

OPEN SKIES



AUGUST
2018

A NEW WAY TO LIVE

UAE architecture: smarter, greener, more inclusive

SKATEBOARDING: AN OUTLET
FOR PASSION IN TOKYO

WHERE TO GET DRESSED
IN LAGOS, NIGERIA

SHANGHAI

31.2304° N, 121.4737° E

PRICE: FROM \$450 PER NIGHT

The Middle House, downtown Shanghai's new kid on the block, conceals a world of artistic wonders behind its dark façade

For the media darlings of Shanghai

WORDS: JOE MORTIMER



As the newest member of Swire Hotels' The House Collective, The Middle House had instant cachet when it opened in Shanghai earlier this year. An outpost of Café Gray Deluxe, the oh so stylish restaurant at The Upper House in Hong Kong, gave further cause for pause among Shanghai's inner circle.

Italian architect and designer Pierro Lissoni has created a moody homage to Chinese culture, with bamboo-effect walls laid in vivid emerald-coloured tiles, black staircases up-lit by hidden lights and 111 guestrooms imbued with a decidedly masculine ambience. Dark polished marble bathrooms with deep, free-standing tubs look out towards the traditional shikumen houses of Shanghai's Jing'an district, while details like vintage speakers create a sophisticated residential quality in the understated 'Studio 70' room.

Playful touches abound: a thick tasselled cord called 'Mr. Goodnight' hangs next to the bed (give it a gentle tug and all the lights go out) and in the residential tower, an abacus made from tiny porcelain dim sum hints at the importance of both food and math in China.

The 3,760-piece Venetian chandelier that hangs above the lobby is one of 680 artworks on display; and artistry is fundamental at Chinese restaurant Sui Tang Li, where cocktails are served in antique vessels.

Like its sister hotels in Hong Kong, Beijing and Chengdu, The Middle House is an instant classic, whose sleek proposition has already earned the affection of Shanghai's scenesters. Though different to its siblings, it's clearly one of the family; a suave young upstart that creatives will clamour to mingle in when visiting the city.

OLD SHANGHAI

Modern Shanghai fades away amid the low-rise structures of the city's traditional neighbourhoods, where community life plays out against the backdrop of shikumen-style buildings. Wandering along passageways criss-crossed with bicycles and birdcages, you'll get a glimpse of real life in Shanghai. Although many neighbourhoods are being flattened to make way for modern developments, a handful are being awarded protected status.

FROM THE CONCIERGE

See

The Shanghai Propaganda Poster Art Centre charts a visual history of 20th century Chinese propaganda through 6,000 original posters.

Do

Take a cycling tour of the nearby French Concession and look out for Art Deco architecture as you pedal down quiet roads lined by plane trees.

Eat

Head chef Tony Ye runs a tight ship at Sui Tang Li, where Shanghainese, Sichuan and Cantonese cuisines are fused in beautiful small plates.



Emirates operates two non-stop daily A380 services between Dubai and Shanghai.