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The 2016
**LUXE
LIST**

OUR FAVORITE NEW HOTELS
IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION

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The Luxe List 2016: Orange County, Hampi

By Contributor - December 28, 2016

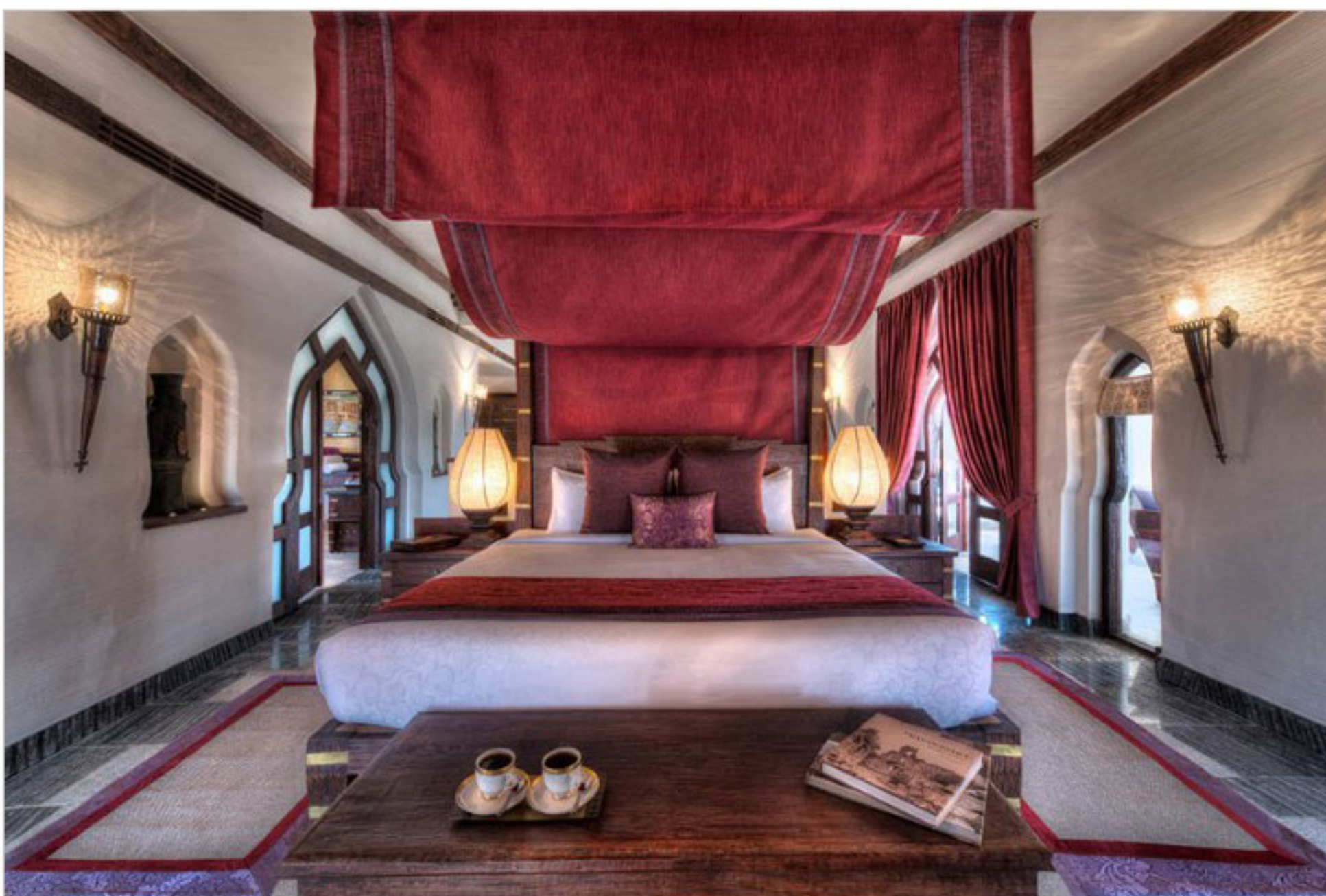


The lounge area at Orange County, Hampi.



Orange County, Hampi re-creates the grandeur of the Vijayanagara Empire.

Long the preserve of hippies and backpackers, Hampi now has a palatial hotel that is bringing a dash of sophistication to this scrubby region of Karnataka. The architecture evokes the 15th-century temple and palace remains several kilometers away, traces of lost glory that pepper the lush expanses between hillsides dotted with giant granite boulders. Like miniature mountains in a Zen garden, three such boulders emerge from the hotel pool backed by a recreated temple tank. Try the four-hand massage at the on-site spa, a structure inspired by the Lotus Mahal in Hampi's royal heart. Pool villas here are suitably palatial, boasting an in-room Jacuzzi and oversized beds with flowing crimson canopies. Not that you would spend most of your time indoors; there's good reason why Wi-Fi coverage doesn't reach the guest quarters. It's far better to trail the in-house experts across the long-lost Vijayanagar capital, where kings had 16,000 consorts, rose-and-perfume-dispensing pools for their queens, and palaces for their pet elephants. In Hampi, the exuberantly carved walls tell tales and even sing, as the fluted musical pillars at Vittala Temple can attest. But don't leave your doors unlocked or you'll discover the local monkeys' penchant for stealing iPhones and homemade in-villa sweets. (91-8394/297-700; orangecounty.in; doubles from US\$555).



Inside Zenana, the most luxurious suite in the main palace building.



The property's on-site spa takes its inspiration from the Lotus Mahal.