




TRAVEL

BY KIM-MARIE EVANS

GUIDE 2016

An aerial photograph of a tropical resort with a white speech bubble and a wooden deck. The background shows a vast expanse of turquoise water meeting a clear blue sky at the horizon. In the foreground, a wooden deck with a central pool area is visible. A large white speech bubble is positioned in the center of the image, containing text. The overall scene is bright and inviting, suggesting a luxurious vacation spot.

SURE, YOU'VE BEEN
TO ANY NUMBER OF FIVE-STAR
HOTELS. BUT HAVE YOU SLEPT
HERE? WE DIDN'T THINK SO.
CHECK OUT THESE FIFTEEN
SERIOUSLY EPIC SUITES

MANTA RESORT
A SIMPLY MAGICAL
EXPERIENCE AWAITS

TUCK IN FOR THE NIGHT in your own private igloo, tree house, see-through bubble pod or underwater suite in one of these curiously amazing hotels. We've scoured the globe to bring you the most unusual and fantastical hotel rooms ever imagined. Some are luxe and come with personal butlers; some require you to bring your own bedding, but they will all give you bragging rights for being the most adventurous traveler in town. Pack your passport and sense of adventure, you won't find these hotel rooms in Grandma's AAA travel guide.



SEA WORLDS

IT'S FISHY

→ **ATLANTIS**
DUBAI

POSEIDON AND NEPTUNE
UNDERWATER SUITES
atlantisthepalm.com

SLEEP WITH THE FISHES IN ONE OF the two über luxury suites at the Atlantis hotel on Palm Jumeirah, the artificial island off the coast of Dubai. This experience falls into the "only in Dubai" category. The spectacular accommodations offer floor-to-ceiling views into an aquarium teeming with thousands of



CONTRIBUTED



OVER-THE-TOP AND UNDER-THE-SEA
NO SCUBA GEAR REQUIRED AT THIS LUXE UNDERWATER RETREAT

fish and other sea creatures (up to 65,000 in total). The 1,700 square-foot, three-story suites can accommodate up to five guests.

The underwater views even extend to the bathrooms, where you can enjoy a bubble bath while a fever of stingrays glide overhead. Each suite has a private elevator, dining and living rooms fit for a king, and elegant touches like soap speckled with 24-carat gold flakes, unlimited Dom Perignon and twenty-four-hour private butler service. Luxury like this doesn't come cheap, though.

Base price is just under \$8,200 per night.

CONTRIBUTED

A TRIP TO OZ
A DIVER'S DREAM DOWN UNDER



2 CRUISE WHITSUNDAYS AUSTRALIA

REEF SLEEP
cruisewhitsundays.com

IS DIVING THE GREAT BARRIER Reef at the top of your bucket list? How about sleeping on the reef? By day, you'll enjoy all the activities offered with a Great Barrier Reef Adventure Day Cruise through Cruise Whitsundays. Guests arrive by boat to the pontoon and enjoy activities like snorkeling, swimming, semi-sub rides, fish viewing from the underwater observatory and diving (over-reef massages are also available). For those looking to take the adventure to the next level, board a helicopter for a bird's-eye view of the largest coral reef system on earth.

Come late afternoon the day guests depart, and those partaking in the Reef Sleep Experience get ready for a spectacular evening that includes the once-in-a-lifetime chance to night dive the most famous dive site in the world. The pontoon is forty nautical

miles from shore, and sleepover guests enjoy the solitude under a tent with clear viewing panel, mattress and snug bedding (think fancy sleeping bag), or a double bedroom.

Only nine guests can book this experience per night. Price includes accommodations, meals and two days, one night on the pontoon.

