



Healthy habitats

Judy Chapman looks at the urban hotel wellness revolution

THE new generation of urban hotel rooms consists of natural bedding, in-room fitness programs and healthy dining. Wellness-focused habitats offer health-conscious guests the opportunity to maintain their exercise regime, eat well and sleep soundly. Could this spell the end of the era of welcome amenities such as bottles of champagne and cheese platters, and minibars stuffed with chocolates and crisps? What next? Organic wine bars and hybrid limousine pick-ups? Stay tuned.

The Metropolitan Bangkok: Years ago, Christina Ong, creator of the Como accommodation group, which includes the Metropolitan, introduced the concept of in-room yoga mats and complimentary yoga classes. Today, wellness-themed guestrooms fitted out with natural materials also feature meditation chairs, healthy in-room dining menu and minibars stocked with organic options. The aromatherapy-based bathroom amenities are all natural.

Glow, the hotel's organic cafe on the second floor, offers energising wheatgrass shots, sugar-free desserts and organic wines; naturally, the Metropolitan's spa has lush facilities and holistic treatments. www.metropolitan.como.bz.

iSawan at the Grand Hyatt Erawan Bangkok: Guests who check into one of the six so-called spa cottages on the fifth floor are treated to a universe of wellness. Each of the cottages is located near a juice bar, gym and spa with all the wellness equipment needed to keep guests rejuvenated. Call ahead and your minibar and in-room dining menu will be customised with organic and herbal options. Order personal meditation and yoga instructors; yoga mats and well-being DVDs are provided.

Guests are encouraged to co-design bespoke detox meals with the head chef and also available is colon cleansing for a complete detox. Each cottage boasts its own spa treatment area; the benefit of taking a Thai massage in your room is that once you've been stretched, pulled and pummelled, you don't have far to go to fall into bed. www.isawan.hyatt.com.

The Plateau at the Grand Hyatt Hong Kong: Guests who check into the 11th-floor Plateau at this Hong Kong Island property have direct access to a full range of wellness facilities, including fitness and exercise studios, sauna and treatment rooms. The 14 residential suites encompass a world dedicated to guests' wellbeing, including an oversized tub with complimentary mineral bath on request and luxurious futon treatment area. There's a healthy room-service menu and Aesop bath amenities; even better, late check-in guests can order in-room massages, reflexology and shiatsu massage up to 11pm. www.hongkong.grand.hyatt.com.

The Mandarin Oriental Hong Kong: A hotel suite with your own spa treatment area, steam room and oversized tub with hydrotherapy jets overlooking Hong Kong Harbour ... guests who check into this freshly refurbished hotel's Mandarin Suite are treated like celebrities. Gone are the days of cheap shampoos and soaps; enter designer amenities brand Aromatherapy Associates. The signature Time Rituals treatment service allows guests to book customised treatments or, for a serious check-up, the Mandarin Oriental has aligned with one of the best traditional Chinese herbal medicine centres in Hong Kong. www.mandarinoriental.com.



The Halkin, London: Kick-start your day on smoothies at this Belgravia bolthole, a member of the Como group. Guestrooms are fitted with minibars stocked with herbal tonics and organic dried fruit as well as aromatherapy candles, eye pillows, bath salts and scrubs. What's new is the hotel's holistic gym, featuring state-of-the-art equipment by Life Fitness.

But if you don't want to venture out, call a Como Shambhala spa therapist for an in-room treatment. Guests can also practise yoga in their rooms via two complimentary 24-hour yoga channels; mats are provided and personal training, yoga and pilates instruction are available. www.halkin.como.bz.

Chi Edsa Shangri-La Manila: The Chi Premiere rooms are retreat-like, with comforts such as posture-sensitive chairs, yoga mat, healthy dining menu plus an open concept bath and shower with natural amenities and Kashwre bathrobes.

New at this Manila property is the so-called Clean menu designed by nutritionists for frequent business travellers, conference delegates and health-conscious holidaymakers. Since the Chi Premiere rooms are connected to the spa, yoga studio, library and relaxation lounge, the entire experience here is wellness oriented. www.shangri-la.com.

The Adelphi Melbourne: This mod lifestyle hotel has all the eco-chic facilities that aware travellers expect. Most materials used through the hotel are recycled, there's energy-saving power and lighting systems, the food is organic, local, chemical-free and low GI. In-room massages are offered to guests, who are also granted private access to the new spa on the 9th floor, which has a hammam-style Turkish steam bath. www.adelphi.com.au.

