

luxury briefing.

issue 120 September 2008

Room at the top

How Philippe Starck and Jade Jagger fell for Yoo

Private equity and luxury

First half results

Why luxury is looking good

luxury. services

PENINSULA

Peninsula has announced plans to open its first European property. The Paris development is located on avenue Kleber, an artery of the Etoile, which has formerly served as the Majestic Hotel and The French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The property is being developed by Hong Kong and Shanghai Hotels Ltd – parent company of Peninsula – working with Qatari Diar Real Estate Investment Company, the owner of the building. Due to open in 2012, the re-development is estimated to cost E140m.

THE IVY CLUB

The Ivy Club is the latest to hit London's private members' club scene. Located above the iconic Ivy restaurant, the space has been designed by Martin Brudnizki and will have a separate entrance on West Street. The 10,200 sq ft space will be divided into two distinct areas: a traditionally-decorated restaurant on the first floor and a striking, modern club space on the top level. The restaurant takes visual references from the 1920s and a diamond motif inspired by the building's leaded windows will be repeated throughout. Features will include a marble bar and wood panelling.

Brudnizki has recently worked on a number of other properties owned by Caprice Holdings, parent company of The Ivy and The Ivy Club, including Scotts and Wentworth Golf Club.

Caprice Holdings has also recently signed a deal with Tatweer to open branches of The Ivy and Le Caprice in Dubai, at the Dubailand complex, due to open in 2010.

MANDARIN ORIENTAL

Mandarin Oriental has announced plans to launch a Moscow outpost in 2011. The group will take over the management of a property on the city's famous Tverskaya Street close to Red Square. The property was once a manor house and converted to a hotel as early as 1911. As part of the renovation many of its original period features, which have been lost over the years, will be restored. On completion there will be 237 rooms, two ballrooms, bars, restaurants and a spa with water and heat therapies and indoor swimming pool. In addition there will be 60,000 sq ft of

luxury retail space spread around the public areas of the hotel.

The Mandarin Oriental property is owned by real estate developer Unicorn Management Company. Unicorn also has interests in banking, retail, agriculture and residential and commercial property.

THE JONES

The Jones is a new property on London's Inverness Terrace, adjacent to Hyde Park. It has been opened by Guest Hotels, the operating brand of GuestInvest. GuestInvest launched in London in 2003, providing a vehicle for investors to buy shares in hotel rooms. The company oversees the day-to-day running of the property and offers investors 52 nights in the room, as well as 50% of the room's annual income. The GuestInvest portfolio currently includes Blakes and Guesthouse West, also both in London.

The Jones is a 178-room property

Sweet tent-ation

For those of a romantic disposition who don't fancy roughing it, Richard Branson's **Kasbah Tamadot** in Morocco has launched Berber tented suites. The six suites are positioned on a hillside close to the main Kasbah building which is located an hour from Marrakech in the foothills of the Atlas Mountains. The suites are furnished with a terrace with plunge pool, large freestanding bathtubs in front of picture windows and TV and DVD player, but should this not prove quite luxurious enough the Kasbah itself has indoor and outdoor pools and spa and hammam for additional pampering.

Air lift

The **Abu Dhabi Airports Company** has announced the development of the first dedicated executive airport in the Middle East, located 10km from Abu Dhabi city centre. Features will include VIP and VVIP passenger terminals, airport services and full fuelling, maintenance, repair, overhaul and fixed-base operational services, with the intention of providing a one-stop shop for private jets in the region. The move follows a AED200m investment in the former Al Bateen military airport which has a 3,200-metre runway and can accommodate planes ranging up to Boeing 737-800s. HE Khalifa Al Mazrouei, Chairman and MD of ADAC, said, "As a growing centre of international business and finance, Abu Dhabi has seen significant growth in the number of corporate jets coming to the city over the last few years. With this development, we are able to meet that demand today and into the future. The facilities already in place will allow us to accommodate more corporate jet operations immediately. In parallel, we will implement our investment programme, which will create one of the best executive airports in the world." ACDC was set up in 2006 by the Government of Abu Dhabi. There are currently 380 corporate jets in the Middle East, a figure that is predicted to rise to 900 by 2014.

originally designed by Edwardian architects Mewès and Davis, who were also architects of The Ritz and worked on the interior of Luton Hoo in the early 20th century. The property retains many of its original features, including a theatre which is being restored in Belle Epoque style by Duncan Dalgleish of Dream Design & Architecture.

SOHO HOUSE/BABINGTON HOUSE

To celebrate its 10th anniversary Babington House in Somerset has relaunched following an extensive makeover. The country outpost of the Soho House group was one of the first to revolutionise the concept of the country-house hotel with its unfussy decor, state-of-the-art in-room entertainment systems and relaxed attitude about eating times. Following the redesign, the property now has a more traditional look and four new guest rooms. There is also a new restaurant, The Orangery, and a space known as the Log Room which is available for weddings and corporate events and has a medieval-style feasting table seating 30. The famous spa has also been renovated, expanded and rebranded as Cowshed Relax, with spa suites and additional treatments and facilities.

Soho House Group was sold in 2007 to Caprice Holdings. The group's next project will be a B&B concept in London's Dean Street, due to launch by the end of the year.

BOTIGA

Botiga is a new private retreats club founded by the team behind Descent International ski properties (launched in 1997). They include Soren Jessen, Peter Scott, Kit Harrison and James Lees. Botiga's portfolio, officially launching in January 2009, includes the Marrakech villa once owned by Mark Birley. There will also be retreats, lodges and city apartments at key destinations worldwide. Standing apart from many other fractional ownership schemes and property clubs, Botiga also offers a concierge and travel service. Personal effects will be put in place in the properties before guests arrive and each guest will be connected to a personal PA.

