

All the presidential suites

Washington DC's infamous Watergate Hotel is set to reopen this summer under the Preferred Hotels and Resorts portfolio. The 342-room property on the banks of the Potomac has undergone a \$125m (€110m) renovation since closing its doors in 2007.



Hotel B Lima

Hotel B's new rooftop terrace offers a fresh vantage point from which to enjoy views of Lima's bohemian Barranco district, where the 17-room boutique hotel opened in 2013.

The beachside belle époque retreat was built by French architect Claude Sahut in 1914 and was restored by a team of sculptors from the Fine Arts Academy with the addition of The Terrace by Peruvian designer Luz Maria Buse. From its rooftop, guests can soak in the Peruvian sun and sights of the Pacific coast while sampling food by chef Oscar Velarde. — MSS

hotelb.pe



Tribute

Hong Kong

The Tribute Hotel has opened its doors in the historic Yau Ma Tei district in Kowloon and the 24-room former office block is certainly worthy of accolades. "We went for quality design and materials with a contemporary theme," says co-founder Dinesh Nihalchand.

Guests on the go can select from a range of complimentary nibbles in the lobby in addition to breakfast in the morning and free-pour craft beer in the evening. Tribute also works closely with a wide range of local producers, with offerings from Hong Kong fashion houses, craftsmen and tea and coffee suppliers found throughout the hotel. — DEP

tributehotels.com



Q&A
Kevin O'Shea (left) and David Bowd
Co-founders,
Salt Hotels
New York

Salt Hotels' third property, The Chequit, opens in Shelter Island this May. We caught up with the pair to talk about the success of their chain in the making.

Q What is the concept behind the brand?

A David Bowd: We wanted to recreate the personal touch of the bed and breakfast with great design.

Q Tell us about the hotel's design.

A Kevin O'Shea: Our designs are inspired by the building's history, in this case The Chequit, which dates back to the 1870s. We never over-design for the sake of it.

Q What makes a stay at Salt Hotels unique?

A DB: It is personal. We don't have a check-in time for example, and write to each guest a few days before they arrive to ask him or her what time they want their room to be ready.

Q What can we expect from Salt in the coming year?

A DB: In the next two years we will open in Denver, New York and New Jersey, followed by Palm Springs, Los Angeles and London. — AK
salthotels.com

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AIRLINE Flights of fancy

Flying fish Kumamoto, Japan

Preface

Characterised by its tiny fleet and dolphin-adorned livery, Japan's Amakusa Airline takes a quirky line in attracting new customers.

Writer
Kenji Hall

In Japan, Amakusa Airline is as small as carriers get. Based on the Amakusa Islands in Kumamoto prefecture, the firm operates up to 10 flights to four cities daily with just one aircraft: a 39-seat Bombardier turbo-propeller DHC-8-103.

The airline launched in 1998 as a joint venture between local governments. There were other ways of travelling between Amakusa and the main island of Kyushu – by ferry or car over the Amakusa Gokyo bridges – but it was felt an airline would boost trade and tourism.

Not every flight starts or ends on the Amakusa Islands so targeting would-be tourists on the Osaka-Kumamoto flight is one of the airline's goals. The inflight newsletter offers tips on dining and dolphin watching (hence the aircraft's dolphin-themed paint job) and on-board snacks feature shrimp rice crackers, *ponkan* (tangerine) juice and other local fare. Two years ago the airline won national attention with its limited-offer Dolphin Paradise ticket: for just ¥15,000 (€115) travellers got a one-day pass on all 10 routes but they had to be on every flight, starting from 08.00 and lasting until 19.30. "If you got off before the last flight you had to pay for each flight separately," says sales and marketing head Shigeo Kawasaki.

The airline's prospects have looked brighter in recent times and by early 2016 a new twin-engine turboprop ATR 42-600, built by French-Italian aircraft manufacturer ATR, will replace the Bombardier workhorse. It's still undecided whether the ATR will also have the dolphin paint job. — (M)
amx.co.jp



The facts

Number of staff: 57

Number of planes: 1
Bombardier turbo-propeller
DHC-8-103

Passengers transported
last year: 76,000

Seats per flight: 39

Revenue last year: ¥750m
(€5.6m)

