

ROOMS TO GROOVE

Travel time-out, business-trip bolthole or luxe meets louche – from Phuket to New York, Sydney to Beijing, these are stopovers with style.



QT SYDNEY

With a little 1920s art deco and a touch of *Rocky Horror* the new QT Sydney recalls a time when some hotels were a little more rock'n'roll than strictly business. Our pick of the 200 rooms is the State Suite, the former Union Theatre chairman's office, complete with original desk and fireplace. A bit like Pandora's Box, the old Gowings site is full of secrets – such as lurking gargoyles and an intuitive elevator that adjusts its soundtrack for passengers, with large groups hearing a party anthem. Party of one? Expect *All By Myself*, Bridget Jones style. From \$420.

49 Market Street, Sydney, NSW.
(02) 8262 0000. qtsydney.com.au



WHERE I STAY

MELISSA BONNEY
DIRECTOR/DESIGNER,
THE DESIGN HUNTER

CROSBY STREET HOTEL, NEW YORK

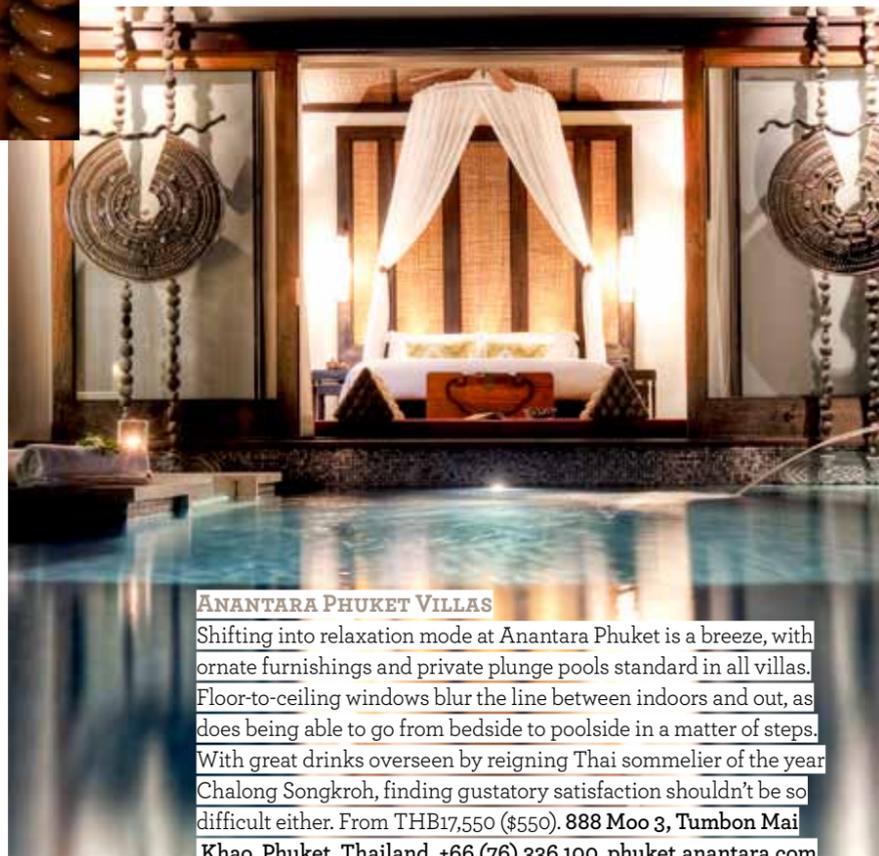
"I'm a really big fan of the Crosby Street Hotel in New York. It's the perfect antidote to big, anonymous hotels in the city. Located in a cobblestoned street in SoHo, it offers easy access to one of my favourite spots for great shopping and dining – the restaurant Balthazar is just across the street. There's arresting and unusual art selected by Kit Kemp on display throughout the hotel, and other quirky touches such as mannequins in the rooms and gorgeous warehouse-style windows. The concierge will go out of his way to look after tickets, dinner bookings and more." From \$US505 (\$488). 79 Crosby Street, New York, US. +1 (212) 226 6400. firmdalehotels.com/new-york/crosby-street-hotel



EAST BEIJING

Frequent-flyer favourite East has added a new location to its portfolio. In Beijing's Chaoyang district, designed for the discerning business traveller, the latest hotel is within reach of both Beijing Capital International Airport and the trading hub of Wangjing. Its 369 rooms and suites are decked out in calming neutrals. From CNY798 (\$123).

22 Jiuxianqiao Road, Chaoyang District, Beijing, China. +86 (10) 8426 0888. www.east-beijing.com



ANANTARA PHUKET VILLAS

Shifting into relaxation mode at Anantara Phuket is a breeze, with ornate furnishings and private plunge pools standard in all villas. Floor-to-ceiling windows blur the line between indoors and out, as does being able to go from bedside to poolside in a matter of steps. With great drinks overseen by reigning Thai sommelier of the year Chalong Songkroh, finding gustatory satisfaction shouldn't be so difficult either. From THB17,550 (\$550). 888 Moo 3, Tumbon Mai Khao, Phuket, Thailand. +66 (76) 336 100. phuket.anantara.com



ASK THE CONCIERGE

PASQUALE MANNA
SAN GIORGIO, MYKONOS



❖ When friends are in town I take them for a drink at...

Castro, one of the oldest and most scenic cocktail bars in Mykonos. It is located in the heart of Little Venice and has fantastic views of the sea.

❖ **The restaurant that best shows off Mykonos...** has to be an authentic Greek tavern, of course. I love Matthew Taverna in Tourlos for its great family-style atmosphere and home-cooked recipes.

❖ For designer fashion I steer guests towards...

Matogianni Street, the main shopping street in town. It offers great international luxury labels such as Louis Vuitton, as well as lesser-known, but no less talented, Greek fashion and jewellery designers.

❖ For the perfect gift or memento I'd shop at...

the countless little boutiques around the downtown area of Chora – take in the picturesque streets there while you stroll.

❖ Couples wanting a romantic evening for two should consider...

a dinner by candlelight at Kivotos on Ornos Beach.

It offers superb food on a private pontoon in one of the most romantic settings on the island.

❖ For great art, head to...

the narrow side roads off Matogianni Street, notably Kalogera Road, which showcases fantastic contemporary Greek art.

❖ For vintage finds...

visit LR, a tiny antique shop in Vbssis Street. The owner, Luca, not only has great taste, but is an amazing storyteller as well.

❖ Sights that are overrated include...

the monastery in Ano Mera. It is enough just to pass by for five minutes on the way to the fabulous beaches in the south-east of the island, rather than commit yourself to spending a full day there.

❖ Mykonos' best-kept secret is...

the background of the island's pelican mascot, Petros. There have actually been several pelicans on the island named Petros, one of which was a gift from a German zoo.

❖ If I were a visitor with a free day...

I'd head straight to one of the amazing beaches to enjoy the sun and crystal clear waters. My favourite is Paranga.

Consider a dinner by candlelight at Kivotos on Ornos Beach – superb food on a private pontoon