

Condé Nast Traveller

MAY 2009

10TH ANNIVERSARY HOT LIST SPECIAL

Real

THE HOT LIST 2009

Our choice of the world's best new hotels



in association with Virgin Atlantic: '25 years and still red hot'

THE HOT LIST 2009

AUSTRALASIA, ASIA
& PACIFIC OCEAN

gaming tables at the Venetian Macao and Plaza Casino next door. There are five swimming pools in the tropical grounds, surrounded by daybeds and cabañas with televisions, surely designed to help broaden Macau's appeal to families and non-gambling sun-seekers. Gourmands will appreciate the authentic Portuguese and Macanese cuisine on offer at the generous lunch and dinner buffets at the Belcânico restaurant. All the spacious bedrooms have state-of-the-art workstations and WiFi access and, whether you are here for work or pleasure, it's worth paying the small daily tariff to access the top-floor executive lounge with its meeting spaces, private offices, breakfasts and sunset cocktails. In the spa, where smiling attendants stand ready outside the steam room with ice-cold Fiji water and enveloping towels, therapists perform a tightly edited menu of targeted treatments for aching muscles and jet lag, as well as traditional Chinese healing.

WHEN TO GO October–May to avoid the monsoon season.

ROOM TO BOOK A balcony suite to fully appreciate the Macau skyline.
00 853 2881 8888; www.fourseasons.com.
Doubles from HK\$2,700 (about £240)

OPPOSITE HOUSE Beijing

Three days into the 2008 Summer Olympic Games – during which the city made a splash with architectural stunners such as the Bird's Nest

and Water Cube – Japanese architect Kengo Kuma made his own statement when this glamorous new 99-room boutique hotel opened in the heart of Sanlitun's entertainment district. Encased in gorgeous green glass and centred upon a soaring six-floor atrium hung with graceful arabesques of steel mesh, Opposite House is certainly modern yet it takes its cultural inspiration from the past. On display in the lobby are Chinese slippers and a suit of armour, both of which are made unexpectedly of decorative porcelain; in the spacious, apartment-style rooms, design details such as day beds, lacquered chests, deep wooden tubs and ryokan-style bathrooms add a traditional Oriental flavour. The hotel is part of the new, open-plan Village at Sanlitun complex, and there is plenty to explore on-site, including a club and several bars and restaurants (try chef Max Levy's innovative northern Asian dishes at Bei). At Mesh, the bar adjoining the hotel lobby, a crowd of thirtysomething expats and hotel guests keeps the place buzzing into the small hours. Check out the hotel's spa and fitness level, where you'll find yet another design gem: a 20-metre stainless-steel swimming pool in a dream-like setting hung with tiny sparkling lights.

WHEN TO GO Spring or autumn are best.

ROOM TO BOOK Studio 115 with private Jacuzzi.
00 86 10 6417 6688; www.theoppositehouse.com.
Doubles from 2,300 yuan (about £230)

10 HOT HOTEL PEOPLE

What's so hot about your hotel?

5. ADRIAN ZECHA Chairman of Amanresorts, Aman at Summer Palace



'Like the Forbidden City, Aman at Summer Palace in Beijing is one of China's most significant landmarks.

We feel very privileged to have been invited to open a property in the shadow of it, particularly because this is the only hotel within the boundaries of this national heritage park'

W HONG KONG Hong Kong

Given the eccentric decor, the horde of chirpy young staff and the ubiquity of the 23rd letter of the alphabet ('the Wonderful World of W'), there are occasions when the W Hong Kong is reminiscent of Hogwarts. Magic might be too strong a word, but the W, set apart from the city on the western edge of the Kowloon peninsula, is certainly different from the more usual Hong Kong five-stars. Australian and Japanese design firms shaped the look; staff at Bliss, the New York-inspired spa, fairly yodel their welcome to arriving guests; and the Living Room (ie lobby) is rather aggressively touted as somewhere to groove rather than drift through. What saves all this wizardry from gimmickry is that the W has already assumed all the confidence and grace of a veteran. The panorama to the west takes in the typhoon shelter and outlying islands; the 393 rooms – dubbed Fabulous, Fantastic, Marvellous, and so on – dazzle with colour and hi-tech gizmos; waiters breeze about the breakfast buffet in the Kitchen restaurant proffering the chef's recommendations; and the roof-top pool hovers at about the same level that Christian Bale swooped around at in *The Dark Knight*. To top it all, the hotel is suspended above one of the city's swishest shopping malls and the airport express station.

WHEN TO GO Between September (when the typhoons have abated) and Christmas.

ROOM TO BOOK Ignore the octet of room categories: pick any room facing west.
00 852 3717 2222; www.whotels.com/hongkong.
Doubles from HK\$2,583 (about £230)

AMAN NEW DELHI India

Until now, visitors to India's frenetic capital have regarded it as a gateway city to the subcontinent, dashing through on a round of sightseeing and shopping en-route to Rajasthan. All this is set to change with the opening of Aman's new urban

Sunlight through the latticework screen on a passageway at the Aman New Delhi

