



IN THE CLUB Banyan Tree has launched Asia's first destination club: the Private Collection. A one-time joining fee of USD 120,000, and annual dues of USD 3,000, get you one week a year in a two-bedroom villa at Banyan Tree resorts in Phuket, Seychelles, Bintan, Ringha or Lijiang, or their exclusive club residences in Tuscany, Provence, and London. Membership is perpetual and transferable and, from an investment point of view, members enjoy asset protection and likely returns. Some 20 destinations – from Bali to Barbados; Marrakech to Mexico – are slated for inclusion in the next few years. In the words of Rannie Tan, Group Director of the Banyan Tree Private Collection: "It's like having holiday homes all over the world." (www.banyantreeresidences.com)

WIDGET WISDOM The Westin Renewal Council is now in session at <http://findrenewal.com>. This mildly addictive, feel-good website hosts a panel of well-being experts who share daily tips and personal insights to help you find renewal at work, home, and on the road. You can even get a widget of wisdom to pop up on your desktop each morning, reminding you to "schedule a daily meeting with yourself" or "never eat standing up."



BOUTIQUE BANANAS Shanghai is going boutique bananas, with two more high-profile openings in June. Two years after her Phillippe Starck-designed JIA Hong Kong had traveling scenesters all a-twitter, Yenn Wong has opened a second JIA property (pictured above) in a heritage building on Nanjing Xilu (021 6217 9000). A stone's throw away, the Accor-run Pudi Boutique Hotel (021 5158 5888) near Xintiandi features original works by contemporary Chinese artists, and boasts Starck's members-only club Volar downstairs.

HUTONG HOTSPOTS Why trundle through Beijing's hutongs in a convoy of tourist tricycles, when you can hunker down in your own 500-year-old courtyard – complete with rain showers and room service? A handful of new hutong hotels have transformed the capital's traditional residences into unique, and remarkably affordable, accommodation options. Our current fave is Hotel Cote Cour SL (www.hotelcotecoursl.com). This 14-room gem (pictured below) set around a colorful courtyard mixes Chinese charm and contemporary chic, and comes with flat screen TVs, free Wi-Fi and a swanky lounge where the chef cooks up whatever is fresh from the market that day (look for the full review in an upcoming *Travels in Style*). For boutique on a budget, try Guxiang 20 (6400 5566) housed along trendy Nanluoguxiang. Rooms here start from RMB 500, ranging up to RMB 1,280 for its three spacious suites, all of which come with big wooden patios overlooking the hotel's rooftop tennis court.

