

# THE WORLD OF HOSPITALITY

Hotels, Bars & Restaurants



## Rosewood, Bangkok

Everything from the external design of the building to the window blinds captures the richness of Thai culture.

## The Negresco Hotel

Studio MHNA continues its collaboration with the Negresco Hotel, a mythical palace that reinvents modern luxury.

## Pillows Grand Hotel Reylof

One of the grandest properties to grace the streets of Ghent, the palace which houses the hotel dates back to 1724.





## Rosewood Bangkok

### Hotel

One of the challenges of hotel design is to create a sense of travel and place while maintaining international standards of comfort and facilities. At the newly opened Rosewood in Bangkok, where everything from the external design of the building to the window blinds captures something of the richness of Thai culture.

It's a disappointing experience to travel halfway across the world and find yourself in a bland, international hotel that could be anywhere; but travellers who book into in one of Rosewood

Bangkok's 159 rooms and suites will not have to worry about waking up and not knowing where they are, since everything in the new hotel has been designed to capture the spirit of Thailand.

The 27th hotel to be part of the international Rosewood brand; the new five-star Bangkok landmark is owned by Thai development company Rende.

The idea of rooting the hotel in Thai culture began with the very shape of the 30-storey

tower, which was designed by New York architecture firm KDF (Kohn Pederson Fox) with Tandem Architects as executive architect. The striking contemporary form, which is comprised of two connected structures, recreates in steel and glass the classical Thai greeting, the wai, where the palms are placed together in a prayer position. The new asymmetrical landmark is set in an area of Bangkok that is filled with embassies, offices and upscale shopping malls, and is intended to attract both business and leisure visitors.

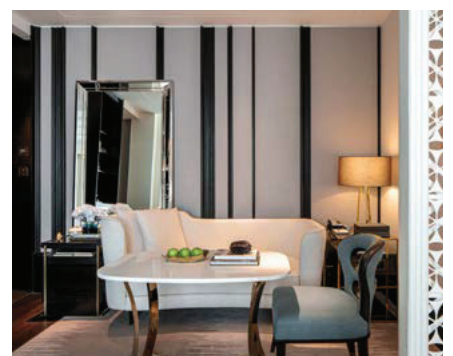
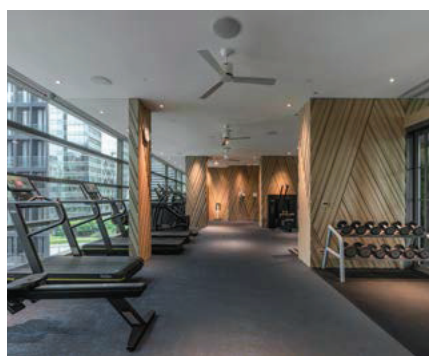




