NEWSLETTER

T Magazine

A Landscape Designer's Favorite Gardening Tools

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A Sunny Hotel Amid Oyster Farms in Cap Ferret, France



A room that opens onto a private garden at Villa Colette, a new hotel in the town of Arcachon in Cap Ferret, France. Julius_Hirtzberger

By Kate Maxwell

The designer and architect Philippe Starck has vacationed in Cap Ferret, the oyster-farming peninsula on France's Atlantic coast, for over half his life, drawn to its natural beauty. "Cap Ferret is hyper-elegant simplicity," he says. "It's almost nothing: Just a sandbank about three-feet high with small villages of oyster cabanas between pine forests, and the wild beaches of the Atlantic on the other side." This week, Starck is opening a hotel on the peninsula — his third in the area, after La Co(o)rniche and Ha(a)ïtza, on the other side of Arcachon Bay — with the restaurateur and hotelier Laurent Taïeb, his friend of 30 years. The architecture of Villa Colette, a newly built 28-room property on the town square, was inspired by the elaborate villas of Arcachon's Ville d'Hiver, constructed in the second half of the 19th century as a retreat for wealthy families convalescing from tuberculosis. For the interiors, Starck and Taïeb imagined the souvenir-stuffed seaside escape of a midcentury actress like the French star Danielle Darrieux with a powder pink, acid yellow and Dior gray color palette. Downstairs, cocktails are served at a mirrored bar, while the restaurant's dishes highlight the fresh fish from the bay. Guests can use the hotel's electric bicycles to explore Cap Ferret's nearly 30 miles of trails or head to the wide, sandy beaches on the Atlantic coast for a surf lesson. *Villa Colette opens April 2; rooms from about $460; villacolette.com.*