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## **WORLDWIDE LUXURY DESIGN LEADER HBA/HIRSCH BEDNER ASSOCIATES PLAYS MAJOR ROLE IN BEIJING'S BURGEONING HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY**

SANTA MONICA, CA – As host of the 2008 Summer Olympics, Beijing, China is home to a variety of new destination hotels and restaurants that after years of planning and development will now welcome the world to the momentous event. Firmly established as one of the leading design firms in China, HBA/Hirsch Bedner Associates helped reshape the hospitality landscape in the capitol city and ushered in a new standard of interior luxury in several of these internationally branded showcase properties, including the JW Marriott Beijing on Jianguo Road.

Designed by architects Wimberly Allison Tong & Goo, WATG, the 20 story, 549-room contemporary hotel anchors the new and prestigious China Central Place, a mixed use commercial and residential urban center in the heart of the city's business district that's also near Olympic Stadium and The Forbidden City. While most other structures in Beijing are outwardly oriented to the street, the challenge for WATG and HBA/Hirsch Bedner's team in the WHAT office was to create an avant-garde hotel that appeals to a younger generation of travelers as well as attracts the pedestrian traffic for the high end dining and shopping destination.

"There has been a rapid increase in International five star hotels in Beijing and that's driven by the requirements for the Olympics but also by the city's need to redevelop and compete with Shanghai and Hong Kong," said Andrew Moore, the principal and project director on the JW Marriott Beijing.

HBA/Hirsch Bedner achieved a modern but subtle sophistication throughout the hotel, which features a residential-style executive lounge, 1,800 square meters of meeting space, a spa and three restaurants, while also incorporating touches of China's history. Each of the guest rooms and 39 suites offer either serene garden views or the bustling neighborhood and beyond to Chaoyang Park, and feature high tech amenities, LCD screens and ergonomic desks complimented by yellow checked rugs and softer ivory leather chairs. Vibrant contemporary paintings adorn the walls to pay homage to China's thriving art scene and along with throw pillows and hand-embroidered quilts also add a bold splash of color.

"Glass panels separate the bedroom from the bathroom, allowing natural light to radiate across the room and showcase the chic sunshine yellow and silver bathroom accessories in the open, lavish marble bathroom with LCD screens above deep tubs," said Moore.

The hotel also offers a 24 hour fitness center and sleek swimming pool and for even more restorative benefits there's the award-winning Quan Spa on the third floor, which offers Eastern and Western massage as well as Vichy and Drench Showers for therapeutic water treatments. The third Marriott International signature spa in China, it's only the fifth in the world and both its body treatments and its design were influenced by the country's water culture.

“From the reception area to the individual suites, we designed the spa to reflect the soothing properties of water,” said Moore. “Dramatic raindrop sculptures and modern paintings resembling the ocean adorn the walls and chandeliers float from the ceiling in a spiral of bubbles and iridescent azure curtains shimmer like rain.”

Water was also used in two video art installations in the elegant lobby, one of Moore’s favorite parts of the project. Following the latest operating trends of more personal check-in stations versus the standard front desk, HBA/Hirsch Bedner also transformed a rectangular space into what he describes as a free flowing elliptical area with multiple and distinct seating areas and the Lobby Lounge. A show stopping stairway leads to upper levels, while the rear of the space includes a 10 meter granite art installation as well as two five linear meter video art installation panels and granite water.

Moore and his design team were also delighted to work with Marriott International RVP of Operations Fitz Aguilar in developing and defining the hotels three new signature restaurants that are changing Beijing’s culinary and entertainment scene: Asia Bistro, which offers gourmet cuisine and live cooking stations; Pinot Brasserie for more casual dining; and Cru Steakhouse for choice cuts of meat and seafood.

According to Moore, in the past there wasn’t a need to move beyond staple Chinese cuisine, but these new restaurants are designed to attract travelers descending on the city for the Summer Olympics as well as a more discriminating, affluent Chinese population.

“The modernization of China and the influx of international business and tourist travelers as well as a more mobile and affluent Chinese population has contributed to an increase in competition between hotels in their restaurants and bars,” he said.

Situated in a high profile area on the mezzanine level of the hotel, rich hues of red and gold tapestries add warmth to the interiors of Cru Steakhouse in contrast with the cooler, more minimalist adjacent lobby space. Due to the daylight exposure of the façade, an undulating timber slat wall was added to create privacy as well as to minimize exposure to glare, but has become a distinct and eye-catching part of the ambiance.

“Rotating wine displays, seafood bar and exposed meat aging room offered many opportunities for us to enhance the dining experience in Cru Steakhouse,” said Moore. “Flames from the traditional rotisserie grill are reflected in flat copper paneled ceilings in the open kitchen.”

The attached Loong Bar, with a large dragon-shaped chandelier above the bar, is a prime spot for Cru Steakhouse diners to enjoy before or after dinner drinks. Accessible to the public through a mezzanine level entrance, the bar was designed to appeal to single travelers or groups and offers a variety of comfortable and stylish seating options in the lounge areas adjacent to the jazz stage that features live music.

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**About HBA/Hirsch Bedner Associates**

As a global leader in hospitality interior design, HBA/Hirsch Bedner Associates is credited with revolutionizing the design industry. Since it was founded in 1964, the company has continually set design trends, pushing boundaries and injecting fresh ideas in to some of the world’s most prestigious and well-known addresses.

HBA/Hirsch Bedner Associates has successfully completed over 900 projects in 80 countries worldwide. More than 70 percent of its current project list is located in Pacific Rim countries,

including many hotels with the world's premier brands such as Mandarin Oriental, Shangri-La, Ritz-Carlton, Four Seasons and others.

HBA/Hirsch Bedner Associates prides itself on its unrivalled knowledge of the cultural, financial, geographical and programmatic requirements involved in design projects, and applies that knowledge to all of its projects, ranging from world-class hotels and resorts to individual boutique hotels, spas, casinos, cruise ships and private residences.

HBA employs more than 450 design professionals in 12 offices worldwide: Los Angeles, Atlanta, San Francisco, London, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Tokyo, Singapore, Brisbane, Melbourne, New Delhi and Dubai. HBA attributes its achievements to its fundamental values of research and sensitivity to the needs of its markets.

For more information about HBA/Hirsch Bedner Associates, please visit the company's website at [www.hbadesign.com](http://www.hbadesign.com).