

# luxury briefing.

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design **Machine**

*Giles Deacon*

*luxury trends*

the top 10 *for* 2008

*Robin Wight on*

the power of blogging

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# luxury. services

*"I've had a belly-full of the French coming over here and telling us how shit our food is. We have cheese on toast, they have croque-monsieur. They just have posher names"*

Gordon Ramsay quoted in *The Sunday Times*

## ROCCO FORTE COLLECTION

RF Hotels has now rebranded as Rocco Forte Collection and is forging ahead with its programme of new launches. The group has just re-opened Le Richemond in Geneva, (having refurbished the 130-year-old property under the guidance of Olga Polizzi) and The Charles in Munich. Rocco Forte Collection is also working on a Prague hotel, due to open in 2008 and a Marrakech location for 2009. Rocco Forte is also said to be seeking a suitable Manhattan property for the group's first US hotel.

## LE ROYAL MONCEAU

Le Royal Monceau hotel on avenue Hoche in Paris is to be refurbished and rebranded under a new management contract with Raffles, and will reopen in winter 2008. The refurbishment, to be overseen by Philippe Starck, is to start in April and aims to achieve what the owners describe as "a 21st-century French masterpiece". On completion Le Royal Monceau will have 152 rooms, five restaurants and bars and a landscaped garden. New additions include a solar energy-heated swimming pool and water recycling technology. There will also be an in-house Fashion Advisor and Personal Shopper. Le Royal Monceau is jointly owned by French entrepreneur Alexandre Allard and Barwa Real Estate, a Qatari development company. Designer Philippe Starck said, "It will represent all that is good about modern French design: luxurious, balanced and a little bit sexy."

## GORDON RAMSAY

Having taken on New York and Tokyo, Gordon Ramsay is now extending his empire to France. The chef is to open a restaurant just outside Paris which will celebrate the joys of British produce and cuisine. Due to open in spring 2008 the restaurant will be located at the Trianon Palace Hotel close to the Palace of Versailles. Signature dishes will include

Aberdeen Angus beef, Balmoral venison, Cornish sea bass and Irish shellfish. The concept has not been warmly embraced by French restaurateurs.

Gordon Ramsay has also just opened a gastropub in Chiswick and his first Irish restaurant at the Ritz-Carlton in Powerscourt. The Devonshire on Devonshire Road is Ramsay's second gastropub following The Narrow in Limehouse which opened in March 2007. This month sees the launch of a Prague restaurant named Maze at the Hilton Prague Old Town which will be overseen by Philip Carmichael who previously worked at Ramsay's Maze restaurant in London. Gordon Ramsay has also said that he plans to open further restaurants in Los Angeles, Amsterdam and Singapore.

## GHM

Adrian Zecha's GHM Resorts is to open three new properties, to be located in Cancun, Turks & Caicos and Philadelphia. The first to open will be the resort at Punta Nizuc on the

Mayan Riviera which is due for completion in 2009. The \$450m project will be built around the former Mexican Presidential retreat and will have 163 villas, 61 hotel rooms and suites and three restaurants. There will also be a 2,000 sq ft Espa spa offering mayan-inspired and ayurvedic treatments. The retreat will be designed by Jean Michel Garthy, the architect behind The Setai, The Chedi, Milan and One & Only Maldives, working with interior designer Aya Ibrahim.

Later in 2009 GHM Turks & Caicos opens on North West Point, with 80 rooms and suites and 133 bedrooms and apartments. The 145-room Philadelphia property will open in 2010 with a L'atelier de Joel Robuchon restaurant.

## NEVAI

Nevai is a new boutique hotel due to open in Verbier in December, to coincide with Verbier Fashion Weekend. Set up by local hospitality group Kings Verbier, Nevai – which means 'snow' in the local Swiss-French dialect – has 35 rooms and suites and will offer an alternative to the chalets which dominate the accommodation available at the resort. The Elemis spa has a Turkish hammam, dipping pool and sauna and a terrace where drinks are served. There will also be a notable après-ski offering, with a 75-cover destination restaurant and bar with outdoor seating on heated balconies overlooking the Swiss Alps and a four metre-long fireplace. A new version of the resort's Farm Club is also to open on the premises.

