



Navigator

News

At your service

The latest concierges have all the right contacts on speed dial. And in their spare time they're DJs, models and even rugby players, says **Will Hide**

CALLAN POLMER, 27

SOHO GRAND HOTEL, NEW YORK, USA

What's unmissable in New York? Sample sales are the best way to shop. Designers often include current season items at half the regular price. Be prepared to get competitive, though: New Yorkers treat it like an Olympic sport. The city is a yoga mecca, but the best classes are the free sessions in Central Park every week.

And when you're not working?

I DJ and model.

Strangest request? A diaper for a pet marmoset.

Who have you helped? Recently, I found out that a celebrity guest was into painting from his Twitter feed, and so I put an easel and canvas in his room. He said it made his entire stay special.

MANDY WAN, 24

LANGHAM PLACE, MONGKOK, HONG KONG

What's unmissable in Hong Kong? Cheung Chau Island. It's great to cycle around. For nightlife, emerging spots like Minden Avenue and Hart Avenue in Tsim Sha Tsui. For shopping, hit the smaller boutiques on Granville Road.

And when you're not working? I play rugby and get some interesting looks as a 47kg winger

Strangest request? To track down a guest's great-great-great grandfather's grave.

Who have you helped? A good concierge will never tell.

KORE ORMSBY, 33

CROWNE PLAZA DARLING HARBOUR, SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA

What's unmissable in Sydney? The 6km coastal walk from Bondi to Coogee when the

Sculptures by the Sea exhibition is on. Go for drinks at hole-in-the-wall bar, Absinthe Salon – it's tucked away in Surry Hills and serves Swiss absinthe. If you want to go to Shh in King's Cross, a bar that's like a 1950s French bordello, you'll need the secret door code which changes nightly. I'm one of the few who knows it.

And when you're not working? I gig with my band, the Rooterz, and work on my custom-made motorbike.

Strangest request? A magician asked me to help him propose to his girlfriend using staff at a very upscale restaurant as part of his act. I was invited to the wedding.

Who have you helped? I took Muhammad Ali to get a steak pie at Harry's Café de Wheels in Woolloomooloo.

CASSIANO VITORINO, 32

COPACABANA PALACE, RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL

What's unmissable in Rio? If you're not in town at carnival, go to the Mangueira samba school for their Saturday night session. Hike to the waterfalls in Tijuca rainforest reserve. To get up Sugarloaf mountain, forget the cable car: hire a guide to help you climb the back of it.

And when you're not working? I surf at Arpoador or Prainha.

Strangest request? Someone from the former Yugoslavia asked me to help track down their daughter who they hadn't seen for 20 years. We did, and it was very emotional.

Who have you helped? Jenson Button. I recommended a restaurant called the Fat Pig, but one of his entourage misunderstood and thought I was calling him names. He just laughed about it.

