

# the o g's guide



## Down to Business

No longer just soulless spaces targeting men in suits, today's business hotels are redefining the genre. These addresses are adapting to the informal digital nomad lifestyle as traditional business hotels and serviced apartments find new perks to woo the working guest.

BY ASHLEY NIEDRINGHAUS



## CO-WORKING HOTELS

With designer digs and creative spaces, a new crop of hotels is making it easier than ever to ditch the nine-to-five and embrace the digital nomad lifestyle.

### MOJO NOMAD

**Who will love it:** Hot-desking urban millennials.

**Where:** Hong Kong's up-and-coming Aberdeen neighborhood.

**What you get:** Hong Kong-based Ovolo Hotels Group manages Mojo Nomad, so expect private rooms to feel more like a modest hotel room than a hostel (or "homstel" as the brand calls themselves) and 24/7 "coaches" play the roles of concierges. Shared rooms with three to eight beds dominate the offerings, though there's a 14-bed team-centric group room. Female-only dorms—dubbed "Wonderwomen"—are available, too. Glean inspiration from nature and book a harbor-view room.

**Get to work:** High-speed Wi-Fi and an on-site café will fuel work sessions at a hot desk, or book the "Cone of Silence" booth to hash out business details on a private video call. [+ www.mojonomad.com](http://www.mojonomad.com); beds from \$26.



### THE MILLENNIALS

**Who will love it:** Design mavens looking for a hotel-like experience.

**Where:** Steps from the Kamo River in central Kyoto with easy access to the city's extensive train system.

**What you get:** Traditional hostel bunkbeds are replaced with state-of-the-art smart pod capsules where single beds convert into couches via an iPod Touch, and partitions include an 80-inch projection screen to stream movies. Rain-head showers,

slippers, pajamas and feather pillows complete the experience.

**Get to work:** The trendy co-working space features tufted leather sofas, Edison light fixtures, phone booths, meeting rooms and traditional desks. Complimentary coffee fuels the work day and free beer for an hour each evening kicks off the night.

[+ the-millennials-kyoto-jp.book.direct](http://the-millennials-kyoto-jp.book.direct); pods from \$50.

### KOHUB THAILAND

**Who will love it:**

The no shoes, no shirt, no problem traveler.

**Where:** Koh Lanta, Thailand, a lush island between Krabi and Phuket in the Andaman Sea.

**What you get:** One-, two- and four-bedroom apartments are simple yet clean with a kitchenette, and standard amenities like air-conditioning and hot-water showers. The apartments are a 15-minute walk from KoHub, and the helpful staff can assist with scooter rentals.

**Get to work:** KoHub boasts robust Internet speed tests and backup generators to deal with the island's semi-regular power cuts. Basic office needs are included, like printing and scanning, and HD monitors are available to rent, which is a benefit to graphic designers and start-ups writing code for their new apps. There are air-conditioned rooms, if the tropical heat is too much; otherwise, the "office" is an open-air bungalow steps from the beach.

[+ kohub.org](http://kohub.org); apartments from \$663 per month (includes two meals per day).



### OUTPOST

**Who will love it:** Writers and coding geeks wanting a tropical setting.

**Where:** Their hub is in the heart of Ubud, Bali, with a Canggu space coming soon. A penthouse pop-up in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, is open until July.

**What you get:** Private rooms and bathrooms ooze jungle charm with four-poster beds, wooden accents, working desks and décor sourced from local artisans. Most rooms have private balconies and views overlooking the pool or nearby mountains.

**Get to work:** A strong community vibe is at the core of Outpost's mission, so expect happy hours, guest speakers and meet-and-greets with local entrepreneurs and NGOs. In Bali, a robust selection of air-conditioned meeting rooms, standing desks, large tables for group work, Skype rooms, and a jungle terrace are available. Order lunch from the personal chef or a massage from the on-site masseuse.

[+ outpost-asia.com](http://outpost-asia.com); rooms in Bali from \$989 per month.

### ONEDAY BANGKOK

**Who will love it:** Instagram addicts and coffee lovers.

**Where:** In Bangkok's upmarket Phrom Phong neighborhood and a short walk to the BTS, the city's primary form of public transportation.

