

Shanghai

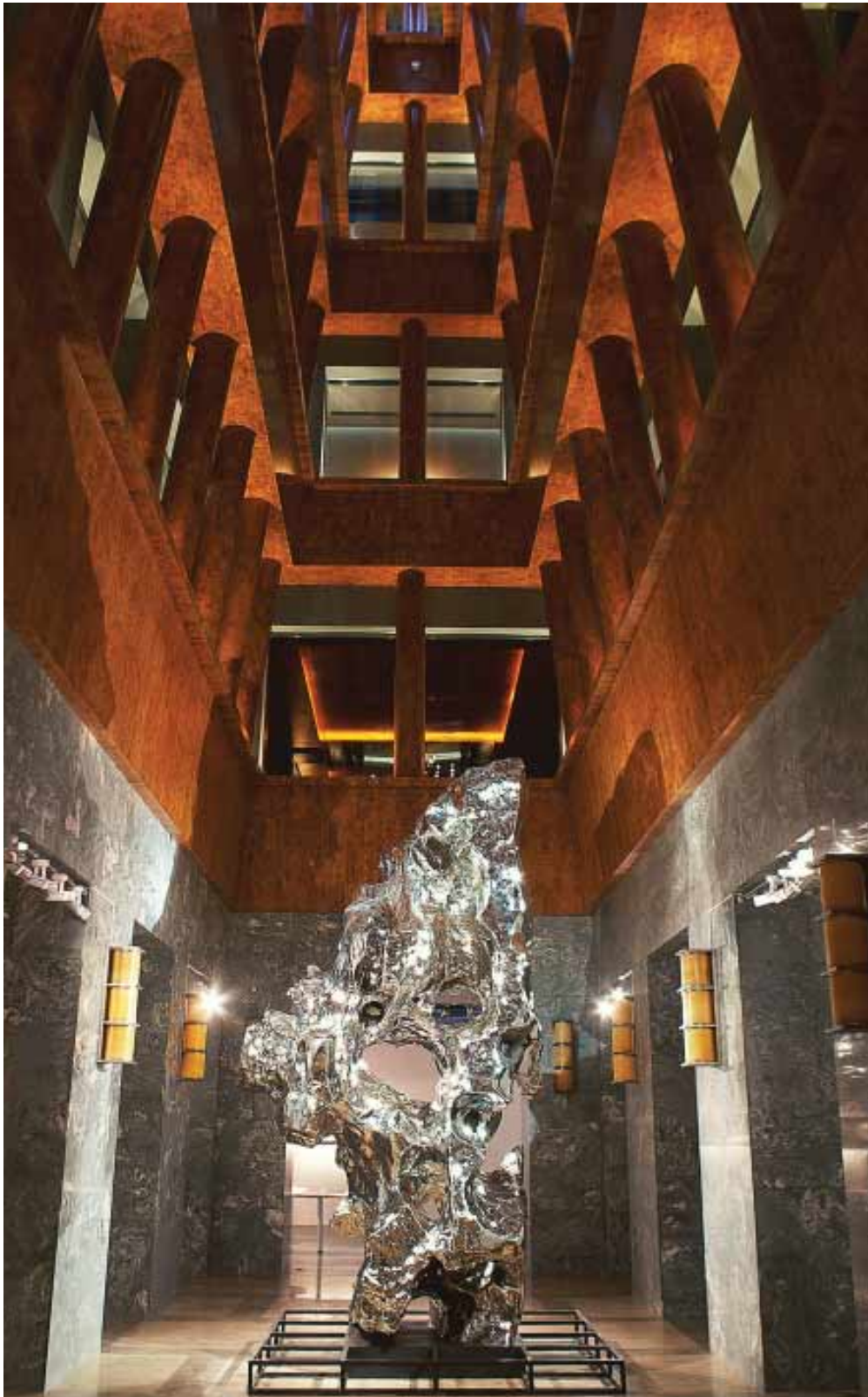
Skylines define a city, the Eiffel Tower in Paris, the Sydney Opera House flanked by the Harbour Bridge, the Manhattan silhouette at dusk. Shanghai's skyline is built to impress. Enter this city of almost twenty million people and enter another world.

