

By Michael Webb

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olympic dreams

Beijing gears up for this summer's most anticipated event

Puttin' on the Ritz

One design firm that has been playing a large role in the city's renaissance is HBA/Hirsch Bedner Associates (the firm actually first put their mark on the city 10 years ago with the St. Regis). Among the many: the already-opened Ritz-Carlton Financial Street and the renovated Hilton, as well as the soon-to-be-completed Regent, Four Seasons, Kempinski, and China World Trade Center (set to be the tallest building in the city). But one of the firm's most notable openings: the Ritz-Carlton Beijing Guohua and next-door JW Marriott, both part of massive mixed-use complex on Chang'an. Blending mid-1700s English country manor style with luxury touches, the Ritz is one of the first Western-designed hotels in Beijing. "It is just one more example of the

striking changes that are taking place right now in Beijing," says Betsy Hughes, associate at HBA's Atlanta office, adding that WATG handled the architecture. Highlights include beveled glass entry doors, marble floors with red and yellow stone accents, stained wood paneling, four restaurants, top-floor spa and fitness center, and guestrooms that feel more like a manor house with bright accents, East-meets-West artwork, and luxurious bathrooms with stone floors and black marble accents.



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who matters. and why.