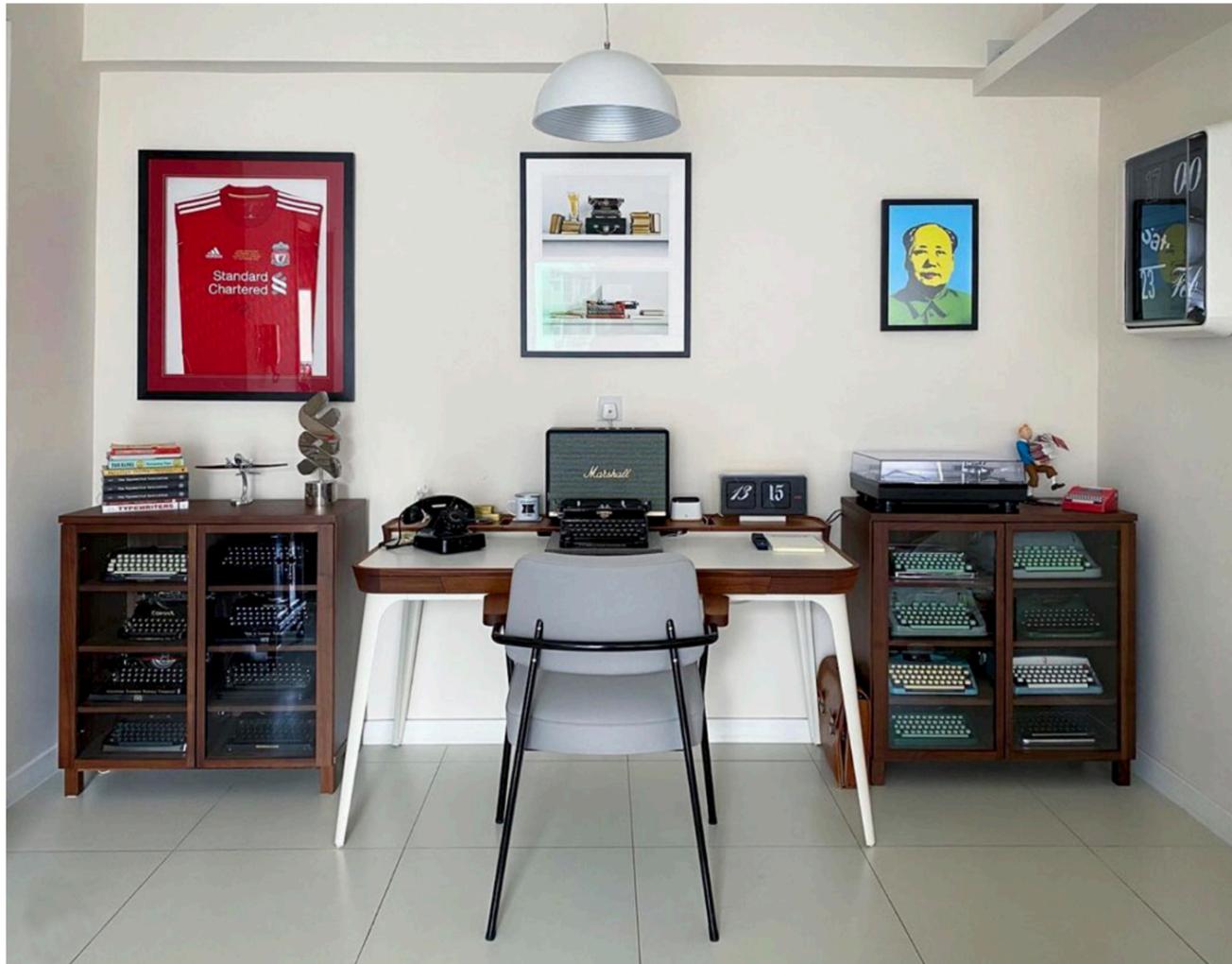


Typewriter Traveler

Words and Images: Steve Parry



"So why typewriters? Although I had thought about typewriters for some time, it wasn't until I stumbled upon a docu-movie called 'California Typewriter' while on a flight from Hong Kong to San Francisco, that I got totally mesmerised and hooked. The movie just struck a chord inside me, from the romance of typing to the beauty of the machines. I was also disheartened by the thought that specialist businesses like California Machines, featured in the movie, could potentially go out of business (sadly, they have since). I decided I had to start doing my little bit to make sure these skills didn't die out and preserve these mechanical marvels. And so the journey began.

I purchased my first typewriter while killing time on a trip to Pau, France. It was a fully serviced vintage 1968 Hermes 3000 in excellent working order and cosmetic condition. I was instantly attracted to the classic look and seafoam mint green keys. When it eventually arrived from New York State, I realised that whilst it was good for home/office use, it was too bulky and heavy to take on my travels, so I shifted my focus to finding portable typewriters.

