

YTL

Life

TREASURED PLACES, TREASURED MOMENTS



CITY REFINEMENT
Checking into JW Marriott
Kuala Lumpur

BEACH CHRONICLES
Discovering The Ritz-Carlton,
Koh Samui

BATH FEASTS
Tasting Chef Dan Moon's
creative cuisine



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UNMISTAKABLY MALAY



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AMIDST CENTURIES OF CULTURE AND COMMERCE

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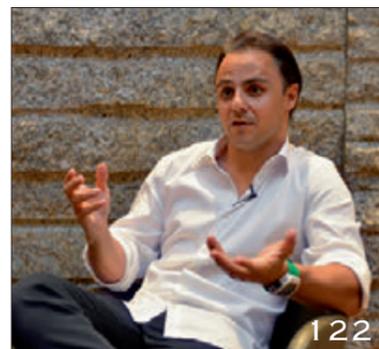
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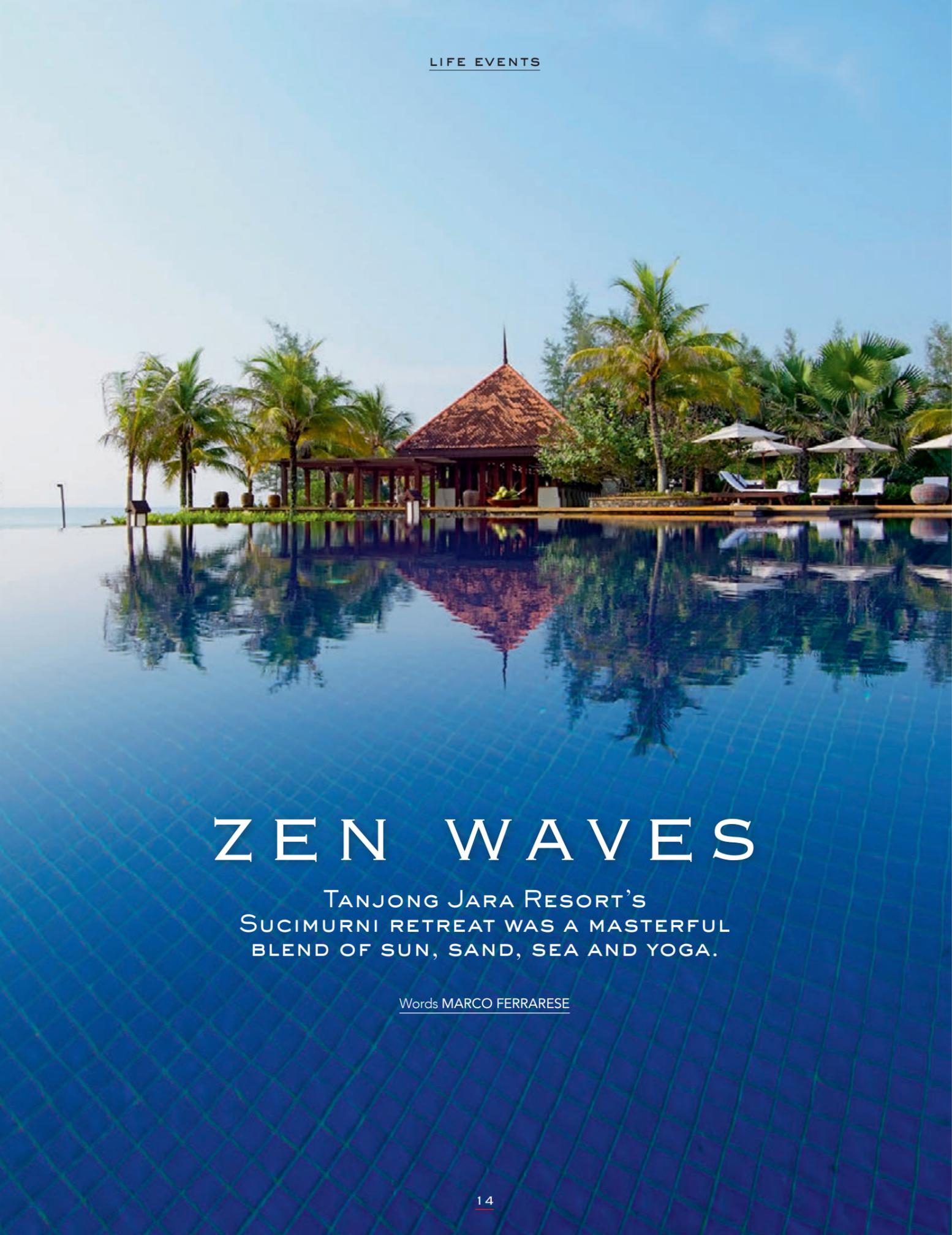


The prestigious Starhill Gallery features a host of premier boutiques as well as the one-of-a-kind Feast Village Starhill Gallery, composed of the award-winning Shook! Restaurant as well as seven other establishments with an international selection of cuisines. Join us on a journey of discovery of unparalleled dining experiences.

We are also proud to present The Ritz-Carlton, Koh Samui, a stunning property with spectacular vistas of the Gulf of Thailand. Conceived as the perfect island getaway, the resort embraces the Samui way of life. It is an embodiment of nature's beauty, southern Thai graciousness and The Ritz-Carlton's legendary hospitality, setting the stage to create inspiring new memories.

In this issue, we highlight the newly renovated JW Marriott Kuala Lumpur in our cover story. The five-star hotel is one of the city's finest and is located in Bukit Bintang, a thriving centre for both business and entertainment. JW Marriott Kuala Lumpur is also known as 'the Happening Hotel' as it celebrates world-class design, fine cuisine and the good life. The property is linked to the upscale Starhill Gallery, situated on the internationally renowned Bintang Walk, created by YTL in 1999 and now a leading retail and lifestyle destination in Kuala Lumpur.

In the United Kingdom, The Gainsborough Bath Spa, housed in a Grade II listed building, is the only five-star hotel in the country with access to natural healing thermal waters. The hotel is the recipient of numerous accolades including Condé Nast Traveler Awards (USA), Best Hotel in the UK, AA Hotel of the Year, England, and Three AA Rosettes for Dan Moon at The Gainsborough Restaurant. These achievements reflect YTL Hotels' constant pursuit of excellence in all that we do. The YTL hospitality arm aims to "craft rich experiences for all who stay with us".



ZEN WAVES

TANJONG JARA RESORT'S
SUCIMURNI RETREAT WAS A MASTERFUL
BLEND OF SUN, SAND, SEA AND YOGA.

Words MARCO FERRARESE

Sucimurni is a Malay word describing a pure state of mind and the height of wellness. Tanjong Jara Resort, in collaboration with Lululemon Athletica's first ambassador in Malaysia Ninie Ahmad, hosted the relaxing weekend Sucimurni retreat, which comprised yoga sessions and creativity enhancing workshops known as "zendoodlings". On the final morning, Captain Mokh taught his signature stretching exercises based on the seven main chakras. Guests also enjoyed delicacies from the two signature restaurants, Di Atas Sungei and Nelayan, and indulged in treatments inspired by royal Malay pre-wedding traditions at the resort's award-winning Spa Village.



THE RELAXING WEEKEND SUCIMURNI RETREAT COMPRISED
YOGA SESSIONS AND ZENDOODLING WORKSHOPS.



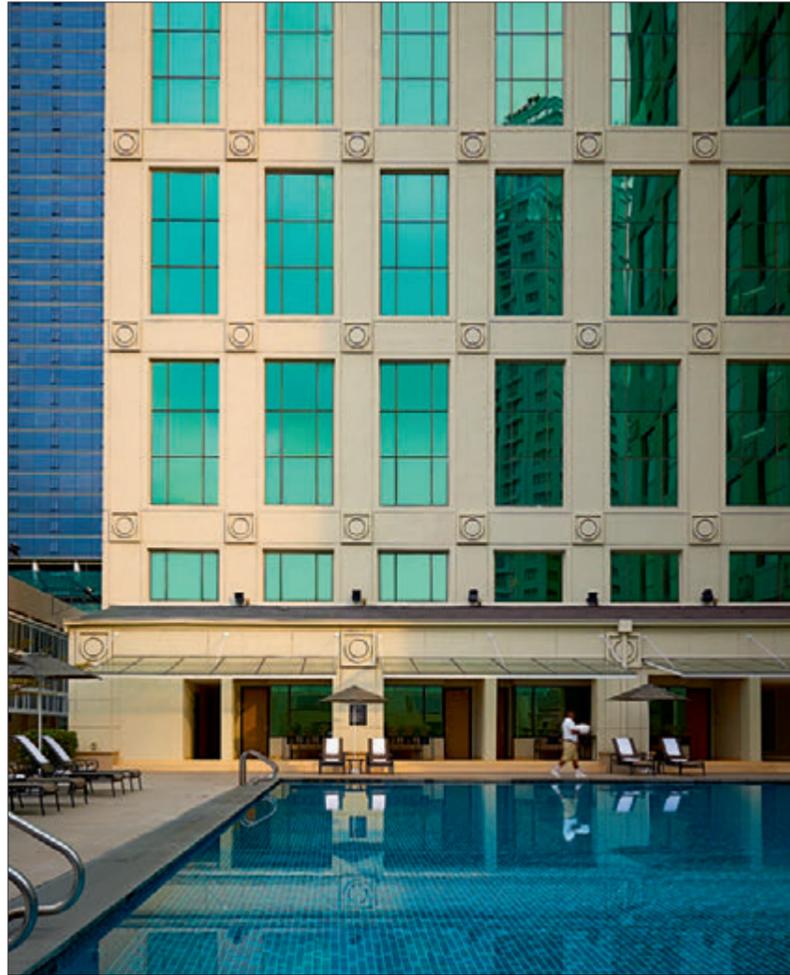
Participants at the Sucimurni retreat led by Lululemon's first Malaysian ambassador Ninie Ahmad.

THE HAPPENING HOTEL - A STAR IS REBORN

THE NEWLY RENOVATED
JW MARRIOTT KUALA LUMPUR
REFLECTS ELEGANCE AND ITS PRIME
POSITION AT THE CENTRE OF THE
CITY'S GOLDEN TRIANGLE.

Words RENYI LIM

THE INSTALLATION IS AN INVITING INTRODUCTION TO A NEW, DETERMINEDLY MODERN HOTEL, POISED TO DELIVER THE CLASSIC JW EXPERIENCE OF QUIET LUXURY AND INTUITIVE SERVICE.



The 'wow' factor becomes apparent when one enters the freshly renovated JW Marriott Kuala Lumpur. Above a new, sleek lobby of cool grey Emperado marble, hangs a magnificent cut crystal chandelier of six linked sparkling rings. The installation is an inviting introduction to a new, determinedly modern hotel, poised to deliver the classic JW experience of quiet luxury and intuitive service. Dedicated to continuing J Willard Marriott's vision, the hotel upholds the brand's values of offering guests warm hospitality, friendly service, comfortable rooms and excellent food.

One of the exclusive JW Marriott Hotels of the world and a market leader in its own right, the JW Marriott Kuala Lumpur anchors the

popular bustling Bintang Walk in the heart of the city's business district. Directly linked to the prestigious Starhill Gallery, the hotel, with its professional levels of service, is the venue of choice for meetings, conferences and special events in Kuala Lumpur. Known as 'the happening hotel', it has been home to numerous local and international stars and organised many highly acclaimed events over the years.