**What you get:** Bedding down in the Oneday Pause hostel is a chic affair thanks to bespoke wood furnishings made by local craftsmen. The experience of sharing an eight-bed dorm is elevated with considered details like individual reading lights, power outlets, curtains and bedside storage. Upgrade to a private room for added perks like a TV and a safety deposit box.

**Get to work:** Adjoining Casa Lapin is hipster heaven with AeroPress coffee and single-origin beans, and the light-filled co-working space, Forward, is stylishly designed with exposed brick walls and banana leaf plants. There's speedy Internet, a 24/7 co-working space and high-tech meeting rooms, and membership packages are a boon to long-term visitors.

[+ onedaybkk.com](http://onedaybkk.com); beds from \$19.



COMING SOON

### lyf by Ascott

Counting millennials as a quarter of their customers, Ascott Hotels last year launched a pilot program at Singapore Management University to test features—like social spaces that can convert into hackathon or workshop zones—of Lyf (pronounced *life*), their new co-living line of hotels. All Lyf properties will be run by millennials who are dubbed "community managers"—a mix of tour guide, concierge and bartender. China will get the first look: a 112-unit Lyf Wu Tong Island Shenzhen will open this year followed by a 120-unit lyf DDA Dalian at the end of 2018. Lyf Farrer Park Singapore is slated for 2021. [lyfbyascott.com](http://lyfbyascott.com).

**ROAM**

**Who will love it:** *Eat, Pray, Love* wannabes who can't live without Wi-Fi.  
**Where:** A flat fee gives access to Roam's global communal living properties. Bali and Tokyo are their Asian locations, but the membership includes spaces in Miami and London, and, soon, San Francisco.  
**What you get:** Each co-living space is stylishly crafted by award-winning artists and architects, which means you'll stay in a contemporary boutique hotel in Ubud, or a minimalist yet spacious room with a balcony in central Tokyo. There are hotel-style niceties, too, like laundry services and yoga.  
**Get to work:** Battle-tested Internet is the big draw here, especially in Bali, where Wi-Fi is often spotty.  
 + [room.co](http://room.co); doubles from \$500 per week.



**LIVIT SPACES**

**Who will love it:** Start-up groups looking for Series A funding.  
**Where:** Currently in Bali's Gianyar neighborhood, with a new hub in central Sanur set to open in spring this year. Other locations in Denmark and Switzerland.  
**What you get:** Livit is ideal for team retreats and working holidays, and they offer villa accommodations with access to a pool, common areas and co-working spaces. To optimize productivity, three daily meals and housekeeping are included.  
**Get to work:** Start-ups rave about the modern working amenities and the fledgling business community that calls this incubator home. Mentor programs and networking events are part of the package, making it ideal for those looking for seed funding or investor pitching advice. The new, multifunctional Sanur space will host a range of events, workshops and getaways, and have a full-service café on-site.  
 + [liv.it/spaces](http://liv.it/spaces); rooms from \$50.



**Stylish co-working spaces**

WHEN A COFFEE SHOP DOESN'T CUT IT, THESE CO-WORKING SPACES HELP TO AMP UP THE PRODUCTIVITY AND GIVE OFF MAJOR #DESIGNGOALS.

**MINISTRY OF NEW, MUMBAI**

Decompress from the cacophony of India's largest city and focus on the task at hand at this co-working hub in a renovated publishing house in Mumbai's Fort district. Working rooms are finished with rich jewel tones, patterned textiles and functional-yet-stylish desks. [ministryofnew.in](http://ministryofnew.in); from \$15 per hour.

**LEARNING CENTER, BANGKOK**

In the 75-year-old Bank of Thailand, this new library, co-working space and museum joins the list of creative hubs along the Chao Phraya River. With design help from the team behind the new Thailand Creative & Design Center, the public space offers rentable meeting rooms and access to multimedia resources. [bot.or.th](http://bot.or.th); free entry.

**WEWORK WEIHAI LU, SHANGHAI**

Converted from a 1930s opium factory, the Weihai Lu branch of this au courant co-working chain is now a Midcentury Modern dream, complete with Fritz Hansen- and Eames-inspired seating, brass lamps and spiral staircase. There are 59 WeWorks worldwide, including Singapore, Seoul and Tokyo. [wework.com](http://wework.com); from \$220 per month.

