



TOP CHOICES

Clockwise from top left: The Omnia hotel in Zermatt, Switzerland; Amber at The Landmark Mandarin Oriental; Candice Chan-Chao



MY FAVOURITE THINGS

Candice Chan-Chao, the founder of J Candice Interior Architects, enthuses about the architectural beauty of the Bank of China Tower, dining at Amber and the view from her bedroom window



Favourite area at home?

My bedroom, which overlooks beautiful lush greenery and bamboo. With the large windows open and the sun soaking into the room, listening to the magpies sing on a late Sunday morning is when I feel the most content and relaxed.

Favourite city?

I love the hustle and bustle of New York—the interesting interweaving of the old and the new, the posh and the grungy. I also love the city for a nostalgic reason, as my husband and I started our careers there.

Favourite hotel?

There are too many! The Omnia in Zermatt, Switzerland comes

to mind first. The hotel is on a hilltop; guests arrive at the bottom of the hill, inside a cave, and an ultra-modern lift then brings you to the reception level. The interior has a beautiful interlay of simplistic continental influences and modernism with the use of light oak and perforated metals. I love the heated indoor swimming pool, which has a stunning view of the white slopes outside—perfect to wind down after a day of skiing.

Favourite building?

The Bank of China Tower by IM Pei is one of the most exquisite buildings of all time. It's iconic on the Hong Kong skyline, and I love how the building changes its look throughout the day.

Favourite artist?

At the moment, I really like Zhang Daqian's work, especially the later works where he splashed vibrant colours onto his paintings. My mother-in-law was very generous and passed on one of his works to us. The painting ties in perfectly with our furnishings.

Favourite restaurant?

My all-time favourite is probably Amber at The Landmark Mandarin Oriental. Richard Ekkebus is amazing at combining flavours and textures; every dish is a work of art. And although I have only been once, I think about Pho Hoa Pasteur, a small local joint in Ho Chi Minh City, all the time. The air conditioning isn't cool enough and the

ambience is lacking—but the pho there is the best I've ever had. And of course I can't forget the restaurant that I've grown up with, Café de Coral. The baked pork chop rice is always there for me—it's my comfort food.

Favourite bar?

I don't bar-hop as often as I used to, but we recently went to Vault +82 in Seoul, Korea. We weren't planning to go there, but we were captured by the sounds of a grand piano echoing through the alleyways of a hilly area of Cheongdam. We arrived at this small yet well-designed house with all its doors opened, and found out that it was a sort of speakeasy with a modern bar in the basement, holding what is probably Seoul's most extensive collection of whiskies.

Favourite book?

The Art of Happiness teaches a lot about inner peace. Finding true balance and harmony in life is particularly essential to me; I believe the state of your inner being not only impacts your perceptions and experiences, it can also be seen and translated in your work. ①