The refreshed, contemporary new look continues throughout the hotel to its bright and spacious 578 rooms and suites. Modern materials and polished chrome are matched by stylish and tech-friendly amenities.

The generously proportioned bathrooms feature rainforest showers with bench seating, alongside a Japanese-style bathtub (perfect for a long, contemplative post-work soak).



From above:
the refreshed rooms and suites offer an executive escape in the city;
from as many as 1,000 guests to as few as 12, JW Marriott Kuala Lumpur has a meeting space to suit your event.



GUESTS ARE SECONDS AWAY FROM A PLACE IN THE SUN ON THE DECKCHAIRS.

The new Starhill Spa Village includes a 24-hour gym with comprehensive Technogym equipment to help keep travellers' fitness regimes in check. Facilities also include a steam room, sauna, a whirlpool and a cool plunge pool, apart from the main spa.

Guests looking to spend some quality leisure time in the city – perhaps over a long weekend or a staycation – may want to consider the hotel's nine new resort-style Cabana Poolside rooms on the sixth floor. Guests are seconds away from a place in the sun on the deckchairs. They can also call for a cocktail from the pool bar, relax on their private outdoor terrace in the evenings or nip two floors down to the Executive Lounge where culinary treats are offered throughout the day, including cocktails and canapés in the evenings.

The hotel's 20 popular function rooms include the new elegant Bayu Ballroom with a built-in stage and crystal chandeliers. It is an excellent choice for more intimate celebrations as it can seat up to 300 people, while the Mayang Sari Grand Ballroom accommodates over 700 people. Bintang 3, a completely new amphitheatre-shaped meeting room for 80 people, is perfect for presentations. It is graced with tall windows that let the sun shine through the space – another example of the new JW Marriott Kuala Lumpur's abilities to wow its guests completely.

For more information, please visit jwmarriott.com

The new Cabana Poolside rooms face the outdoor pool on the sixth floor.





DINING, REIMAGINED

FEAST VILLAGE STARHILL GALLERY OFFERS
CULINARY EXPERIENCES TO SAVOUR.

Words RENYI LIM

By walking through the LED-lit Time Tunnel at the JW Marriott Kuala Lumpur, guests will discover one of the city's dining destinations with a difference – Feast Village Starhill Gallery. Here, Shook! Kuala Lumpur offers its one-of-a-kind Saturday Night Vibes experience, which combines the new Cirque de Culinaire dining concept with an expertly curated entertainment selection of talented performers.

Dining at Shook! on Saturdays is now an opportunity to sample signature specialities from all of Feast Village's dining venues, including Khushi Spice's Chicken Tandoori, Luk Yu Tea House's dim sum and Sentidos Gastrobar's authentic Spanish dishes.

Adding an exciting party atmosphere to the evening's culinary circus, a selection of dishes from Shook!'s specialised open kitchens will regularly find their way to diners' tables such as Sushi, Snow White Dancing Prawns or freshly shucked Pacific oysters and Shook! Antipasti of Classic Italian Signatures. Highlights include the dessert bar and a night of serious dancing to work off the feast.

The recently refreshed menus at Sentidos Gastrobar – The Latin Grill, and Fisherman's Cove are also sure to delight, offering irresistible spreads such as Sentidos' Viva la Vida Spanish buffet every Saturday evening or the live Boston Lobsters and Red Mangrove Crabs at Fisherman's Cove, accentuated by its exotic Asian houseboat surroundings.

For more information, please visit www.feastvillage.com

DINING AT SHOOK! ON SATURDAYS IS NOW AN OPPORTUNITY TO SAMPLE SIGNATURE SPECIALITIES FROM FEAST VILLAGE.



Clockwise from top:
Fisherman's Cove; Sentidos' sautéed garlic tiger prawns; the bar at Sentidos; Boston lobster with lemon butter sauce at Fisherman's Cove.
Facing page:
the entrance to Shook!.



蘇浙苑

CHINESE CHIC

SHANGHAI RESTAURANT AT JW MARRIOTT KUALA LUMPUR SETS THE STAGE FOR GRAND FEASTS.

Words RENYI LIM



Framed with two tall standing lanterns, the entrance to JW Marriott Kuala Lumpur's signature restaurant, Shanghai conjures a sense of intrigue. Like the entire hotel, Shanghai has undergone a complete transformation and emerged with a touch of modern Chinese glamour. Neutral tones of black Marquina marble and light grey Emperado marble lend a contemporary and elegant feel to the restaurant.

One of its key changes – and its newest attraction – is a separate bar, located next to the entrance, a

choice spot for diners who prefer an apéritif in a comfortable yet stylish lounge setting. An inventive range of Shanghai-themed cocktails is a feast for the eyes as they are created on the spot at the bar.

Long established as the preferred venue for authentic Shanghaiese cuisine in Kuala Lumpur, Shanghai Restaurant serves classic, exquisite dishes and dim sum, with vibrant and distinctive flavours. Four tastefully furnished private dining rooms are available.

For more information, please visit jwmarriott.com

SHANGHAI HAS UNDERGONE A COMPLETE TRANSFORMATION AND EMERGED WITH A TOUCH OF MODERN CHINESE GLAMOUR.

The restaurant's elegant setting and talked-about cuisine makes it one of Kuala Lumpur's top tables.

STARHILL
SPA
VILLAGE

SPA CRAFTS

WITH REIMAGINED INTERIORS
AND INNOVATIVE WELLNESS OFFERINGS,
THE SUBLIME STARHILL SPA VILLAGE IS
KUALA LUMPUR'S LATEST WELLNESS TEMPLE.

Words [MARK LEAN](#)



The gorgeously designed Starhill Spa Village is a visual and sensorial feast. With understated interiors in shades of light grey and stark white, the space emanates calm and holds promises of bliss to come. For travellers, the updated range of treatments is primed to alleviate even the toughest bouts of jet lag.

Treatments capture the essence of relaxation with a three-dimensional approach. The first hones in on the power of scent, the memories it evokes and its seemingly magical abilities to either revitalise or lull one into a state so relaxed, one can begin physically, mentally and emotionally on a new slate.

The Spa Village aromatic oil blends have been created purely for this intention. The 10 exquisite blends range from Joy, composed of fresh bergamot and floral ylang-ylang notes, to Uplifting, featuring grounding juniper and zesty grapefruit. The

immensely popular Calm Seas uses healing clary sage and fragrant magnolia to soothe frazzled senses.

The second element of the Starhill Spa Village experience is the selection of massage style. Therapists are skilled in the arts of Malay, Thai, Swedish, Balinese and Hawaiian massage techniques. The third component is

the inclusion of a treatment enhancement in the form of a warm lemongrass and ginger compress, hot stones or a muscle relax pack.

Or, opt for the signature Deep Sleep treatment. It comprises a lavender and clary sage essential oil bath, followed by a specialised spirit reviving massage and music tuned to 432Hz – the frequency that balances the

body's delicate circadian rhythm, all of which encourage a good night's slumber.

For more information, please visit marriott.com

**FOR TRAVELLERS,
THE UPDATED
RANGE OF
TREATMENTS
IS PRIMED TO
ALLEVIATE EVEN
THE TOUGHEST
BOUNDS OF JET LAG.**



This unique retreat offers a mix of the world's most sophisticated therapies integrated with the healing practices of the region.

THE SIGNATURE DEEP SLEEP TREATMENT COMPRISES A LAVENDER AND CLARY SAGE ESSENTIAL OIL BATH, FOLLOWED BY A SPECIALISED SPIRIT REVIVING MASSAGE AND MUSIC TUNED TO 432HZ.



JEWEL IN THE SUN

THE RITZ-CARLTON, KOH SAMUI AFFORDS
GUESTS OPPORTUNITIES TO EMBRACE
THE ISLAND'S LAID-BACK WAY OF LIFE.

Words MARK LEAN

During the latter part of the 19th century, the island of Samui provided a safe haven for the sea traders, fishermen and sailors who sought refuge from frequent storms when plying routes across the Gulf of Thailand. Two centuries later, the island has transformed into a different kind of refuge, one that opens its arms to world travellers seeking tropical escapades with sophisticated luxury accents. Today, Koh Samui's main draws are its stunning beaches and the southern Thai warmth and graciousness of its people.

The island's latest fabulous gem is The Ritz-Carlton, Koh Samui, situated in a sprawling 58 acres of an alcove stretching from beach to hilltop on the north-eastern part of the island. With its 175 luxuriously appointed suites and pool villas, the property embraces the Samui way of life, complemented by The Ritz-Carlton's signature hospitality.

The resort, an exceptional blend of The Ritz-Carlton and Thai cultures, sets the scene for creating new memories in sought-after locations. Design elements pay homage to the property's island location, marrying traditional and modern elements. Materials such as finely honed wood and statement lighting nod to its location as a former coconut plantation. The Arrival Pavilion is a picturesque setting with

**DESIGN ELEMENTS
PAY HOMAGE TO
THE PROPERTY'S
ISLAND LOCATION.**



The spacious Ocean View Pool Villa comes with its own separate living area, with Thai-inspired furnishing and accents.



The prime location of the Ultimate Pool Villa means that you'll enjoy unbeatable Instagram-worthy views of the Gulf of Thailand. Facing page: enjoy immersive snorkelling discoveries and scheduled supervised fish feeding at the Swim Reef.



shimmering ponds that reflect sky and sea.

Accommodation options embody fine living. A modern design, palettes of creams and beiges as well as subtle Thai craftware adorn the spacious suites, which have separate seating areas, creating opportunities to both rest and relax. Beds are plush and guarantee an excellent night's rest, while standalone bathtubs are ideal for relaxing in after a busy day on the beach.

The resort's exclusive Ocean View Pool Villas are all about luxury trappings. Each villa has its own pool and deck area where one may read a book, catch some sun or enjoy a romantic dinner. The Ultimate Pool Villas boast stunning panoramic views

of the Gulf of Thailand that capture the essence of an idyllic tropical getaway.

The resort's elevated Sala Thai that looks out onto the shimmering Gulf of Thailand waters is just the spot for an outdoor wedding to remember. The impressive open-air location enjoys cool sea breezes and is the perfect venue for couples to exchange their lifetime vows in an intimate setting with family and close friends.

The Ritz-Carlton, Koh Samui's medley of bars and restaurants offers the best of Thai and international dishes. Shook! – the resort's prime open-air breakfast and dinner venue – serves a handpicked selection of dishes from East and West. For pre-prandial drinks, the adjacent circular bar One Rai and its well-trained bartenders come highly

THE RESORT, AN EXCEPTIONAL BLEND OF THE RITZ-CARLTON AND THAI CULTURES, SETS THE SCENE FOR CREATING NEW MEMORIES IN SOUGHT-AFTER LOCATIONS.



recommended. At Pak Thai, southern Thai dishes are traditionally prepared, while at Baan Talat, an outdoor food market, guests have their pick of the best street food stalls as well as chances to experience vignettes of traditional Thai culture. During the day, the outdoor Sea Salt is just the place to grab a feta cheese and tomato salad or sip on a fresh coconut, while pool bar and cevicheria Tides offers delicious speciality cocktails served in ceramic Tiki tumblers and citrus-cured seafood dishes flavoured with a tropical vibe.