Rates for stay are \$440 for a swag and \$700 for a room, single occupancy. »



3

EXCLUSIVE VIEW
ONLY 120 DIVERS A DAY ARE ALLOWED TO EXPLORE THE UNDERWATER PARADISE OF SIPADAN ISLAND

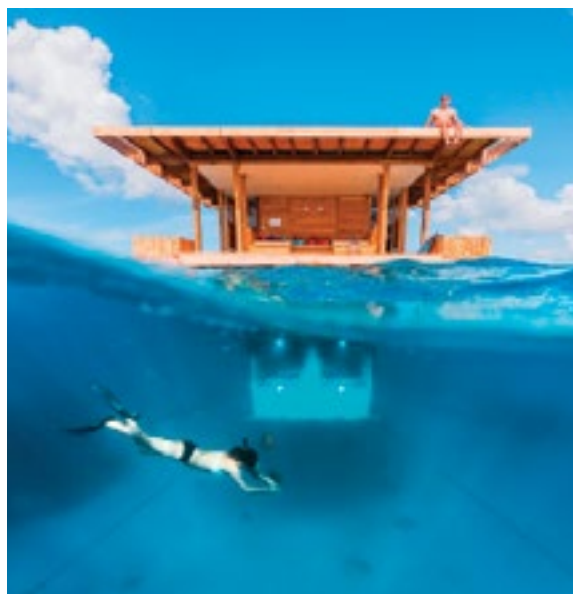
→ SEAVENTURES DIVE RIG MALAYSIA

THE RIG
seaventuresdive.com

VACATIONING ON A converted oil rig might not be your idea of paradise, unless you are a scuba diver looking for the ultimate dive experience. The Seaventures Dive Rig is the only converted oil rig in the world to offer adventure-seeking divers the chance to dive the nearby Sipadan Island. With more than 3,000 species of fish and a 600-meter wall, this protected Malaysian island consistently makes most “Best Diving in the World” lists. “Sipadan is the stuff of divers’ dreams, where you see turtles, sharks, barracuda, huge schools of jacks and many more, not just fleetingly but in your face all the time,” says Asia-based scuba journalist and author Chris Mitchell. “Jacques Cousteau raved about Sipadan when he first dived it [in 1989] and he was a hard man to impress.” In order to protect Sipadan’s fragile ecosystem, in 2004 the Malaysian government ordered all dive resorts to leave the island, banned night dives and set a limit of 120 divers per day. Guests at Seaventures Dive Rig need to book a minimum stay of three nights to guarantee one-day Sipadan permits.

The accommodations range from a bunk room to a rather comfortable family-style suite.

Dive packages including permits start at \$625 per night, per person and do not include equipment rental.



TALK ABOUT REMOTE!
THIS HOTEL ROOM LITERALLY FLOATS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE OCEAN.

The three-story house offers a living area at sea level with a roof for sunbathing and stargazing, but the real magic happens beneath the surface in the bedroom (and not how you think). At night, spotlights illuminate the room’s immediate surroundings, creating a surreal luminous view of the marine life around it. The coral reef is teeming with exotic fish, and the quiet nights attract squid and octopi—a more reclusive crowd than the daytime sea life. Guests can also choose to slumber on the roof under the stars; the Zanzibar archipelago is free of light pollution and guarantees a crystal clear blanket of stars every night.

Manta resort sits on Pemba Island off the coast of Tanzania; the less seaworthy can book a stay in one of its sixteen land-based rooms. This tiny island has a population of around 30,000, and you will never find more than a few dozen tourists.

One night in the Underwater Room is just over \$1,500 for two people.

4 ↑ MANTA RESORT TANZANIA

GENBERG UNDERWATER ROOM
themantaresort.com

WHAT BEGAN AS AN INSPIRED work of installation art in a Swedish lake has now reached the island of Pemba in the Indian Ocean. The floating glass cube makes for the most breathtaking of hotel rooms. First conceived in Sweden, the Genberg Underwater Room has been reimaged in this tropical locale.

INSIDE OUT

NATURE'S CLASSROOM



5 ↑ LOISABA CONSERVANCY KENYA

STAR BEDS
loisaba.com

SLEEPING UNDER THE STARS is not a unique idea. Sleeping in a Star Bed under the Kenyan sky with elephants and hippos as your pajama-party companions is. Fiona Sandeman, tourism manager of Loisaba, says, "The Star Beds really are special. A guest once described it as the biggest bedroom in the world—the starry night is your ceiling! Wake up with coffee in bed and watch the sunrise over the dam."

