in Hitchcock's *To Catch a Thief*, did she think that all of Monaco would soon be hers? It was while filming there with Cary Grant that she met Prince Rainier—and the rest is history. Literally, for the Grimaldi family. (hoteldeparismontecarlo.com)

PHOTOGRAPH: PARAMOUNT/THE KOBAL COLLECTION

Funfair

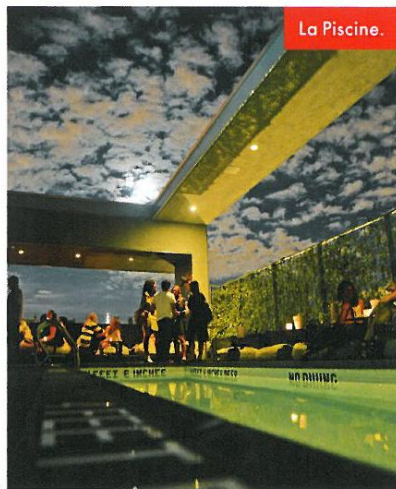


The Ides at the Wythe. Below: a view of the Hudson from the Jane.

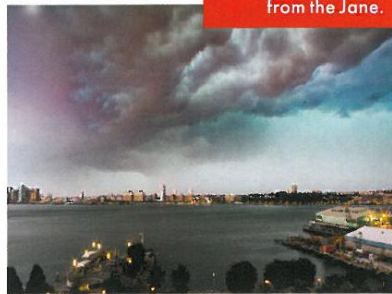
LA PISCINE AT HOTEL AMERICANO

518 WEST 27TH STREET

If heights make you feel panicked, then La Piscine is not for you. Because to get high, it's a 10-floor ride in a glass elevator on the side of Hôtel Americano. Scarlett Johansson and Ewan McGregor have managed it. Once atop, the treats are: views over Chelsea with the Hudson to one side, the Empire State to the other, three tequila menus, 10 different types of mescal, Mediterranean grub mostly cooked on the outdoor grill, and a chance to wave at the folk below on the Piet Odulf-planted High Line—a garden-as-art-installation on the old elevated railway line that goes through the west of the city. Bagsy one of the comfy beds by the lap pool, but no show-off swan-dives: the water's only four feet deep.



La Piscine.



THE ROOFTOP AT THE JANE

113 JANE STREET

The Jane opened in 2008 but it's taken until now for the rooftop bar to catch up. Step out into a sky-blue domed bar with a swinging chandelier and red leather barstools. Once a hotel for sailors, the rooms below are still panelled like cabins on a ship (some of the littlest rooms have bunk beds). Survivors of the *Titanic* stayed until the end of the American inquiry into the ship's sinking.

THE SURREY

20 EAST 76TH STREET

For a taste of Britain, head for Pimms night at the English-garden-inspired rooftop at the Surrey. Lavender, ivy and frothy meadow plants decorate the 2,200-square-foot space above Central Park, reserved for hotel guests and club-members only (no blagging). Other perks are the Daniel Boulud food and cocktail menu: English pea and burrata arancini, a gin-based cocktail called Sins of Juniper, or fresh lemonade if you're being a goodie-goodie.

THE IDES AT THE WYTHE

80 WYTHE AVENUE

The point about the Ides at the Wythe is that you can see the entire Manhattan skyline from a perky perch in Brooklyn. The owners of the Wythe (*Vanity Fair's* "war room" post-Sandy, pre-presidential election) have tried to keep the bar under the radar. But with knockout views and a vibe that feels like Manhattan, even though you're staring right at it and not buried in the thick of it, means that tastemakers have homed in like pigeons. Angle yourself cleverly in front of the bar and you can line up the bottles of grog against the skyscrapers.

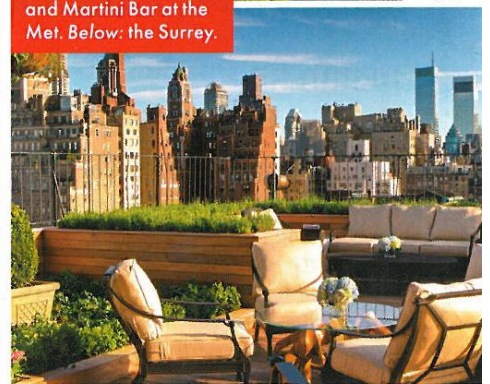
ROOF GARDEN CAFÉ AND MARTINI BAR AT THE MET

1000 FIFTH AVENUE

Too much culture makes Jack a dull boy. So it's up, up and away for a rest from the visual stimulation below, while gazing over Central Park with a frozen daiquiri and a mozzarella and blistered-pepper sandwich. Don't feel too guilty about sneaking off: the Met uses the roof as a display space, and previous artists have included Rodin, Jeff Koons and the art brothers (who created a giant pick-a-heck tunnel made of bamboo). At the weekends they set up a tip-top martini bar. Everything's more fun on the roof.



The Roof Garden Café and Martini Bar at the Met. Below: the Surrey.



PHOTOGRAPHS: MATTHEW WILLIAMS (WYTHE); JOE SCHILDORN/BRANCY.COM (LA PISCINE); EVAN Y LEE (MET); LLOYD G. TAPPER, JR (SURREY)