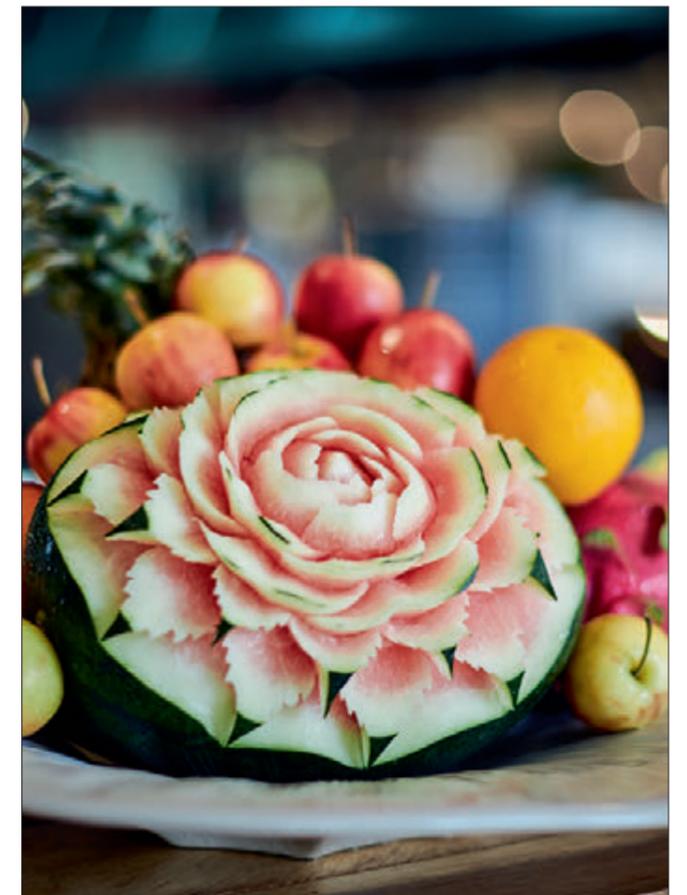
From outdoor adventures to cultural discoveries, a host of activities awaits. Learn the art of Muay Thai, explore the intricacies of southern Thai cuisine or embark on a cruise aboard a luxury yacht. Located on the property is an outdoor temperate Swim Reef brimming with over 50 unique species of fish. As the largest in Southeast Asia, the Swim Reef is where guests can snorkel, feed the fish or merely admire the marine life.

The Ritz-Carlton, Koh Samui, with its sparkling azure waters and sandy shores, is just the place to create inspiring memories in a location one may find hard to forget.

For more information, please visit ritzcarlton.com/kohsamui

**THE RITZ-CARLTON,
KOH SAMUI'S MEDLEY OF
BARS AND RESTAURANTS
OFFERS THE BEST
OF THAI AND
INTERNATIONAL DISHES.**

Each restaurant, bar and private dining experience at The Ritz-Carlton, Koh Samui offers its own unique interpretation of gastronomic delights, transforming a meal into an unforgettable journey.





From above:
experience the Songkran Shower as a prelude to spa treatments; an unsurpassed level of letting go and relaxation is evoked in the transformational Thai Aquatic Freedom experience.



IN SEARCH OF SANCTUARY

SPA VILLAGE KOH SAMUI IS THE IDEAL RETREAT IN WHICH TO TAP INTO TRADITIONAL HEALING THAT SPARKS THE REJUVENATION OF MIND AND BODY.

Words MARK LEAN

One of the crowning features of The Ritz-Carlton, Koh Samui is Spa Village Koh Samui. This latest addition to the Spa Village family spans 3,800 square metres and features eight treatment suites, three massage pavilions, a yoga pavilion, a lap pool with cabanas as well as a relaxation sala for post-treatment pampering with a cup of warm honey tea.

Inspired by the island's rich bounty of fruits, flowers and herbs, the treatments at Spa Village Koh Samui centre on traditional Thai wisdom and know-how passed down through generations. Each spa experience begins with the invigorating Songkran Shower, based on the Thai New Year custom of throwing water, signifying mental, emotional and spiritual cleansing for a fresh beginning. This is followed by a selection of therapies unique to Spa Village Koh Samui. Taking a leaf from the island's history of coconut cultivation, the signature Samui's Coconut Heritage mines the healthful benefits of the fruit. Start with a Deluxe Songkran Shower including a coconut scrub, followed by a 90-minute Coconut

Flow Massage and capped with a nutrient-rich Coconut Hair Masque for a glossy finish.

Another highlight at the spa is the Tok Sen massage derived from the ancient Kingdom of Lanna. Popular in the north of Thailand, Tok Sen works by tapping the body's meridian pathways using a specially blessed mallet crafted from the wood of a tamarind tree. The treatment's repetitive tapping sound induces a calming meditative effect, while the tapping rhythm dislodges blockages stored in the body, reaching deeply into areas, and affording a sense of relaxation beyond that of conventional massages.

For those preferring their treatment outdoors, the Thai Aquatic Freedom is conducted in the spa's aqua therapy pool. Centred on the Thai philosophy of "plod ploy pi kab say nam" or "letting go with the water flow", the treatment comprises a series of stretches targeting aching muscles and stiff joints, releasing both tension and stress with the help of the therapist's expert guidance.

For more information, please visit ritzcarlton.com/kohsamui

THIS LATEST ADDITION TO
THE SPA VILLAGE FAMILY
SPANS 3,800 SQUARE METRES.

Spa Village Koh Samui respects the environment, culture and traditions to create holistic and rejuvenating spa programmes.

ANCIENT RITUALS

SPA VILLAGE PANGKOR LAUT
DRAWS ON A WEALTH OF HOLISTIC HEALING
TRADITIONS FROM ALL OVER ASIA.

Words [DIANA HUBBELL](#)



The story of Malaysia is not the tale of a single culture, but rather an interwoven tapestry of traditions, beliefs and ethnicities created over the course of centuries. At Spa Village Pangkor Laut, a sprawling temple of wellness at the core of Pangkor Laut Resort, highly skilled therapists tap into a wellspring of different Asian healing traditions from Indonesia, Japan, China, India, Thailand and the indigenous people of Malaysia.

The Spa Village offers a curated selection of the best and most exclusive treatments from each tradition. For instance, Chinese Foot Pounding, a reflexology technique designed to restore alignment, was once only available to the highest concubines in feudal China, while the exfoliating Shanghai Scrub historically was a privilege reserved for noblemen. In between, a visit to a miniature Japanese-style bathhouse with a warming soak in a Rotenburo pool boosts circulation much like a classic onsen. Meanwhile, a cool dip in a Malay fountain followed by deep inhalations of four kinds of incense awakens the mind.



The programmes at Spa Village Pangkor Laut combine physical and spiritual health and well-being, and are based on one of four umbrella concepts: Rejuvenation and Longevity, Relaxation and Stress Reduction, Detoxification, and Romance.

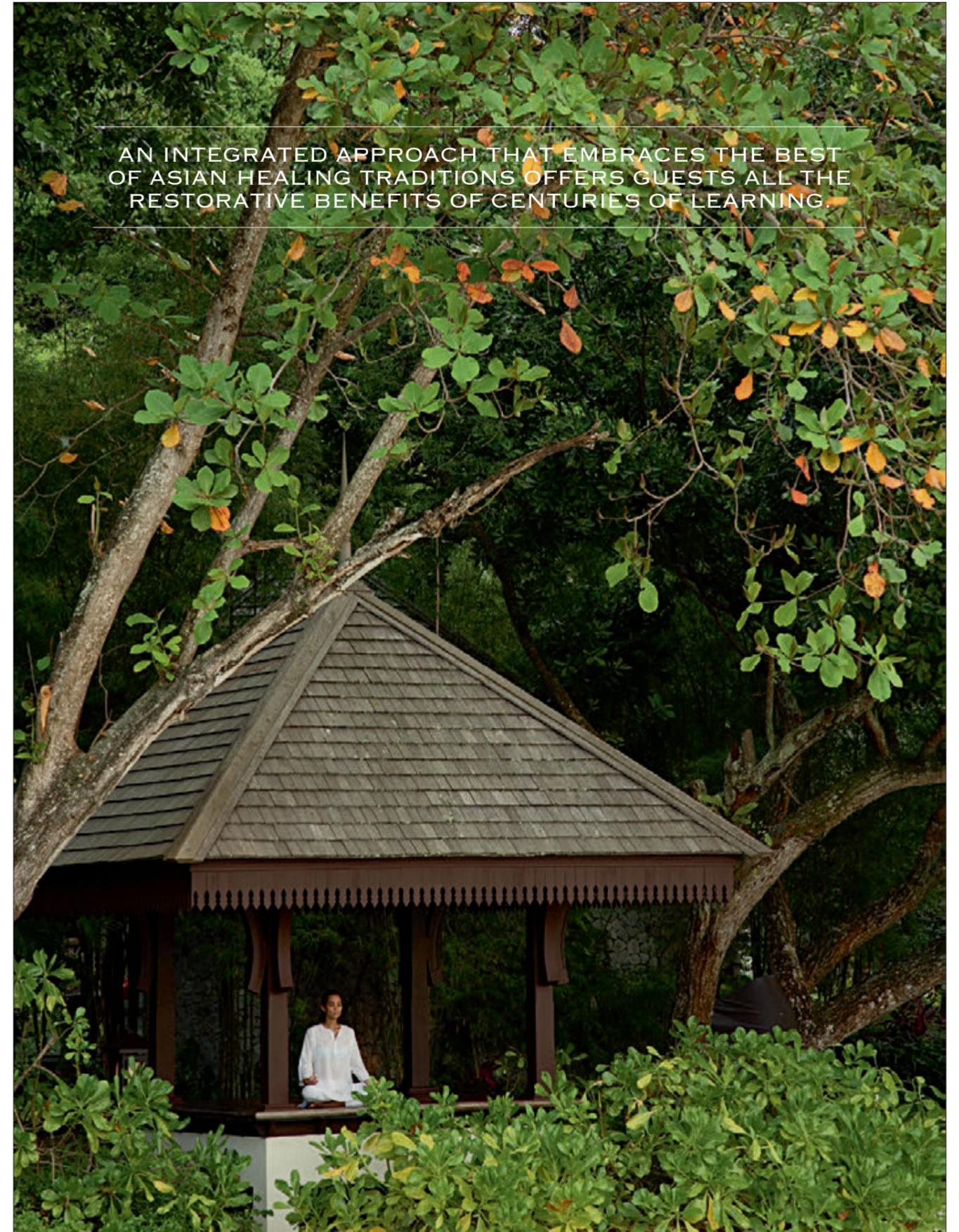
SPA VILLAGE PANGKOR LAUT IS A SPRAWLING TEMPLE OF WELLNESS AT THE CORE OF PANGKOR LAUT RESORT.

For the full spa experience, many guests select one of several combination packages designed to work in tandem to aid different areas of the body. An Ayurvedic Day, for example, begins with an invigorating yoga session and includes a facial, hair treatment and massage, all of which use a customised selection of aromatic, purifying oils concocted to help restore the *prakruthi*, or body's constitution. Meanwhile, a Chinese Day seeks to rebalance the body's *qi*, or life-giving energy, and restore harmony to disparate elements through treatments such as *gu fang xun shen*, in which smouldering medicinal herbs release a pungent smoke with potent curative properties.

