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Shangri-La The Shard Ushers In Spring With Its Culinary Updates



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Below, all of London is laid out, resplendent with its neon lights twinkling in the dark. From Level 52 of The Shard – the home of **Shangri-La The Shard's** bar, **Gong** (the highest bar in the city) – it's an awesome sight. Even the most standard cocktail is elevated here – with the moody vibe of Gong's design – based on traditional Chinese wood architecture – adding a resonance to the views *and* your chosen drink.



Gong Bar at Shangri-La The Shard. (CREDIT: © ANDREW BEASLEY 2019)

But, as this is quite possibly London's ultimate late-night spot, you don't have to settle for anything 'standard' here – especially with a rich line-up of inventive cocktails featuring on the menu. From 'Guava & Spice' to 'Flowers & Coconut', inspiration has been taken from the hotel brand's Asia Pacific roots.

It's something that is also echoed in the design ethos seen throughout the hotel. Spreading over levels 34-52 of the famous building originally designed by master-architect Renzo Piano, the feel is sleek and contemporary – plush carpets, standout chandeliers and marble finishing. But there are also references to the Shangri-La's Asian roots, with Chinese ink paintings found in the ground-floor lobby entrance, orchids dotted everywhere and – in the signature suites – handmade silk wallpaper with a classic geese motif, referencing a traditional Chinese tale, to represent the beauty and serenity they experience from an infinite sky.



The iconic view of The Shard. (CREDIT: SHANGRI-LA THE SHARD)

Talking of which, it's the sky – or rather skyline – that brings the wow-factor here. Everywhere you look, it's dazzling, with the hotel offering views across all directions of the capital. From this height, you can see just how the River Thames snakes its way across the city; and how some of our best-loved buildings – Tower Bridge, Big Ben and St Paul's Cathedral – look like something made for Toy Town.

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City views as seen from the 'London Suite'. (CREDIT: SHANGRI-LA THE SHARD)

Room décor across the 202 rooms is 'city slick' in style, and while all have floor-to-ceiling windows, no two rooms are exactly alike. Yours might feature wood-panelling, elegant burnished silk wallpaper embossed with cherry blossom and a bathtub, perfectly situated so you can drift off as the clouds float by.

Giving you the ultimate first impression, however, are the remote-controlled blinds which automatically start to raise as you first enter, revealing *those* views. Details are everything, from the exquisite handmade treats from the pastry chef to welcome you to the genius TV which is set into the bathroom mirror.



Table with a view at Ting. (CREDIT: SHANGRI-LA THE SHARD)

One of the highlights is the hotel's famous sky-high dining offerings, and for spring this year, there have been some new updates, which will no doubt refresh its famous culinary approach.

Ting, the hotel's signature restaurant, featuring a unique British-Asian fusion menu, sees chef **Paolo Belloni** take over as the newly appointed executive chef. He has previously worked in some of the world's leading kitchens, including at **Kulm Hotel St. Moritz**, and Michelin star restaurants **Ristorante Cala di Volpe** in Sardinia. From the 'Sweet and Sour Lobster', which comes with fried rice and green onion salad, to the 'Cornish Plaice' with smoked clams in a Thai Red Curry – the dishes are bursting with a multi-layering of flavours and unique marrying of English and Asian produce and flavours. Signature dishes include 'Shanghai Noodles' and 'Hainanese Chicken Rice' and, while the vegetable sides are just as standout, there's also a pleasingly eclectic tasty plant-based menu, too – with inventive dishes, such as 'Korean Cauliflower Popcorn', 'Roasted Taro Root' and 'Braised Beef Tomato' taking centre stage.



In the 'Iconic Shard Suite' you can truly soak in the views. (CREDIT: SHANGRI-LA THE SHARD)

New pastry chef **Leyre Pedrazuela**, recently seen as a contestant on the UK's *Bake Off: The Professionals*, has also arrived. Passionate about working with sustainable and fresh, local ingredients, she will combine classic Asian flavours with the sweetness of patisserie. Take the 'Chocolate and Miso' (a chocolate mousse, with salted toffee crémeux, gold chocolate and miso ice cream), for instance – a decadent delight and not to be missed. Pedrazuela is also set to relaunch the hotel's afternoon tea offering with her new concept, featuring pastry inspired by London's skyline and its famous architecture.



Have a cinematic moment at the Sky Pool. (CREDIT: SHANGRI-LA THE SHARD)

Across its lofty floors, guests can expect a cinematic experience of London. Making it even more memorable is an early morning or late-night dip in the Sky Pool, or by drifting off with one of the new 'Wellness in the Clouds' treatments devised by **Neal's Yard** in its pop-up spa. It's heady stuff.

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