It is not an easy feat to find decent, fully functioning typewriters in Hong Kong at a reasonable price, so I relied on finding suppliers online. A month later came my first portable purchase from a U.K. supplier, a custom chrome plated 1965 Olivetti Lettera 32. I have since purchased over 20 machines from this dealer. After buying several other portables, I came across a 1922 Corona 3, which is a 'folding typewriter', definitely a magnificent piece of engineering for its time. And once again I shifted my focus to finding more folding typewriters as they are the original and perhaps ultimate portable. While I now own half a dozen Corona 3's, my prized possession is the aluminium

1910 Standard Folding Typewriter No.2 - the second generation of the first folding typewriter, which a few years later became the iconic 'Corona 3'. This model stayed in production between 1912-1941.

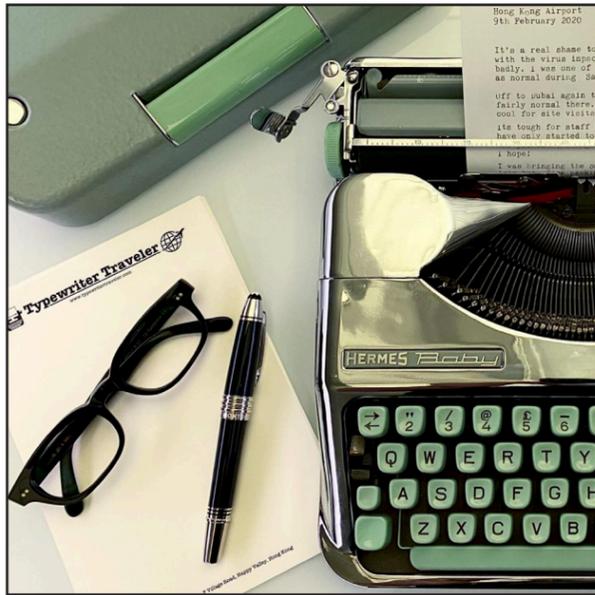
Typewriters have a special charm and unlike computers there is an awful lot more interaction between the machine and the user. Each typewriter has its own personality and quirks. You have to work with them to produce the result you want, for example finding the right key pressure for the ink to hit the paper creating a precise and clear character. It may be a struggle sometimes but the pure magic of the sound of the margin bell, the automatic advancement of the ribbon and sweeping action of the carriage return, combined with beautiful end results, make it all worth it. Moreover, it often makes people smile when they see or hear you type, and it is quite a conversation starter.

In a world of emails and instant messaging, you still can't beat the excitement of receiving a typed letter through the post. People keep and cherish them, and memories are made for generations to enjoy.

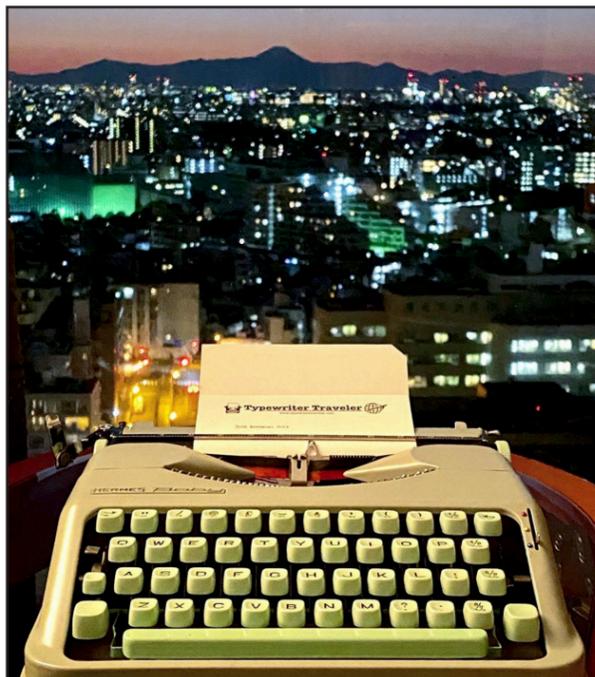
My collection of typewriters has now grown to over thirty machines, sourced from the USA, Canada, U.K. and the Netherlands. As an extensive business traveller, I enjoy bringing at least one or two typewriters with me on each trip, so that I can chronicle my travels as well as typing letters to friends and family.

Last year, I made 22 international trips, involving 65 flights to 13 different countries, all with a typewriter or two. Unfortunately, Covid19 has curtailed my traveling this year, but I still take them with me around Hong Kong whenever I am able to.

W: typewritertraveler.com
lg: [@typewritertraveler](https://www.instagram.com/typewritertraveler)



Above, 1968 Hermes 3000.





Opposite, 1922 Corona 3. Above, 1910 Standard Folding Typewriter No.2.