



Find peace in Buddha-themed hotel

MAHAYANA OCT BOUTIQUE, WHICH LOOKS LIKE A TEMPLE, OFFERS GUESTS A SPECIAL ATMOSPHERE

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SHENZHEN — You can get married at the Mahayana OCT Boutique.

You just can't sleep in the same room as your spouse after the ceremony.

Designed to replicate life in a temple, the Mahayana OCT Boutique might not be the first Buddha-themed hotel in the world, but it has to be the only one that requires couples to stay in separate rooms.

The reason? Well, show some respect in front of the Buddha.

Sitting next to the quiet Huaxing Temple, located halfway up the mountain and facing the sea 30 kilometers east of Shenzhen, the 22-room hotel is geared towards privacy and peace.

A total of eight theme hotels — including a 'castle' and the SPA resort — are scattered throughout the nine-square-kilometer area of OCT East Shenzhen. All are placed next to one or two attractions, be it the hot-air balloon, golf course or the small tea town situated on top of the mountain.

You might hesitate before checking in to a 1,600 yuan (\$248.5) per night room (suites cost 3,600 yuan and, remember, couples need two rooms), but it might just be worth it for that peaceful state of mind.

The 12,000 square meter Huaxing Temple isn't spacious by temple standards, but it's big enough to feature a nice Chinese garden and the 23.3-meter-high gold-plated Kwan-yin (Guanyin) — one of the major attractions of the area. The temple buildings, surrounded by old lindens and containing several cultural attractions, including a small Buddha museum, are beautifully laid out 486m above sea level.

Looking exactly like part of the temple, the Mahayana-based hotel chooses cassock yellow as its basic tone. A cup of Puer Tea awaits you at check-in as Zen music hums in the background.

Guest rooms resemble those of a standard hotel, with a large square bed in the middle. But there's no cozy couch, chaise lounge or shining glass in the living area; instead, a tatami-like wooden space provides a refreshing meditation corner.

Rising early is a must.

As the meditation corner faces



A guest room at the Mahayana OCT Boutique

south and close to the window, either reading or meditation in the sunshine is ideal for "morning exercise." Your neighbors — those noisy birds outside the room — are there to make sure you don't oversleep.

Monks and priests are available for Zen consultation.

A vegetarian diet is encouraged and provided, and Buddhist-style weddings are available at the hotel. But if the tranquil temple hotel isn't your speed, how about a room behind a waterfall?

Hidden behind a large man-made waterfall, Otique Aqua Hotel is a 94-room hotel that combines the theme of water with modern interior design in a water park at the foot of the mountain.

Guests in some rooms will find their bathtub in an odd location — the middle of the bedroom. With a huge shell-shaped tub in front of the bed, guest rooms turn out to be potential honeymoon suites. Blue LED lighting and background music add extra ambiance.

If you pull back the curtain: Surprise! A rollercoaster climbs a huge rock outside the window.

But the wild party at Water Park closes early, leaving guests undisturbed.

One small problem: there are more mosquitoes than you might expect.

For the more budget-conscious, the Cargo Hostel offers housing for backpackers or those who don't mind sharing a room. The bed and breakfast sports a bright orange and green color scheme and simulates the environment of a huge container truck.

The hostel boasts a bird habitat with about 100 flamingos and exotic parrots. The outdoor café on the second-floor terrace provides a serene view of it.



Designed to replicate life in a temple, the Mahayana OCT Boutique is a Buddha-themed hotel, which gives guests a unique feeling.

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