**THE GREAT ROOM, SINGAPORE**

Decorated with leather sofas and marble-topped tables, one could imagine enjoying a Scotch in this über-chic space; The Great Room feels like a sleek hotel lobby for the design-conscious worker. This year will see more Singapore locations, as well as outposts in Bangkok, Hong Kong and Jakarta. [thegreatroomoffices.com](http://thegreatroomoffices.com); from \$70 per day.

FROM LEFT: CHRIS WISE; COURTESY OF LIVIT SPACES

RALF TOOTEN

**BUSINESS HOTELS**

Mix business with pleasure (and fast Wi-Fi) at these innovative hotels that prove the life of a road warrior is more than all work and no play.



**W SHANGHAI THE BUND**

In 2017, luxury hotels opened in Shanghai at a breakneck pace and chief among the anticipated openings was the Shanghai's first W Hotel, which was part of a citywide redevelopment of the North Bund that includes a spacious urban park and lifestyle complex. Business travelers will be wooed by the hotel's uninterrupted views of downtown Shanghai, dining options suitable for a working breakfast, and curated recommendations from the W Insider—the brand's version of the concierge—on where to impress a client at, for instance, a local dumpling shop.  
**Get to work:** The W Hotel boasts 6,000 square meters of meeting space—the largest in tech-centric Shanghai—and hosts can create custom mood music and a signature scent to diffuse during group meetings. When it is time for a break, let the hotel's Insider craft a "Recess" for your crew with yoga, express spa services, icebreakers or signature cocktails at the splashy Woo Bar.  
 + [whotels.com](http://whotels.com); doubles from \$295.

**The W hotel on new technology**

For hotel conglomerate Marriott, the W Hotel group is the "luxe rebel" of the family, says Anthony Ingham, Global Brand Leader, W Hotels. That means they're often a petri dish for experimenting with a new technology. As for their customers, well, these millennials are happy to be the guinea pigs. At the W in Austin, Texas, in-room Amazon Alexa devices were installed so guests could ask for city recommendations from the W Insiders for top live music spots, the best barbecue joints or local rooftop bars. While Alexa devices might not make it further than Texas, the idea, Ingham says, is about doing test runs of cutting-edge ideas in the hospitality sphere. Once new ideas get the seal of approval from the W, it's a trickle-down model to more conservative brands in the portfolio, like St. Regis Hotels. Case in point: The W was one of the first Starwood Preferred Group brands to rollout keyless entry for guest rooms, and now that technology is being adopted across the Marriott organization. But keyless entry isn't a hard sell for most customers; for the real innovation, Ingham is looking forward. "We're designing hotels now that will open in three to four years that we will be able to reconfigure the arrival space completely," he says. "We're fast approaching a time where we don't need traditional check-in spaces or welcome areas." This year, expect to see W Dubai and W Brisbane, among others, while the brand's first hotel in Japan will open in Osaka in 2021. [whotels.com](http://whotels.com).

**HYATT PLACE BANGKOK SUKHUMVIT**

Targeting self-reliant professionals who blur the lines between business travelers and digital nomads, Hyatt Place, which launched in 2005, has more than 300 locations globally. The brand-new Bangkok property is close to Queen Sirikit National Convention Centre. The stylish rooftop bar is great for drinks with clients or networking, and online check-in and express checkout make getting right to work or catching a jet-lag busting nap a little easier.

