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## BALLYFIN COUNTY LAOIS, IRELAND

Ballyfin, certainly Ireland's grandest hotel, is a vast Regency mansion surrounded by a swathe of green at the foot of the Slieve Bloom Mountains. Interiors are sumptuous – glittering French chandeliers, Thomas Chippendale mirrors, ancestral portraits and an overwhelming collection of fine Irish art. Everything is geared to an aristocratic stay in

the country. It's frightfully *Downton Abbey*, in a good way! Cruise the bucolic grounds by bicycle or golf buggy, indulge in classic pursuits (fishing, croquet, falconry, tennis) or simply head to the spa. The food is local, organic and seasonal. Everyone says that, but here they do it brilliantly. The Ballyfin Bar's top-shelf Irish whiskies are the perfect tipple.

**SIZE** 15 guest rooms

**WEB** [ballyfin.com](http://ballyfin.com)

**HOTELS.COM GENUINE GUEST SCORE** 5/5

**HOTELS.COM GENUINE GUEST REVIEW** One of the most luxurious mansions in the world.

**DID YOU KNOW?** The sun-filled conservatory is reached through a secret door hidden in the library, which holds 5000 books. 📖



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## EARTH LODGE

### SABI SABI, SOUTH AFRICA

On the Sabi Sabi Private Game Reserve in Kruger National Park, the wildlife is spectacular, the veldt is pristine, rangers highly trained, and trackers totally in-the-know. And then there is your base, Earth Lodge, literally sculpted into a slope of the earth – completely in tune with the land. While the entrance is discreet, the interiors are an audacious mix of designer-driftwood furniture, tribal motifs and chandeliers. There are safaris by Land Rover, but also by foot 'to feel the beat of the earth'. There's an Amani spa, remarkable Afro-Asian cuisine and an underground 6000-plus bottle wine cellar.

**SIZE** 13 suites

**WEB** [sabisabi.com/lodges/earthlodge](http://sabisabi.com/lodges/earthlodge)

**DID YOU KNOW?** The name Sabi Sabi comes from the local Tsonga word 'tsave' and means danger, referring to the hippos and crocodiles in the river.