



HBA/Hirsch Bedner Associates Introduces Gold Standard of Luxury in the Ritz-Carlton Guangzhou

SANTA MONICA, CA -- From Hong Kong to Singapore, HBA/Hirsch Bedner Associates has brought its signature of elegant interior design to ten Ritz-Carlton properties in Asia. In China alone, the world's leading hospitality design firm has a 30-year history designing luxury hotel properties and with the recent opening of the Ritz-Carlton Guangzhou and the Ritz-Carlton Residences has introduced a new gold standard in hotel and apartment luxury to the country's mainland.

"From the vast lobby to the stately rooms, The Ritz-Carlton Guangzhou brings a new level of elegance and design aesthetic that is unexpected and unrivaled in the China market," said associate Betsy Hughes from HBA's Atlanta office.

Located in the heart of Pearl River New City area of Tianhe District, The Ritz-Carlton Guangzhou is the fourth luxury Ritz-Carlton property to debut in China, with new ones set to open within the next two years in Sanya, Hong Kong and Shanghai. Earlier this year, HBA/Hirsch Bedner Associates won the prestigious *Travel + Leisure* Design Award for "Best Hotel" for their interior design of the Ritz-Carlton Beijing, Financial Street Hotel, and the company is also in the process of designing the new Ritz-Carlton Shenzhen.

The third largest city in southern China, Guangzhou is home to international companies such as Nokia, Coca-Cola and Lehman Brothers. Considered a crown jewel in the central business district, the Ritz-Carlton Guangzhou occupies the 20th to 38th floors of a sleek modern building sitting in a premiere near many cultural and commercial landmarks, including Guangzhou Opera House and the new Guangzhou International Convention and Exhibition Center.

The sophisticated hotel's 351 guestrooms, Ritz-Carlton Spa and fitness center offer a sanctuary from the hustle and bustle of this busy area. The hotel also includes 91 private residences, the first ever Ritz-Carlton Residences in China, 11,000 square feet of meeting space and six dining offerings including, LAI HEEN, which showcases the Cantonese specialties the city of Guangzhou is known for introducing to the world.

"The look of the hotel captures a romantic place and moment in time and the interiors reflect a grand continental Southern European home in the mid 17th Century during the height of Baroque architecture," said Hughes.

Designed in the style of an Italian villa, the large lobby features an intricately detailed patterned marble floor and the walls are divided into classic raised ornate panels, painted in creamy tones and accentuated by touches of gold leaf. An elaborate fountain is the centerpiece of the space and the nearby lobby lounge provides views to the hotel's gardens and water installations.

"If the lobby reception is the arrival hall of a stately home, the lobby lounge is the formal living room and the heart of the Ritz-Carlton experience," said Hughes. "It's appointed with a grand piano, excellent views and emphasizes the luxury of tea and the delicate art of relaxation."

Off the lobby, a sweeping grand staircase leads to the hotel's ballroom, business center and meeting space, including a wood paneled board room. All of the meeting rooms can be custom

named by the groups using them. A pre-function space with exterior windows adds to the ambience of the function level and this floor also connects to an adjoining walkway leading to the art gallery.

“The ballroom, corresponding meeting rooms and boardroom continues the design aesthetic from the lobby level,” she said. “The floors are covered in rich axminster carpet and the walls are painted millwork with an inset of upholstery, while chandeliers, mirrors and art complete the look.”

The classic, continental design continues in the quiet corridors and elevator lobbies found on the guestroom levels. At 540 square feet, the standard guestrooms are some of the largest in the city, and their clean and crisp interiors are complimented by brightly colored accents in apple red and mossy green. There are 35 suites along with 58 Ritz Carlton Club rooms that feature golden undertones with draperies and other furnishings in soft romantic shades of blue.

“Octagon shape bathrooms open the space in the guest rooms and allows for a proper foyer hall upon opening the entry door and guestrooms feature a walk-in closet accessed from the bedroom and bath,” said Hughes.

Crema classico stone floors and black marble accents highlight the inviting bathrooms, and glazing at the shower and water closet provides soft, flattering light. The Ritz-Carlton Presidential Suite on the top floor of the hotel features a walk-in wine cellar, private gym, two patios and an outdoor Jacuzzi. Carved paneling in a mahogany veneer and stain make up the walls and wood floors are covered by lush and colorful Persian rugs. The master bathroom features a large floating tub.

The private, serviced apartments, from one to four bedrooms, are accessed through a special entrance and lobby, which feature a more contemporary approach to traditional design and offer a wide range of personalized services, including concierge and housekeeping, spa treatments and a Ritz-Carlton fitness center membership.

Located on the fourth level of the hotel, the fitness facility offers Technogym equipment, an outdoor heated pool, yoga and steam rooms, while the spa offers 11 treatment rooms, and a VIP suite with powder room, Thai massage bed, pedicure station and whirlpool.

“The common areas of the fitness center and spa feature a bright and lively color palette with a touch of the tropics and the feel of an exclusive club while the private treatment areas are textural and soft, natural and modern,” added Hughes.

In keeping with the theme of the hotel as a giant Italian estate, The Churchill Bar ON THE WHAT LEVEL, serves as its library and is reminiscent of an upscale English gentleman’s club with dark paneling, leather furniture, conducive to the enjoyment of libations, cigars or a game of pool or chess. The hotel’s other restaurant offerings, include LAI HEEN, a stylish Chinese dining room featuring private dining pavilions and an elevated stage surrounded by a moat, where traditional cheongsamed guzheng players perform; TERRA, an art deco inspired steakhouse and “foods,” a New York-style bistro serving Asian and Western cuisine.

The Ritz-Carlton Guangzhou joins other HBA/Hirsch Bedner Associates designed properties, including two in Beijing, one in Hong Kong, Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, Osaka, and the Ritz-Carlton Millennia Singapore and the Portman Ritz-Carlton Shanghai.

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