Finally, Malay Day turns to thousand-year-old wisdom from the time of the Malacca sultanate. An integrated approach to wellness, one that embraces the best of Asian healing traditions, offers guests all the restorative benefits of centuries of learning. Those who enter Spa Village Pangkor Laut exit with both a natural glow and a deeper understanding of this multicultural land.



For more information, please visit www.spavillage.com



AN INTEGRATED APPROACH THAT EMBRACES THE BEST OF ASIAN HEALING TRADITIONS OFFERS GUESTS ALL THE RESTORATIVE BENEFITS OF CENTURIES OF LEARNING.



REFINED
THROUGH
TIME



Located on the banks of a river that once teemed with Chinese junks and spice-laden vessels from all over the world, The Majestic Malacca provides a rare insight into the splendid saga of an extraordinary empire.

IT TOOK YEARS OF RESTORATION TO RETURN THE MAJESTIC MALACCA, A HISTORIC HOTEL THAT PLAYED HOST TO THE CRÈME DE LA CRÈME OF MALAYSIAN SOCIETY IN THE 1950S AND 1960S, TO ITS FORMER GLORY, BUT IT WAS WORTH THE WAIT.

Words [DIANA HUBBELL](#)



Steps from the UNESCO World Heritage-protected quarter of Malacca lies one of the city's oldest grande dames, a mansion built in 1929. It was once the private residence of a wealthy merchant who spared no expense in its construction. In the 1950s, businessman Lim Heng Fang transformed it into The Majestic Hotel and it hosted the area's most fashionable crowd, including, according to local lore, Malaysia's first prime minister.

In 2008, YTL Hotels acquired the property, transforming it into The Majestic Malacca. Though its new incarnation maintains the stately façade, a few subtle improvements bring it up to contemporary standards. For example, a 10-storey tower behind the main building houses suites with state-of-the-art amenities and vintage flair. Hardwood floors, marble details and claw-footed tubs keep the décor squarely rooted in the classic.

For all of the updates, though, the soul of the place remains intact. Upon arrival, guests sip whole-leaf tea brewed in a china pot, while a turndown service in the evening provides a multitude of traditional Malay sweets made from jaggery sugar, coconut and rice.

HARDWOOD FLOORS, MARBLE DETAILS AND CLAW-FOOTED TUBS KEEP THE DÉCOR SQUARELY ROOTED IN THE CLASSIC.

Those same morsels make an appearance at The Majestic Malacca's unique spin on high tea. The hotel offers an alternative to the British ritual, one that honours the city's diverse heritage. In an intricately painted, triple-tiered box sit an assortment of sweet and savoury Malaysian bites as well as a few dainty crustless sandwiches. Served in The Lounge, an airy salon in the centre of the original building, it's an ideal way to while away an afternoon.

In many ways, The Majestic Malacca shares a great deal in common with the city that surrounds it.

After all, this is a hotel where history and contemporary opulence match beautifully, where exquisite craftsmanship is the greatest luxury of all and every element has a story to tell.

For more information, please visit www.majesticmalacca.com

Bespoke furnishings call to mind the glory days of old Malacca, while floor-to-ceiling windows framed by silk drapes bathe the room with soft light.



Located at the heart of the mansion, The Lounge presents an inviting and historic space, ideal for a casual lunch, midday refreshments, afternoon tea or just conversation.

EAST COAST INSIDER

DISCOVER THE INTRICACIES OF TERENGGANU'S
MALAY CUISINE FROM TANJONG JARA RESORT'S
CHEF ANN DURING A TOUR OF HER DAILY STOMPING
GROUND, THE BUSTLING DUNGUN MARKET.

Words WEI-YU WANG



THE MARKET HUMS GENTLY WITH ACTIVITY, AND CHEF ANN HEADS STRAIGHT TO THE WET MARKET SECTION, WHERE STALL OWNERS GREET HER WARMLY.

Dungun, a peaceful seaside town with an active fishing industry, has a charming laid-back vibe. Chef Ann, who was born here, has worked at Tanjong Jara Resort since 1999. She visits the market every morning, and if resort guests want to follow her on a specially guided tour, she will gamely bring them along. "This is where the locals come," she offers, with a smile.

The market hums gently with activity, and Chef Ann heads straight to the wet market section, where stall owners greet her warmly. Tables are piled high with a rainbow of shimmering ocean catch. There is a brightly hued red snapper, tiger-striped mackerel, a palm-sized shiny silver mirror fish, tiny slipper lobsters and a massive 15kg stingray. Fishmongers do brisk business, and are busy gutting and filleting for waiting customers.

Chef Ann is in her element amid the clamour as she moves from stall to stall, while offering guests tips on selecting the best seafood for specific dishes. "Tuna is popular with locals in the form

of curry or sambal," she explains. Parrotfish, she says, is sweet and has soft flesh. Stingray is best for curries and barbecues. Shark is mostly good for curry, while burgundy-toned blocks of roe are tasty when deep-fried with garlic.

Dungun market is also popular for its delicious food and snacks. Some of the fare is unique to Malaysia like *apam balik* – peanut turnover pancake – and other varieties of local desserts or *kuih*.

Back at the resort, Chef Ann works out of the Di Atas Sungei restaurant. Here, she and her kitchen team prepare the dishes from the market-to-table menu that very day.

Always a repository of information, the good-humoured chef enthusiastically explains the differences between *rendang* and *assam* to diners new to these styles of Malay cuisine. "I'm always happy to prepare dishes the ways guests prefer," she says.

For more information, please visit www.tanjongjararesort.com



There is no menu at Di Atas Sungei. Instead, diners are guided by the resort's Culinary Master Chef Ann, an expert in local cuisine, who provides a distinctive dining experience using only the freshest produce of the highest quality.





WALKING IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF JIM THOMPSON

IN THE 1960s, ONE OF ASIA'S MOST ICONIC FIGURES VANISHED IN CAMERON HIGHLANDS. A WALK THROUGH THE FOREST PAST THE SITE OF HIS DISAPPEARANCE OFFERS A GLIMPSE INTO ONE OF HISTORY'S STRANGEST TALES.



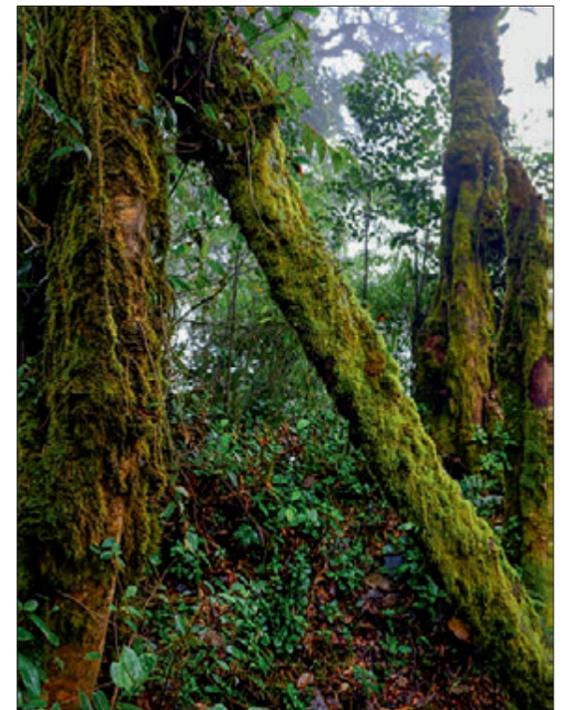
Words DIANA HUBBELL

To this day, Jim Thompson's life and disappearance remains one of the greatest unsolved mysteries in Southeast Asia, perhaps the world. Born in Delaware to a wealthy textile merchant family, the enterprising businessman travelled from Thailand to Singapore to Malaysia as he built up a silk empire that exists to this day. Yet while much is known about the intricate fabrics he produced, the man himself remains something of an enigma. In 1967 in Cameron Highlands, he told his cook that he was going for a stroll, but that he would like to have fish head curry for dinner that night. He waved jauntily to his gardener, walked into the jungle and was never seen or heard from again. For those hoping to discover more about his legacy and the theories swirling around his life,

Cameron Highlands Resort's naturalist S Madi leads a complimentary Jim Thompson Mystery Walk twice daily from the resort that plunges deep into the heart of the forest. Along the way, he stops to point out native plant species and exotic blooms imported by British colonialists. The narrow trail, which he forged himself through the brush, leads past quaint English-style cottages, including the one where Thompson spent his last days. While the final pieces of the puzzle surrounding Thompson may never be found, it is fascinating to delve into the lore that swirls around this fabled region. Walking through the misty jungle where it all happened, it is impossible not to be captivated by what might have been. *For more information, please visit www.cameronhighlandsresort.com*



The Jim Thompson excursion involves walking through the lush thick forest that surrounds Cameron Highlands Resort.



STEPPING INTO NATURE

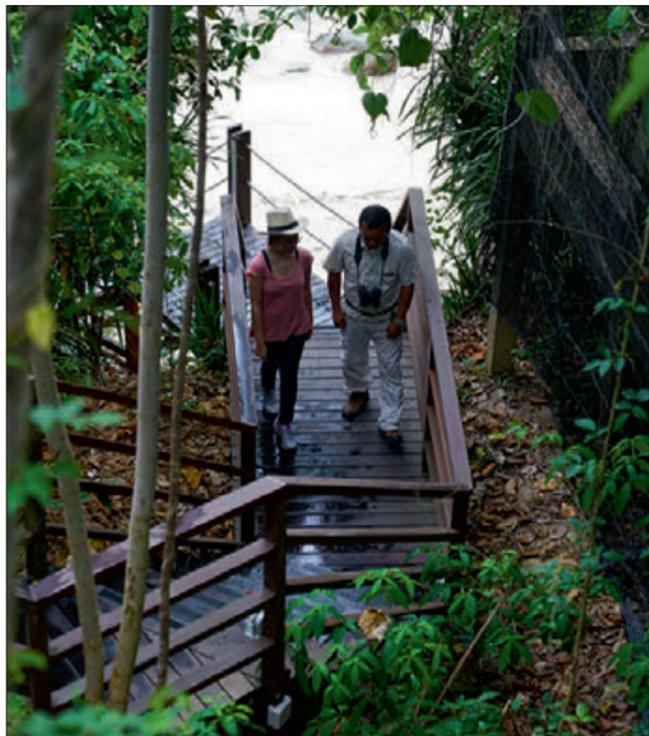
GOING ON A NATURE RAMBLE WITH
JUSTIN JUHUN, GAYA ISLAND RESORT'S
SENIOR RESIDENT NATURALIST,
ISN'T A MERE WALK IN THE JUNGLE.

Words RENYI LIM

“**A**ll forests are unique,” says Justin Juhun, as he leads the way through one of Gaya Island Resort’s nature trails, following a path that winds around enormous hardwood trees and past densely tangled vines, looping rattans and sprawling palms.

The resort’s senior resident naturalist is one of a handful of individuals capable of unlocking the many secrets that Gaya Island’s dense and richly diverse coastal dipterocarp forest holds. As the largest of five islands that make up the Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park in Sabah, the 1,483-hectare island has been a forest reserve since 1923 and is a veritable jewel box of rare flora and fauna, offering sanctuary to wildlife species facing rapid extinction.





Juhun embodies YTL Hotels' philosophy of 'conservation through education'. On any given day, he can be seen tracking down families of long-nosed proboscis monkeys in the name of research, keeping his eyes trained on the rainforest canopy for red giant flying squirrels that glide from branch to branch, or patiently collecting and planting elephant foot yam seeds. Setting out on an early morning guided nature walk with him is a highlight of the resort's PURE activities programme every guest should try at least once.