At first glance Shanghai resembles a futuristic city, designed by the Jetsons. Skyscrapers thrust from the ground adorned with codpieces of twisted steel, gold encrusted glass and circular spaceships with revolving restaurants. The most recognizable being the Oriental Pearl TV Tower that resembles a disco hypodermic needle when lit up at night.

But looks can be deceiving, Shanghai may look shiny and new but this city started its life as a seaside fishing village and came into its own during the Yuan Dynasty in the 1200s. Eight centuries later and Shanghai is the largest city in the People's Republic of China, due vastly to being the world's largest port and the third busiest in the world.

The blend of old and new is best seen from The Bund, the riverside destination that houses the city's swankiest restaurants and shopping and the original home to banks of Britain, France, Belgium and their neighbours. Three on the Bund is a seven story complex of fine fashion and cuisine first built in 1916. It's a one stop shop for the city's elite and expatriate community. You won't find the designer copies the city is known for here. If it's not original, it's not stocked and if you have to ask the price then you won't be wearing the frock.

The Evian Spa in Three on the Bund is the first of its kind outside France and an impressive shrine to pampering. The foyer atrium covers three floors and is designed with serenity in mind with crisp clean lines and neutral colours. Post pampering is spent upstairs at New Heights for a cleansing cocktail at sunset on the deck taking





in the city skyline as the lights come on.

Seriously intimate dining can be found at Three on the Bund's Cupola, a restaurant built literally for two with a personal butler to take care of all desires. Tom wined and dined Katie here during a Mission Impossible tour and the Cupola averages three marriage proposals a week. Those who prefer to share their dinner with more than one can head to Laris and the Chocolate Room for Australasian flavours and

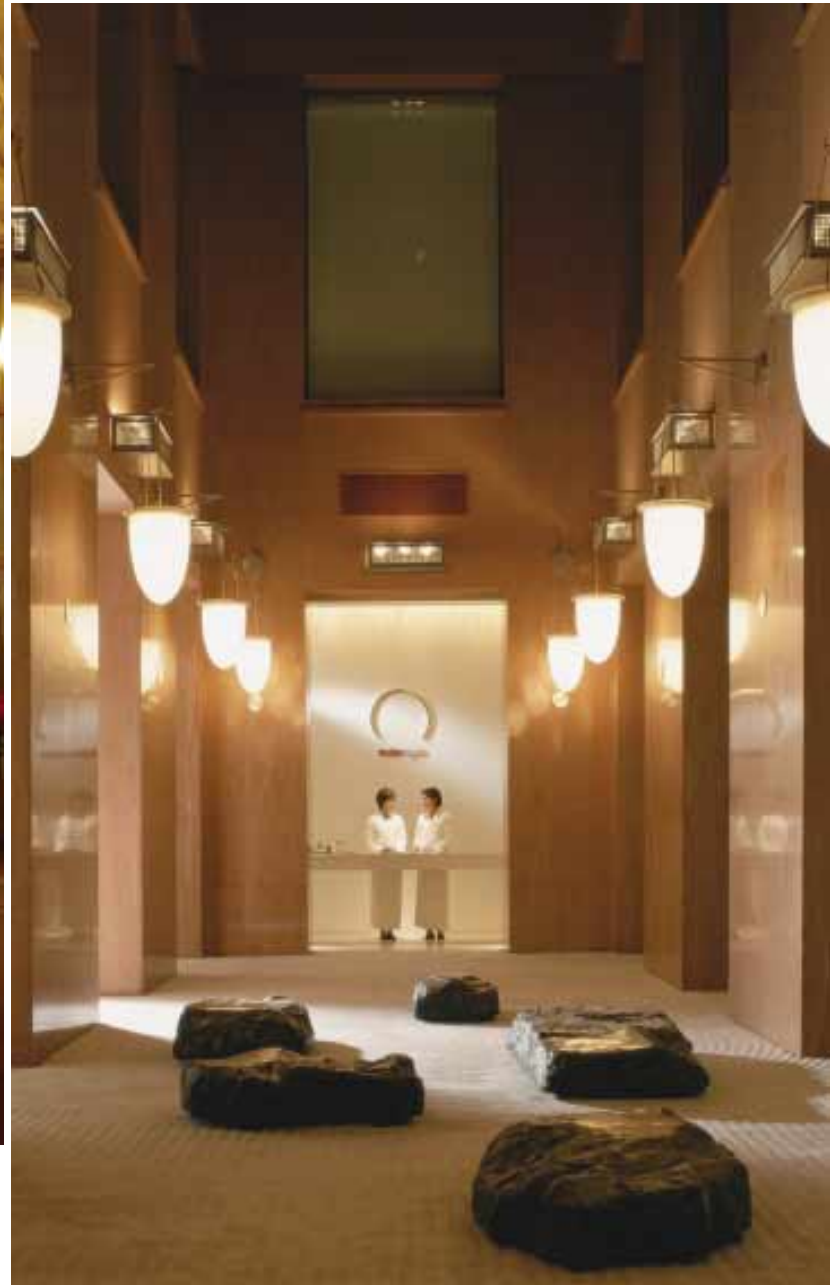
chili chocolate.