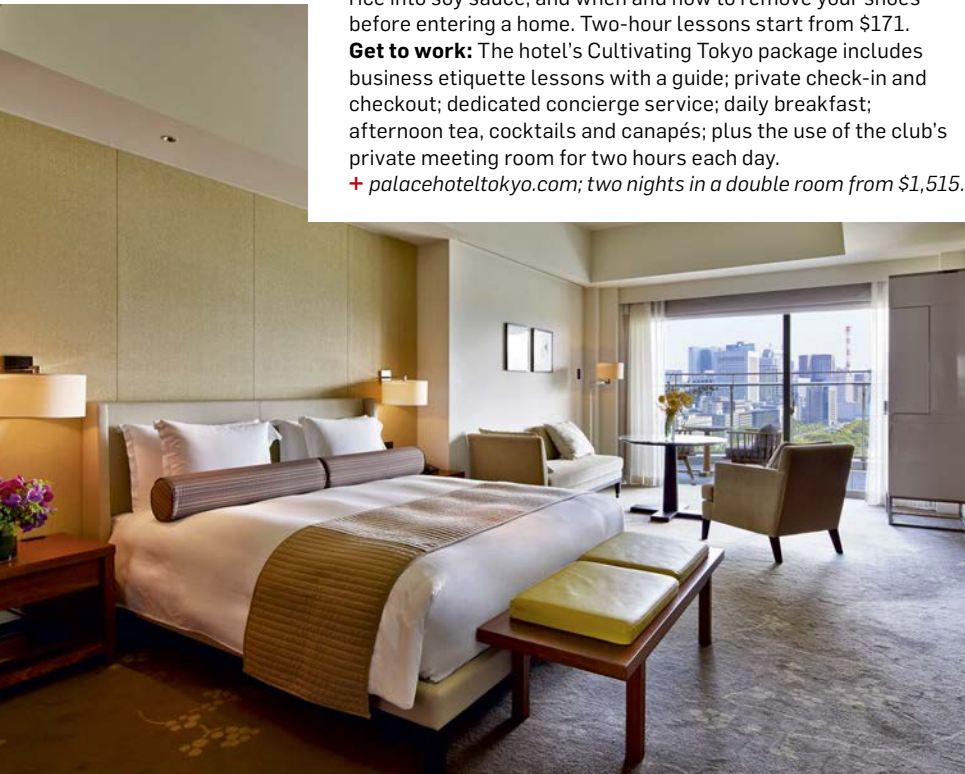
**Get to work:** Returning customers come for 24/7 business centers with meeting rooms, spacious suites with separate working areas and concierge services to craft unique meetings. Complimentary breakfast and grab-and-go options help shrink expenses. + [bangkoksukhumvit.place.hyatt.com](http://bangkoksukhumvit.place.hyatt.com); doubles from \$101.



**THE PALACE HOTEL, TOKYO**

If you didn't master the art of *meishi koukan*, the Japanese practice for presenting and receiving business cards, before landing in Tokyo, book a two- or four-hour session with the hotel's private etiquette guide. Learn the craft of Japanese gift giving; proper eating techniques, like never to dip your *nigiri* sushi rice into soy sauce; and when and how to remove your shoes before entering a home. Two-hour lessons start from \$171.

**Get to work:** The hotel's Cultivating Tokyo package includes business etiquette lessons with a guide; private check-in and checkout; dedicated concierge service; daily breakfast; afternoon tea, cocktails and canapés; plus the use of the club's private meeting room for two hours each day. + [palacehoteltokyo.com](http://palacehoteltokyo.com); two nights in a double room from \$1,515.



**COMING SOON**

**KHOS by Rosewood**

The Rosewood Hotel Group is known for luxurious hotels around the world, including standout properties in Phuket and Beijing, and later this year they're hoping to capitalize on the growing demand for business hotels that prioritize modern amenities without sacrificing style. So far, they're tight-lipped about where they'll debut their new line of hotels, dubbed KHOS, but all signs point to Asia. The name KHOS is a derivative of the Mongolian word for *pair*, and representatives for the hotel chain say they hope to "blend work and play, people and ideas, East with West and business with lifestyle." The first KHOS property is set to open later this year, while Rosewood hotels in Phnom Penh, Hong Kong and Luang Prabang are coming in the next few months, too. [rosewoodhotels.com](http://rosewoodhotels.com).

FROM TOP: COURTESY OF HYATT PLACE BANGKOK SUKHUMVIT; COURTESY OF THE PALACE HOTEL



FROM TOP: COURTESY OF SHANGRI-LA; COURTESY OF RADISSON BLU DUBAI WATERFRONT

**THE KERRY HONG KONG**

The five-star hotel brand from Shangri-La opened up their waterfront Hong Kong outpost last year, and the 16-story hotel designed by local architect André Fu has already become known as an urban resort for working travelers. Book business events and conferences in meeting space that boasts extensive harbor views and can seat more than 1,000 guests. There are also Kerry hotels in Shanghai and Beijing.

