



## High Honey

One reason for the buzz around Hong Kong.

YOU DON'T JUST VISIT HONG KONG. You plug in. There's night life. Shopping. The business district. London-born designer Michael Leung moved here for the ground-level energy. But three years ago he moved on up, literally. He started a beekeeping business, HK Honey, on top of Hong Kong's skyline. When he's up there, he stays as busy as a ... you know.

➔ **I'd never even seen a beehive until 2009.** I was in Sweden and came across these two boxes in the snow. A friend told me what they were: beehive boxes. When I got back home, I read that people in urban environments, like Paris, keep bees. I thought, *wow, I should do this.*

➔ **I looked at a lot of rooftops.** But most of them were too close to homes. People hang their clothes on rooftops, and some roofs face bathrooms or bedrooms. I didn't think those

residents would be very happy to have a beehive next to their windows. So I found a rooftop in an industrial area.

➔ **No protective gear for me.** Going to the hives without armor is respectful. If I wear gloves and a veil, my vision could be obscured and I might accidentally squash some bees with my gloves.

➔ **I've been stung 25 times.** When working with bees, you have to move slowly. You can't be distracted. It's a contrast from urban life. It's therapeutic.

➔ **This connects me to nature.** It's a farm on the roof. I can't hear the traffic or the crowds. Just the bees. We don't try to kill each other. We like each other.

➔ **The roof is safe.** For the bees, I mean. We're away from pesticides, and the isolation allows the bees to fly in and do what they do best: make honey.

➔ **There are beehives all over New York.** You just have to



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know where to look. I've seen them in Chinatown, in parks, on the roofs of poetry clubs. If you can make it happen in New York, you can make it happen anywhere. Even Hong Kong.

➔ **People are fascinated with this.** A businessman took my beekeeping workshop recently, and now he wants to get out of finance and do something more down to earth, if you can call beekeeping on a roof down to earth. — CELESTE MOURE