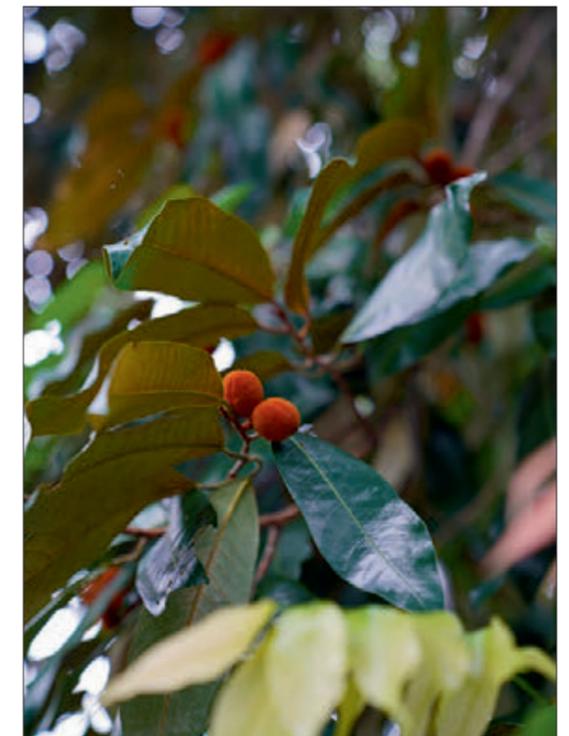
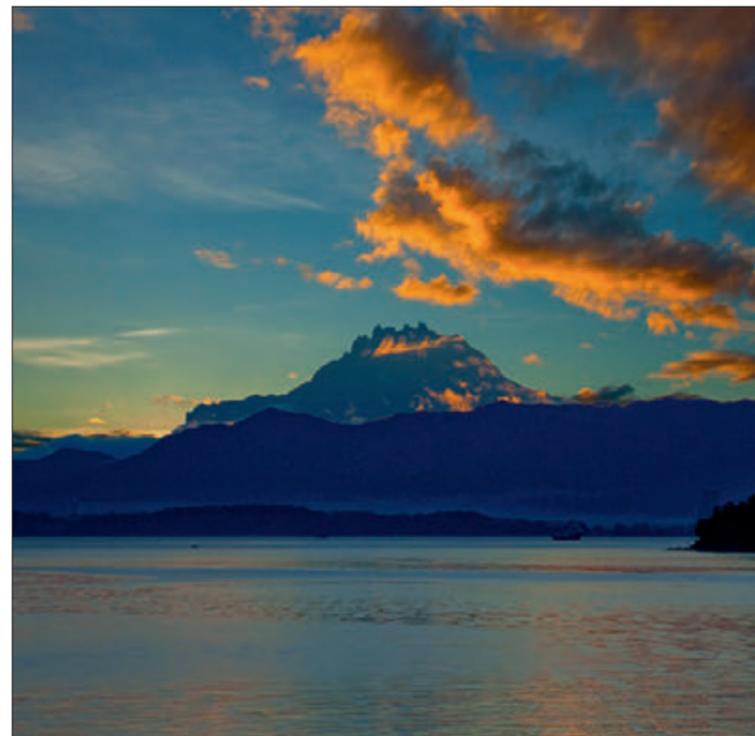
Kayaking through the oily, brackish waters of the mangrove forest just next to the resort is an adventure in itself, where Juhun will point out crabs slowly emerging from the twisted roots or an oriental pied hornbill perched on a branch in the golden afternoon light.

Would-be explorers who aren't afraid to tough it out may want to take up the challenge of attempting to cross the island on a private trekking experience with Juhun. To this day, no guest at Gaya Island Resort has successfully completed the walk, which takes seven to eight hours.

"Along that track, we might spot Pteroptyx fireflies, a tiny frog the size of your fingernail and huge spiders. And be prepared to climb over big boulders while using vines as a rope to haul yourself up. Everyone who's been on that trek can't believe what they've seen."

For more information, please visit www.gayaislandresort.com

WOULD-BE EXPLORERS WHO AREN'T AFRAID TO TOUGH IT OUT MAY WANT TO TAKE UP THE CHALLENGE OF ATTEMPTING TO CROSS THE ISLAND ON A PRIVATE TREKKING EXPERIENCE WITH JUHUN.





KEY TO THE CITY

THE BEST SECRETS OF MALAYSIA'S CAPITAL CAN'T BE FOUND IN YOUR AVERAGE GUIDEBOOK OR TRAVEL BLOG. INSTEAD, MAKE YOUR WAY TO THE CONCIERGE DESK OF THE MAJESTIC HOTEL KUALA LUMPUR, WHERE SHAREZAL ABDUL WAHID WILL HELP YOU DISCOVER THE CITY'S MANY GEMS.

Words RENYI LIM

There aren't many people who know Kuala Lumpur better than Sharezal Abdul Wahid, the Director of Concierge at The Majestic Hotel Kuala Lumpur. Instantly recognisable in a crisp white jacket and lapel pins in the shape of two gold crossed keys, he's a member of the prestigious Les Clefs d'Or - which singles him out as the crème de la crème of seasoned, professional concierges.

"A concierge is an ambassador for their hotel. We're the first person a guest meets and the last person they see when they leave the hotel. We're the ones who uphold what The Majestic is," says Sharezal, who has been with The Majestic Hotel Kuala Lumpur since 2013, and has worked in the hospitality industry for 15 years.

"You have to be a jack-of-all-trades," Sharezal muses, and when you hear some of his stories, they'll leave you in no doubt that he's remarkably adept at multitasking and thinking on his feet. For instance, one gentleman asked Sharezal to reserve a table at a restaurant in Singapore that same evening, which meant scrambling to book a private jet and chauffeur-driven cars to take the guest there and back.

Later, I can't help but eavesdrop as he helps a couple plan a short itinerary for their first



The concierge team at The Majestic Hotel Kuala Lumpur uses their wealth of local knowledge and expertise to help guests make the most of their stay by providing personal recommendations of Kuala Lumpur's finest shopping, theatre shows and hidden treasures.

"A CONCIERGE IS AN AMBASSADOR FOR THEIR HOTEL. WE'RE THE FIRST PERSON A GUEST MEETS AND THE LAST PERSON THEY SEE WHEN THEY LEAVE THE HOTEL."

exploratory steps in Kuala Lumpur, and it's clear that he's passionate about emphasising the historical backdrop of the city. "From the hotel, we're within walking distance of Merdeka Square," I hear him explain.

"Why don't you take a slow walk down to the Square, visit KL City Gallery, and then pass by the picturesque Sultan Abdul Samad Building? There's also one of the oldest churches in town, St Mary's Cathedral. Apparently, Henry Willis, the man responsible for crafting the pipe organs at London's St Paul's Cathedral, created similar instruments at St Mary's. From there, cross the new bridge over the River of Life project that leads to Central Market, and take in the occasional cultural performance or shop for souvenirs to bring back home. And I guess that's half the day gone!" he says with a smile.

For more information, please visit www.majestickl.com



QUEK FIX

ACCLAIMED CHEF JUSTIN QUEK SERVES GUESTS AT THE RITZ-CARLTON, KUALA LUMPUR'S THE LIBRARY A TASTE OF HIS SIGNATURE FRANCO-ASIAN CUISINE.

Words RENYI LIM



“**T**he world is about combinations - and when you get those combinations right, it's amazing,” was chef Justin Quek's thought process behind his specially curated four-course dinner, a highlight of his guest appearance at The Library in The Ritz-Carlton, Kuala Lumpur in July. Having hopped over the border to showcase his famous Franco-Asian cooking, the internationally renowned chef demonstrated his much-celebrated talents in elevating and reworking Asian dishes using modern French culinary techniques.

An assortment of Quek's signature hors d'oeuvres included an earthy mushroom cappuccino with ceps cream, cauliflower purée with Oscietra caviar and white chocolate, and an aromatic, broth-filled duck foie gras *xiao long bao*. “The key word is elegance,” he explained. “I don't copy Western recipes. I create my own style. Yes, there are European elements but I keep my food light because in Asia, we like elegance.”

Swiftly proving his point, even a duo of Maine lobster and wild mushrooms in a delectably buttery *shao xing* cream sauce remained delicate and well-balanced, although the fact that it was lifted by a glass of J Moreau & Fils Fourchaume, Chablis Premier Cru, certainly helped. Quek's two options for the main course were a blue cod fillet with crispy scales in a clam and herb fondue, and Asian-style braised Angus beef and seared Wagyu beef with oriental greens.

Deciding to keep things simple, Quek rounded off his debut at The Ritz-Carlton, Kuala Lumpur with a pillow-like marshmallow chocolate and mint *île flottante*, with caramelised rice for added crunch and a glass of Harveys Bristol Cream sherry. Evidently still one for keeping his diners well-fed, especially while he waits to move from Sky on 57 at Marina Bay Sands to his new restaurant, JQ Mon Asia, he sent sheets of crisp salted almond tuile around The Library as an irresistibly moreish petit four, almost as a promise of what is to come at his restaurant next year.

For more information, please visit ritzcarlton.com/kualalumpur



“I DON'T COPY WESTERN RECIPES. I CREATE MY OWN STYLE. YES, THERE ARE EUROPEAN ELEMENTS BUT I KEEP MY FOOD LIGHT BECAUSE IN ASIA, WE LIKE ELEGANCE.”



The Ritz-Carlton, Kuala Lumpur hosted a unique and unforgettable experience as Singapore-born chef Justin Quek showcased his ability to reinvent Asian favourites with French flavours and flair.

IN THE FLOW

INTERNATIONAL YOGA TEACHER AND ASHTANGA PRACTITIONER KINO MACGREGOR TELLS *YTL LIFE* ABOUT HER YOGA JOURNEY IN MYSORE, INDIA, AND HOW THE PRACTICE HAS SHAPED HER LIFE.

Words TAN SU FEN

Hotel Stripes Kuala Lumpur in partnership with Oscillation Yoga had the pleasure of hosting Kino MacGregor. The international yoga teacher and pioneering yogi embraces the traditional teaching of yoga and social media – she has 1.1 million followers on Instagram.

This is your first time at Hotel Stripes. What are your impressions?

I think one of the most stunning features about this hotel is the rooftop pool. It has a beautiful view of the city and it's peaceful up there.

How and when did you find yoga?

I started the practice of yoga to live a peaceful life. When I did my first class at the age of 19, yoga left an impression. It was a path of healing.

Is ashtanga one of the most intense methods of yoga?

There are some things that the traditional practice demands in the ashtanga yoga method that some of the more contemporary styles of yoga don't. For example, if you drop in for a beginner's ashtanga class, everything will be relatively approachable.

What is the biggest challenge you face on your yoga journey?

My biggest challenge in the practice is strength. I was never a dancer or gymnast, so it's not

something that comes naturally for me. To work on the powerful moves, to lift up and jump back or to do a handstand, all that stuff was almost impossible when I first started the practice.

How has yoga changed your life?

The first thing that yoga taught me was how to believe in myself. I never learned that, I never really had a discipline of any type. It taught me how to believe in myself, to achieve the things I wasn't naturally good at.

Tell us about your yoga journey in Mysore, India.