## HIBISCUS

Having started life deep in the countryside in Ludlow, Shropshire, double Michelin-starred restaurant Hibiscus is now moving to London. Located on Maddox Street, the restaurant is co-owned by husband-and-wife team Claude and Claire Bosi, who founded it in its original incarnation in 2000. Chef Claude Bosi

## Same old storey

Aficionados of Amy Sacco's **Bungalow 8** in New York can now apply for membership of the London edition of the nightclub. This hotspot has recently been opened at St Martin's Lane hotel in partnership with the Morgans Hotel Group Director of Bars and Nightlife Ben Pundole, who has collaborated with Sacco since 2000. Contrary to the name, London's Bungalow 8 has a split-level interior; but it comes with all the cocktail-making expertise that is associated with the name. The space has been designed by India Mahdavi.

## In training

London stations and luxury are generally not synonymous, but **St Pancras** is raising the bar in its new incarnation as London's Eurostar terminal. Following an extensive renovation under London and Continental Railways, the station has now been restored to its former glory and will also have the longest champagne bar in Europe, a daily farmers' market and a nine-metre sculpture of an embracing couple by Paul Day. Improving on standard British station fare, there will be a gastropub run by Geronimo Inns and a brasserie for more formal dining. St Pancras station was originally built in 1868 and had the largest single span roof structure of its time.

originally trained under Alain Ducasse, Alain Passard and Jean Paul Lacombe and is known for his experimental approach. The restaurant also has a 700-bin wine list.

#### MOONLIGHT HEAD LODGE

The group behind Australian wilderness retreat Moonlight Head Lodge has just opened its second property at Moonlight Head, situated at the mid-point of the Great Ocean Road in the Victoria province. The original Moonlight Head property was opened in 2006 by New Zealand hotelier Mark Banning-Taylor (see LB Dec 2005) and there are now plans for a total of five lodges in the area and a 30-room boutique hotel due to open in 2009. Each property will be designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architect Glenn Murcutt and includes furnishings by B&B Italia, Philippe Starck, Cassina and Peltrona Frau, with beds provided by Savoir. The lodges are available for private hire and come with a private chef, concierge and full complement of staff. Moonlight Head Private Lodges are founding members of Healing Hotels of the World.

#### JUMEIRAH

Dubai-based hospitality group Jumeirah is to launch its first European resort and spa, a new development in Port Soller, Mallorca. The company is to manage the development, which is currently being built by Deka Immobilien and WestInvest InterSelect. The resort is scheduled to open in 2010 with 120 rooms, each with private terrace or balcony, two swimming pools, a 20,000 sq ft spa and extensive conference and banqueting facilities. Jumeirah has said that, through Port Soller, it plans to redefine the standard of luxury resorts in the Spanish region. Jumeirah is also working on other projects with a view to opening 57 hotels by 2011. Locations of properties under construction include Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Aqaba, Doha, Phuket, Shanghai, Bermuda and London (see October LB).

#### KEMPINSKI

Located on the Dead Sea in Jordan, Kempinski Ishtar is now close to completing its final phase. Having opened its first section

### Get a room

The average cost of a Saturday night stay in the most expensive suites in five-star hotels (euros)

1 Paris	7,600
2 New York	6,641
3 Tokyo	5,150
4 London	5,334
5 Hong Kong	3,958
6 Frankfurt	1,315
7 Brussels	1,150
8 Rome	970