Loisaba is in Laikipia County, Kenya, about a six-hour drive from Nairobi and miles from the nearest town. The safari experience alone is enough to draw

guests, but the Star Beds add a rare and extraordinary element.

These hand-carved beds are perched on an en-suite "platform" with half-covered thatch roof, handcrafted furniture, and wooden floors set among big rocks, overlooking watering holes and the Ewaso N'giro River. And all meals are prepared over the fire in the traditional camp kitchen. When it's time to turn in for the night, you will be shrouded under a mosquito net so you can comfortably drift off to the lullaby of the African wilderness.

Guests are guided and hosted by a team of traditional Samburu and Laikipiak Maasai warriors, who stand guard all night to protect against any curious animal visitors.

An all-inclusive stay in the Star Beds is approximately \$400 per person, per night in high season.



6 ↓ ARIAU AMAZON TOWERS HOTEL BRAZIL

TARZAN SUITE
ariauamazontowers.com

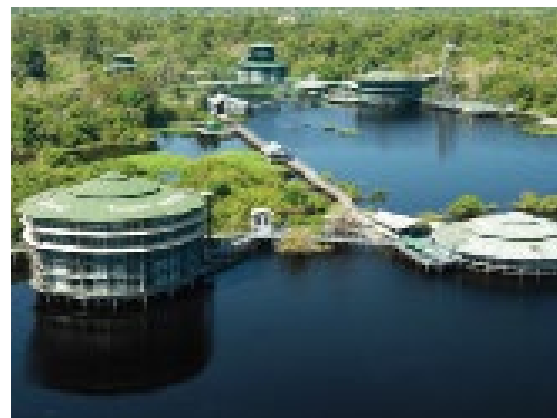
THIS IS NOT YOUR AVERAGE backyard tree house. Ariau Amazon Towers Hotel is one of the largest commercial tree-house hotels in the world, described by *Forbes* as "the world's only accommodations set amid the wildflowers, birds and monkeys of the rainforest canopy." Located on the Ariau River, a tributary of the Rio Negro near Manaus, this exotic hotel offers guests small-boat rides to local villages, where you can fish for piranha and swim with pink dolphins. Guests arrive via a two-and-a-half-hour ride down the Amazon River.

This architectural wonder features aerial towers linked by miles of wooden catwalks seventy feet up in the canopy and offers 263 guest rooms. But the room to book is the Tarzan Suite, which has a private balcony, plunge pool, living room and Jacuzzi. Celebrity guests have included Bill Gates and Prince Charles.

Amidst the treetops there are also two swimming pools and two heliports. We recommend booking at higher levels for better views.

Rates available upon request. »

EVERYTHING IS LOOKING UP!
THE PERFECT SPOT IF YOU'RE TIRED OF KEEPING YOUR FEET ON THE GROUND.





Travel & Leisure's
TOP FAMILY
HOTEL in
AFRICA and THE
MIDDLE EAST
2014

**STICK YOUR
NECK OUT**
WHO DOESN'T
WANT TO BE
GREETED BY
THESE GENTLE
GIANTS IN THE
MORNING?



7

← **GIRAFFE MANOR**
NAIROBI

KAREN BLIXEN SUITE
thesafaricollection.com

THE OPENING LINE OF KAREN Blixen's novel *Out of Africa* has spawned many a safari fantasy: "I had a farm in Africa, at the foot of the Ngong Hills." Her namesake suite at Giraffe Manor is the ideal spot for families looking for a remarkable getaway.