When I first went to India, I had no idea what to expect. I was just this American girl from Florida who flew to India and it was completely overwhelming.

There were only 40 students in the class, and that number dwindled to half before I left, so there were only 20 of us in that trip to India. It really just changed my whole perspective. I realised that the first gift that India gave me was patience.

Tips for practising yoga at home?

Try to practice at the same time every day. Try to make a programme and stick to it – that is really important because if you have a routine around it, then the people in your life start to respect that routine. Try to practice in the same spot every day. This is important because it builds a sense of energy and respect, much like a sacred space.

“TO WORK ON THE POWERFUL MOVES, TO LIFT UP AND JUMP BACK OR TO DO A HANDSTAND, ALL THAT STUFF WAS ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE WHEN I FIRST STARTED THE PRACTICE.”





A NEW LEVEL

THE VISTANA PENANG BUKIT JAMBUL'S EXECUTIVE CLUB WELCOMES GUESTS WITH ITS RANGE OF AMENITIES AND PRIVILEGES.

Words MARK LEAN



Travellers to Penang now have more reasons to check-in to the Vistana Penang Bukit Jambul. The hotel's recently unveiled Executive Club comprises rooms and amenities that will make business and leisure guests feel at home while on the island. The Executive Club rooms and suites have been tastefully decorated with a contemporary aesthetic and feature thoughtful amenities such as complimentary minibars and Wi-Fi, along with 24/7 access to the Executive Club Lounge. The cosy Lounge offers guests complimentary Wi-Fi, priority late check-out privileges, all-day refreshments and snacks, as well as evening drinks to cap a productive day of meetings or sightseeing.

For more information, please visit www.vistanahotels.com/penang

The new Club Floor provides an international standard and style of accommodation with exceptional value-added benefits.



A LICENCE TO THRILL

CULT KNITS, CROPPED LEATHER JACKETS AND CLASSIC BLAZERS ADD A HINT OF SPY FOR A GLAMOROUS WEEKEND GETAWAY.

Photographer SOON LAU/AWESOME PICTURES
Styling JAYEN CHOW
Location THE RITZ-CARLTON, KUALA LUMPUR

On Zsofia: Round-neck patterned knit sheath dress, M Missoni.
On Robson: Striped button-down cotton shirt and navy check suit, all from Ermenegildo Zegna.

Round neck wool knit sweater, leather bomber jacket with hood and slim-fit tailored trousers, all from Ermenegildo Zegna.





Round-neck ruffle knit shift dress, M Missoni; Omega Railmaster Co-Axial Master Chronometer 40mm, Omega.

LIFE STYLE



Contrast collar striped cotton shirt, Gucci; blue cotton suit blazer and trousers, both from Ermenegildo Zegna; Speedmaster Racing Omega Co-Axial Master Chronometer Chronograph 44.25mm, Omega

On Robson: Button-down cotton shirt, checked wool blazer and carrot-fit wool trousers, all from Ermenegildo Zegna.
On Zsofia: Round-neck patterned knit midi wool dress, M Missoni.



Assisted by: Asyiqin & Akmal
Make-up: Cat Yong
Hair: Gavin Soh
Models: Zsofia M & Robson B/Wu Models

CATCH THE SPIRIT OF NISEKO

HOKKAIDO'S PRISTINE, SPARKLING WHITE SNOW COVER MAKES THE AREA A PARADISE FOR SKIERS, SNOWBOARDERS AND POWDER HOUNDS OF ALL LEVELS.

Words RENYI LIM

With the swift arrival of colder weather, it's time to look towards the Japanese island of Hokkaido, where the interaction of Siberian winds with moisture from the Sea of Japan produces exceptional 'champagne powder' from December to May.

Given Niseko Village's prime position at the foot of the 1,308-metre-high Mount Niseko Annupuri, it's an opportunity for guests to make the most of the season at what is arguably Japan's best ski resort, whether it involves traversing the mountain's stunning off-piste terrain or simply taking in the wild, dramatic scenery surrounding the Village.

There are plenty of ways to enjoy the endless powder: 70 groomed runs are available for skiers from beginner to expert level, while the multilingual instructors at Niseko Village Snow School (NVSS) and Niseko Kids Snow School provide a gentle introduction to the slopes, marking the start of what will hopefully become a lifelong hobby. Advanced skiers and snowboarders can test their mountain skills on the NVSS All Mountain Explorer course, or venture onto the extreme terrain area known as Mizuno No Sawa, where avalanche-control operations are employed daily. Risk-takers willing to push their experience to the extreme might want to consider snowshoeing up the mighty Mount Yotei and attempting a mind-blowing stratovolcanic crater skiing expedition at the summit.

This year has seen Niseko join The Mountain Collective for the 2017-18 season, which offers a Mountain Collective Pass to four interlinked ski resorts on Hokkaido: Grand Hirafu, Hanazono, Niseko Village and An'nupuri. The lift ticket includes two days of riding at all partner resorts and 50 per cent off additional days at each resort, which means you're sure to be kept in your skis and on the 2,191 acres of skiable terrain for most of your holiday.

Just remember to treat your hardworking legs every now and then to a soothing après-ski soak in a traditional Japanese onsen. Two serene hot spring baths are available at Niseko Village, including The Green Leaf and the pine tree-framed onsen at Hilton Niseko Village with unbeatable views of Mount Yotei in all its magnificence.

For more information, please visit www.niseko-village.com



From top: the instructors at Niseko's Snow Schools pride themselves in ensuring a fun, safe and exciting experience; book a Mt. Yotei guestroom at Hilton Niseko Village to see the spectacular Sea of Cloud early in the morning in the spring and autumn seasons; family-friendly activities include the chance to whisk across the sparkling snow on a reindeer sled.



THERE ARE PLENTY OF WAYS TO ENJOY THE ENDLESS POWDER.



From top: at Niseko Village, traditional and contemporary concepts meld to offer world-class restaurants and bars, designer boutiques, and art and cultural events; guests of all ages can retreat to sanctuary of healing at a Niseko Village spa or onsen.

NIGHT SPARKLES

THE EVENINGS MIGHT BE QUIETER ON BALI'S NORTH-EASTERN COAST, BUT WITH THE STARS FOR COMPANY, THE ENTERTAINMENT IS UNFORGETTABLE.

Words [SIMON PRIDMORE](#)

I am lying on my back staring up at the sky. It's late and I have had a full day and a wonderful dinner, but my eyes are wide open because I do not want to miss a thing. The mattress beneath me undulates gently. My wife Sofie squeezes my hand softly, and I instinctively understand the message she is conveying: "How amazing this is!"

The sky above us is dark and cloudless but it is far from empty. We are lying on a double airbed, floating on the surface of the swimming pool at Spa Village Resort, Tembok that skirts Bali's north-eastern coastline. Between us is a digital music device that both of us are connected to through earphones. Our view is of a firmament of millions of stars, framed by the long fronds of the tall palms that encircle the pool.

The number of stars increases as our eyes become accustomed to the darkness. We begin to see layer upon layer of less luminous and more distant stars concealed behind the superstars that initially drew our attention when we began this special experience.

Kadek, the pool attendant in charge of our starlight gazing this evening, manoeuvres a tether

so the floating mattress turns ever so slowly. The water is slightly disturbed as we pass over it and we feel the ripples beneath us. It is the gentlest of massages.

Of course, our perspective is not that we are moving but that we are completely still. It is the stars that are in flux, and that we are watching a universe in perpetual motion. Sofie's hand presses mine again, more urgently this time. I have seen it: a shooting star crossing from right to left across the frame, falling fast and fading behind one of the palm fronds.

A breath of wind ruffles the water's surface and causes the trees to sway. The stars rush by a little more quickly and we are glad of the thin blanket that was laid over us as we set out. All too soon, our time with the stars is over and we return to reality.

"How was it?" asks Kadek as he takes our blanket and earphones.

"Out of this world!" we reply.

"Everybody says that," he says with a smile.

For more information, please visit www.spavillage.com/tembokbali



Starlight Gazing is an innovative spa treatment at Spa Village Resort Tembok, Bali. Guests lie weightless on a floating platform, taking in the enormity of the universe above as they listen to a specially selected soundtrack. It is a perfect way to end the night.



SQUARE MILE SENSATION

ORIGINALLY A BANK, THREADNEEDLES HOTEL IN LONDON MATCHES VICTORIAN DESIGN WITH CRISP AND FRIENDLY BRITISH HOSPITALITY.



Threadneedles Hotel sits in the midst of London's financial heart, making it ideal for those working in The City of London, with many of the major financial institutions within walking distance.



Restaurants and bars in London's city centre come and go, but at Threadneedles Hotel, the dining options – which range from the Champagne Bar to the Dome Lounge – are as consistent a lure as the accommodation.

Words MARK LEAN

Located in the City of London, the Bank of England, known affectionately as the Old Lady of Threadneedles Street, has had its headquarters on that thoroughfare since 1734. It's believed that 5,000 tonnes of gold bars are stored below ground, in the bank's eight vaults.

A short walk down this storied road is the similarly historic Threadneedles Hotel, an Autograph Collection Hotel, situated in a Grade II-listed Victorian building – the former head office of the City and Midland Bank. Enjoy an English afternoon tea in the lobby, beneath a beautifully restored 19th-century stained glass dome, in what was previously the bank's main reception area.

All 74 rooms in this luxury boutique hotel are modern yet retain classic elements that nod to the area's banking history. Rich beiges and browns form the interiors scheme. Bedding is plush and comfortable. In-room technology includes 38-inch LCD televisions, complimentary high-speed Wi-Fi and iPod docking stations.

In the evenings, the hotel's Champagne Bar is

a magnet for hotel guests and those who work in the area. Fashioned from the old banking counter, the bar is nostalgic and has a cool, unpretentious vibe. Ask the bartender for Blood & Sand, a drink composed of equal parts Chivas 12-year whisky, sweet vermouth, Cherry Heering and orange juice. Or for those preferring a slightly more glamorous alternative, the Classic Champagne Cocktail featuring Veuve Clicquot champagne, Martell VSOP cognac, Angostura bitters and a sugar cube, might just do the trick. Invented in 1862, the drink was transformed in 1937 when a shot of brandy was added to the recipe.

Beyond the hotel, most of the city's landmarks are close by including places such as The Shard, St Paul's Cathedral, Tate Modern Museum and Tower Bridge. Steps away are the Bank and the Monument Underground stations that connect to the glitzy West End with its theatres and other attractions that the British capital is famous for around the world.

For more information, please visit www.hotelthreadneedles.co.uk

ENJOY AN ENGLISH AFTERNOON TEA BENEATH A 19TH-CENTURY STAINED GLASS DOME.



PALATE PLEASER

HEAD CHEF DAN MOON'S USE OF LOCALLY GROWN PRODUCE IS CATCHING THE ATTENTION OF FOODIES EVERYWHERE.

Words MARK LEAN

It's just after lunch at Dan Moon at The Gainsborough, the elegant Georgian-design restaurant regarded as one of Bath's top tables. The restaurant is located at the award-winning The Gainsborough Bath Spa, which recently added the Hotel of the Year (England) accolade at the 2017 AA Hospitality Awards to its list of achievements. Its head chef Dan Moon, who was born in Exmouth in the Westcountry, knows the farming communities in the area well. This home-grown expertise allows him to make the most of the freshest, the finest and often unconventional, produce.