**Get to work:** Guest rooms feature a comfortable desk, ample lighting and plenty of power outlets, and the hotel is connected to a MTR station for quick access to the rest of the city. + [shangri-la.com/kerry](http://shangri-la.com/kerry); doubles from \$267.

**Hotel tech gets a reboot**

FREE-TO-USE SMARTPHONES ARE TAKING OVER HOTEL ROOMS IN A TREND THAT BOTH BOOSTS HOTELS' POSITIVE REVIEWS, AND HAS GUESTS RAVING ABOUT DITCHING EXPENSIVE ROAMING PLANS. HERE ARE SOME TO LOOK OUT FOR WHEN YOU NEXT CHECK IN.

**HANDY**

With thousands of hotels around the globe offering Handy, it's easy to see why this early adapter of the guest-facing technology took off quickly. The phones work like any other smartphone and allow for international calling, web-surfing and checking e-mail on the go. The brand's city guide recommendations cast a wide net to appeal to budget and luxury travelers. [handy.travel](http://handy.travel).

**PORTIER TECHNOLOGIES**

Targeting five-star hotels and resorts, this technology start-up is making waves in Thailand with their proprietary operating system and Samsung phones. With free international calling, unlimited 4G data and Wi-Fi hotspot capabilities, guests can connect anytime, anywhere. Open the chat function from a Bangkok tuk-tuk and quickly get directions, lunch ideas and more from your hotel's concierge or butler. [goportier.com](http://goportier.com).

**PORTER & SAIL**

Rather than offering a stand-alone smartphone, Porter & Sail is hedging their bets that travelers have space on their phone for another app. Guests staying at a partner hotel, including The Warehouse in Singapore or COMO Shambhala Estate in Bali, will receive access to the brand's curated list of lifestyle recommendations along with where to eat, shop, drink and hang out in the city. Available on iTunes and Google Play.

**RADISSON BLU DUBAI WATERFRONT**

Looking out to waterfront views, this brand-new Dubai hotel is located within Dubai Water Canal, the latest business district linking Business Bay to the Arabian Gulf. The 432-room hotel offers more than 1,000 square meters of conference space, and has a smaller, also new, sister property, Dubai Canal View, nearby. With more than 260 locations worldwide, including two more corporate-focused hotels in Dubai's media district slated for 2019, Radisson Blu gives working travelers all the basics and then some. Radisson Blu's Bangkok hotel, for example, is conveniently located between two BTS stations and features Wi-Fi, flatscreen TVs, city views and a lush, rooftop craft-beer bar when you need to unwind.

**Get to work:** Use the hotel's free One Touch meetings app to manage events, set agendas and coordinate with speakers and attendees. Bonus: The hotel will offset the carbon footprint of your meeting for free. + [radissonblu.com](http://radissonblu.com); doubles in Dubai from \$231 and Bangkok from \$126.



# SERVICED APARTMENTS

Looking for a home away from home? Serviced apartments draw sway with business travelers. Here, some reliable stand-outs.

## 137 PILLARS SUITES AND RESIDENCES

Last year saw the first expansion of the esteemed 137 Pillars House in Chiang Mai to the bustling Thai capital. Once you check in, be warned: it will be hard to leave the luxe thread count sheets, deep soak tubs, private balconies, in-room kitchens and washers and dryers. Larger residences include a dining space for up to five people. Zip up to the hotel's panoramic rooftop pool or order a cocktail at the posh Jack Bain's Bar. Don't be surprised if you find yourself wondering if this is vacation or work.

**Where in Asia:** The Bangkok residence is near Thonglor, in the heart of the city's fashionable and commercial Sukhumvit district.  
+ [137pillarsbangkok.com](http://137pillarsbangkok.com); studios from \$167.



## FAR EAST RESIDENCE

Road warriors on extended assignments will welcome the creature comforts of the brand's one-, two- and three-bedroom apartments. Defined living rooms, fully equipped kitchens and comfortable bedrooms are standard and benefits include continental breakfast, speedy Wi-Fi, gyms, pools and concierge services. Some

locations have in-room laundries, wine chillers or private cellars. Many include outdoor play areas for children, and Staycation Guides offer things to do on your time off.

