



HBA SETS NEW BENCHMARK FOR AVANT-GARDE HOTEL DESIGN WITH THE BRAND NEW FOUR SEASONS HOTEL GUANGZHOU

*China's most significant hotel opening this year
creates new design landmark for the city of Guangzhou*

(Hong Kong, 20 August 2012) – Global interior design leaders HBA, Hirsch Bedner Associates set out to challenge perceptions of hotel design with the styling of the Four Seasons Hotel Guangzhou, a stunning new architectural landmark in China's southern provincial capital and the brand's 88th property worldwide. Remarkable for both its soaring height and tapering *avant-garde* design, the newly opened hotel is set to become a new benchmark for interior design in Asia.

Rising 103 stories above the Pearl River, the Four Seasons Guangzhou occupies the top third of the new Guangzhou International Finance Center. The project is architecturally dramatic for its triangular tower, diagonal lattice and soaring, 30-floor-high atrium. HBA's interior design concept is striking, developed to push the boundaries of design and challenge perceptions of the classic hotel interior.

HBA won an international competition to design the hotel. "It was because we were able to beautifully communicate a visual presentation that upholds the integrity of the Four Seasons brand coupled with innovative design and sensitivity to location," said Ian Carr, CEO of HBA in Singapore.

Every detail of the hotel's elegant yet ultramodern interior was meticulously planned and executed to ensure an exceptional guest experience. From the ground floor, guests take dedicated express elevators to the 70th floor lobby, where a dramatic three metre (ten foot) red steel sculpture by Australian artist Matthew Harding appears to float on a sea of watery glass, reflecting the astounding ceiling window 30 floors above.

The incredible naturally-lit atrium, surrounded by restaurants and rooms above, is higher than the top of St. Paul's Cathedral in London and New York's Statue of Liberty. The intricate textured screen made of woven metal wraps around the interior of the sky-high lobby. In a subtle reference to the hotel brand, the screen is themed around the four seasons, from spring in the basement to fall in the upper reaches.

"The artwork extends to edgy, modern Southern Chinese pieces by local artists and continues the theme of the four seasons from spring on the ground floor to winter at the top floor." Said Sandra DeSouza, Director of Canvas, art consultants on the project. For instance, Tian Bar on Level 99, the artwork is pure, white and ethereal in a fitting tribute to the heavens.

A key challenge facing HBA was to match interiors with the complex structural columns featured in all public spaces and the hotel's 104 guest rooms and suites. Each boasts a unique floorplan as a result, with the building narrowing as it rises and columns intersecting at different points. The only

constants in HBA's guest room interiors are the bathrooms and beds, positioned to offer unparalleled views of the Pearl River Delta and cityscape. Floor to ceiling glass windows additionally encourage guests to "look right down", said Mr Carr. "This design is naturally inspired by the 103-storey building we were given. We didn't want to close up the windows and deny guests the spectacular view."

Furniture is predominantly modern Italian, with contemporary Chinese art playing off elements of nature and culture. HBA created beautifully customized carpets that are watercolor like and evocative of the skies and clouds.

"Everything Four Seasons does is classy – nothing trite or glib," said Carr.

Embracing this brief, HBA's objective was to bridge the gap between Four Seasons' "modern conservatism" style and the building's *avant-garde* architecture, with the vast, light-filled central atrium contributing to a particularly dramatic effect.

"Where guests check-in, they can look up and see beautiful patterning spanned across 35 floors of tapering diagonal glass, it's quite amazing," said Carr.

This lent itself to creating further patterns of angles and refractive elements in the interior design, from the handrails in the atrium – custom measured for each floor – to a dynamic skylight at the top, with angular black panels. The effect is magnified in interior corridors, with angled glass deliberately projecting outwards to "embrace the height". Nowhere is this sense of height more intense than from a bridge on Level 100, where a staircase projects into the void and glass floors look down 40 floors below to the lobby.

In addition to Tian Bar, HBA also provided sumptuous interiors for Yu Yue Heen, Caffe Mondo and Kumoi – three of the hotel's four new dining destinations. Located on Level 71, signature Chinese restaurant Yu Yue Heen deliberately speaks a different design language than the rest of the project, with interiors playing on traditional Chinese calligraphy and carrying the colors of the Red Dragon. In Yu Yue Heen, and throughout the hotel, design marries tradition and innovation to firmly ground interiors in modern China.

"Overall, Four Seasons Hotel Guangzhou breaks conventions, coupling luxury with the *avant-garde*," added Carr. "The architect created amazing spaces for us to work with and this building really stands out as a new design icon for both Guangzhou and for the Four Seasons brand."

- Ends -

About HBA

World-renowned as the "Number 1 Hospitality Design Firm" (Interior Design) and honored in 2011 by the Perspective Awards, the Boutique Design Awards and the European Hotel Design Awards; HBA/Hirsch Bedner Associates, unveils the world's most anticipated hotels, resorts, and spas. Leading the hospitality interior design industry since 1965, HBA remains keenly attuned to the pulse of changing industry trends governed by today's sophisticated traveler. The company's international presence, depth of experience, and detailed industry knowledge enables them to identify interior design trends at their source, make definitive predictions about new directions and innovations, and influence design standards at a global level. HBA's ultimate objective is to add value, raise standards and enhance the brand of a project's owner and operator.

HBA creates the signature look of traditional luxury brands, independent contemporary boutiques, urban resort spas, world-class residences, restaurants, casinos, and cruise ships. From continent to continent, each HBA interior is the result of a unique and sensitive response to location, architecture, and client vision. With over 900 designers around the globe in 16 offices and a recent expansion in Asia, HBA is a true global company with more than 75% of its employees now outside the United States. HBA's international presence, combined with its extensive knowledge of the interior design industry, has facilitated the ability to rewrite the language of design with each new project.

For HBA in Los Angeles, Atlanta, San Francisco, London, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Tokyo, Singapore, Brisbane, Melbourne, New Delhi, Dubai Moscow, Istanbul, Thailand and Manila, visit www.hba.com.

Issued by Grebstad Hicks Communications on behalf of HBA.

For interviews, images, renderings and design details please contact:

Sophie Bent / Carol Kong
Grebstad Hicks Communications – Hong Kong
Tel: (852) 2810 0532
Email: sophie.bent@ghcasia.com / carol.kong@ghcasia.com

Joshua Shi
Grebstad Hicks Communications – Shanghai
Tel: (86) 21 5213 3030
Email: joshua.shi@ghcasia.com



Bridging the gap between Four Seasons' ultra-luxury standards and the avant-garde design of Guangzhou IFC, HBA's design creates a space that is sumptuous and soaring in scope



The building's unconventional structure required more than 100 different room configurations, each offering unimpeded views of the Pearl River Delta and cityscape



In signature Chinese restaurant Yu Yue Heen, and throughout Four Seasons Hotel Guangzhou, HBA's concept marries cultural tradition and design innovation