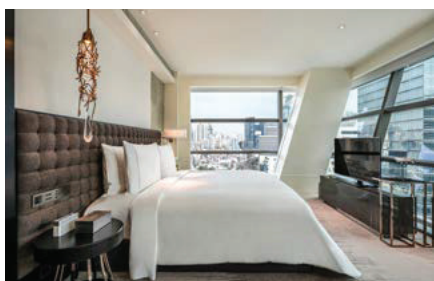
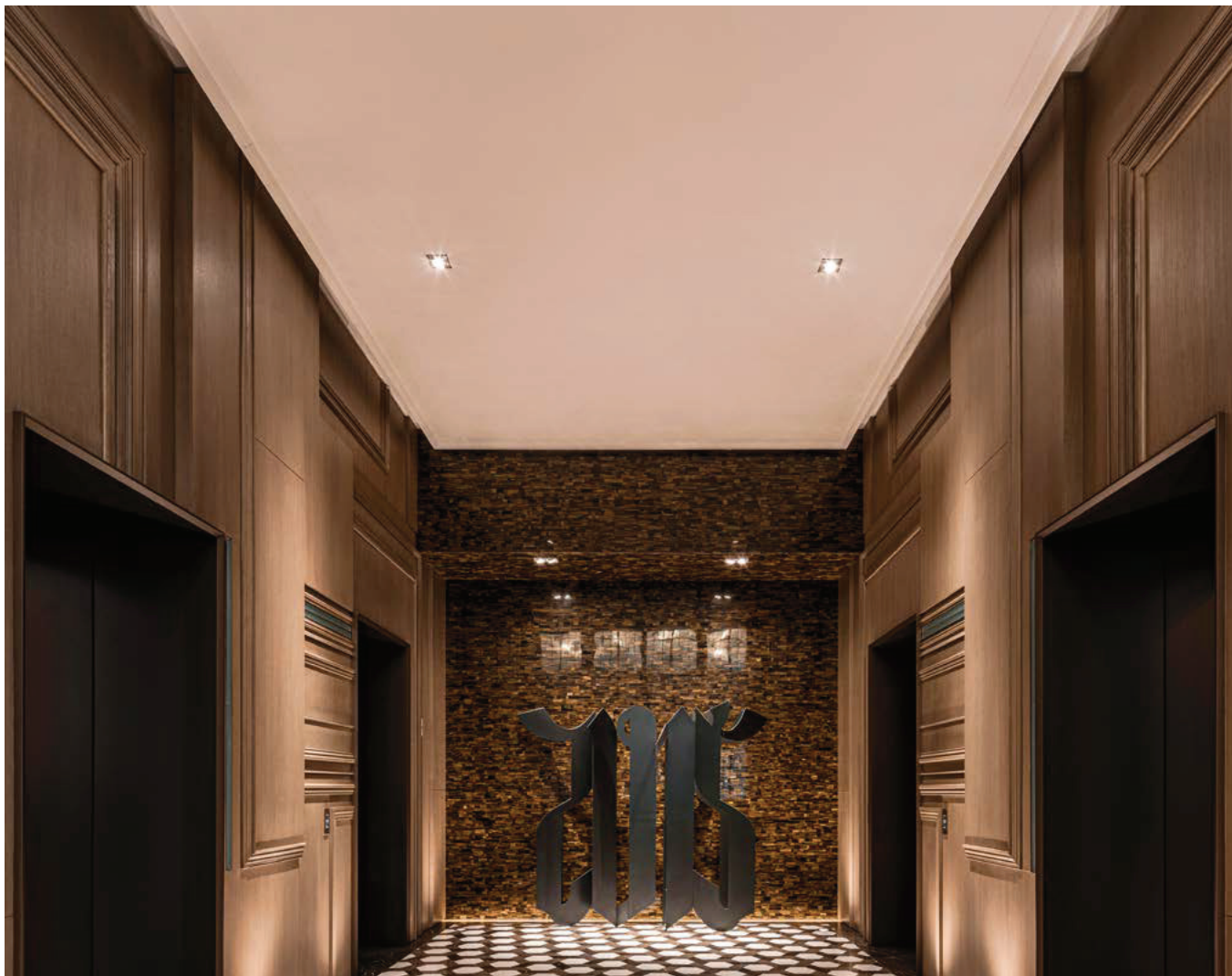
"The design of the building itself is the hand gesture of greeting known as the wai and I carried the theme from the architecture into the interior design, from the big picture right down to the smallest detail," says Chu. "I was trying to create a hotel with a residential feeling that is about culture and local flavour."

The process starts at the very first step on the journey – the drop-off area, which has been designed with a private driveway to begin the separation process of taking people from the bustling, narrow streets of the city into the calm of the hotel, presenting initially on an almost domestic scale to fortify the idea of being in a private home. This first glimpse also cements the idea that this is a building where the contemporary and the classical co-exist in harmony. What looks at first glance like dark, hardwood panelling and sculpted wood turning at the entrance doors is actually tinted stainless steel, while the modern piece of sculpture that is seen through the doors is ancient Thai calligraphy representing the word 'wai', designed by artist Jiandiyin.

Moving into the drop off area, the panelling here is wood, but the traditional moulding panels are in a variety of different sizes and configurations.







"It's something classic that can become something modern and fun," says Chu, who also chose the patterned marble floor because she wanted something "strongly graphic" to make an impact.

The natural second stop for visitors is the Sky Lobby on level seven, which is a relaxing multi-functional space that backs on to the main reception area. "The design for the Sky Lobby was inspired by the owners' family history of collecting art," says Chu. Indeed, it seems that every aspect of the room is a work of art in itself – the wall panels, for example, are made with 'scales' of glass overlaid with gold leaf. "They are the same shape as the roof tiles of the Grand Palace, which I love, but I wanted to transform them in an architectural way so that people would take more notice of them," says Chu. The incredible bespoke glass chandelier is made in the shape of Thai dancing fans, inspired by the traditional skill that young Thai girls master as young girls.