**Where in Asia:** More than 20 properties in Singapore, Australia and New Zealand.  
+ [stayfareast.com](http://stayfareast.com); apartments in Singapore from \$190.



## FRASERS HOSPITALITY

Seven distinct hotel brands sit under the Frasers Hospitality umbrella, including three award-winning serviced apartments: Fraser Suites, Fraser Place and Fraser Residence. The design-focused residence Capri by Fraser is aimed at the young guns, and their millennial-minded facilities include iPad check-ins, e-concierge services and a modern décor scheme that mixes in pops of color. Fraser Residence woos a more traditional (read: mid-40s) client base that values human contact over fast check-ins and high-tech rooms. Modena by Fraser lands in the middle, and focuses on balancing work and play—the laundries even have their own Nintendo Wii.

**Where in Asia:** There are properties in Malaysia, Australia, Singapore, India, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam and China.  
+ [frasershospitality.com](http://frasershospitality.com); doubles in Kuala Lumpur from \$104.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: LEFT: COURTESY OF 137 PILLARS BANGKOK; COURTESY OF FRASERS HOSPITALITY; COURTESY OF FAR EAST RESIDENCE



FROM TOP: COURTESY OF SEDONA HOTELS AND SUITES; COURTESY OF THE ASCOTT; COURTESY OF PAN PACIFIC



## PAN PACIFIC SERVICED SUITES

Twenty hotels, resorts and serviced suites dot Asia—with a few North American postal codes in the mix—and guests of the serviced suites will enjoy extras like residents' lounges, gourmet breakfasts, rooftop infinity pools and top-of-the-line fitness centers.

**Where in Asia:** From Melbourne to Hanoi, the brand is well-represented in the region, with flagship property Pan Pacific Serviced Suites Orchard on Beach Road in the heart of Singapore. The 180 suites at this Singaporean standout include contemporary décor and access to 24-hour personal assistants who can book dinner reservations, assist with networking or make an appointment to meet with a top tailor.

+ [panpacific.com](http://panpacific.com); doubles in Singapore from \$190.

## SEDONA HOTELS & SUITES

As well as a five-star hotel in Rangoon, Sedona offers deluxe serviced suites in Saigon for working travelers looking for a more high-end stay. At the Saigon property, conveniently located in upmarket District 1, a new 195-room Grand Tower offers studios, one-, two-, and three-bedroom suites. All rooms have reliable Wi-Fi and a back-up power supply, if needed.

**Where in Asia:** Sedona's hotel in Rangoon overlooks Inya Lake; the Saigon serviced suites are a short walk from Pasteur Street.  
+ [sedonahotels.com.sg](http://sedonahotels.com.sg); doubles in Rangoon from \$113; apartments in Saigon from \$140.

## THE ASCOTT

The Ascott's spacious kitchenettes and floorplans put some Hong Kong apartments to shame.

The brand doesn't shy away from luxury hotel perks, and most properties include top-notch health clubs with personal trainers, pools and a kids' club.

**Where in Asia:** The Ascott is in 14 countries across the continent, but they're making a big push in

China—with 20,000 rooms, it is their biggest market—and Chinese expansion plans for 2018 include Shanghai and Hangzhou. Outside of the People's Republic, there are properties in Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia, and new apartments will open this year in Vietnam and Cambodia.

+ [the-ascott.com](http://the-ascott.com); doubles in Kuala Lumpur from \$100. Ⓡ

## Work while traveling the world

FROM A MONTH TO A FULL YEAR, HERE ARE TWO PROGRAMS THAT OFFER DIGITAL NOMADS A PROFESSIONAL WORK ABROAD EXPERIENCE THAT SHINES ON A RESUME.

### WE ROAM

Looking for a catalyst for creativity but can't put a career on hold? We Roam provides co-living spaces in Europe, South America and Asia, along with immersive experiences like language classes and speaker series, for participants to enjoy on a month-long stop in each location. [we-roam.com](http://we-roam.com); rooms from \$500 per week.

### REMOTE YEAR

Seventy-five professionals with a sense of wanderlust follow Remote Year's planned itineraries that bounce across several continents, from the Far East to Latin America, working from co-working hubs along the way. The team coordinates housing, travel plans and community events. [remoteyear.com](http://remoteyear.com); \$5,000 deposit then \$2,000 per month.