The company operates its membership through a points system, with varying levels available. As time goes on, Botiga will buy new properties, with members having a direct say in future locations through an interactive map on the Botiga website.

Botiga has also recently commissioned designer Russell Sage to compile a lifestyle publication titled the *Botiga Style Guide*.

BUDDHA BAR

Entrepreneur Raymond Visan has brought his Buddha Bar success story to London. The concept is located in a newly-created space under Waterloo Bridge, extending over two storeys. The hub of the property is a dining area, surrounded by private and semi-private rooms. The space is decorated in Buddha Bar's trademark opulent oriental style and the menu is pan-Asian. London is the sixth in the chain and joins outposts in Sao Paulo, Dubai and Kiev, recently opened. The next will open in Jakarta.

ELIE SAAB

Paris-based Lebanese designer Elie Saab is currently working on a boutique hotel in Dubai, overlooking the Tiger Woods golf course at Dubailand. The hotel is the first in

a series that will bear the designer's name. The £82m property is being developed by Tatweer and is due for completion in September 2009. Covering a 360,000 sq ft space, it will have 89 suites and 14 bungalows. Discussing the project Elie Saab said, "Every detail of the hotel's interiors will reflect my signature, a fusion of simplicity, luxury and modernism to create a dreamlike ambience. This is a first for me in terms of designing the interior of a hotel, a reason why this project is especially close to my heart and will draw the best of my creative sensibilities."

Elie Saab has flagship stores on the Rond Point des Champs-Élysées in Paris and in Beirut, and has recently announced plans to increase his retail presence with further openings in major cities.

ROCCO FORTE COLLECTION

Rocco Forte Collection has a number of launches in the pipeline. The first will be The Augustine Hotel, a new development created from five historic buildings in Prague including a former monastery dating back to the 1400s. Due to open in early 2009, the 101-room property will include a spa, restaurant and a series of garden squares and courtyards running between the properties. The Augustine has been designed by local architect Martin Kotik, a partner in Architects Studio Omicron-K, and London-based interior designers RDD, which also worked on Browns in London. The interiors will be overseen by Olga Polizzi and reflect the character of the surroundings.

Also opening in 2009 will be Rocco Forte Collection's much-anticipated Sicilian property at The Verdura Golf Resort and Spa. The group's first resort development, this will include a 200-room hotel, a hydrotherapy spa, two championship golf courses and a significant real estate development. Meanwhile a Marrakech

TOP-EARNING CELEBRITY CHEFS

1	Rachael Ray	\$18 million
2	Wolfgang Puck	\$16 million
3	Gordon Ramsay	\$7.5 million
4	Nobuyuki Matsuhisa	\$5 million
5	Alain Ducasse	\$5 million
6	Paula Deen	\$4.5 million
7	Mario Batali	\$3 million
8	Tom Colicchio	\$2 million
9	Bobby Flay	\$1.5 million
10	Anthony Bourdain	\$1.5 million

Source: *Forbes*

property, set in a 225-hectare estate and olive grove, is also under construction and due to open in 2010, to be followed by a 282-room Abu Dhabi hotel.

ATLANTIS

This month Kerzner International is to open Atlantis, a striking new resort at Palm Jumeirah in Dubai. The complex will have 1,539 rooms divided between different sections, with some areas tailored to families and others to couples. Among the accommodation options are the Lost Chambers suites: subterranean rooms with glass walls offering underwater views. Atlantis has six restaurants, including an outpost of Nobu and dining concepts by Michelin-starred chefs Giorgio Locatelli, Michel Rostang and Santi Santamaria. Bars and lounges include an Arabian coffee house and, continuing the marine theme, an underwater cocktail bar. A retail area named The Avenue will feature high-end brands. Among the resort's most unusual features is the Leap of Faith, a giant slide that leads into a shark tank at the adjacent Aquaventure water park.

HYATT

A Grand Hyatt Residences and Spa is to open in Moscow in December, a boutique property created as part of the \$12bn Moscow-City Project located north-west of the Kremlin. There will be 18 residences, each with its own kitchen, wine cave, espresso machine, humidifier and the choice of classic or contemporary decor. There are also seven residential spa suites allowing for in-room treatments, a 20-metre swimming pool in the spa area and restaurant and lounge. The project, owned by Mirax Group, will be the highest hotel in Russia, sitting on top of the Federation Complex mixed-use development which will also house residential accommodation, serviced apartments, retail space, offices, restaurants and entertainment venues.

Within the same complex, Hyatt is also building the 368-room Grand Hyatt Moscow, scheduled for completion in 2010 and located on the 91st floor of the Tower East section. The group already has a Moscow outpost, Ararat Park Hyatt.

Can can cha cha

Parisian airports are keeping passengers entertained by offering free dance lessons.

Aéroports de Paris, which oversees the Paris airports, offers a variety of 15-minute classes ranging from *salsa* for those heading to Cuba, to oriental dance for those heading east. Other options include hip hop, mambo, modern dance, tango and jazz. One way to keep the circulation going between flights.

A home from Home

London-based private members' club **Home House** is expanding and developing. In September the club will launch a new section named '21', having expanded into the adjoining building at 21 Portman Square. As part of the redevelopment the club has commissioned Zaha Hadid to create a bar for the new contemporary space. An Urban Retreat spa, new bedrooms and meeting rooms have also been added, with a view to making the club more appealing to a younger clientele and female members. The Zaha Hadid bar will sit alongside the classical 18th-century Robert Adam interior, originally conceived in 1773. Home House opened in its current incarnation 10 years ago.