

IDYLIC GREEN

Otahuna Lodge, Christchurch (New Zealand)

A (little) house on the prairie - and oh so British! Hardly surprising when you learn that the dwelling, which dates back to 1895, was built at the request of Heaton Rhodes. Sir Robert Heaton Rhodes of Canterbury was a gentleman with a particular passion for horticulture; hence the pristine English lawns and camellia bordered paths leading to the lake. To one side, **millions of yellow, award-winning daffodils** and to the other, the woodlands. Betwixt the two lay the Dutch Garden with its exotic trees and heady scents, the organic kitchen garden abundant with herbs and fresh vegetables and, stretching from the rose garden to the Melon Shed, the Victorian conservatory rife with limes, cucumbers and pineapples, not to mention the cultivated mushrooms in the converted apple shed. So many beautiful gardens to discover, what are you waiting for?

www.relaischateaux.com/otahuna





INSPIRATIONAL GREEN

Château de Courcelles, Courcelles-sur-Vesle (France)

Quintessential Louis XIV ! The Château de Courcelles was built between 1690 and 1694 and reflects the style of this king who also built the Palace of Versailles. By replicating such details as the use of hardwood parquet floors and choosing the same stone as that used at Versailles, the king's style made its mark on the Chateau. **The 20 hectare of surrounding grounds also mirror the resplendent garden style at Versailles.** Symmetrical paths are lined with statues and boxwood hedges clipped as straight as a die. In the distance, one can see the canal bordered with two-hundred-year-old plane trees, meadows speckled with frolicking horses, and forests as far as the eye can see. Pervasive serenity provides the perfect ambience to relax and reflect. Racine, La Fontaine, Rousseau, Dumas, Dior loved coming here and strolling through the grounds. You can see why, inspiration awaits !

MAGICAL GREEN

Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons, Great Milton (United Kingdom)

Magical and poetic, with its Alice-in-Wonderland décor. This property is located in Lewis Carroll territory near Oxford, and you almost expect to happen upon Alice or the Mad Hatter while basking in this wonderland. **And what composes this wonder? The gardens...** English gardens embellishing the banks of the ponds, Japanese tea gardens and gardens splashed with rows of fragrant lavender hinting at the South of France. But first and foremost, the culinary gardens take centre stage. Seventy varieties of aromatic herbs and more than ninety varieties of vegetables meet the daily needs of the restaurant run by Raymond Blanc, Grand Chef Relais & Châteaux. 'You are never better served than by yourself' – there is some truth in that. In this instance it is a necessity, given the ambitions of the chef. 'I am not interested in what is merely good, I aim for the sublime ...'

www.relaischateaux.com/4saisons





TERROIR GREEN

Hotel Bellevue, Cogne (Italy)

With a plethora of lettuces, carrots, cabbages, leeks, celery, aubergines, strawberries, herbs and even flowers; the commis chefs at Hotel Bellevue's restaurants have a lot from which to choose. The profuse kitchen garden offers such an abundance of fresh produce that the chefs, in turn, feel as well served as their guests. Add to this the benefits of freshly crisp air of the Aosta valley; an area in the very heart of what once was the legendary hunting reserve of the Kings of Savoy. Embraced by the gentle green meadows of Saint-Ours and opposite the Gran Paradiso glacier, this hotel exudes serenity. And if the prospect of a sumptuous meal is on your mind, where better to dine than at the Petit Restaurant at this Relais & Châteaux. Fabio Lacovone serves **the region's cuisine which draws its inspiration from his mountain kitchen garden**, serving only four tables at a time. A very special pleasure; an exceptional culinary experience.