

Projects

Hotels/Resorts/Wellness

Going Places 2019: Sanya

Alia Akkam • Photography by Owen Raggett and Dirk Weiblen • March 5, 2019



Attractively melding tropical rainforests and beaches with such cultural draws as ancient temples, Sanya, found on the southern end of Hainan Island, has emerged as one of China's most sought-after tourist destinations. It's also a top global market in the Asia Pacific region, with 53 hotels and 17,231 guestrooms, according to Lodging Econometrics. With interest booming in this resort-like city, numerous global hotel brands have fittingly planted their flags here, including Park Hyatt, Rosewood, Autograph Collection, and EDITION. W, Andaz, and Waldorf Astoria also have properties under development, while the recent openings of an Atlantis and a Hyatt Place underscore how Sanya's natural surroundings provide design inspiration for those seeking an otherworldly experience.

Atlantis Sanya > Located along Haitang Bay, the Atlantis Sanya is a massive 1,314-room hotel (with five underwater suites) that spans a waterpark and retail and restaurant collection. Sibling to Atlantis Ko Olina in Hawaii and Dubai properties Atlantis, the Palm, and the forthcoming Royal Atlantis Resort & Residences, this outpost depicts the ancient myth of Atlantis via a 48-story building with an undulating façade united by two fin-like forms thanks to architecture firm HOK. Featuring a podium envisioned as spiraling vortexes of water, the tower maximizes ocean views in guestrooms and illuminates a connection to the aquatic life that is “both symbolic and literal throughout the property,” says Greg Cranford, senior principal at HOK's New York office. Having worked on the Dubai resort, Jeffrey Beers, principal and founder of New York-based Jeffrey Beers International, was already immersed in the Atlantis ethos, but for Sanya's interiors, it was time for a “new and futuristic narrative that was aimed at a completely different demographic,” he says. Studying the South China Sea's marine life led to dressing public spaces and corridors in deep blue and turquoise and etching purple sea fan coral and Chinese lacebark elm onto glass and bronze surfaces. Zitan, Hongmu, and Jichimu, hardwoods native to the province, were also embraced.