

The capital's latest architectural achievements are a towering testament to ambitious design

北京城內最新落成的建築傑作，每一座均是充滿巧思的前衛設計

by MARK GRAHAM

# Beijing's big shape up

## 京城新貌

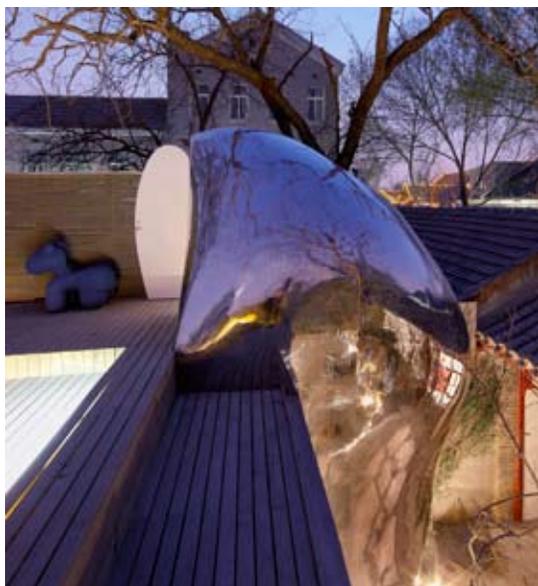


The 81-storey China World Tower offers 360-degree views of Beijing

樓高81層的國貿大廈讓大家飽覽北京360度全景

The uniquely shaped CCTV Headquarters (left) was designed by Rem Koolhaas and Ole Scheeren

由Rem Koolhaas及Ole Scheeren設計的中央電視台總部大樓(左圖)造型獨特



**E**VERY VISITOR TO Beijing marvels at the way ancient palaces and temples are juxtaposed with ultra-modern high-rises. But until the 81-storey China World Tower was completed recently, there was no way of enjoying an unhindered view of the entire metropolis, with its amazing architectural marvels, such as the Forbidden City, the world's largest palace, the Temple of Heaven, built some 500 years ago, the CCTV Tower, with its wacky, trouser-leg design, and the Bird's Nest stadium's instantly recognisable web of interlinked steel girders.

The China World Tower, a silver obelisk that rises some 330 metres above street level, has changed the way Beijing people look at their city. Heading to the building's 80th-floor hotel lounge

**High style at the China World Summit Wing hotel (top left)**

氣派豪華的北京國貿大酒店(最上圖)

**Hutong Bubble (above left) adds a modern touch to a traditional courtyard building**

胡同泡泡(左上圖)為傳統四合院建築增添時尚氣息

and bar to peek through powerful telescopes has become a popular pastime among locals, expatriates and visitors.

Even without the aid of magnification, a stroll around the upper-floor China World Summit Wing hotel offers a breathtaking, 360-degree view of the entire city. The panorama is liberally scattered with buildings ancient and modern, from the gravity-defying CCTV Tower to the serene, yellow-roofed Forbidden City complex, built more than 500 years ago by Ming Dynasty emperors. No other city has such an eclectic mixture of architecture on such a large scale.

Funded by China's economic miracle, the new buildings keep on coming. Just across the street is the Yintai Centre which, at more than 60 storeys,

## THE CHINA WORLD TOWER HAS CHANGED THE WAY BEIJING PEOPLE LOOK AT THEIR CITY

國貿大廈改變了市民欣賞京城的角度



Beijing's skyline has been transformed by the China World Tower (above left) and the CCTV Headquarters (right)

國貿大廈（上圖左）及中央電視台總部大樓（上圖右）改變了北京的城市面貌

Enjoy a spectacular view from the China World Tower (left)

從國貿大廈俯瞰北京的壯闊市容（左圖）

enjoyed a brief reign as the city's tallest building, with decent views down Jianguomenwai, the main east-west artery.

More skyscrapers are planned for that immediate area, the core central business district, but the Beijing architectural renaissance is not just about who can build the highest and the flashiest. One of the most innovative recent creations came from Yale University-educated wunderkind Ma Yansong, who took time out from designing bizarre-looking high-rises to create the Hutong Bubble, a chrome structure built on top of an extension to a traditional Beijing courtyard building.

Glass dominates the Parkview Green complex, which is due to open later this year. The vast pyramid structure – visually inspired by ancient Egypt

The pyramid-shaped Parkview Green complex (below) is designed to store thermal energy

芳草地(下圖)是一個金字塔型的建築項目,其設計可儲存熱能



rather than imperial China – claims to be one of the most eco-friendly buildings in the city, using only half the energy of a similar-sized conventional office building. This feat is achieved by its double-glass exterior which can store thermal energy.

The four Parkview Green office towers are housed inside the giant pyramid, along with restaurants and shops. Dotted around the complex will be more than 40 sculptures by Salvador Dali, known as the Clot Collection, created by the Spanish surrealist late in life.

Also inside the complex will be a boutique hotel with 100 suite-sized rooms, courtesy of complex owners, the Hong Kong-based Parkview Group, which also has hotels in Singapore and France.

Farther north, a 10-minute drive away, is the Sanlitun Soho office-and-shopping complex in Beijing's buzzing Sanlitun district. Renowned Japanese architect Kengo Kuma, who also designed the nearby Opposite House hotel, a minimalist marvel,

Salvador Dali sculptures adorn Parkview Green

Salvador Dali的雕像為「芳草地」增添情調



says he was striving to make the buildings as harmonious as possible with plenty of water features and greenery. The nine gleaming towers of Sanlitun Soho are arranged around a sunken pedestrian precinct which has a babbling brook running through it – a relaxing contrast to the always-bustling main street above.

