Charleston, US

First direct flights

Grand seafront neoclassical mansions interspersed with palms, excellent slow-cooked southern barbecue, antiques shopping, and horse-drawn carriage rides — Charleston has plenty of old-world charm. South Carolina’s genteel port city is about to become viable for a short break with the launch of British Airways’ first direct flights from the UK on April 4 (twice a week, from £600 return, ba.com). The city has had a spate of interesting hotel openings in the past three years, and in January the Hotel Bennett opens (B&B doubles from £229, preferredhotels.com) with smart, light rooms. Travel company Bon Voyage (0800 3163012, bon-voyage.co.uk) has created a car-free tour of Charleston, Savannah and New Orleans, travelling by rail, and including a Mississippi paddle steamer cruise and Louisiana plantation home tour, from £2,195pp for 11 nights, including the new flights to Charleston, an internal flight, and a return from New Orleans.