"I always look at what's in season," he says. His criteria for selecting 'wow' ingredients involves "anything that meets visual specifications; basically, anything that looks and tastes amazing". Moon adds a dash of apple cider vinegar to the chicken liver, which he explains is something that balances the flavours.

Dan Moon is pushing culinary boundaries and surprising hotel guests and local diners with his unlikely culinary combinations.



DAN MOON'S CRITERIA FOR SELECTING 'WOW' INGREDIENTS INVOLVES "ANYTHING THAT LOOKS AND TASTES AMAZING".



"I find elements that work well together and place them on a blank canvas," he adds. Meats, according to Moon, are used as a form of language; a method of communication that contrasts flavours – the richness of meat with piquant vinegars, pickles and yuzu. His main courses follow a similarly inventive approach. A crowd-pleaser, the Creedy Carver duck breast confit is paired beautifully with spring roll, plum and sesame.

He isn't averse to presenting smoked salmon with cucumber and borage – a type of local flower – either. The blooms are edible and add colour, texture and taste.

"All dishes at The Gainsborough Restaurant have been created with these contrasts in mind," Moon says. He adds that fermented beetroot when in season is mixed with cauliflower, milk and whey. "I am always developing new and different dishes that aren't always predictable".

The menu at The Gainsborough Restaurant changes seasonally. However, the items that steal the show are often retained. "Those dishes stay on the menu longer," Moon adds.

The winner of three AA Rosettes and The Caterer's Acorn Award, this creative chef is steadily carving a name for himself. The reason behind The Gainsborough Restaurant's buzz both in the United Kingdom and farther afield could well be due to Moon's perfectionist approach. "I taste every item before it's served," he says. "It is the secret to maintaining consistent standards."

For more information, please visit
www.thegainsboroughbathspa.co.uk



Moon's beautifully presented feasts are a perfect complement to the sophisticated decor of The Gainsborough Restaurant's dining room.



"I FIND ELEMENTS THAT WORK WELL TOGETHER AND PLACE THEM ON A BLANK CANVAS."

SCOTTISH TRADITIONS AND TALES

CELEBRATE HOGMANAY IN STYLE AT
THE GLASSHOUSE HOTEL EDINBURGH.

Words MALCOLM ARNOLD



THE LIGHTING OF BONFIRES WITH SMOKING STICKS WRAPPED IN ANIMAL HIDE HAS FOR CENTURIES BEEN SYMBOLIC OF THE OCCASION.

In the late 18th century, it was Scottish poet Robert Burns, famously known as the Bard of Ayrshire, who immortalised his poem *Auld Lang Syne*. These verses then evolved into a song, which became popular during the Hogmanay end-of-year celebrations. As traditions dictate, the celebrations involved 'first-footing', or being the first to visit a friend or relative's home after midnight, bearing gifts such as shortbread, whisky and black buns, with merriment lasting long into the night. It was thought that the first visitor to a home during that time would ideally be a dark-haired male, as a blond stranger was likely to be a Viking invader.

The lighting of bonfires with smoking sticks wrapped in animal hide has for centuries been symbolic of the occasion; one deeply rooted in Scotland's customs and way of life. Considered a symbol of purification and instrumental in warding off negative energies, these torches are known as Hogmanays.

In the same vein as the practice of trick or treat during Halloween, groups of boys would traverse their Highland locales, wearing sheepskin, while

repeating a rhyme in Gaelic. Residents in the homes they visit would then pile these youths with gifts of bannock, a delicious variety of fruit bun.

During Hogmanay, the element of fire has a crucial role to play. In towns such as Stonehaven, near Aberdeen, giant flame balls are swung around on poles, signifying the energies of the sun triumphing over darkness. In Edinburgh, the annual Torchlight Procession creates a river of fire with blazing torches.

The Glasshouse Hotel Edinburgh celebrates Hogmanay in style. The once-a-year event comprises a champagne reception, a five-course dinner with exquisite wine pairing at The Brasserie, a *ceilidh* at The Calton Suite, located in a setting unique to the hotel – the city's only two-acre rooftop garden. This is the perfect vantage point to enjoy a flute of champagne, to catch the panoramic fireworks display from Calton Hill and to imbibe the timeless Hogmanay spirit.

For more information, please visit www.theglasshousehotel.co.uk



The Glasshouse Hotel Edinburgh is one of the top places to stay for Hogmanay, with its unbeatable views of the fireworks displays from its roof garden.



12 THINGS TO DO ON JALAN KAMUNTING IN 48 HOURS

EXPLORING ONE OF KUALA LUMPUR'S MOST VIBRANT AND ECLECTIC NEIGHBOURHOODS ON FOOT IS A CHANCE TO GET UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL WITH THE CITY'S BEATING HEART.

Words RENYI LIM





Clockwise from left: Oscillation Yoga; Man Tao Bar; Sin Hua Bee Bakery; Vallette Gallery. Facing page: Le Gouter at Brasserie 25; Yut Kee Restaurant.



9:30AM - OSCILLATION YOGA

Rev your body's engine by participating in a Dynamic Vinyasa Flow class at Oscillation Yoga, a partner of Hotel Stripes Kuala Lumpur. Classes take place in the light-filled, ultra-modern studio. www.oscillationyoga.com

11:25AM - YUT KEE RESTAURANT

This Kuala Lumpur institution is as famous for its long line of patrons as it is for its stellar Hainanese cuisine. Arrive early to beat the queue and order the signature dish – a crispy, golden-brown chicken chop drizzled in thick sauce.

1:03PM - VALLETTE GALLERY

Head to The Row, a chic cluster of shophouses dating to the 1940s, which has been transformed into a collective of independent shops, bars, arts spaces and cafés. Make your way up the stairs to Vallette Gallery. There, you'll find pieces by some of Malaysia's newest and most exciting artists, such as Faizal Suhif, Ain Rahman and Anniketyni Madian. www.vallettegallery.com



2:15PM - SIN HUA BEE BAKERY

Dash across to the district of Chow Kit and seek out Sin Hua Bee Bakery, with its turquoise shelves and large glass jars of biscuits on display. Sample the traditional Chinese wedding biscuits, which remain a sought-after speciality of this family-run bakery by the city's newlyweds.

3:31PM - AH LOKE TAILOR

Swing by for a spot of sartorial chatter with the second-generation owner of Ah Loke Tailor, the gentle and soft-spoken Loke Kwong Yuen, and ask to peek at his selection of fine Italian wools.

7:08PM - MAN TAO BAR

The poolside Man Tao Bar at Hotel Stripes boasts one of the loveliest views of the Malaysian capital, stretching from the tree canopies of Bukit Nanas Forest Reserve to the heights of the Petronas Twin Towers. Enjoy the evening sunset with a Tsingtao beer-laced cocktail and a selection of man tao buns. www.stripeskl.com





THE COUNTRY'S BEST MEE MAMAK (DANGEROUSLY ADDICTIVE STIR-FRIED EGG NOODLES IN A SPICY SAUCE) CAN BE FOUND A FEW STEPS ACROSS THE ROAD FROM HOTEL STRIPES.

10:07AM - LOKE MANSION

Take a morning stroll to the beautifully restored Loke Mansion to get a sense of Kuala Lumpur's golden age in the former home of Malaysian business tycoon and philanthropist Loke Yew. The building now houses the office of Cheang & Ariff law firm.

12:20PM - COWBOY MAMAK

The country's best *mee mamak* (dangerously addictive stir-fried egg noodles in a spicy sauce) can be found a few steps across the road from Hotel Stripes at Cowboy Mamak. Wash the feast down with a cup of milky *teh tarik* (pulled tea).

1:12PM - JALAN TUANKU ABDUL RAHMAN

It's time to traverse the length of Jalan Tuanku Abdul Rahman. Here you'll find anything from crisp Indian cottons to elaborately embroidered, heavily beaded fabrics fit for a king.

4:18PM - BRASSERIE 25

Cool off and escape the afternoon sun at Hotel Stripes' Brasserie 25, where you can people-watch as you nibble on tasty morsels from the *Le Goûter* afternoon tea presentation. Partake of a selection of sweets and savouries including traditional Malaysian curry puffs and a mind-blowingly delicious white chocolate truffle cake. www.stripeskl.com

6:06PM - BITS & PIECES

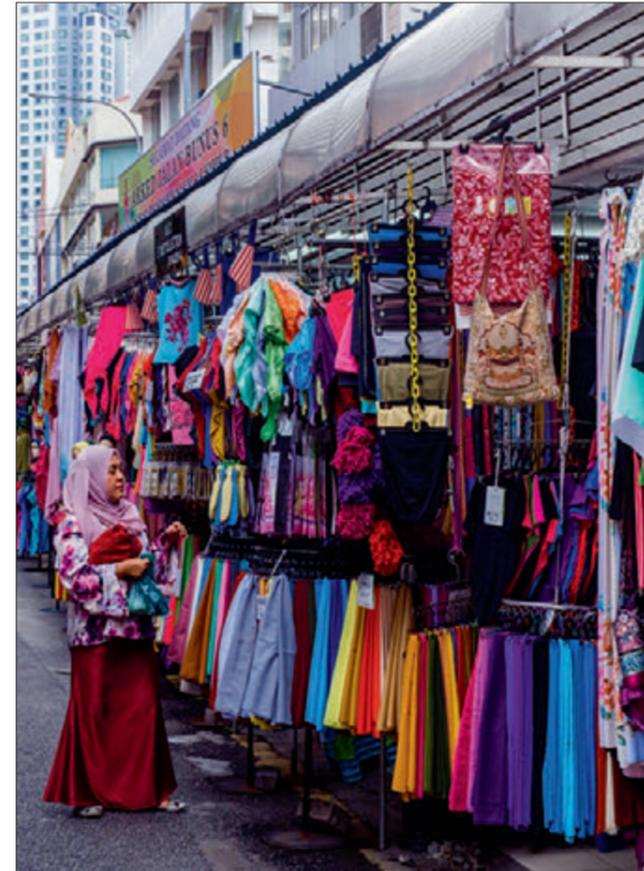
It's back to The Row for a final round of souvenir shopping at Bits & Pieces, a delightful boutique stocked with rustic, vintage-inspired ornaments and furniture. www.bitsandpieces.com.my

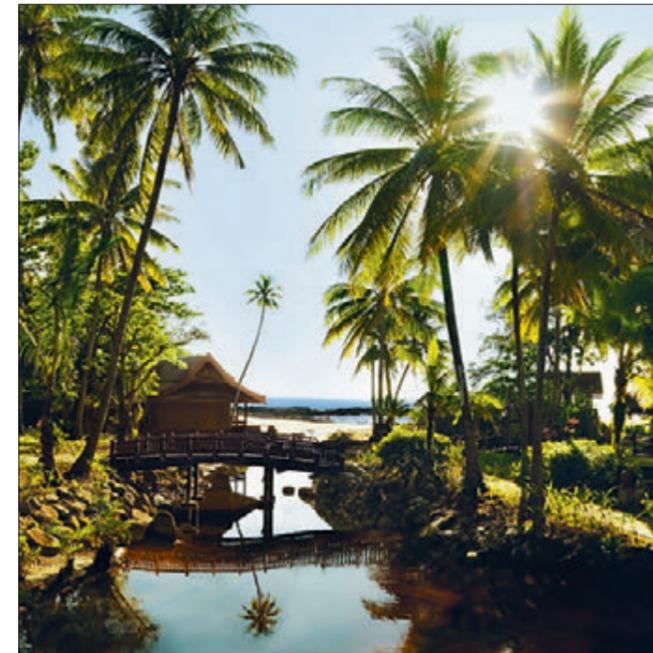
7:17PM - CAPITAL CAFÉ

Try a plate of *nasi padang* composed of steamed rice served with an assortment of tasty accompaniments, such as fried stink beans, grilled fish and spicy tofu. You'll find an excellent example of this much-loved staple at Capital Café, an establishment that has satiated hungry locals since 1956.



