Whiter than white

Tangier’s colourful past may have gone but it remains a feast for the senses
Ask a concierge

Where can I get a present for my pet?

Prudence Cheng
Chief concierge
The Murray, Hong Kong

As the old Chinese proverb goes, if you’re good with birds, you’re also good with people. There’s a strong Hong Kong tradition of keeping birds, even if it has slightly fallen out of fashion now that you’re no longer allowed to take them on public transport. If you go to Bird Garden in Mongkok on Kowloon, you’ll meet Mr Chan Lok-choi, Hong Kong’s last bamboo birdcage maker. He creates intricate cages by hand – a dying craft in the city. The cages are beautiful collectables and certainly a conversation starter.

Joyce Louie
Chef concierge
Waldorf Astoria, Beverly Hills, LA

In Los Angeles pets are big business, and there are quite a few fashionable options when it comes to shopping for them. The luxury lifestyle boutique Duroque in West Hollywood has a pet decor selection including a Dior velvet chaise longue at $1,320. Also, try Only in Beverly Hills souvenir shop, specifically their line of Posh Pooch chew toys that come in luxury designer brand-inspired themes, like “Chewy Vuitton” and “Furcedes”. For homemade treats, we like The Dog Bakery, located at the Original LA Farmers Market.

Felipe Costa
Concierge manager
The Winston Hotel, Johannesburg

With tonnes of green space, Joburg is great for pets, but if you decide to leave yours at home and fancy bringing them back a gift, Benji + Moon, stocked at Le Pawtique pet spa, is the go-to brand for hand-crafted artisanal pet products that look cool around the house. They make ceramic and concrete dog bowls that look like sculpted contemporary design pieces, plus chunky vegetable-tanned leather collars. The stuffing in the dog toys is made from recycled plastic and five per cent of all buys goes to animal welfare.

Just doing it

Max Aniort
Le Collectionist co-founder on the death of tourism

I t was in 1998 that B Joseph Pine and James H Gilmore first introduced the “experience economy” in the Harvard Business Review. The central idea is now fairly well known: the world no longer wants to buy stuff, rather it wants to do stuff. In tourism, which has always been about the experience, it’s seen an entirely new travel paradigm emerge and, arguably, has allowed start-ups like mine to grow. I co-founded Le Collectionist in 2013. We are, essentially, a luxe home-share company with properties all over Europe. Still, even in the beginning, we knew we needed to be more than just real-estate rentals. Airbnb launched experiences in 2016 but we do it differently with a bespoke approach. To ensure each trip is immersive, we create experiences customised for each guest. From the personalised booking process to the arrival, departure, we handle all the details, so travellers can maximise every minute of their stay. In the past, luxury might have meant bigger is better, but not any more. Of course, we can still get you a superyacht on the Côte D’Azur, but actually our most popular experience isn’t at all fancy: a bouillabaisse on a fishing boat in Marseilles. Simple, but with a twist: it’s with Jean Claude-Bianco, the so-called “miracle fisherman” who in 1998 found the lost bracelet of writer-pilot Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, missing in action since 1944. This kind of experientialism, I think, is slowing overtaking conformist checklist travel. Tourism is dead; long live tourism. lecollectionist.com
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