THE 5K CHALLENGE

What does \$5,000 a night buy these days? We stacked up some over-the-top suites around the world to see how they compare. One thing is standard: discretion. As one hotel rep quipped, "We can't talk about our guests until they're dead."

BY ANDREA COOPER



THE SUITE

GSTAAD PALACE

GSTAAD, SWITZERLAND
Tower Suite



- . 2,045 square feet
- from \$5,177 a night
- palace.ch

HILTON BORA BORA NUI RESORT & SPA

BORA BORA
Presidential Overwater Villa



- * 3,229 square feet
- \$5,000 a night
- hilton.com/frenchpolynesia

THE BOULDERS

CAREFREE, ARIZONA
The Villa Retreat



- 5,000 square feet
- \$5,000 a night
- * theboulders.com

ALVEAR PALACE HOTEL

BUENOS AIRES Royal Suite



- 1,895 square feet
- \$4,530 a night
- alvearpalace.com

THE ATHENAEUM

LONDON Rooftop Suite



- 1,100 square feet
- from \$3,070 a night
- athenaeumhotel.com

THE AMENITIES

Just like Rapunzel, let down your hair in a room in a fairy-tale tower. The suite has two bedrooms, each with its own bathroom, and a walk-in closet for your snow gear. The three balconies all overlook the Bernese Alps, where you can head for ice climbing, a sleigh ride

drawn by huskies, or, for diehard linksmen, snow golf. The bonus: Pets are welcome.

The Hilton boasts the only two-story overwater bungalow in French Polynesia—one that features a window in the floor for tropical fish watching. Furnishings include Tahitian

black pearl chandeliers and tapa cloths pounded from breadfruit trees, In the suite you can sweat out your troubles in the sauna or linger in a tub with a stunning ocean view.

At this Waldorf Astoria resort in the Sonoran Desert, the villa is actually five bedrooms split between two buildings. The interiors are inspired by Bali, and the terrace includes a pool, hot tub, barbecue, and firepit. It's been reported that Matt Lauer was golfing at the resort when he got the call that he would be the new host of the *Today* show, but no word on whether he splurged on the Villa Retreat to celebrate the good news.

The Royal Suite, where Sophia Loren and George Soros are said to have stayed, is designed to look like a Paris apartment, but artwork by Argentinean painters and sculptors will remind you where you are. The rate includes daily fresh floral arrangements and fruit baskets, Hermès bath products, and butler service for such tasks as drawing your bath.

This suite has three bedrooms, two baths, and six plasma televisions, but what's really outstanding is the balcony spanning three rooms, which offers a view of St. Paul's, Big Ben, the Houses of Parliament, Westminster Abbey, Buckingham Palace, and St. James' Park. The suite is priced below our \$5,000 minimum, but the extras are

so fantastic that you'll get there in no time.

THE SPLURGE

For \$65 your pup can receive royal pampering too, with dry food, two water bowls, pillows, and a welcome card. Another novel service: If your suite is just too warm and cozy, you can build your own igloo (above) or spend a night at the Igloo Village of Saanerlochgrat (rooms from \$177).

A dinner for two on Motu Tapu, once a queen's private beach, will cost you an extra \$700. But it's worth it for the bragging rights of dining on the most photographed isle in the Pacific. Or, for \$110 per person, take a lagoon safari and swim with lemon sharks.

Make a grand entrance or exit via helicopter on the property's helipad, with a backdrop of painted desert sand and tall cacti. If you're expecting company the resort can arrange a butler, valet, and private chef (from \$250 per hour).

If you want to go home a tango pro, book the hotel ball-room for a private lesson (\$180 per couple). And for \$50 an hour, a personal shopper will take you to Buenos Aires's top stores, with access to

private collections and accessories.

Two can't-miss options: Tour the city for three hours in an Aston Martin or vintage Rolls-Royce (your driver also acts as your guide; from \$1,486), or breeze about town with a royal photographer in tow for the most prestigious Facebook photos ever (from \$1,200).