The Lyall Hotel & Spa Melbourne: Top-notch wellness facilities are in place at this hotel in Melbourne's cosmopolitan fashion district. In-room offerings include tannin-free teas, 24-hour spa cuisine menu and all-natural sulphate-free shampoos and soaps. Even the cleaning fluids used here are low in chemicals. Spacious and sleek describes the spa, which offers natural Elemis treatments to boost energy, slim and purify.

Says founder Rowina Thomas: "We called upon a feng shui master to ensure positive energy flow throughout." She says the Lyall will continue to add more holistic features. www.thelyall.com.

The Mandarin Oriental Miami: Expect green tea and organic snacks when checking into one of this hotel's Spa Lifestyle guestrooms. Setting a new benchmark in stress-free style, rooms are fitted with special bed linen and air-purification systems and are certified allergy-friendly.

Rooms also include a workout space with wellness balls, dumb-bell racks, eco-yoga mats and blocks. A

fitness-themed TV channel offers 24-hour classes for different levels and includes guided relaxation sessions to help guests sleep more soundly.

The spa cuisine is streamlined throughout the hotel and can be taken in-room as well as by the pool. A step up from concierge service, each room is also assigned a personal lifestyle consultant who will customise a program to further enhance guest wellbeing. www.mandarinoriental.com.

The Miami Standard: Nutrition is now an essential element of four and five-star hotels and at Miami's hottest boutique hotel the menu is bursting with organic, biodynamic and locally grown foods with plenty of vegetarian options. Rejuvenate, for example, on green spirulina juice or wheatgrass and ginger shots.

In a bold move, creators have revived the communal aspect of the spa, including an optional-clothing mud bath (dial the concierge and order tubs of organic coloured clays to slather on self and others).

With lectures on health, spirituality and sexuality, and daily yoga classes, the wellness vibe flows throughout this hotel. www.standardhotels.com.

The Urbn Shanghai: Shanghai's first eco-chic hotel is also the region's only carbon-neutral urban hotel. Each of the 26 eco-sensitive rooms has been built from local reclaimed timbers, with low-VOC paints and feature energy-saving lighting, solar shades, low-wattage lighting, water-based and energy-efficient airconditioning, eco-bedding and organic amenities.

There are in-room fitness kits, yoga and tai chi classes and customised minibars. The hotel uses environmentally safe cleaning products; order herbal bath soaks, acupuncture sessions and traditional healers to your room. www.urbnhotels.com.

The Naumi Singapore: Creators of this new lifestyle hotel have dreamed up several concepts to rejuvenate guests. The hotel is fragrant with lime and ginger essential oils pumped through its ventilation system, and a yoga room is open 24 hours a day with a holistic music station catering to hard-core gurus who like to rise early to salute the sun.

Meals are described as energising: start the day well with low-kilojoule options, fresh juices and wholefoods. www.naumihotel.com.

Sheraton hotels worldwide: Even the bigger brands are wellness-conscious. Sheraton has partnered with

**Once you've been stretched
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Eco-chic: The carbon-neutral Urbn in Shanghai



Eleventh heaven: One of the residential spa suites with futon bedding that make up the Plateau on the 11th floor of the Grand Hyatt Hong Kong

Core Performance and by the end of the year will roll out 360-degree training and nutrition programs across all its properties.

This includes healthy minibars, kilojoule-controlled dining, sleep-enhancement programs and state-of-the-art fitness centres. Also on the agenda are in-room fitness kits, on-demand wellness videos and workout DVDs that come with massage sticks, workout cards and mats, stretch ropes and foam rollers.

For sleep-deprived guests there are therapy programs and, after checkout, a customised 365-day online training program enables you to continue a healthy lifestyle. www.sheraton.com.

Novotel hotels, Australia: While there's no organic bedding (yet), this four-star branding has plenty of healthy and green initiatives to shout about. In-room rejuvenation, for instance, includes a 24-hour yoga channel and complimentary yoga mats with personal trainers on call. In Balance Fitness Menus showcase healthy choices such as all-organic fruit compote, banana bread and muesli.

Each hotel offers meals analysed by Good Health Solutions and designed with the right proportions, good oils and proper nutrients in mind.

Novotel recently signed with the leading Australian international accreditation program Green Globe to achieve certification of its 400 hotels worldwide. www.novotel.com.au.

Tangula luxury trains, China: Wellness-themed accommodation is not limited to hotels. The soon-to-launch Tangula luxury trains — from Beijing to Lhasa through the vast Qinghai province and over the Tibetan Plateau or from Beijing to Lijiang through Yunnan province — will feature compartments fitted with natural bed linen, healthy minibars, organic toiletries in biodegradable bottles and ensuite showers supplied with AquVita pure water. www.tangulaluxurytrains.com.



Bathtime bliss: Soaking in style at the refurbished Mandarin Oriental Hong Kong