

# Jumeirah Himalayas Hotel

## *Shanghai*

Words: Catherine Martin Photography: Philip Vile (unless otherwise stated)



Jumeirah's first foray into Asia blends Chinese tradition with contemporary vision as interpreted by architect Arata Isozaki, interior designer KCA International, and furniture designer and manufacturer Channels.

With projects under development in Qiandoahu, Sanya, Hangzhou, and Guangzhou, it was crucial that Jumeirah's entry into Asia be a success. Introducing a new brand that appeals to the burgeoning domestic market while attracting admirers of the group's homegrown properties in the Middle East is no mean feat. But the venture, from owner and developer Zendai Himalayas, appears to have paid off.

Located in the heart of Pudong, Jumeirah Himalayas Hotel is part of the Himalayas Centre, a new arts and cultural hub comprising the DaGuan Theatre, Himalayas Art Museum, a luxury brands shopping mall, and outdoor events facilities. With these attractions plus four destination restaurants and lounges, and a spa due to open in the 2012, the hotel caters ►



► well to the leisure traveller. Its proximity to the Shanghai New International Expo Centre (SNIEC), the city's largest exhibition venue, alongside its own meeting and events space is a draw for the business guest.

Inspired by Chinese cultural elements and traditional Feng Shui principles, the mixed-use complex has been designed by Japanese architect Arata Isozaki. The hotel tower is constructed in the form of the Yu Cong, an ancient Chinese ritual object formed from an outer square representing the earth and inner circle representing heaven – which in this case forms an atrium reaching 14 levels through the centre of the tower. At its base, Tien Shu patterned walls wrap around the exterior to present a conceptual interpretation of ancient Chinese characters from the Tien Shu by Cang Jie. Windows have also been custom-made to

subtly insert between the characters allowing light to flood the hotel interiors.

A three-dimensional urban forest comprising dramatically sculpted columns defines the central section of the Himalayas Centre and provides an entrance to the hotel. Inside, the lobby features a 260m<sup>2</sup> LED screen, the largest in Shanghai, displaying multimedia animation art changing to reflect the sky at different times of the day.

Design firm KCA International was responsible for the interiors, described by Design Principal Khuan Chew as “simple, neutral and economical” to provide a clean backdrop for evolving artworks. Art plays an important role in the hotel with works from great Chinese artists past and present. Even the colour palette is sourced from ancient Chinese paintings. ►

**ABOVE & PREVIOUS PAGE:** Furniture throughout the hotel is designed by Samuel Chan of Channels. Key pieces include a contemporary interpretation of the classic Lamp Hanger chair, as well as the Motley Baton Drum table



LEFT: Encircling the lobby is a 1,000-character poem in the calligraphy of ancient Chinese scholar Huai Su BELOW: Jumeirah Himalayas Hotel is part of the Himalayas Centre, designed by Japanese architect Arata Isozaki BOTTOM: The Grill Room is described as “rustic-chic”



Pic Courtesy of Jumeirah Group



Pic Courtesy of Jumeirah Group

► Encircling the lobby is a 1,000-character poem in the calligraphy of ancient Chinese scholar Huai Su. Legend has it that the poem was commissioned by Emperor Wu of the Liang dynasty and first written between 508 and 510 AD. The text is still taught today.

This isn't the only aspect of the design that has seen the combination of tradition with modernity. Hong Kong-born Samuel Chan of British furniture design company Channels was commissioned to create a series of furniture that incorporates classic Chinese elements interpreted in a more contemporary way. From their workshops in the UK and China, Channels designed, produced and installed all furniture in the public areas and 401 guestrooms, making it their biggest hotel project to date. The bespoke pieces feature many of Chan's signatures, from strong forms and use of natural materials, to quality craftsmanship. Worthy of note is the Motley Baton Drum Chair upholstered in client-

specified colours, with co-ordinating Motley Baton Drum tables and floor lamps, as well as a contemporary interpretation of the classic Lamp Hanger chair. Suites feature custom four-poster beds and wardrobes with round plate detail, while premier rooms offer a living area with day sofa and Chinese scholar's work desk with fully integrated connectivity panel.

The F&B outlets serve up a range of fare with Shang-High Cuisine being a celebration of the finest Shanghai dining traditions. The floor-to-ceiling windows provide ample light to the honey-wood dining room, furnished with rows of hanging lanterns, wooden screens, and scholar-style chairs. Described as “rustic-chic” the Grill Room features grey brick walls reclaimed from Shanghai alleys, with wooden tables illuminated by low pendants. J-Mix is a Japanese restaurant characterised by paper moon lanterns, pod seating and white pebbles, while the Arte Café & Lounge in the lobby completes the offering. ■

#### EXPRESS CHECKOUT

**Jumeirah Himalayas Hotel**  
1108 Mei Hua Road, Pudong,  
Shanghai 201204  
China  
Tel: +86 21 3858 0888  
[www.jumeirah.com](http://www.jumeirah.com)

🛏 401 guestrooms and suites  
🍷 Arte Café & Lounge, Grill Room, J-Mix,  
Shang-High Cuisine  
🍷 Lobby Lounge  
🧘 Gym, Talise Spa (opening 2012)  
+ The Grand Ballroom, Infinity Garden &  
Himalayas Ballroom, meeting rooms

**Developer / Owner:** Zendai Himalayas  
**Operator:** Jumeirah Group  
**Architect:** Arata Isozaki  
**Designers:** KCA International  
**Furniture Designer & Manufacturer:**  
Channels