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For the Moment | My Top Ten Travel Destinations

By **BEN ELLIOT**



This week's guest blogger is Ben Elliot, a co-founder of [Quintessentially](#), the global concierge service that counts Madonna, Gwyneth Paltrow, Scarlett Johanson, Sean Combs and Harvey Weinstein among its members. Elliot, a self-styled public stomach who has the arduous task of having to dine at the world's finest restaurants, divides his time between New York and London. For earlier posts by Ben Elliot, please click [here](#).

Tomorrow I am off to the luxury watch fair in Basel, which welcomes 100,000 buyers and aficionados from around the world. [Richemont](#), owner of some of the finest watch manufacturers, chooses to welcome its fans to neighboring Geneva at the same time. For me, it is important to see what is being developed as the appetite from our members to know what is coming is paramount to us being successful. The appetite for these timepieces, even as world markets seem to be spiraling into decline, is stronger than ever. As I mentioned earlier in the week, in relation to the contemporary art market, the world's wealthy are showing no signs of reining in. As for today, I hope I do not do a Naomi Campbell at Terminal 5 as my connecting flight to Zurich is tight.

Because it is becoming vacation season and everybody has travel on the brain, I have been asked today to give you my current favorite destinations for 2008. (All of which, of course, can be sorted in a totally bespoke way for you by our Quintessentially travel team.) Here they are, in no particular order:

10. **Italy:** Italy always delivers. I've heard great things about [Villa Mangiacane](#) in Chianti Classico, the famous winemaking region. Set in acres of vineyards, the villa is steeped in history — it's named after the ancient and powerful Machiavelli family who once owned it. Florence and its great restaurants and bars is also a stone's throw away.