

Hotel 酒店

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pace publishing limited
17/f., north point asia-pac commercial centre,
10 north point road, north point,
hong kong
t: +852 28971688
f: +852 28972888
www.pacesource.com
pace@pacebase.com

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publisher: george lam / george.lam@beisistudio.com
editorial: diane tsang / diane_tsang@pacebase.com
proofreader: maisy chan
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Preface

by Peng Loh

About Peng Loh

Dynamic hotelier and restaurateur, Loh Lik Peng was born in Dublin, Ireland, to Singapore parents who were practicing medicine there at the time. He attended school in England before returning to Singapore in 1997.

Loh became a corporate litigator upon his return before leaving the profession to open Hotel 1929 in 2003. His new establishment not only made headlines locally, but also internationally with features in The Washington Post, The Observatory, SC Global, and Time Magazine. In addition to this, Hotel 1929 was the only Singaporean hotel to be featured in Hip Hotels City, which presented the hotel in a six page feature.

In less than a year of its opening, Hotel 1929 was also awarded the "URA Architectural Heritage Award"; and in 2005, the Singapore Tourism board awarded Loh with the "New Tourism Entrepreneur Award" for his work in transforming a simple shophouse into the designer boutique hotel that is Hotel 1929.

Set within Hotel 1929 is the award-winning restaurant, Ember, which features suitably nouvelle international cuisine with an Asian twist. Under the direction of Executive Chef Sabastian Ng (formerly of the Four Seasons and Raffles Hotel) and Loh, Ember has not failed to draw crowds every night. Not content with making waves in Singapore alone, Ember is set to take the world by storm with expansions into Thailand and the region as well.

2006 sees Loh returning to his first passion and success formula with New Majestic Hotel and Majestic Restaurant, his second designer boutique hotel. Located at Bukit Pasoh Road, New Majestic Hotel was awarded the "Facelift of the Year Award" by Elle Magazine for its spectacular transformation. Like Hotel 1929, New Majestic Hotel was also awarded the "URA Architectural Heritage Award". Adding on, the hotel was also the only Singaporean hotel honoured with a place on Conde Nast Traveller's prestigious "Hot List 2006" for being one of the world's most hospitable hotels.



HOTEL DESIGN

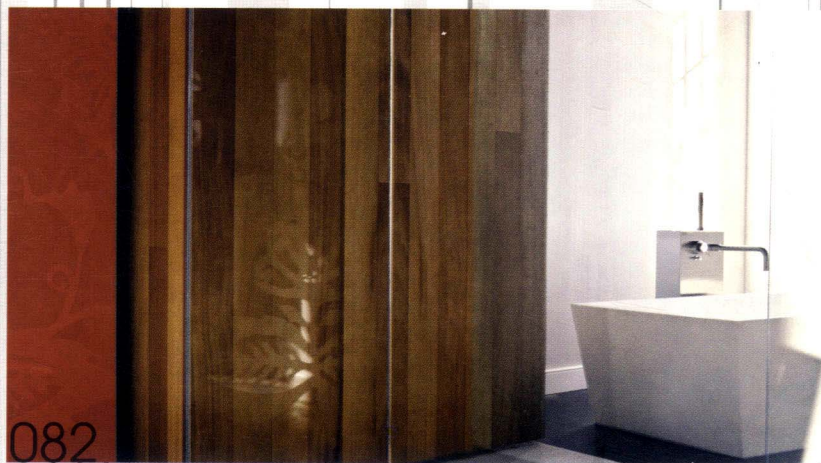
Hotels have moved in a new direction in recent years. From an emphasis on standardized service and rooms, largely promoted through strong centralized brands and management companies, we have gradually moved towards more independent and individual hotels. These hotels emphasize individuality in service, décor and design. This has led to a whole new field in hotel design led by smaller interior design and architectural firms. They are prepared to test the boundaries and to push the client to try something new, sometimes even at the expense of cost or practicality.

