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PREP STATION A VIEW OF NANTUCKET'S GREAT POINT LIGHTHOUSE

# AMERICAN

s vibrant hues and short hemlines reign supreme, travelers heading to the beach can look forward to some updated classics. Among the lighthouses and sailboats of Nantucket, the island stalwart White Elephant has opened the stand-alone threebedroom White Elephant Loft (whiteelephanthotel .com; rates from \$1,800), with

#### THREE STORIED SEASIDE HOTELS GET A MODERN TWIST.

picture windows looking out over the former whaling capital's cobblestoned Main Street. Guests can make use of the gourmet kitchen (private chefs are on call) and eat by the fireplace on breezy nights, or head to the main resort to take advantage of the spa and heated pool.

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Down south, on Florida's Gold Coast, Palm Beach's legendary watering hole **The Breakers** (thebreakers.com; weeknight rates from \$329) has unveiled a decade-long \$250 million expansion of its 540 rooms and suites, with crisp white sheets on the mahogany poster beds and preppy pastel accents. Built in the 1920s, the palm-studded resort, whose entryway fountain was modeled after one at the Boboli Gardens, is still owned by the family of its founder, oil-and-rail magnate Henry Flagler. Along with the property's eight restaurants, visitors can enjoy a new set of private oceanfront cabanas, a mid-century-style cocktail bar, and—naturally—an onsite Lilly Pulitzer boutique.

Meanwhile, on the eastern tip of Long Island, Gurnev's Montauk Resort & Seawater Spa (gurneysinn .com; high-season rates from \$875) recently renovated, with a new, 38-room oceanfront building and a refreshed, surfchic design. Jennifer LeRoy (whose family once ran New York institutions the Russian Tea Room and Tavern on the Green) oversees the food and drink offerings, borrowing chef Seth Levine from Manhattan's Hotel Chantelle. Sunseekers can sip a gin rickey from the beach bar while lounging on a 1,000-foot stretch of pristine shorelineor by the Olympic-size saltwater pool-while dreaming of endless summer.—JENNIFER CONRAD PATA >80

t's a sign of our wised-up times that most filmmakers fear unabashed romanticism. Not so John Carney, the Irish writer-director who scored a surprise hit with Once (now a Broadway musical), the sort-of-true-life story of a Dublin street musician falling (slowly) for a Czech pianist. He's as swoony as ever in Begin Again, which is essentially Once on steroids. Everything is bigger-the city, the budget, and especially the stars. Keira Knightley plays Gretta, a gifted but shy English singer-songwriter who comes to New York with her ambitious lover, Dave, played by perma-shifty Adam Levine. When Dave lets fame go to his head, the heartbroken Gretta begins performing in a bar where she's spotted by Dan (Mark Ruffalo), a drunken, crazy-yetadorable ex-record label exec, on the very night he's feeling suicidal. Bound by loneliness-and their love of soulful music—Dan and Gretta set out to record a guerrilla album on the streets of Manhattan.

Although Carney's idea of a plot is a cavalcade of shamelessly good-hearted absurdities, including a beaming cameo by CeeLo, he gets the most from a terrific cast. James Corden is especially amusing as Gretta's busker best friend, Steve. He offers the comic counterpoint to the warm chemistry between Gretta



and Dan, who seem to feed off each other's emotion. Knightley has always excelled at portraying the battle between enthusiasm and disappointment; this time she does it to music, and you'll have fun hearing her sing.—J.P.