Built in the 1930s and modeled after a Scottish hunting lodge, this luxury boutique hotel has become famous for its resident herd of Rothschild giraffe, which are the children of the original pair brought to the manor by its former owners in 1974. This is the only place in the world where you can feed and photograph a giraffe over the breakfast table, at the front door or from a bedroom window. The friendly giraffes pop up in the most unexpected places, vying for your attention and checking out what's on your plate. Relax on the veranda where you can hand feed the friendly long-necked beauties.

The manor sits on twelve acres within a 140-acre indigenous forest and has beautiful views of the Ngong Hills. In 2014 it was named *Travel & Leisure's* Top Family Hotel in Africa and the Middle East. Local excursions include the David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust, where guests can meet, feed and even adopt baby elephants, and the nearby Karen Blixen Museum. The metropolitan city of Nairobi is just a short eleven-mile journey.

Rates start at \$525 per night for a full-board stay, including airport transfer.

CONTRIBUTED



FRIENDLY SKIES
AFTER A STAY IN THIS TWO-BEDROOM SUITE, FIRST CLASS ON EMIRATES WON'T EVER BE ENOUGH.

8 HOTEL COSTA VERDE COSTA RICA

727 FUSELAGE HOME
costaverde.com

THERE ARE TREE HOUSES, AND THERE are planes reimagined as hotels. But there's only one luxury suite fashioned out of a former 727 perched in a tree—making it the coolest tree house ever.

This 1965 Boeing jet spent its flight life shuttling globetrotters on South Africa Air and Avianca Air; now it provides adventure-seeking travelers a unique home in the jungle of Costa Rica. Don't fret, you won't be dining on tired tray tables or sleeping in seat 12B. The plane's interior is paneled with Costa Rican teak and the furnishings are hand-carved teak pieces from Java, Indonesia. The tree-house suite features two air-conditioned bedrooms with en suite baths, an ocean-view terrace, a river rock-spiral staircase entrance and 360 degrees of surrounding gardens. If watching the resident sloths, toucans and monkeys gets boring, the rooms have flat-screen TVs.

The 727 Fuselage Home is offered by Hotel Costa Verde, which is situated on a rainforest bluff between Manuel Antonio National Park and the Pacific Ocean. The hotel is just 300 yards from the beach and has three cliffside buildings featuring a variety of room types.

Rates start at \$500 per night in high season for the 727, no boarding pass necessary.

9 WINVIAN FARMS CONNECTICUT

HELICOPTER COTTAGE
winvian.com



YOU NEEDN'T TRAVEL FAR TO experience a truly unique stay. The helicopter cottage at nearby Winvian Farms is just a ninety-minute drive from Fairfield County. Here you'll find a fully restored 1968 Sikorsky Sea King Pelican helicopter reimagined as a most fanciful cottage. This former Coast Guard chopper stands at the center of the 890-square-foot bungalow, its rotor blades embedded in the ceiling. The original pilot and copilot seats, switches and gauges are all here, but modern updates such as a mod sofa and flat-screen TV give it a luxe touch. Enjoy a cocktail in the cockpit, watch a film in the fuselage or relax by a glowing wood stove.

The room features a king-size bed and Jacuzzi tub. Should you choose to leave the comfort of your 'copter, the resort is set on 113 acres and has an award-winning spa and five-star dining.

Rates vary; a weekend night stay in the Helicopter Cottage averages \$700. »

'COPTER COMFORT

WHETHER YOU WANT TO HANG OUT IN THE COCKPIT OR RELAX IN THE JACUZZI, THIS COTTAGE IS A SPECIAL RETREAT.



QUIRKY COMFORT

SMALL WITH SUBSTANCE

**CLAUSTROPHOBICS
NEED NOT APPLY**

FORGET SIX FEET UNDER.
IN THIS SUITE YOU'RE
509 FEET BELOW GROUND.

10

→ SALA SILVERMINE SWEDEN

UNDERGROUND SUITE
salasilvergruva.se

THE DEEPEST HOTEL ROOM IN the world can be found 509 feet beneath the earth's surface in an old silver mine in Västmanland, Sweden. Your stay in this subterranean palace begins with a tour of the mine (accessed by elevator), which, during its heyday, produced more than three tons of silver a year. The tour ends at your underground suite, a vision in—you guessed it—silver, where the wall glow and the furnishings have been hand-selected to complement the silver surroundings.

