

HOTELS



Jing' An In Shanghai's PuLi Hotel and Spa features dark timber paneling and historic Beijing Hutong bricks along with Western and Chinese art pieces and books to create a space with luxurious texture and depth, just like its cuisine.

FEEL THE HEAT

Local, sustainable ingredients and dramatic design characterize today's hottest concepts in F&B.

By Ann Bagel Storck, managing editor

Defining a “hot” food and beverage concept can be elusive, but judging by most new arrivals on the hotel F&B scene, key menu buzzwords include local, seasonal, authentic and sustainable. “The movement gaining momentum is a focus on quality,” says Arlene Spiegel, a New York City-based consultant who specializes in matching hotels with F&B concepts. “By quality, I mean local and indigenous ingredients from a certain geography, farmer or vintner.”

A restaurant’s ambience is critical too, and prominent themes among new concepts include dramatic architecture or views in addition to a fun, interactive experience. Bob Puccini, president and CEO of San Francisco-based restaurant developer Puccini Group, notes that restaurants can be affordable entertainment. “Think of the cost of going to a movie with popcorn and the cost of a meal and a drink,” he says.

“Restaurants in many ways are bargains for singles or couples.”

Hotels still battle the perception that their F&B offerings are inherently staid and often outdated, but that idea may be starting to fade. “Owners and developers are seeking partnerships with restaurants that really step up to the plate and enhance the guest experience,” Spiegel offers.

Here, HOTELS highlights a “dazzling dozen” new F&B concepts doing just that. While there were no absolute criteria for this collection, most of these restaurants and bars debuted within the past six months. They represent hotels around the world and include various types of properties, from luxury to midscale. Most important, they all have menus, design elements and almost indefinable qualities that make them decidedly “hot.”