



## A New Era for Regent

An Interview with S. Steven Pan,  
Executive Chairman of Regent Hotels & Resorts  
and FIH Regent Group



Regent Taipei's Tai Pan Residence (left)  
and the newly opened Regent Porto Montenegro (above)

**EDITORS' NOTE** Steven Pan joined FIH Regent Group – owner of Regent Taipei – in 1991 and became President in 1992. In 2000, he led a management buyout of the company and became Executive Chairman. The company acquired Regent Hotels & Resorts from Carlson in 2010. Pan also founded Pacific Resources Group in San Francisco in 1994, and the group has since completed many landmark transactions in San Francisco, Tokyo, and Hong Kong.



S. Steven Pan

**COMPANY BRIEF** Regent ([regenthotels.com](http://regenthotels.com)) was founded in the '70s and became the first truly Asian-based global hospitality group. In the '80s and '90s, Regent properties such as the Regent Hong Kong and Regent Beverly Wilshire were among some of the world's most acclaimed hotels. In 1992, eight Regent hotels were recognized by Condé Nast Traveler as among the Top 25 Hotels in the World, with more than half of the best 14 hotels on earth carrying the Regent name. The brand was later sold to Four Seasons and then Carlson before finally being acquired by FIH Regent Group. The existing Regents are located in Bali, Beijing, Berlin, Phuket, Taipei, Turks & Caicos, and Singapore. In 2011, all hotels in the Regent-managed portfolio were listed as the best luxury hotels in the world by the Condé Nast Traveler's Readers' Choice Awards, becoming the first and only international luxury hotel group to ever achieve this recognition. In 2013, the group was fifth in the worldwide ranking of the World Luxury Index measuring the most searched and sought-after luxury hotels.

FIH Regent Group ([fihregent.com](http://fihregent.com)) is the largest and most profitable hotel company listed on the Taiwan Stock Exchange, with market capitalization in excess of \$1 billion. FIH Regent Group owns flagship Regent Taipei, which has consistently been one of the most profitable Regent Hotels in the world. Regent Taipei also pioneered the first true luxury hotel shopping concept – Regent Galleria, anchored by Chanel, Hermès, Dior, Graff, Harry Winston, and 50 other luxury brands.

**Would you discuss the history and heritage of the Regent brand?**

Regent is an iconic name in the global hospitality industry with Asian roots. The brand was started by legendary hotelier Robert H. Burns in 1970. He was later joined by industry leaders George Rafael and Adrian Zecha, who founded

Amanresorts after Regent. They developed and expanded the Regent brand to become the first truly Asia-based global hospitality group in an industry previously dominated by European and American brands.

Regent injected high-quality Asian hospitality standards into all of their hotels worldwide, including the flagship Regent Hong Kong, which introduced the five-fixture bathroom, now standard in five-star hotels.

Since 1970, Regent has opened 17 hotels in 22 years, including the celebrated Regent Beverly Wilshire, the magnificent Regent New York, and Regent Bali at Jimbaran, which was the first resort with the all-villa and private-pool concept. Regent quickly became synonymous with glamour and style, and dominated the luxury hotel industry with eight Regent hotels among the top 25 hotels in Condé Nast Traveler's best in the world list. In 1992, the brand was acquired by Four Seasons Group, which rebranded many of the original Regent hotels to Four Seasons.

In 2010, Regent returned to its Asian roots with acquisition by our FIH Regent Group, the original developer of Regent Taipei and the leading hotel company listed on the Taiwan Stock Exchange.

**How do you define the "original Regent DNA," which you often refer to?**

The Regent DNA is focused on luxury. The original Regent DNA is the basis on which Regent's founding fathers built the brand and it's still clearly observable in all current Regent hotels – elegant architecture, timeless décor, design elements indigenous to the local area, and intuitive, discreet service, all of which help to achieve a balanced, harmonious luxury: simple yet elegant, modern yet timeless, luxurious yet understated.

**Would you provide an overview of Regent's current properties?**

Regent Hotels & Resorts currently operates in Beijing, Berlin, Montenegro, Phuket, Singapore, Taipei, Turks & Caicos, and 10 other destinations worldwide under development.

**You speak about each Regent property as being unique. Is there a common thread throughout the properties that define them as Regent or do you focus on what works in each hotel location?**

As our founder Mr. Burns so elegantly puts it, "the only thing we specialize in is luxury, and the only thing our hotels have in common is the fact

that they are all unique." One common thread that our guests will be able to find regardless of the location is their own bespoke experience.

They can go on a culinary experience that tickles their taste buds at Regent Taipei, or benefit from a six-day weight loss/detox program with custom-made classes and meals at Regent Porto Montenegro, which we have set as the hot spot for pampering spa treatments this winter season.

**Is your focus for continued growth primarily in Asia or do you see opportunities in other international markets?**

There is a lot of potential in Asia. With the presence of Regent Beijing firmly established in China's capital, we are now targeting secondary cities including Chongqing, Xian, and Harbin, where an influx of domestic and international travelers overflowing from first-tier cities is expected in the near future. Elsewhere in Asia, Regent will make its first appearance in Manila, while returning to Jakarta with a brand new mixed-use hotel and residential complex, as well as a second development not far from Regent's corporate office in Taipei. There will also be multiple resorts in Bali and other destinations.

Global expansion outside of Asia is also crucial. Europe will see the establishment of Regent Kitzbühel and Regent Venice – located in Austria's skiing and hiking destination and Italy's "Floating City", respectively, plus phase two of the prominent Regent Porto Montenegro, which has received a lot of attention since its opening in August of 2014.

**As you continue to grow and hire top talent, how do you define what makes for a successful hotelier today?**

A successful hotelier has a unique understanding of a brand's origins and a commitment to exceptional service. He is a visionary with ambitious plans, creating unique hotels with mixed-use developments that include signature restaurants and spas, along with luxury residential developments and extensive retail spaces.

**As you look at the impact that you have had with the Regent brand, do you take time to reflect and appreciate what you are building with this storied brand?**

The common goal for all the associates at Regent and myself right now is to bring Regent back to an unprecedented platinum era, more prominent than its former days in terms of uniqueness of concepts, level of personalized service, and quality of the overall experience. Its success is based on working with like-minded people and partners around the world. ●