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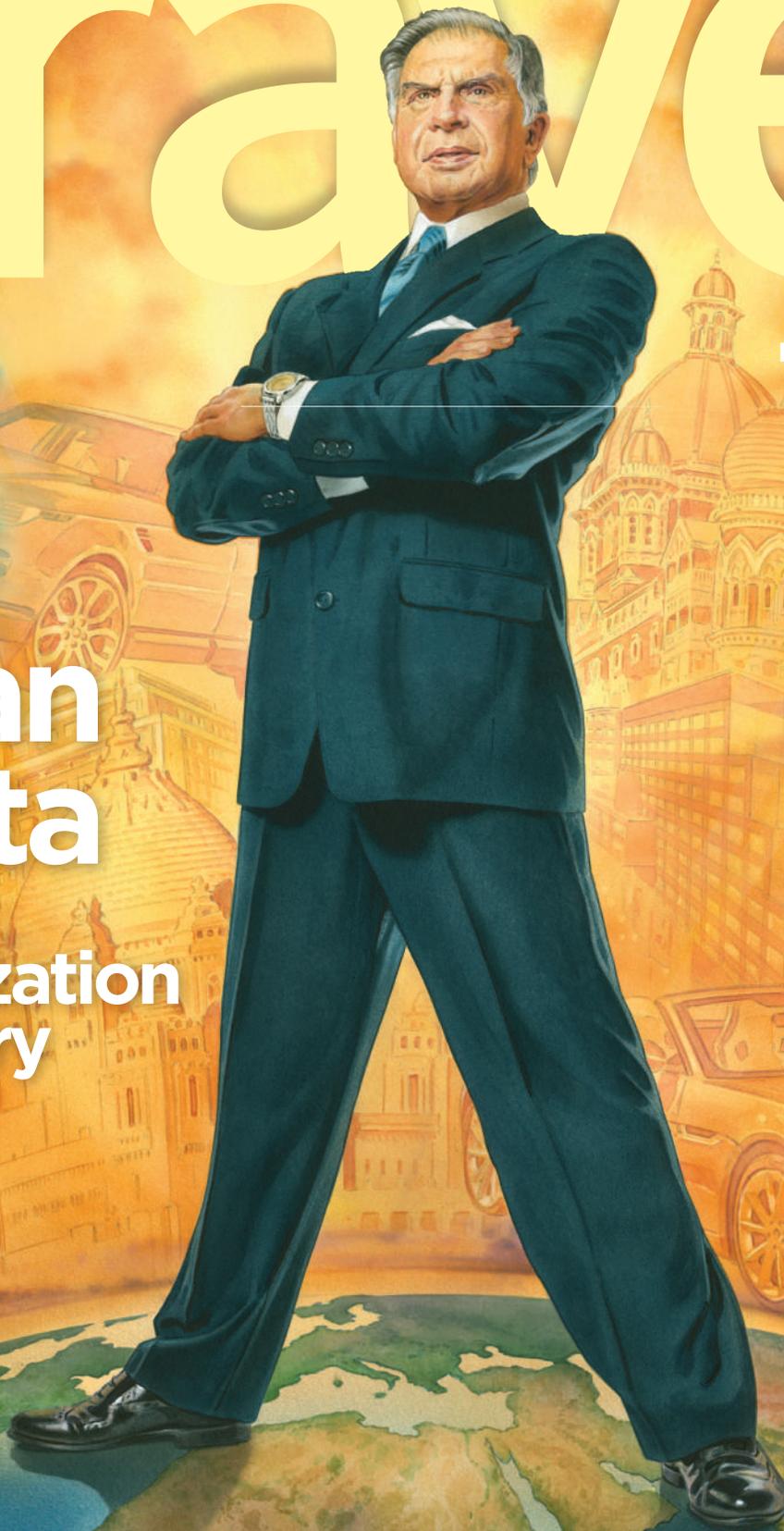
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SPECIAL ISSUE
The BRIC Playbook
BRAZIL, RUSSIA,
INDIA, AND
CHINA

Knowing China

Canadian by birth, Gerald Hatherly was nudged as a child into an obsession with China when he read about Marco Polo's journey to ancient Cathay. That inspired him to learn Chinese and pursue Asian Studies—and eventually led him to Taiwan, Hong Kong, and China. Fluent in Mandarin and Cantonese, he joined the upmarket tour company Abercrombie & Kent in 1986, first as a tour guide and later as business development director.

How would you describe China today?

Very different from 25 years ago. Today it is a powerful, increasingly sophisticated country. Now you must travel farther afield to experience its more traditional character.

What does every travel planner need to understand about China?

China is huge—it's a physical kaleidoscope of images and landmarks. Every traveler should go beyond Beijing and Shanghai to discover a more authentic China. One thing I know: China is not a one-time destination. Travelers will want to return to appreciate its diversity. And it is great for year-round travel.

Your top three destinations in China?

1. Xi'an: for its history, including the Terra-Cotta Warriors & Horses Excavation Site.
2. Yunnan Province: for its diversity, minority cultures and physical landscapes.
3. Gansu Province: the ancient Silk Road in northwest China where the Gobi Desert meets the mountains and the ancient world's greatest philosophical influences convened.

Beside the requisite passport and



visas (when required), what do you not leave home without?

A map of China and at least three books on China, including a biography and something on archaeology or anthropology.

What does every business traveler need to know about China?

Chinese traditional culture is based on relationships. It is important to show respect and show friendship. In China, the concept of "relationship" is the foundation for a good business deal.

Tips for sealing a deal?

- Include a meal. The Chinese love food and social camaraderie.
- Bring a gift, ideally something that reflects your home or culture. Could be

as simple as a baseball cap.

- Pose for a photo to commemorate the meeting or visit.
- Business cards are profoundly important.
- Learn to say "hello" and "thank you" in Chinese.
- Small talk is important.
- If the meeting includes a meal, make a toast with tea or alcohol. Just get up to thank your hosts, wish them good health and a good meeting. At the end of the meeting, thank the business guest or client on behalf of your company.

behalf of your company.

- The Chinese are not direct, so understand that some circuitous discussion needs to take place before getting to the point.

Travel confession?

An addiction to Ding Tai Fung—a dumpling and noodle chain with outposts throughout Asia.

Shanghi or Beijing?

Both. Shanghai for food, art, shopping, and architecture. Beijing for history, as it is the bastion of Chinese intellectual culture.

Becca Hensley writes for more than a dozen top newspapers and national magazines.