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thehotlist

15 must-do's for the month ahead.
Simply pick, tick – and go 



1 ☒ Escape...

the **Big Apple's** stifling summer in the city's newest slices of open space. First there's the High Line, a flower-strewn park in the sky, built on a previously derelict stretch of railway track above Manhattan. Stay at the new Standard Hotel (above), which straddles the Line as it hits the Meatpacking District (www.standardhotels.com; doubles from £300). When you're over flowers, board a boat to the beach. The ferry from Battery Park chugs out to just-reopened Governor's Island, off the Brooklyn shore, for sand, barbecues, basketball courts and a live-music stage. Goodbye smog; hello sunshine.

2 ☒ Grab...

a bag and head to **The Great Singapore Shopping Sale** (May 29 to July 26) – eight weeks of cut-price retail therapy. Locals stockpile essentials such as shampoo and socks, but there are glamorous goodies to be had, too, including up to £500 off designer watches. Perfect for stopover shopping. Bridge & Wickers has four nights in Singapore from £732pp, including flights (www.bridgeandwickers.com).



3 ☒ Sniff...

out the UK's prettiest gardens. More than 1,700 flowerbeds and follies open to the public in aid of charity every year under the National Garden Scheme, which comes into its own this month, with summer in full bloom. Snoop around everything from London's tiniest patio to the garden of world maps at Lullingstone Castle in Kent. (Check dates at www.ngs.org.uk; entry from £2.)



4 ☒ Swan...

around Italy's **bonniest boutique hotel**.

Castel Monastero (www.castelmonastero.com; doubles from £440) opens this month just outside Siena, in a sprawling castle enclosed by 1,000-year-old walls. Once the home of nobility, it's fit for a *principe*, with an in-house personal shopper and 76 rooms lovingly decorated with Chesterfield sofas and bleached-oak panelling. If you're more of a city mouse, just opened Il Salviatino (www.salviatino.com; doubles from £400), in Florence, is Tuscany's other hot address – a gigantic villa dating back to 1427, it's the poshest place to stay in town.