

# Şahane Shanghai

Says it all

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Açılış öncesi olan “ilk” gününde Şangay’ın Peninsula Hotel’inin terasında duruyorum. Hemen önümde yuvarlanıp akan Huangpu Nehri’nin Pudong noktasından dikkatlice dönmeye çalışan mavna ve konteyner teknelerini izliyorum. Sonbaharın serin esintisi mavi göklere bir tutam bulut bırakmış. Nehrin ötesinde ise yepyeni çelik ve cam binalar neredeyse elimle dokunabileceğim gökyüzüne egemen bir silüetin ana hatlarını çiziyorlar. Şehrin benim bulunduğum eski ve imtiyazlı kısmına her boş alanı dolduran neo-klasik ve art deco yapılar hakim. Dünyanın en heyecanlı destinasyonlarından birine vardığımı hissediyorum.

Sadece on yıl öncesine kadar Şangay, lüks seyahat denince akla gelen şehirlerden biri değildi. Elbette “Çin’i görün” derlerdi; Pekin’de kültür gezisi, Hong Kong’da biraz alışveriş ve iyi yemek... Fakat Şangay’ı ziyaret etmeniz bile orası sözde kuru bir iş dünyası alanıydı. Savaş ve devrim öncesinin muhteşem şehrinin alımı sanki sonsuza

I am standing on the terrace of the Shanghai Peninsula Hotel on its first ‘pre-opening’ day. Directly in front of me the Huangpu River rolls and bends, causing the numerous barges and container vessels to steer a gentle curve around Pudong Point. A cooling autumnal breeze provides wispy clouds and a blue sky. Across the river the steel and glass new buildings dominate a skyline I can almost touch. Here on the old concession part of town the neo-classical and art deco structures fill each small piece of land

spreading into the western sunset. I feel as if I have arrived in one of the most exciting destinations on the planet.

Up until about a decade ago Shanghai was no one’s choice for luxury travel. Sure, see China they said, and make sure you stay in Beijing long enough to sample some culture, then catch some shopping and fine dining Hong Kong. Shanghai, if it was visited at all, was the domain of businesspeople. The city of before, of pre-War, of pre-



revolution, had been lost forever. My... Were they ever wrong! The ambition and creativity of not only those businesspeople, but also the flexibility and hard work of the city's 25 million Chinese inhabitants, has created a Shanghai that is in a lot of ways a repeat of the lush decadence of the 1930s. Now, just as then, Shanghai seems immune to international financial wobbles, and continues to build the finest in hotels, restaurants and other top-end destinations. All feature the mix that makes Shanghai great: Chinese touches on a cosmopolitan nature that is the blood and heritage of the Shanghainese.

### EXQUISITE HOTELS

Appropriately, a Shanghai holiday begins in one of the city's finest hotels. The Park

Hyatt is celebrating its first year anniversary. The highest hotel in the world remains a unique temple to modern Japanese-inspired interior design, achieving that envious mix of exoticism and comfort. Meanwhile, the best-trained staff members in town seamlessly guide you from spa to pool to enticing dining options. However if it is a gilded art deco re-mix you crave, then the Peninsula should be your choice. The sprawling property is the first new building on the famous Bund waterfront in 62 years, and it bleeds luxury from each of its individually designed public and private rooms. Many terraces on different levels give one the option of being a part of the landscape, or standing above it all. Of course it should be said that Shanghai's up-market re-birth was the opening of M on the

Bund in 1999. Constantly in tune with the city, half of the nightly clientele live in Shanghai. Consistency and never-ending improvement are their mantras, and this commitment to quality is readily apparent. The same goes for M on the Bund's posh drinks destination, the Glamour Bar. There, commitment to excellence means cutting edge entertainment, from music to cabaret to literary festivals.

**The Bund houses three other must-do destinations on your top-notch tour through the city. The first is the new Mr. and Ms. Bund, a creation of traditional and inspirational French fine fare. Just upstairs is Bar Rouge, both are housed in Bund 18, one of the first old banking houses on the waterfront to be renovated.** The opulent interior is a mix of

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