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Expanding Hong Kong Serviced Apartment Brand – Ovolo Inspires Design-Conscious Living

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The Art of Urban Living

THE traditional adage of ‘location, location, location’ defining the merit of a property is only the start of the formula for cutting-edge Hong Kong boutique serviced apartment brand Ovolo.

“Our key philosophy is also to make living so much easier, more enjoyable and effortless,” says founder Girish Jhunjhnuwala.

The lifestyle focus of this leading independent provider of both short and longer-term sanctuaries, therefore, embraces key additional aspects.

Award-winning intelligent design by brothers Johnny and Paul Kember of renowned architects KplusK maximises a feeling of space, bathing apartments and public areas in natural light to nurture the soul.

State-of-the-art technology and communications are also key elements, from latest 42-inch LCD TVs and surround-sound home theatre systems to “smart lighting”, i-Pod docks and statutory wi-fi internet.

After an inevitably hectic day in this city that never sleeps, recuperation is in “possibly the most comfortable beds” in the service apartment market. Libraries of books, DVDs and video games cater for relaxation ‘down time’ while in-house business centres cover all main aspects of after-hours work commitments, from faxing to printing.

Given that a clientele ranging from high-flying executives to younger professionals on more modest budgets and even families ‘on the road’ may not have the time or energy to shop for themselves, extensive concierge services feature order-in food and wine and free grocery deliveries, as well as laundry.

Ovolo is also an instant ticket to ‘in the know’ social life that might otherwise take months or even years to establish – with Ovolo Indulge guide plus discounts and privileges thrown-in at Hong Kong’s hippest bars, restaurants, nightclubs, spas, beauty salons and fitness centres, including complimentary membership at fashionable California Fitness.

Ample storage space is also a key consideration, accommodating those arriving with most important clothes and possessions in suitcases.



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In this environmentally-aware age, eco-friendliness and sustainability are also high on the agenda.

Ovolo prides itself on maintaining a low carbon footprint wherever possible, with bamboo flooring, costly but low-consumption LED and fluorescent lighting.

Ongoing green efforts extend to eco-friendly paint, non-toxic cleaning products, light sensors and switches to reduce consumption, re-usable canvas shopping bags and even eco-kettles.

SPACE FOR LIVING

Ovolo apartments are “not the cheapest in town”, concedes Mr. Jhunjhnuwala. But they are among the largest with many occupying entire floors.

While some 200-300 sq ft studios are available, starting from HK\$11,500 a month, most apartments are sized from 500-700 sq ft – the size of an average city apartment for 1 or 2 bedrooms, priced from around HK\$16-40,000 a month – rising to 1,200 sq ft penthouse-style accommodation, equivalent to a reasonably up-market duplex and priced accordingly, from HK\$50-60,000 a month.

“We have pioneered boutique contemporary luxury, with comfort and style as a key focus, in this sector,” says Hong Kong-born Mr. Jhunjhnuwala.

“From the start, we have led the market in creating groundbreaking concepts and seamless ways of making our apartments truly like a new home.

“For us, it’s all about understanding what our guests really need and want – how to make their new lives in Hong Kong as comfortable, appealing and effortless as possible. “It’s enough of a trauma being relocated in the first place; our job is to ensure their transition is smooth, hassle-free, enjoyable and delightful. In the end it’s all about optimising lifestyle.”

STYLISH CONVENIENCE

The unique and individual identity of Ovolo has clearly paid dividends. Since being founded in 2002, the brand has grown “in a measured way” to a portfolio of 174 apartments in five buildings – all on Hong Kong Island, within comfortable commuting distance, or in some cases just a stroll, from the main Central business district.

The brand also boasts occupancy levels of over 95 per cent – a league leader in the local serviced apartment industry.

Ovolo takes its name from a classical architectural term for convex mouldings, which were a feature of its initial flagship complex at 2 Arbuthnot Road, Central.

Inspired by state-of-the-art boutique hotels in London and New York, this signature property features fully self-contained apartments each occupying an entire floor, in an ideal location for both work and play just minutes from the financial nerve-centre of the city and the eclectic nightlife of Lan Kwai Fong and Soho.



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These exquisitely designed, ultra-chic Manhattan-style suites immediately established Ovolo as a trendsetter.

Ovolo's second property, at 286 Queens Road, targets a much younger expatriate crowd moving to Hong Kong on more moderate budgets. Again just a stroll from Central and nightlife, these chic New York-style apartments in the heart of the city feature ultra-contemporary design, elegant furnishings and most up-to-date night-tech features.

Design was also "inspired by nature and the natural elements, making it a soothing hideaway from the hustle and bustle of the city".

For its next property, Ovolo ventured beyond downtown Hong Kong into the upcoming Aberdeen district at 100 Shek Pai Wan Road in Tin Wan, just minutes from Cyberport and Ocean Park, while still on major transport routes to Central.

NEW OPENINGS

Newly-opened in Western district, one of the oldest areas of Hong Kong, a complex acquired from a boutique operator at 111 High Street, Sai Ying Pun is part of Ovolo's latest expansion.

"It's the ultimate urban retreat, close enough to Central and Cyberport, yet far enough away to unwind – the perfect elixir to Hong Kong's hectic pace," says Mr. Jhunjnuwala.

Also newly-acquired is the "optimum residence for the sophisticated, urban professional" at 222 Hollywood Road, Sheung Wan. Its look is inspired by the neighborhood's edgy and stylish character yet its interiors are plush and comfortable.

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