Though it's chilly in the rest of the mine, the underground suite is heated to a near-balmy 64 degrees. Guests are advised to bring warm clothes for the mine tour and late night trips to the bathroom, which is at ground level and apparently a bit frigid.

A staff member is available above ground throughout the whole night, and guests are given an intercom radio (cell phones do not work in the cave).

A night's stay is \$565 and includes tour, refreshments and breakfast.



FINDING FRODO
THE HOBBIT
MOTEL. 'NUF SAID.

11

→ WOODLYN PARK NEW ZEALAND

THE HOBBIT MOTEL
woodlynpark.co.nz/thehobbitmotel

IF YOU'RE INTO ALL THINGS MIDDLE EARTH, then a stay at The Hobbit Motel is sure to appeal. Numerous scenes in the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy were filmed in New Zealand's dramatic landscapes, and this lodging is a lasting tribute to the blockbuster





films. The Hobbit Motel is a string of rooms built into a hillside, which look very similar to the fantasy home of Frodo. Each unit accommodates up to six people and has a bathroom and kitchenette.

The unusual motel was built using polystyrene blocks, keeping it cool in the summer and warm in the winter. Located in Woodlyn Park, it is a former farm that now claims to be the only place in New Zealand to bring Kiwi culture alive with a history and heritage show, a kiwi bear and a dancing pig (really).

You can make a Lord of the Rings fan's dreams come true for just under \$200 per night.

12

↑ **KAKSLAUTTANEN
ARCTIC RESORT
FINLAND**

ICE IGLOO
www.kakslauttanen.fi

IN FINNISH, THE WORD FOR THE AURORA borealis is “Revontulet,” which translates to “Fox Fires.” The name comes from a Finnish myth in which the lights are caused by a magical fox sweeping its tail across the snow, spraying it up into the sky. Though this resort in the Finnish Lapland offers skiing, ice fishing and reindeer-

THE GLASS CEILING
WATCH THE NORTHERN LIGHTS PAINT THE EVENING SKY FROM A PRIVATE IGLOO.

drawn sleigh rides, the real draw is the chance to see the awesome spectacle of the northern lights.

Here, guests can bed down for a night of lights viewing in one of the glass-domed ice igloos. Though the temperatures outside might dip to negative forty, inside you'll be tucked into a sleeping bag on furs in an almost-cozy room where the temps hover around 28 degrees. For the less hardy, there are log cabins that feature glass domes so that the northern lights can be viewed in all their majesty, with toasty toes.

If seeing the lights from the relative comfort of your igloo is not thrilling enough for you, you can go “Aurora Hunting.” You'll chase the northern lights in a horse- or reindeer-drawn sleigh through the crisp winter night. Aurora season lasts from late August until the end of April.

Igloo rates start at around \$200 per person; they can accommodate up to four people, but you still only get one bed. »

ECO-COOL

DON'T LET THE "ECO" FOOL YOU



**EARTH,
WIND & FIRE**
GOING GREEN
HAS NEVER
BEEN SO CHIC.

CONTRIBUTED

13 **EARTHSHIP BIOTECHTURE NEW MEXICO**

THE WAYBEE
www.earthship.com

SPEND A NIGHT OFF THE GRID in a boutique-chic solar-powered Earthship. Part accommodation, part piece of art and part science project, these novel desert dwellings are more than hotel rooms; they just might be the future. Each structure is made from recycled and sustainable materials; solar panels generate electricity; and a rain and snow-collecting cistern provides all the water.

Although each pod is powered solely by the sun, wind and rain, guests still have access to modern amenities including Wi-Fi, television, and the all-important Netflix. The one-, two- and three-bedroom homes are decorated in a bohemian-chic style and offer every comfort, with zero carbon emissions.