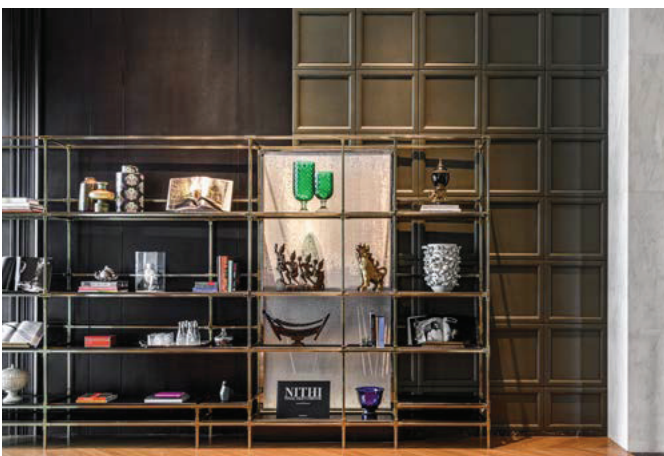
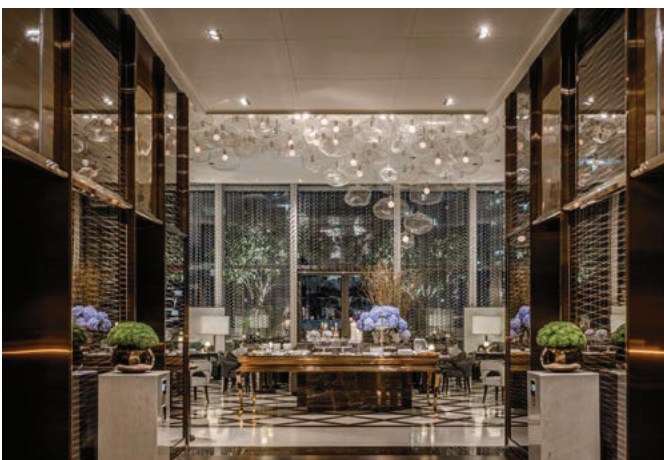
The neighbouring reception has contemporary art from local artists alongside a reception desk that has been a labour of love. Chu found one original antique, hand-carved wooden panel, then commissioned the other three panels to

match. "It took years to prepare and weather them," she admits.

One of the most striking of the public rooms is the Lakron, the all day dining restaurant and bar which is used breakfast to afternoon tea. The curved panels that create an intimate seating zone within the larger space are a stylised interpretation of the floral pattern on an antique musical box that was brought as a gift from the travels of the owners' parents. And a closer look at the metallic mesh window screening reveals another iconic Thai motif – the screen is made from the fake nails worn by traditional Thai dancers. "It's the combination of something very traditional and very open - like Bangkok itself," says Chu.

The traditional arts also inspire Chu's design for the Pavilion banqueting space on level five: "This chapter of the book is about celebration and dancing at weddings, and I captured the movement of the dancing in the curving shape of the chandeliers and the swirl of the carpet."

While it is Thai martial arts that was behind the design used in the fitness centre: "Thai boxing is world famous and I used the design of the traditional wrapping on the boxers' hands as a design element on the walls."



In the bedrooms and suites, the Thai motifs are more subtle, blending in with a slightly more European look, but the location is still referenced in the pierced screening that separates the living areas from the beds and in the bathroom tiles which have the same pattern as those in the Grand Palace, but executed in brown rather than gold.

Chu admits that finding a design theme for the spa was a challenge: "Thai spas are world famous, most are either very modern and very white, or completely traditional, so I wondered

what we should do next. In Thailand we have all these caves with lovely cool temperatures, so I decided to design the space like cave walls. We hired an artist to shape and paint the plaster walls so they looked like they had been carved by years in the elements."

Part of the Rosewood brand identity is its concept of each hotel having a unique sense of place, and Rosewood Bangkok has successfully expanded the company's horizons with a truly Asian identity. "Rosewood Bangkok exemplifies a perfect marriage of destination

and our core concept of a modern ultra-luxury hotel experience," states Sonia Cheng, chief executive officer of Rosewood Hotel Group. "We are thrilled for travellers and residents to experience the warmth of Thai hospitality and the dynamism and beauty of its culture within such a fresh, exciting and radiant retreat."

Client: Rende Development

Architect: KPF

Executive architect: Tandem Architects

Interior Design: Celia Chu Design - Taipei

Restaurant interior design: AvroKO