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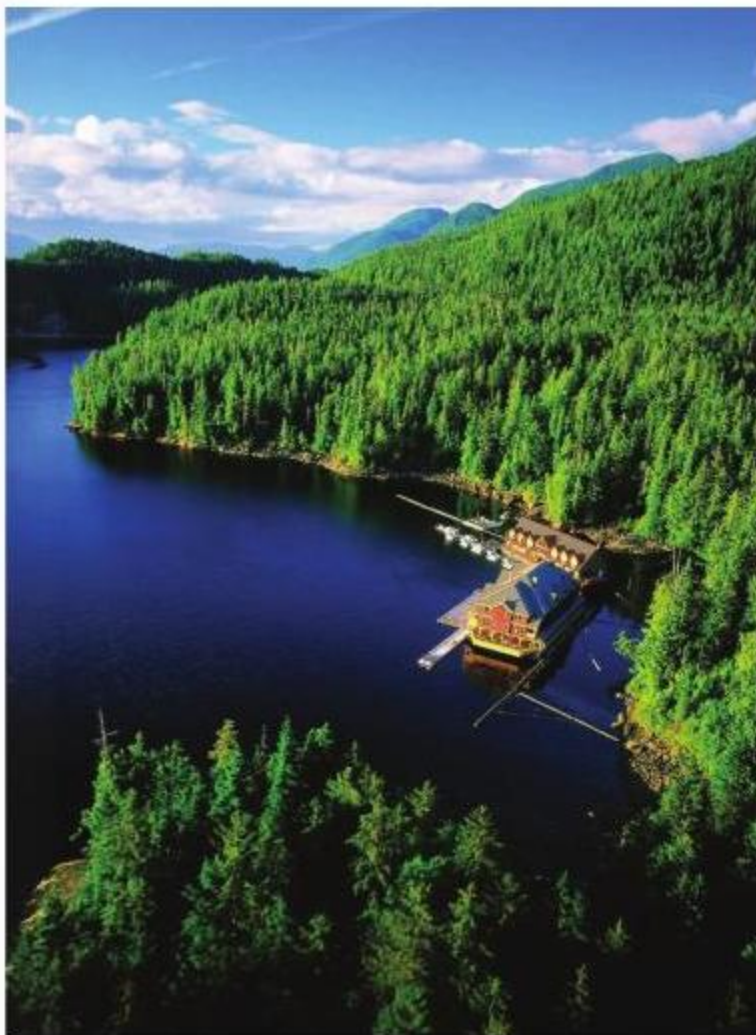
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Accommodation

A place to float anyone's boat

There are overwater suites and beachside villas, but nothing gets clients as close to the water as a floating hotel. **Clare Vooght** finds out about some of the best floating retreats



Canada's floating King Pacific Lodge is set in the Great Bear Rainforest and functions as a base for fishing trips

KING PACIFIC LODGE

CANADA

This hotel floats on the calm waters of the west coast's Barnard Harbour, in the pristine Great Bear Rainforest. Thanks to this prime spot, guests can enjoy a soak in the bath while looking out on to breathtaking wilderness or ocean views. The lodge has a Japan-inspired spa and fireside library to add to the five-star-luxury feeling. It also provides a base for fishing trips, hiking and kayaking. Its high-powered telescope for star-gazing and wildlife viewing mean you might spot a rare Kermode bear, whale, wolf, bald eagle or white-tailed deer nearby. Three nights (minimum stay) start at €3,022 per person, excluding tax. It is featured by operators including ITC Classics.

■ kingpacificlodge.com

SALT & SILL

SWEDEN

Wake up to the sound of lapping waves at Salt & Sill, which is built on a moored pontoon off the west coast of Sweden and a one-hour drive from Gothenburg. Its minimal Scandinavian style, wooden features, granite flooring, and sea-view rooms offer spectacular sunset views. The hotel is also known for its sister restaurant, found on dry land next door, which serves fresh seafood and traditional local dishes (don't miss the herring platter). Recommend the suite with a roof-terrace Jacuzzi, or tempt clients with the hotel's sauna boat, said to be the fastest floating sauna in the world, which stops at picturesque spots along the coast. Standard double rooms start at around £185 per night.