Apres dinner is spent across the road supping alcoholic concoctions at the Glamour Bar, owned and operated by Australian Michelle Garnaut. Glamour hosts a number of cultural cocktail events including the Shanghai literary festival and has its own M on the Bund fine dining restaurant with open air deck for Bund viewing.

Modern Shanghai is all about shopping.

Nanjing Road sits in the main commercial area and is lined with department stores, multi story shopping malls and franchise stores. The 'copy markets' were recently disbanded by the 'copy police' who regularly check for counterfeit designer products.

A fresh crop of copy stores has sprouted under the Museum station but for quality copy products best to head to the Pearl Centre where the pearls are real but the bags may or may not



be. The entire top floor is dedicated to pearls of every description. A string of south sea pearls can be had for around twenty dollars and trinkets start at one dollar. Downstairs Prada, Ferragamo, Jimmy Choo leather goods sit side by side with Gucci, Chanel and Versace sunglasses, only the prices give them away.

The hottest entertainment development is Xin Tian Di (New Heaven Earth), two square city blocks restored and developed at a cost of US\$170million. A blend of historic brick buildings with open courtyards and Chinese designers such as Vivienne Tam and David Tang's Shanghai Tang. Come sundown this complex buzzes with post work drinks and designer dining.







Those seeking culture can choose from The Shanghai Museum for a history of Chinese ceramics, calligraphy, art and more or The Shanghai Oriental Art Centre with its impressive theatres, ceramic tiled entrance walls and architecture inspired by five blossoming petals.

Add the French Quarter, the fabric markets, side trips to Hangzhou West Lake, the antique markets and the Jade Buddha Temple and you'll be booking a return trip to this cosmopolitan city before you've left.

FACT FILE

Getting there:

Qantas fly from Sydney direct to Shanghai daily

Web: www.qantas.com.au

Tel: 13 14 15

The Maglev Train from Shanghai Pudong Airport can reach speeds of 350kmph in two minutes and takes passengers the thirty kilometers into town in just over seven minutes.

Where to stay:

Pudong side

Sofitel Jin Jiang Oriental 47 stories offering spectacular views across the city and a fine

dining revolving restaurant on the top floor.

www.sofitel.com

Nanjing Road side

Sofitel Hyland

Funky shop side accommodation with cool club lounge and Sofitel My Beds.

www.sofitel.com

Getting around:

Taxis are inexpensive and easily hailed on the street unless it's raining and the city traffic overloads. There is a metro with five lines which will expand to thirteen by 2010.

Must have:

Luxe City Guide to Shanghai. Don't leave home without this handy sized guide in your back pocket. If it's in Luxe then it's Shanghai worthy. www.luxecityguides.com

Chow down and drink up:

M on the Bund www.m-onthebund.com
Laris at Three on the Bund www.threeonthebund.com
Xin Tian Di www.xintiandi.com

Spa Up:

Evian Spa www.threeonthebund.com