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Minor Hotels Founder William E Heinecke Receives Lifetime Achievement Award as Anantara Takes Two Further Honours at 2026 ULTRAs

Minor Hotels collects three honours at the 2026 ULTRAs, voted by Ultratravel readers and 38 million GHA DISCOVERY members, with Anantara Hotels & Resorts named Luxury Hotel Brand and Anantara Koh Yao Yai Resort & Villas named Best New Hotel in the World.



▲ William E Heinecke receiving his Lifetime Achievement Award at the ULTRAs 2026. Pictured (Left to Right): Christopher Hartley, CEO, Global Hotel Alliance; Nick Perry, Chairman & Founder, Ultratravel; William E Heinecke, Chairman & Founder, Minor International; Nick Wood, Founder and Creative Director, Nick Wood Music

Minor Hotels is proud to announce its three honours from the 2026 Ultimate Luxury Travel Related Awards (ULTRAs). At the ceremony held in London on 1 October 2026, William E

Heinecke, Founder & Chairman of Minor International, the parent company of Minor Hotels, received the Lifetime Achievement Award. Anantara Hotels & Resorts, the group's flagship experiential luxury brand, was named Luxury Hotel Brand of the Year, while Anantara Koh Yao Yai Resort & Villas won Best New Hotel in the World.

Mr Heinecke's hospitality career began in 1978 with the Royal Garden Resort in Pattaya, Thailand. From that first hotel, Minor Hotels has grown into a leading global hospitality company with more than 640 properties across 67 countries, operating under Minor Hotels' 12 hotel brands including Anantara, Elewana Collection, The Wolseley Hotels, Tivoli, Minor Reserve Collection, NH Collection, nhow, Avani, Colbert Collection, NH, Oaks, and iStay, and complemented by a diverse portfolio of restaurants and bars, travel experiences, and spa and wellness brands.

Anantara's title as Luxury Hotel Brand of the Year arrives in a milestone year for the brand. Anantara Hotels & Resorts turns 25 in 2026, a quarter of a century after its first property opened in Hua Hin, Thailand. Anantara now shares its Thai-inspired hospitality across more than 50 properties in Asia, the Indian Ocean, the Middle East, Africa and Europe, with Australia and the Americas coming soon.

The brand's Anantara Koh Yao Yai Resort & Villas property was crowned Best New Hotel in the World and sits in Thailand's Phang Nga Bay between Phuket and Krabi, on one of the country's last unspoiled islands. Its 148 suites, including beachfront pool villas and sea-view penthouses, offer generous space along the shores of Koh Yao Yai.

Mr Heinecke commented on the ULTRAs honours: "Anantara began as a single property in Hua Hin and has become a way of travelling: unhurried, rooted in place and generous in spirit. Twenty-five years on, to be named Luxury Hotel Brand of the Year is a tribute to the team members who bring that spirit to life at more than 50 properties."

The ULTRAs took place at the Tower of London, in the Jewel House and The White Tower. Nick Perry, Chairman of multi-media brand Ultratravel, organises the awards in partnership with Global Hotel Alliance, the world's largest alliance of independent hotel brands and operator of the award-winning loyalty programme GHA DISCOVERY, through their long-standing joint

venture, Ultratravel Collection. Ultratravel readers and GHA DISCOVERY members voted for this year's 18 categories.

UK television presenters Natalie Pinkham and Gethin Jones hosted the evening, and guests included British actor Hugh Bonneville, Sky News presenter Sarah-Jane Mee and rugby legends Simon Shaw, Alun Wyn Jones, Serge Betsen and Andrew Mehrtens.

“The ULTRAs offer a powerful reflection of the standards and experiences that matter most to today’s luxury travellers, shaped by the views and preferences of Ultratravel magazine readers, as well as our GHA DISCOVERY members who voted for these awards,” said GHA CEO Chris Hartley. “Congratulations to all this year’s winners for raising the bar and demonstrating the very best of hospitality, aviation and travel.”



▲ Anantara Koh Yao Yai Resort & Villas

Press Release - Minor Hotels ULTRAs 2026.docx

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About Ultratravel Collection

Ultratravel Collection brings together hotels of distinction for the discerning traveller. Its membership includes only the finest hotels and resorts globally, delivering luxurious experiences and personalised service.

About GHA and GHA DISCOVERY

Global Hotel Alliance (GHA) is the world's largest alliance of independent hotel brands with 60 brands and 1,000 hotels across 100 countries. Its award-winning loyalty programme – GHA DISCOVERY – provides 38 million members with recognition, D$ rewards and exclusive experiences across its hotels and partners, both with and without a stay.

Through membership in GHA, brands expand their global reach, drive incremental revenue and reduce dependence on third-party channels, all while maintaining management independence and individual positioning. For more information, visit globalhotelalliance.com or ghadiscovery.com.

About Minor Hotels

Minor Hotels is a global leader in the hospitality industry with more than 640 hotels, resorts and branded residences in operation and committed development across 67 countries. The group crafts innovative and insightful experiences through its hotel brands including Anantara, Elewana Collection, The Wolseley Hotels, Tivoli, Minor Reserve Collection, NH Collection, nhow, Avani, Colbert Collection, NH, Oaks, and iStay, as well as a diverse portfolio of restaurants and bars, travel experiences, and spa and wellness brands. With over four decades of expertise, Minor Hotels builds stronger brands, fosters lasting partnerships, and drives business success by always focusing on what matters most to our guests, team members and partners.

Minor Hotels is a proud member of the Global Hotel Alliance (GHA) and recognises its guests through one unified loyalty programme, Minor DISCOVERY, part of GHA DISCOVERY.

Discover our world at minorhotels.com and connect with Minor Hotels on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, TikTok and YouTube.

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