Very often the main point and focus of the design is to attract attention and to ensure that the hotel is newsworthy. This is driven by the need to be featured in key design and hospitality publications and websites and very often clients expect their designers to be featured. Is this unhealthy? I'm not sure it is. I think the emphasis on strong eye-catching design has produced some extraordinary hotels; and hotel experiences have never been more unique and highly valued. We now have hotels perched on cliff tops, on the bottom of the ocean and in the farthest flung corners of the globe. Good design has been democratized to the point where for a small budget you can stay in decent properties in some very unexpected places. This has made travel accessible and palatable for a vast swath of people. This

has come at a time when long distance travel has been cheaper than ever before. Now, people expect to travel cheaply and when they arrive at their destinations they want to stay in a nice hotel and have a fabulous time, all for an increasingly attractive price. Choice has been the final arbiter of our travel tastes and long may it continue.

The one cloud on the horizon is the environmental cost of our taste for travel. In order to maintain this growth and dynamism designers and hotel developers will increasingly have to design and build sustainably and responsibly. This must also be made a desirable trait that travelers look for. Sustainable design in travel should be buzzwords for everyone in the industry and be an integral part of good design. I think we are already seeing some of this trend with zero carbon rated resorts and carbon offsets in travel. However, the key challenge will be how to make this trend widespread in highly urbanized cities with congested roads and airports. I'm looking forward to seeing how this pans out and how forward thinking and innovative the new generation of designers and hoteliers will be. I think we are about to enter a new era in hotel design and I hope it allows us all to continue with the growth we have seen in the last decade.

Peng Loh, 2007



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W Hotel, Seoul

Studio GAIA, Inc.

■ Seoul, South Korea
■ 19,250 sq.m.

Each room is specially designed with drapery, diverse beds, and bold compositions that offer an experience of relaxation and inspiration.



W Hotel is a truly unique project, not only because it is the first Six Stars Hotel in Asia, but also because it has the virtues to change the meaning of the 'Boutique Hotel' and take it to a new level. This hwwotel emphasizes the purity of shapes and forms over ornamental décor. The project takes the initial concept of a hotel, and evolves it into a permanent new experience with a strong presence, and a forceful sense of longevity. Luxury is an important element that plays along with comfort and total innovation. Behind these intentions, is a desire to evoke emotional states by appealing to the senses, often in dramatic ways.

A striking entrance invites you into the 'Living Room', where clear rectangular structural components and the different seating areas are highlighted by custom made furniture. The energetic lobby area

can become a personal space for spending time and not just an area for looking at others. It is divided into semi separate areas, each expressing a different style of furniture and sensation. The whole lobby becomes a ground for exploration. As you discover that the large staircase designed in the centre can also be used for seating, you realize that it is the structure that holds all the areas together in the open space.

The retail area is a colorful candy shop structured by wood partitions that are used for display and in the elevators one can hang from lighted handrails like in old subway cars. In order to give the returning guest a different experience, the hotel features 4 different room schemes: Wonderful Room, Spa Room, Media Room and Scent Room, along with different kinds of suites.



Shrouded with curtains, the drama of Wonderful Room unfolds before you like a present waiting to be unwrapped.

The Spa Room and Spa Suite were done in dark colors with a very "Zen" feel. They are designed with pure sensory indulgence in mind. Soul-soothing shades of gray, white, and natural wood juxtaposed with a dramatically placed spa bath next to floor-to-ceiling windows result in a breathtaking experience. Complementing the journey are various scents, candles and in-room therapies, which promise to make even the most hardened traveler swoon with delight.

Stimulation in abundance is the inspiration behind the Media Room. From the round red bed a complete array of media is at your fingertips. You can try the DVD home theatre, the latest in

games, cool sounds, or even project your own art and images on the large plasma display. The roomy resin, red tub adds another dimension to bathing, complete with flat screen TV for essential bath time viewing.

The Presidential Suite is conceived as one continuous texture of white and red, with unique artwork and fabulous textiles; it achieves an original approach to exclusivity and upscale elegance. The dining room floats on a lighted surface and is only a counterpart to a series of entertainment spaces like its sleek bar and cozy living room.

Each room is specially designed with drapery, diverse beds, and bold compositions that offer an experience of relaxation and

The lobby is divided into semi separate areas, each expressing a different style of furniture and sensation. The whole lobby becomes a ground for exploration.





The large staircase designed in the centre of the lobby can also be used for seating.



