

hot spots Hotel Teatro, Denver, Colorado

What is it? Every city has its celebrity hotel, where rock stars and Hollywood A-listers can be left in peace, with no pesky fans doubling as room-service staff or concierges. In Denver, Colorado, in the US, it is Hotel Teatro, favoured by Gwyneth Paltrow, Chris Martin and Apple when they're in town, and also frequented by INXS, Snoop Dogg and anyone else with a gold record or award nomination to their name.

What's so good about it? Service with a capital S, for "Sir, let me take care of that for you." A complimentary chauffeur service ensures you arrive at Denver's attractions on time, bowls of fruit sit by the fire for your consumption and free Fiji water keeps thirst at bay. If the staff could personally tuck you in, they would. The next best thing is the aromatherapy bath menu: order and let the bath director draw you a combination of scents to soothe jet lag and weary travel muscles. Step into the

trademark tub, remote control in hand, and spend an hour channel-surfing the flat-screen bathroom TV.

Roomy or gloomy? What the standard guest rooms lack in size they make up for in height, with four-metre-high ceilings and huge windows. Ask for a corner king deluxe room for extra lounging space or go the full upgrade to an apartment, a top-floor penthouse city pad with Frette linen and Rocky Mountain views.

I'm hungry! Discerning diners frock up for Kevin Taylor's eponymous restaurant, with its flickering chandeliers and wood-panelled walls. More casual dining can be found at bistro jou jou, which is worth a look for the coffee beans alone. It's refreshing to find true barista-style coffee.

Anything else we should know? The hotel occupies the old Denver Tramway Building, built in 1911. It is an art-deco revival with a thespian theme: pictures, costumes and theatre programmes line the hallways. The hotel's



Rachael Oakes-Ash

designers have made the most of the small space, with a discreet lobby, cute business nook and cardio-concentrated workout space. Spa treatments are in-room for a personalised touch – meaning it's only two steps to your bed for flaking out after a massage.

What's the bottom line? Check the hotel's website (www.hotelteatro.com) for regular special deals, including Late Night at the Office, Movie Night In, Shopping, Romance and Teatro Theatre packages, which cost from about US\$200 a night. Rachael Oakes-Ash

spree Moscow

Although shopping is not one of Russia's strong points, the women's underwear market presents an unlikely window on the country's transition from communism to capitalism.

You have two main options. Pick from the lavish and astronomically priced lingerie boutiques, which cater to the wives and mistresses of the rich, status-conscious New Russian, or from the cheap underwear stalls in Moscow's Metro stations, which cater to most Muscovites. But a third option is

just opening up in the middle ground as global brands such as Marks & Spencer enter the former Soviet Union.

For a sensual taste of life as an oligarch-ess, visit Petrovsky district and slip into **Agent Provocateur** (www.agentprovocateur.com; tel: 7 495 937 5488), one the world's most expensive burlesque-style underwear shops, at 10 Stolesnikov Pereulok. Rubbing shoulders with Burberry, Cartier and Gucci, and down a picturesque cobbled pedestrian strip, the place

is sensual, sophisticated and shockingly pricy. A white satin, boned corset, with suspenders attached, costs 24,195 rubles (HK\$7,000). One of the most unusual items, besides a diamond-studded whip, is a bra-less bra, which has underwires but no fabric.

If you have a taste for the luxurious, saunter over to department store **Tsum** (Tsentralny Universalny Magazin), built in 1909 as the Scottish-owned Muir and Merrilees and the first shop aimed at middle-class consumers. It is now packed with designer labels and luxury items; there's nothing middle class about it.

Next, take your blacked-out Mercedes and head towards Novinsky Passage, in Barrikadnaya, to savour the delights of **Wild Orchid** (www.wildorchid.ru; tel: 7 495 514 0057), a luxury lingerie chain selling Lacroix, Nina Ricci, Kenzo, Versace and Dolce & Gabbana. A cherry-pattern bra and knicker combination, at 10,370 rubles, is a sensational find.

Bustiere (tel: 7 495 209 2644), at 3 Kuznetsky Most, gives another indication of how Russia's wealthy spend their money. It might not carry diamond-studded whips, but it does offer black and red lacy underwear sets at 12,100 rubles.

But for a true picture of what most Muscovites are wearing below, descend into the city's Metro stations and inspect the glass kiosks full of underwear, food, DVDs and clothes. A busy undergarment stall in Kolomenskaya sells exotic-looking red and pink diamante thongs for 173 rubles and some unusual items for men. Christina Dean



Christina Dean

be our guest

Unless you've cracked the secrets of time travel, Hawaii might be too far away for a long weekend. But what if Hawaii were right on your doorstep? Welcome to the "Hawaii of the east" – Hainan, China's only tropical island and 50 minutes' from Hong Kong by air. The Sanya Marriott Resort and Spa, Marriott International's first resort in China, can be found on the white-sand beaches of Yalong Bay, 30 minutes' drive from Phoenix Airport and close to energetic Sanya City. All guest rooms have generous balconies that beckon you to sit back and take in commanding views of the sea or mountains. For the energetic, the surf is at hand, as is a host of water sports; exercise buffs may head straight to the fitness centre or tennis courts; others might prefer to laze around the sprawling, picturesque Lagoon Pool.

Golfers will particularly be in their element at Sanya Marriott, which lies opposite the Robert Trent Jones II-designed Yalong Bay Golf Club, one of the finest courses in Asia. More world-class golf can be found in Yalong Bay, at Sun Valley.

In a competition exclusive to readers of the *South China Morning Post*, the Sanya Marriott Resort and Spa is offering two nights in a deluxe mountain-view room with breakfast, a set dinner at the Indochine restaurant to the value of 600 yuan and an aromatherapy massage at the Quan Spa for two people. To enter, simply write to us using the words "Sanya", "tropical" and "Marriott" in the most creative way you can. For inspiration, go to www.marriott.com, then visit promotions.scmp.com, click on "Travel Club" and complete the registration form. Entries must be no longer than 75 words. Closing date: August 31. The offer, subject to availability, is valid until December 31, 2006. The editor's decision is final. Air fares are not provided. Kerry Group employees and their families are ineligible.

