

THE SQ SEATTLE'S CAPITOL HILL HAS IT ALL • RAMI MALEK ON BEING THE BAD GUY • DESIGN-DRIVEN HOTELS

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QUIRKY ESCAPES IN THE HEART
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Architectural
brilliance
meets
traditional
cultural cues at
these design-
driven hotels

Rosewood, Bangkok

rosewoodhotels.com

A sense of place

Towering high above Bangkok's ritzy Phloen Chit district, the hotel's gleaming exterior is shaped like a *wai*, the traditional Thai greeting where palms are pressed together. Further nods to Thai culture mingle with chrome and luxurious leather interiors: silk wall coverings feature intricate Thai motifs, chandeliers akin to traditional hand fans hang from the lobby ceiling and mirrors etched with temple-roof-shaped gold leaf are found in the hallways.

Welcome home

From the entry-level studios to the multi-bedroom suites, all the cream-coloured rooms resemble an art collector's penthouse, adorned with art books, brass trinkets and lacquered candy jars, alongside marble-clad bathrooms. Butlers on call remind guests they're at one of Bangkok's most luxurious addresses. On



Spacious corner Premier Rooms feature fantastic views of the Bangkok skyline

the hotel's top floors are four private "houses" – the "smallest" spanning 189m² – that come with their own plunge pools, outdoor terraces and dining rooms surrounded by teakwood.

North meets south

On the 19th floor, signature restaurant Nan Bei brings out the best of China's regional cuisines. Designed by New York-based AvroKo and

inspired by the romance of the ancient Chinese folktale *The Cowherd and the Weaver Girl*, the interior carries shades of mustard and deep purple, with gleaming chrome chandeliers, exquisite marble inlay floors and sultry velvet upholstery. Just as remarkable is the top-notch Peking duck – carved tableside – and their take on *xiao long bao* (soup-filled dumplings), with black truffle and blue swimmer crab.



WORDS: CHRIS SCHALKX (BANGKOK), TRAVIS LEVIUS (CAPE TOWN) AND LEVIN TAN (PARIS)

GRAND
DESIGNS

Gorgeous George, Cape Town

gorgeousgeorge.co.za

Housed in heritage

Situated between St George's Mall and Greenmarket Square, this trendy hotel is spread across two restored heritage buildings: one Art Deco and the other New Edwardian. Both have been connected since the 1940s, with Cape Town-based architects Urbane Citizen keeping the original façades largely intact.

Industrial-chic interiors

Johannesburg-based Tristan du Plessis is the maestro behind the hotel's design. Exposed steel piping and raw concrete salute the original buildings' legacies, which are

brilliantly combined and contrasted with subdued tones, such as the dark olive chesterfield sofas and black high-end designer lighting, alongside contemporary artworks and assorted African curios from decades past.

Rooftop respite

Multi-functional hotspot Gigi Rooftop, on the sixth floor, is made of distinct, impeccably designed but delightfully fluid zones: The bookshelf-lined lounge shares space with the cocktail bar and dining area, which leads to a conservatory with lush plant-filled baskets suspended from the ceiling.



Making a splash

Cascading down 10 floors into an indoor-outdoor swimming pool overlooking the cityscape, a dazzling waterfall at the heart of the building references the peace and harmony that water symbolises in Thai culture. At its source, a seven-metre-high light installation made up of hundreds of illuminated metal birds resembles a night sky glittering with stars.

Extraordinary art

Dozens of contemporary works by Thai artists dot the property. Highlights include an abstract temple drawing by 2009 National Artist Preecha Thaothong and a metal rendering of ancient Thai lettering by inter-disciplinary artists Jiradej and Pornpilai Meemalai. The mini-gallery on the lower-level lobby changes with the seasons, exhibiting emerging homegrown talent.



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JK Place, Paris

jkplace.paris

A statement of place

Located in the city's 7th arrondissement, the property's unmarked white stone exterior suggests a formal air, but upon entering you'll find an almost Bohemian mix of design styles. There's a reception area clad in distressed oak, ornate marble fireplaces and cashmere throws flung over custom-furniture, all sitting alongside vintage finds such as Hermès lamps and a Jacques Adnet table.

Visual cues

Each of the 30 rooms is decorated with graphic,

geometric wool rugs by interior designer Michele Bönan. Forsaking the conventionality of walls, one suite divides the spacious room with a large, puzzle-like bronze box. Bathrooms are equally over-the-top, with chrome showers, pearl-inlaid fittings and even a full sitting area.

Luxury for within

Need to relax and unwind? You'll find a *hammam* (Turkish bath) and a lap pool in the basement. Afterwards, enjoy Mediterranean sharing plates at restaurant Casa Tua.

