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Starwood debuts Luxury Collection in Tianjin

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Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide Inc has announced the opening of its renowned The Luxury Collection brand in China with the opening of The Astor Hotel, A Luxury Collection Hotel in Tianjin. The 147-year old iconic building located in the Heping commercial district of Tianjin opened its doors today with a glamorous event attended by the Mayor of Tianjin, top government officials, senior executives of the owning company – Tianjin Tourism Group and Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, top clients and business associates, and media from all over China.

“With the opening of The Astor Hotel, A Luxury Collection Hotel, Tianjin, we proudly introduce The Luxury Collection brand to China. This hotel is a true expression of its destination, making it a perfect addition to The Luxury Collection’s portfolio of spectacular hotels and resorts,” says Qian Jin, Senior Vice President of Operations for Starwood Hotels & Resorts, China & Taiwan. “The property’s long-standing history of welcoming prominent people from around the world, combined with its striking location, impeccable service and sheer beauty ensure it will provide a unique and enriching experience to our guests.”

Paul James, Global Brand Leader for The Luxury Collection added, “As one of the world’s most desirable travel destinations, we are thrilled to debut The Luxury Collection brand in China. Featuring the brand’s celebrated, luxurious signature amenities and outstanding service, combined with the hotel’s rich history and landmark status, The Astor Hotel, A Luxury Collection Hotel, Tianjin offers the ideal accommodations for our worldly and discerning guests.”



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Upon completion of renovation by the award-winning interior designer Alexandra Champalimaud, the hotel unveils its restored buildings – The Astor Wing (built in 1863 & 1924) and more recent Hai River Wing. Said to be the most impressive building in Tianjin during the early 20th century, The Astor Hotel's legacy continues as the first Luxury Collection Hotel to enter the Greater China region, making it an important milestone for Starwood Hotels & Resorts which recently celebrated the opening of its 1000th hotel.

The hotel features 152 elegantly appointed rooms and suites set-up in both dramatically classic colonial style as well as with a more contemporary design, and all with modern fittings and amenities. The guest rooms in the Astor Wing open up to the opulent view of the Victoria Park, while those in the Hai River Wing enjoy panoramas of the Hai River. Three exquisite restaurants – all day dining, fine-dining and Chinese; a lobby lounge, a British pub, meetings and function space for up to 240 guests, a business center, a fitness center, an indoor swimming pool and a museum, showcasing the many treasured antiques and memorabilia of The Astor Hotel, complete the hotel's outstanding offerings.

As a Luxury Collection Hotel, The Astor Hotel will feature two of the brand's signature services:

- *Luggage Liaison – A partnership with Luggage Forward, a suite of travel services including luggage storage and unpacking / packing services upon request.
- * News Paper Direct - A print-on-demand service for over 520 newspapers helping The Luxury Collection guest stay connected.

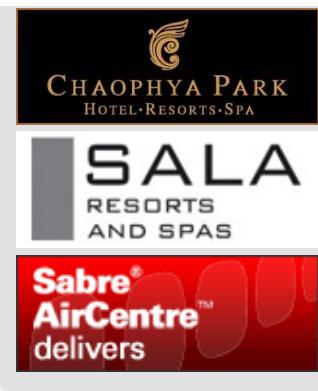
Once open The Astor Hotel will pursue its journey in contributing to the economic and tourism development both in Tianjin and China. It is the only hotel in China that has been included in the national cultural relic preservation project. The Astor Hotel, one of the pioneer hotels in Asia, was originally built in 1863 by a British missionary, John Innocent, under a Crown Lease from England's Queen Victoria. The historic property boasts many of the first technological innovations in Chinese hotel industry.

Distinguished as the "Diplomatic Hotel", The Astor Hotel was at the forefront of many historical and important events taking place since its onset in 1863. With the expansion of the foreign community in the late 1880's, The Astor Hotel soon became the prime venue for both political and social gatherings. As a result, two international treaties were signed at the property and for a few years Dr. Sun Yat Sen commanded the whole country from this very hotel. The last Emperor, Pu Yi and Empress Wan Rong spent many autumn days dancing in the hotel ballroom. During more recent times, Premier Zhou En Lai met the visiting Polish Premier at The Astor Hotel.

In 2009, The Astor Hotel commenced a renovation project destined to restore the hotel to its former glory and bestow upon it once again its renown as a timeless iconic landmark of Tianjin. The hotel is branded as a Luxury Collection, a unique Starwood Hotels & Resorts' lifestyle brand specializing in exceptional and indigenous luxury hotel experience. The traditions of the place are perfectly captured by distinctive and luxurious settings. The Astor Hotel, with its extraordinary and majestic character plus its interesting history undoubtedly is a perfect fit.

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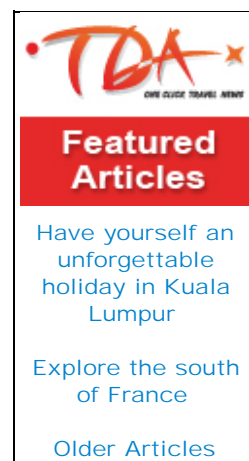
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