■ booking.com

UAKARI FLOATING LODGE

BRAZIL

The accommodation might be simple, but each room has a private terrace and

bathroom, with hot water. Deep in the heart of the Amazon's Mamiraua Reserve, guests will have the chance to see pink river dolphins, toucans, caimans and red-faced Hakari monkeys nearby. In the wet season (December to May), the surrounding forest area floods, so canoe excursion routes allow you to paddle between the treetops. The lodge also hosts working scientists, so guests can catch some fascinating talks about the local flora and fauna. Audley Travel suggests a seven-night package, including flights, with four nights at Hakari Floating Lodge and one night in Manaus from £1,750 per person.

■ audleytravel.com

ELEPHANT HILLS

THAILAND

Elephant Hills is a well-established luxury camp in Khao Sok national park in southern Thailand. The original camp has 30 tents set in the jungle, and earlier this year 10 floating tents were added at nearby Cheow Larn Lake, complete with crisp, white sheets, en-suite bathrooms and wooden, safari-style furniture. Activities on offer include jungle trekking, elephant feeding, night safaris and canoe jaunts (each tent has its own canoe



Elephant Hills is a luxury camp in a Thai national park - this year 10 floating tents were added to the camp's accommodation portfolio

moored outside). Guests can also enjoy alfresco dining on balmy evenings by sitting out on the floating decking of the restaurant and bar, which is surrounded by the sounds of the jungle's wildlife.

The floating camp is featured by Premier Holidays, which can arrange a two-day Jungle Lake Safari extension to a Thailand itinerary from £190 per person.

■ elephant-hills.com

FOUR RIVERS FLOATING LODGE

CAMBODIA

Guests here wake up in the four-star luxury of their safari-style overwater tents to the sights and sounds of Cambodia's Cardamom Mountains. Away from the tourist trail, this boutique resort is in the heart of unspoilt forest that is home to rare orchids and

www.cometotunisia.co.uk

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Four rivers Floating Lodge is set in unspoilt Cambodian forest

fragrant frangipani flowers, as well as Javan rhinoceroses, Indochinese tigers and Asian elephants. From the lodge you can also swim, kayak and take a trip to the nearby Tatoi waterfall. Each tent has a minibar, Wi-Fi, flatscreen TV, top-quality furnishings and a private balcony. Double villas start at £71.61 per night, including taxes, booked through AsiaRooms.

■ asiarooms.com

Other hotels 'on the edge'



TAJ LAKE PALACE, INDIA

Built in white marble to fully occupy an island the Taj Lake Palace looks as if it is floating on the tranquil Lake Pichola. Constructed for the king in 1746, the rooms have been kept in plush, palatial style and feature opulent silks, colourful murals and carved furniture. Four nights start at £885 per person with Seasons until September 30, based on two sharing.

■ seasons.co.uk

HAMILTON ISLAND'S REEFWORLD PONTOON, AUSTRALIA

After spending a night on a pontoon floating over the Great Barrier Reef, guests can explore the waters in a scuba session or underwater viewing chamber. A "reefsleep" package, including one night on the pontoon and two on

Hamilton Island, starts at around £600 per person, based on two sharing.

■ hamiltonisland.com.au/trade

SONEVA GILI SIX SENSES, MALDIVES

Glass tables on the sundecks of these stilted villas allow guests to view marine life while they dine over the Indian Ocean. Some villas also feature private spa suites.

■ emiratesetours.co.uk

JETWING VIL UYANA, SRI LANKA

These spacious dwellings are built on stilts over a private lake within five kilometres of Sigiriya rock fortress, often called the "eighth wonder of the world". Priced from £183.75 per night, including breakfast, with Expedia.

■ expedia.co.uk

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