This visionary community was named one of *Lonely Planet's* Top Ten Eco-Stays in the World for 2014.

Rates range from \$200 to \$400 per night, depending on the season.



14

↓ **ATTRAP'REVES**
FRANCE
BUBBLE TREE PODS
attrap-reves.com

IN 2011 DESIGNER PIERRE STEPHANE Dumas unveiled his line of transparent bubbles that allow people to sleep with almost nothing blocking their view of nature. His goal was to create a portable earth-friendly space that allows inhabitants to feel at one with nature, minus the bugs and humidity. Since not many can afford the \$11,000 price tag for the unusual camping tent, those keen on a see-through sleeping experience can book a night at the Attrap'Reves hotel.

The bubbles can be found in five different locales in France, including a Provençal pine forest and a field in Luberon. The stylish bubbles are all located within short walking distance from the nearest village and a main building, which provides meals, an outdoor Jacuzzi and other amenities. While most of the bubbles are completely see through, a few are semi-opaque offering guests a bit more privacy.

The bubbles are about thirteen feet in diameter, feature a queen-size bed, have separate bathroom bubbles and include telescopes with star charts.

Packages average \$120 per night.

CLEAR SKIES TURNS OUT FRENCH BUBBLES AREN'T JUST FOR CHAMPAGNE.

BOTTOM LEFT: CONTRIBUTED; TOP RIGHT: CONTRIBUTED; BOTTOM RIGHT BY LUCAS HANDYZ



YOU SLEPT WHERE?! IT JUST DOESN'T GET ANY ODDER THAN THIS.

15

↑ **TREEBONES RESORT**
CALIFORNIA

HUMAN NEST
treebonesresort.com


IF BIG BIRD WERE LOOKING for a great escape, he would surely vacation in the "Human Nest" at Treebones Resort in Big Sur, California. This unusual work of woven wood-art was created and built by Big Sur artist Jayson Fann. Guests reach the rustic lodging via a wood ladder and are advised to bring a sleeping bag as there are no bed linens, though there is a futon to help get a good night's sleep in possibly the most unusual hotel room we've ever heard of.

Plush accommodations this is not. There is no turndown service and no chocolates on your pillow



(in fact there are no pillows, it's strictly BYOP). Instead there is a panoramic view of the Pacific Ocean and a once-in-a-lifetime chance to experience the world as our feathered friends do.

Treebones also offers yurts, which seem palatial by comparison. This eco resort boasts of being truly off the grid, producing its own power and growing its own food. Oh, and if you need to make a phone call, don't bother with your cell phone (there is no reception), you'll have to use the pay phone.

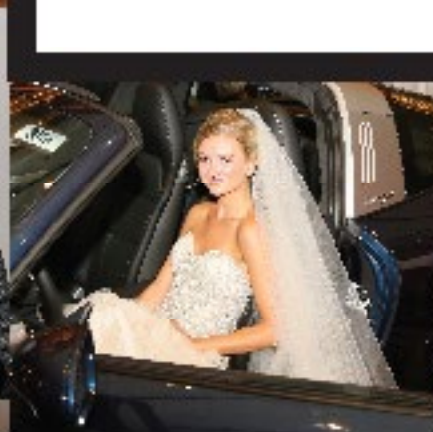
The nest rents for \$150 per night, with a two-night minimum and a two-person limit. 



BIG

[event photography + marketing]

PICTURE



 PHOTOGRAPHY

 VIDEOGRAPHY

 SOCIAL MEDIA

Moffly Media is one of the leading providers of professional event photography and marketing services in Fairfield County. We capture compelling, high-quality images of individuals and groups at meaningful events. With our wide range of capabilities from video to social media and post-event press coverage, Moffly will customize a marketing package that's just right for you.