*The Wall Street Journal Europe*

# Luxury Indicator

## Designer children's wear

*From 2000 to 2006, the US children's wear market grew at a compound annual growth rate of 7.6%. With children's wear sales expected to grow at a projected 6-7% per year in the top 10 global markets, to \$131.5bn by 2012, the luxury segment of the category is expected to take a disproportionate share of this expanding sector. Riding on the coat-tails of the global luxury boom, the upscale children's wear category is experiencing growth that is being driven by a flourishing world economy and increased consumer purchasing power as a result of parents having children at a later age. In addition, luxury children's wear has witnessed heightened popularity in today's celebrity-centric media. Not only do celebrity-obsessed consumers desire the same looks as their favourite stars, but they also want to dress their children in similar brands and styles as the celebrities' offspring.*

*In the modern world of luxury, Christian Dior is often recognised as the first major designer to have launched an upscale children's wear line. Developed in 1967, Baby Dior relied heavily on the brand cachet of the designer's famed ready-to-wear line and sold children's wear to mothers who, themselves, were loyal to the brand. Following the success of Baby Dior, smaller niche stores began to emerge, including the renowned Parisian company Bonpoint in 1975. Rather than rely on the name of a prestigious designer, Bonpoint focused on well-crafted and intricately detailed products to differentiate themselves from others. Since then, most major designers, including Burberry, Dolce & Gabbana, Donna Karan, Hermès, Giorgio Armani, Gucci, Louis Vuitton, Prada, Ralph Lauren, Roberto Cavalli and Versace have created children's wear lines in the hope that brand-loyal parents will purchase their favourite labels for their children. Even contemporary designers have entered the upscale children's wear landscape, including 3.1 Phillip Lim, Diesel, Ernest Sewn, Moschino and Tocca. Capitalising on the popularity of this burgeoning market, Harrods launched a 2,000 sq ft international designer children's brands section in May.*

*In recent years, the 'trading up' phenomenon in children's wear has moved beyond apparel into new categories, including luxury skincare, fragrances and strollers. Companies such as Bobbi Brown, Bulgari and Kiehl's have launched children's skincare and fragrance products, while Bugaboo and Stokke have introduced ergonomically-designed strollers priced at \$840 and \$799 respectively. Given the strength of the adult accessories market, the latest must-have luxury items may extend to baby jewelry and girl's handbags as the high-end children's category continues to grow.*

Supplied by Telsey Advisory Group

in 2006, the 318-room resort has multiple pools and lagoons throughout the grounds, four restaurants, three bars and the longest private beach on the shores of the Dead Sea. A number of ancient olive trees have been replanted in the surrounding gardens. Early next year it will open the Anantara Spa, the largest spa in the Middle East at over 100,000 sq ft. A second Kempinski property is to open in Jordan in spring 2008 in Aqaba. Jordan has opened up considerably as a destination since it signed a peace treaty with Israel in 1994 and the government has now made land on the East Bank of the Dead Sea, previously occupied by troops, available for hotel development.

Kempinski is also working on a new property in Bruges in the former Dukes Palace, located on the UNESCO heritage site, which is due to open in 2008.

#### TITILAKA INKATERRA PUNO

This month Inkaterra is to open an 18-room boutique hotel and exploration lodge on the shores of Lake Titicaca in Peru. Rooms will have panoramic windows and wrap-around terraces offering views over the lake and the

Andes. The property is the first of its kind in the area. Inkaterra is a 30-year-old eco-adventure company which runs a number of properties and works on sustainable tourism tours and initiatives, investing profits into research, conservation, educational and social development programmes. It also has lodges on the Madre de Dios River and in the Sacred Valley of the Incas.

#### THE PARK HOTELS

The Park Hotels is a hospitality group credited with introducing the boutique hotel concept to India. It currently has six properties in major centres and has now announced plans for two new properties which will open in Kochi (Cochin) and Hyderabad. The Park Hyderabad will open in early 2009. The 25-room Kochi hotel will open by the end of 2009. The Park Hotels is also to launch a boutique cruise ship with eight cabins. Owned by the Apeejay Surrenda Group, a family company, The Park Hotels opened its first property in 1967 in Kolkata (Calcutta). Since then it has developed to include its own spa brand, named Aura, and a number of the properties are now members of Design Hotels.