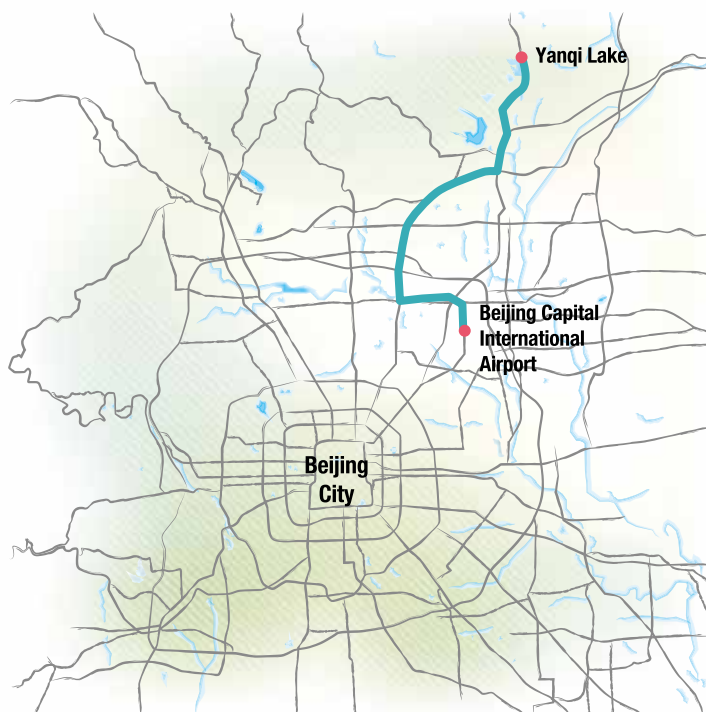




New dawn

After debuting with Apec leaders as guests, a scenic venue is poised to lure more meetings from bustling Beijing, writes **Marisa Cannon**



The Sunrise Kempinski Beijing and Yanqi Island was arguably the most anticipated hotel and resort to open in China last year. Its first event did not disappoint.

The hotel's conference centre, located on the shore of Yanqi Lake, was the first in China to host a global summit outside a major city: the Apec Economic Leaders' Meeting, which among its guests saw presidents Barack Obama, Vladimir Putin and Xi Jinping.

The resort is located 60 km from Beijing's city centre. Sunrise Kempinski Beijing and Yanqi Lake is the umbrella brand for a number of venues including the Sunrise Kempinski Hotel Beijing, the Yanqi Hotel and another 12 boutique hotels. Together with the main hotel, Kempinski runs the meetings facilities on the 14 sqkm of grounds, including the 8,277sqm conference centre where the final day of the Apec summit was held.

Preparations for the summit began in early 2013. Employees who joined the staff once the hotel opened in November 2014 worked with China's Foreign Affairs ministry and the Beijing government who gave instructions on set-up, security, menus and themes for the event. The summit was held in Jixian Hall and saw 21 world leaders, an entourage of about 300 and more than



4,000 members of the media. The scale of the event required most of the Sunrise Kempinski's 16 buildings to be used.

"We worked closely with the central government's security team to ensure that the location was swept and that maximum security was implemented," said Brice Péan, general manager of the Sunrise Kempinski. "Although the facility on Yanqi Island is large, the challenges we faced concerned logistics and allocation of manpower around the various buildings."

Péan said an additional 395-strong taskforce was deployed from other Kempinski-branded hotels, as well as those from Chinese luxury hotelier NUO, to support his own staff of 395 employees at the event.

The Sunrise Kempinski hopes the publicity will help it to attract meeting organisers seeking an alternative to Beijing's city centre. The architecture is enticing too – with an enormous oval structure designed to mimic the rising sun. As well as an aesthetic triumph, it's a sustainable one. The mirrored panels on the building's exterior complement the hotel's surroundings, reflecting the nearby Yan mountain and lake below, and double as solar panels, feeding the hotel's power system. The glass panels are also four-layered, which means there's no chance of heat escaping in the winter months. In addition, the Sunrise Kempinski is the first hotel in China to use CCHP Systems Applications, a system that uses natural gas as its main fuel. It is also the first in China to use the Gas Power Generation System, which minimises energy consumption.

In total, the Sunrise Kempinski complex comprises four ballrooms and 23 meeting rooms, with outdoor catering available at all venues. The Yanqi Hotel's Conference Centre, inspired by Han and Tang dynasties in its architecture, has a ballroom that houses 750 delegates theatre-style and 800 for cocktails. Each of the 12 boutique hotels has one meeting room. Nearby attractions include the Mutianyu Great Wall, a section of the Great Wall of China, Hongluo Temple from the 12th-century Yuan dynasty and the Miyun Reservoir. ●

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The Apec summit by numbers

95

room attendants, public area attendants and supervisors involved

223

chefs served at the summit

500

security personnel mobilised

16

interior designers from China and the US styled the Beijing Yanqi Lake International Conference Centre

4

the number of months it took to make the 100 metre-long carpet especially for Apec