



Framing the View

Located on the banks of Yanqi Lake near Beijing, Sunrise Kempinski Hotel pays homage to both landscape and architecture

HK\$48
US\$18
€15



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+ Hirsch Bedner Associates CEO Ian Carr on the company's 50th anniversary



Designed by Shanghai Huadu Architect Design Company, the orb-like structure of the Sunrise Kempinski Hotel exists peacefully in its setting, with 10,000 glass panels on the exterior reflecting the surrounding mountains, land and sky.

Inside, the magnificence of the design continues with an interior that is largely inspired by the idea of framing views. Here, DiLeonardo — headquartered in the USA with offices in Hong Kong, Manila and Dubai — has created elements of intrigue throughout the hotel, experimenting with a juxtaposition of solids and voids, light and dark and natural versus man-made materials.

The design for the hotel was very much an exercise in international teamwork for the practice. “From its early stages through final implementation, the design was a complete and thorough team effort. Our studio created an innovative process to share research and creative process. We had some of our Hong Kong team members join us in our USA headquarters to work through this creative process,” says Giana DiLeonardo, lead partner on the project.

Successfully working within the confines of the structural sphere was an interesting new challenge for the practice. “Maintaining a balance of geometries within the architectural shell proved to be a significant challenge in which we found an opportunity to infuse geometric forms into unexpected spaces, design elements or features,” she adds. “This was accomplished by establishing a harmony between orthogonal and organic spaces.”

Framing the view

Text: Sophie Cullen Photography: © Owen Raggett

Located on the banks of Yanqi Lake, around one hour’s drive from the heart of Beijing city centre, Sunrise Kempinski Hotel pays homage to both landscape and architecture

Top
Inspired by clouds, custom-designed chandeliers float against the backdrop of the sky in the sky lounge



The play on light and dark continues into the atrium on level three which connects the hotel to the convention centre. A large scale three-dimensional feature wall with integrated lighting is set within a stone frame that runs the height of the four-storey space. Also located on level three are both the tea lounge and the spa, with the two adjacent areas being tied together via key design elements. Undulating light and dark wood panelling can be found along the inner wall surrounding the spa corridor, and this ode to the exterior mountain forms is then found as the feature wall behind the bar in the tea lounge area.

Level 19 houses the sky lounge Views Bar, which offers a lounge/dining restaurant, cigar lounge and whiskey bar. The focal features of the main lounge are the three custom-designed crystal chandeliers that were inspired by clouds. Suspended within the open space, they float next to sweeping views of both sides of the hotel building. Curvilinear modular seating in hues of violet and rich purple populate the main lounge, adhering to the client's wish for a flexible and divisive space and allowing for easy transport and storage.

In the basement, the swimming pool sits in a double-height space with the ceiling being framed as the focal point of the design. A strong criss-cross structural element repeats throughout the open space, with a staircase that appears to be floating from metal rods suspended from the ceiling connecting to the upper level.

A highlight among the guestrooms and suites, the Presidential Suite incorporates a contemporary flair with abstract artwork adorning the walls and French walnut wood being used on the floors. The firm has opted for a minimal yet contemporary aesthetic through the guest accommodations, allowing the views of the landscape beyond to speak for themselves. "The monolithic and large-scale wood frame around the bed suggests the 'framing' concept carried throughout the hotel's public space design. Hints of soft blues conjure a peaceful ambience, in harmony with the view, yet relaxed," notes DiLeonardo. ●



Left from top

Sunrise Kempinski Hotel embodies the shape of the rising sun and symbolizes harmony and unity ● The Presidential Suite frames the stunning view of the mountainous region with floor-to-ceiling windows ● Geometric forms can be seen extensively through the hotel, particularly in the pool area where a criss-cross pattern has been used as a focal point on the ceiling