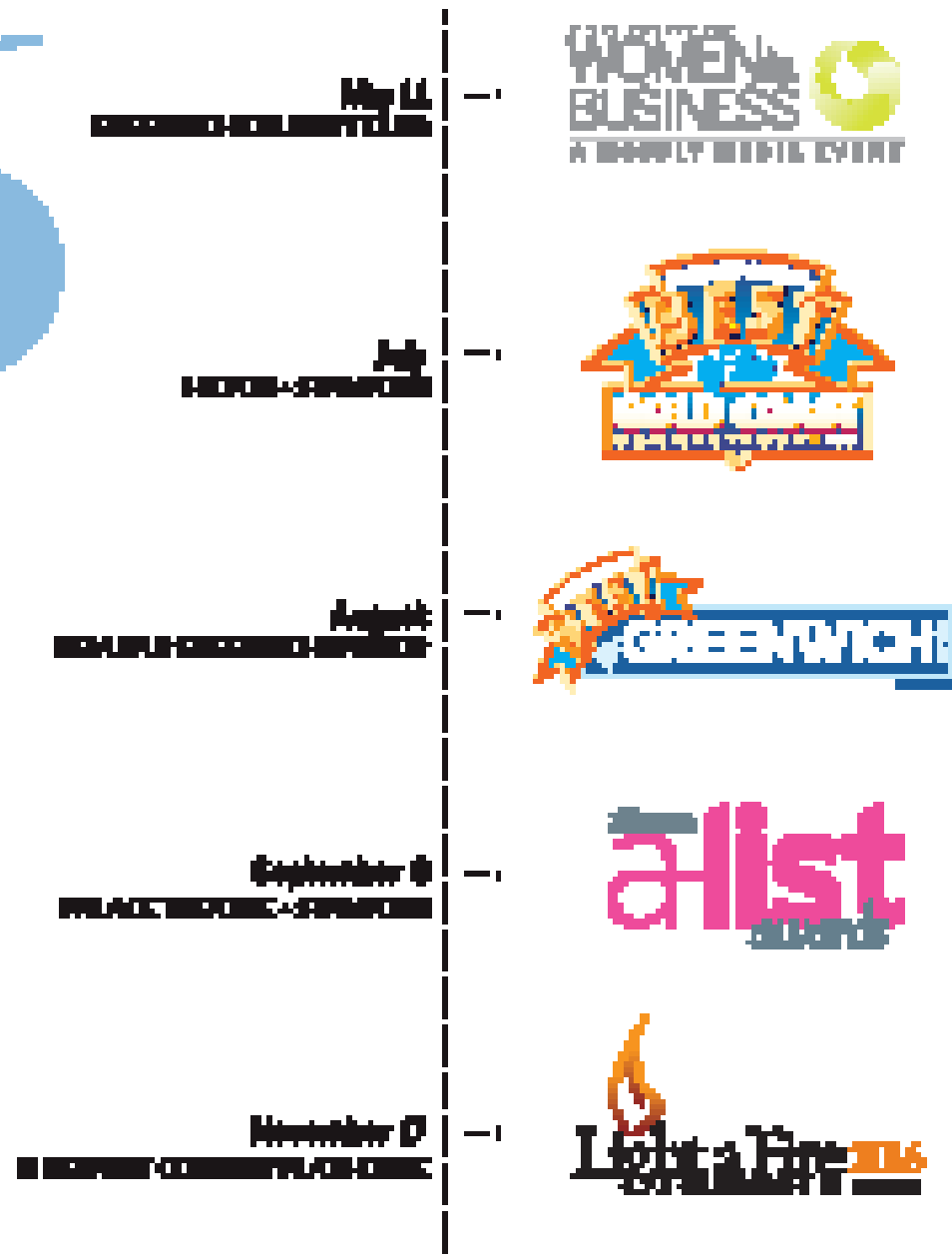
 MOFFLY MEDIA LEAH HINCHETT ASSOCIATE MARKETING DIRECTOR, OUTREACH - EMILY BLACHE AT EMILY@MOFFLYMEDIA.COM OR 203.571.1654

2016

MOFFLY MEDIAS

Event Lineup

mark your calendars!



For more information, visit our website
www.mofflymedia.com



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