



Extravagant Mandarin Oriental

By Jill Weinlein

took a copy of our credit card. Our room offered the most spectacular bathroom I ever seen, with a large white soaking tub showcasing the center of the marble room, overlooking the Ferry Building, Hong Kong Ferris Wheel and Kowloon.

Since this is the year of the goat, our daughters each had an adorable stuffed Chinese goat on their pillow as a welcome gift.

The elegant living area had a sitting area and desk with every amenity discerning guests might desire. Niko brought us two large baskets filled

with an exquisite china tea pot and cups. We sat on the sofa and enjoyed a proper afternoon tea with biscuits in our suite before exploring the sights of the city.

Taking the Star Ferry across the Victoria harbour to Kowloon, we gazed out to the impressive General Post Office and noticed the stately signature fan and brass Mandarin Oriental letters decorating the top of the hotel.

Upon our return I met with the General Manager, Jonas Schuermann of the Mandarin Oriental, Hong Kong. He informed me that the Mandarin



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Oriental hotel spent \$150 million to renovate its 501 guest rooms, 10 restaurants, and numerous public spaces, as well as to construct the Mandarin Spa. Now there are 71 individually-designed suites and 430 guest rooms with either exciting city or lovely harbor views.

I also learned that Hong Kong is very green, with approximately 3/4 of Hong Kong being rural, comprising 24 country parks, scenic hills, woodlands, reservoirs and coastline easily accessible from the city. The

concierge team is happy to share with guests the best walking and hiking trails.

Also, within the last five years the art and wine world have established a major presence in Hong Kong. "During art auctions, the airport runs out of space for all the private jets," shared Jonas. "Hong Kong has become a city filled with stunning artwork in all of the galleries." Jonas told me that people come from all over to buy rare and popular wine, because there is no tax. "It makes

buying wine or anything in Hong Kong very attractive," said Jonas. Before dinner, management sent a staff member to our room with a tray of fresh bread, small bottle of olive oil and balsamic vinegar and chocolates. An ice bucket held a chilled bottle of Ruinart French Brut Champagne. It was a treat before our dinner at the MO Bar.

Early the next day, the sun broke through an array of clouds to cast a rose-colored glow on the hills above Victoria Harbor. Situated between

Hong Kong Island and Kowloon, the harbor attracts an interesting array of international ships with its deep, sheltered waters next to the South China Sea.

Before our car service took us to the airport, we bade goodbye to all of the professional and classically trained staff members we met at the Mandarin Oriental. The memories of our two-night experience make me long to come back to this exciting cosmopolitan city before another 23 years slips by.