Once renowned for its dive bars, Sanlitun has evolved into the most vibrant part of the city. The scruffy, cheap-beer outlets have been joined by the Village shopping, dining and entertainment complex that shows malls do not have to be sterile and uniform.

The latest section to open, Village North, offers generous, open public spaces and sunken piazzas, and is designed to stage outdoor summer entertainment, a novelty in Beijing



## THE GLEAMING TOWERS OF SANLITUN SOHO ARE ARRANGED AROUND A SUNKEN PEDESTRIAN PRECINCT

三里屯SOHO多座耀眼的建築物沿著一個下沉式露天廣場而建

Stroll amid water features and greenery at Sanlitun Soho (left)

在三里屯SOHO (左圖) 的水景及綠蔭間散步

Eye-catching design in the retail area of Sanlitun Soho (right)

三里屯SOHO的購物區以奪目別致設計吸引目光 (右圖)



## 京城新貌

**北**京城內故宮古廟與摩天高度並肩而立的景致，令來到北京的遊客歎為觀止。然而，直至樓高81層的北京國貿大廈最近落成，遊人才有機會飽覽京城全景，包括全球最大的宮殿紫禁城、於500多年前建成的天壇、外型獨特的中央電視台總部大樓，以及彷彿以鋼筋織成的新地標鳥巢國家體育場。

高約330米的國貿大廈改變了人們欣賞京城的角度；到80樓的酒店酒廊以望遠鏡俯瞰京城景貌，已成為最受當地人和遊客歡迎的消閒活動。

隨著中國的經濟起飛，摩天大樓在首都如雨後春筍般出現。與國貿中心隔街而立的銀泰中心樓高逾60層，也曾短暫享有北京第一高樓的榮銜。

北京重現的建築熱潮，並非只是一場比拚高度及時尚的競賽。京城近年最具創意的建築作品，非金屬結構的「胡同泡泡」莫屬；它是一座傳統北京四合院的增建部分，由畢業於耶魯大學的青年建築師馬岩松設計。

以玻璃材質為主的大型建築項目「芳草地」預計於年底落成；其設計靈感源自古埃及金字塔，該項目附設各式環保裝置，堪稱城中最高環保的建築群。

剛落成的三里屯SOHO是集商場、辦公大樓及住宅於一身的綜合社區。三里屯曾是廉價酒吧的集中地，但三里屯Village的出現，打破了商場予人單調劃一的固有印象，令這裡成為首都最時尚的社區。最新落成的三里屯Village北區，其設計帶有北京老城四合院的影子，並擁有寬廣的公共空間，以及可供

在夏日舉辦文娛活動的戶外下沉式廣場。在這個變化急遽的現代化城市裡，這種結合古今的設計令人讚賞。

此外，長城及798藝術區這兩個熱門景點，最近均吸引精品酒店進駐。

長居北京的Jim Spear將距離長城不遠、位於慕田峪村內的一家舊瓦廠，翻新成奢華隱密的瓦廠鄉村酒店，其16間套房均可飽覽長城的壯麗景色。

坐落於798藝術區的「一驛」酒店，由出生於北京的前投資銀行家Shauna Liu經營。她在美國和香港工作多年後重返家鄉，將市郊一座綜合工廠大樓改建成以藝術為主題的酒店，設有30間客房和一間高級餐廳。酒店內的家具裝飾全是她於世界各地旅行時親自挑選的，極富品味，令住客印象深刻。



Luxury brands and fine-dining await at Sanlitun's Village North

三里屯Village北區內有許多高級品牌的店鋪及一流食肆



**CX FLIGHTS**  
國泰航程

where developers are normally parsimonious when incorporating public space into their schemes. The design is based loosely on the *siheyuan* style, which is found in the older parts of the capital, where entire families live in rooms arranged around a central courtyard.

It is a neat nod to the past in a city that is heading to the future at breakneck speed. What makes the recent building boom in Beijing so remarkable is

that nothing much of significance had happened, architecture-wise, for the past 50 years, since the grimly utilitarian Great Hall of the People was built in Tiananmen Square. Then came the successful Olympic Games bid, sparking a building frenzy that saw the city change more in five years than the previous 500.

As Beijing continues to look to the future, there is no sign of it abating yet. ■

Cathay Pacific flies daily to Beijing, while its sister airline, Dragonair, flies eight times a day to Beijing

國泰航空每日均有航機飛往北京·其姊妹航空公司港龍航空每日有八班航機飛往北京

## › SUITE TEMPTATIONS

Two of Beijing's most popular sights – the Great Wall and the modern-art district 798 – have recently acquired boutique hotels, run by individuals with a deep appreciation of the city's culture.

Long-term resident Jim Spear personally supervised the renovation of an old brick factory near the Great Wall at Mutianyu village. The Brickyard Inn and Retreat Center is a luxury hide-away where all 16 rooms offer a view of China's most celebrated ancient wonder. Spear also rents village cottages that have been converted into swish family residences and runs a restaurant in a converted schoolhouse.

Closer to the city, in the suburban 798 factory complex, home to scores of art galleries, boutiques and cafés, former

investment banker Shauna Liu runs the Yi House hotel, a cosy, 30-room property which incorporates a top-notch restaurant.

Beijing-born Liu worked in banking for many years in the United States and Hong Kong before returning home to open this art-themed hotel. The tasteful design and furnishings were chosen by Liu, who was inspired by boutique hotels she visited around the world.

"I picked up things from my travels that I like – the candles in the lobby, for example, are from my last trip to India," she says. "They give you a warm feeling. The main colour is green – the colour of the environment – in different shades. We also use black, white and grey. We are an art hotel, so I want to show the artwork and keep the colours simple."



The Emperor Suite at Yi House hotel

一驛酒店的 Emperor Suite 豪華套間