Loke Mansion; Cowboy Mamak. Facing page, clockwise from top left: colourful textiles along Jalan Tuanku Abdul Rahman; Brasserie 25; the view from Man Tao at Hotel Stripes.





Set within Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park, Gaya Island Resort is a jewel located off the capital of Sabah, Kota Kinabalu. Golden sandy beaches and crystal-clear waters teeming with marine life are compelling attractions, while its Spa Village offers opportunities to sample authentic Borneo-inspired healing and wellness therapies.
www.gaya-islandresort.com

This luxurious resort is set on a private tropical island on the Straits of Malacca. Villas either fringe the hillside or are gracefully balanced on stilts over water. An award-winning Spa Village offers world-class treatments derived from Chinese, Indian and Malay healing traditions.
www.pangkorlautresort.com

Tanjong Jara Resort on the east coast of Peninsular Malaysia embodies the essence of Malay culture and traditions. Facing the South China Sea and surrounded by the lush green beauty of the local countryside, Tanjong Jara Resort reveals a quieter but equally attractive side to Malaysia.
www.tanjongjararesort.com

Evoking the splendour, the romance and the nostalgia of one of Malaysia's oldest hill stations and its grand colonial heritage, Cameron Highlands Resort with its luxurious rooms and award-winning Spa Village is the best place to take in the area's rolling hills, tea plantations, rose gardens and strawberry farms.
www.cameronhighlandsresort.com



THE RITZ-CARLTON

KUALA LUMPUR



THE RITZ-CARLTON

KOH SAMUI

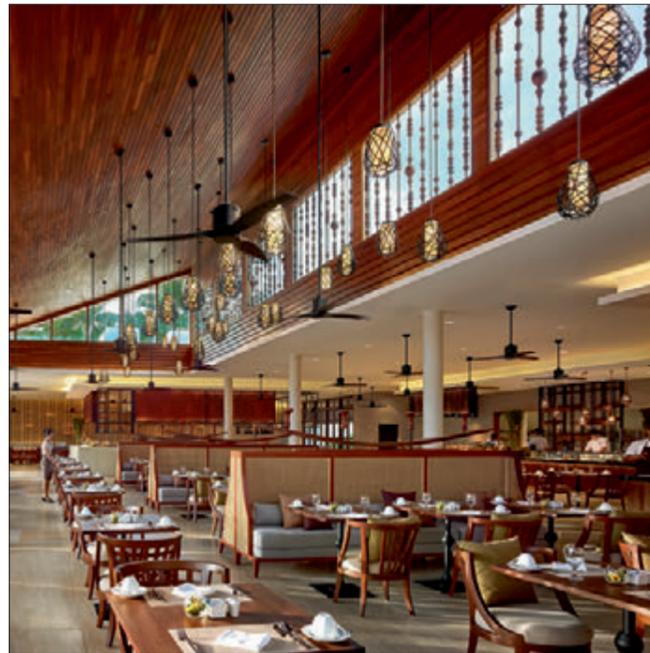


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LOCATED IN KUALA LUMPUR'S GOLDEN TRIANGLE BUSINESS DISTRICT, THIS STYLISH LUXURY HOTEL IS CONVENIENTLY POSITIONED FOR UPSCALE SHOPPING, DINING AND ENTERTAINMENT. IT IS HOME TO AN AWARD-WINNING SPA, AND GOURMANDS WILL BE DELIGHTED BY THE INDULGENT AFTERNOON TEA EXPERIENCE AS WELL AS LI YEN'S STELLAR CANTONESE CUISINE.

RITZCARLTON.COM/KUALALUMPUR

NESTLED WITHIN THE EMBRACE OF A PRIVATE SUN-KISSED BAY, THE RITZ-CARLTON, KOH SAMUI IS SURROUNDED BY OCEANFRONT BEAUTY AND QUINTESSENTIAL EXPERIENCES THAT ARTFULLY REFLECT THE SAMUI WAY OF LIFE. THIS MAKES THE BEAUTIFUL PROPERTY AN IDEAL SETTING TO EMBARK ON WELLNESS PROGRAMMES, CULTURAL IMMERSIONS OR CULINARY JOURNEYS.

RITZCARLTON.COM/KOHSAMUI

LOCATED ALONG BUKIT BINTANG ROAD AT THE HEART OF KUALA LUMPUR, JW MARRIOTT IS IDEAL FOR BUSINESS AND LEISURE TRAVELLERS. WITH WORLD-CLASS SHOPPING MALLS NEARBY, THIS CONVENIENTLY LOCATED HOTEL WITH ITS EXTENSIVE RANGE OF FACILITIES IS ONE OF THE CITY'S FINEST.

JWMARRIOTT.COM

HOTELSTRIPES IS THE SECOND AUTOGRAPH COLLECTION HOTEL IN MALAYSIA. IT COMBINES A MODERN VIBE AND HISTORICAL REFERENCES TO ITS LOCATION, ONE OF KUALA LUMPUR'S OLDEST NEIGHBOURHOODS. WITH CONTEMPORARY GUESTROOMS AND SUITES, THE HOTEL IS A CONVENIENT BASE TO EXPLORE THE MALAYSIAN CAPITAL'S MANY ATTRACTIONS.

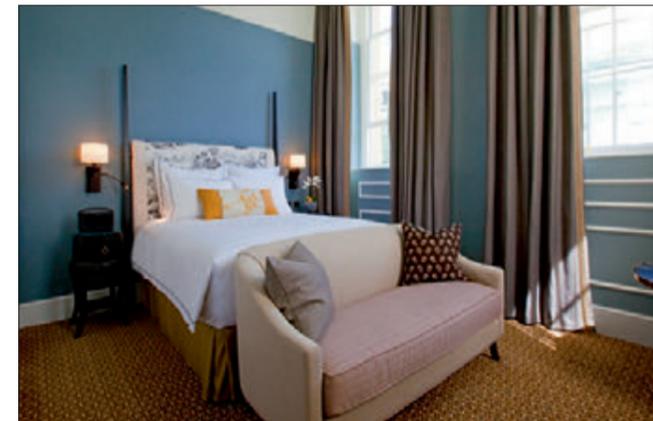
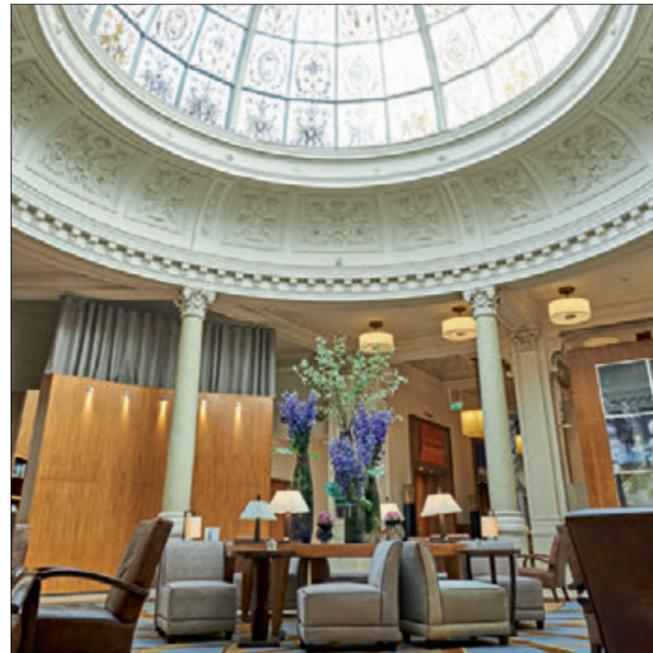
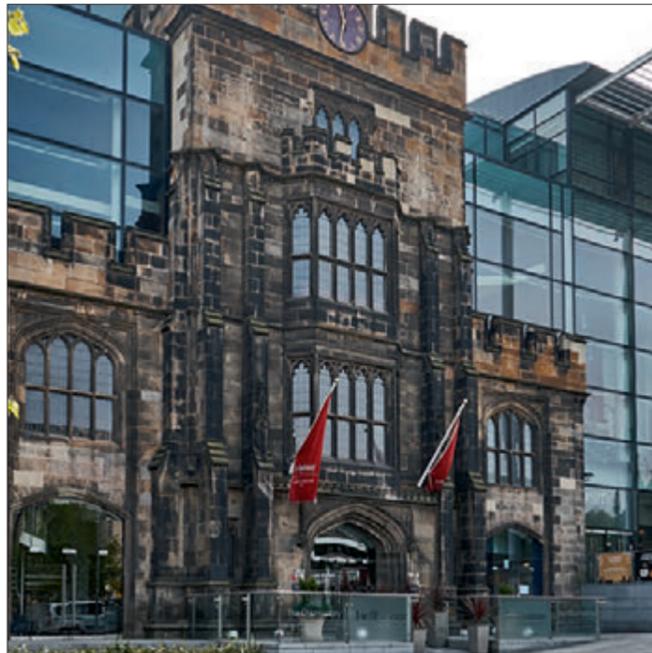
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GAINSBOROUGH
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Shook!
RESTAURANT &
ROOFTOP TERRACE



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WWW.THEGLASSHOUSEHOTEL.CO.UK

THIS FORMER VICTORIAN BANK HAS BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO A DISCREET, BOUTIQUE-STYLE HOTEL, CROWNED BY AN ELEGANT STAINED GLASS DOME, AN UNEXPECTED FIND IN THE CITY'S HEART. THE HOTEL EXUDES GRANDEUR IN A THOROUGHLY MODERN WAY, WHILE SERVICE IS POLISHED; IT'S ALSO UNPRETENTIOUS AMID THE BUSTLE OF SQUARE MILE.

WWW.HOTELTHREADNEEDLES.CO.UK

THE GAINSBOROUGH BATH SPA OFFERS THE ONLY NATURAL THERMAL SPA WITHIN A HOTEL IN THE UK. THE HOTEL IS A MOMENT'S STROLL FROM BATH ABBEY, THE HIGH STREET STORES ON MILSOM STREET AND THE ROMAN BATHS, WHICH MAKES IT A CHOICE LOCATION FROM WHICH TO EXPLORE THE CITY AND ITS NEARBY ATTRACTIONS.

WWW.THEGAINSBOROUGHBATHSPA.CO.UK

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WWW.SHOOKRESTAURANTSHANGHAI.COM



A GLAMOROUS AND PRIVATE HIDEAWAY IN THE SOUTH OF FRANCE, MUSE SAINT TROPEZ IS ALL ABOUT THE HIGH LIFE. LOCATED IN RAMATUELLE AND SURROUNDED BY FORESTS OF UMBRELLA PINES, THIS BOUTIQUE PROPERTY FEATURES JUST 15 SUITES, EACH OF WHICH IS NAMED AFTER FAMOUS 'MUSES'. MAKE THE HOTEL YOUR BASE TO EXPLORE THE SIGHTS, THE SOUNDS AND THE DELIGHTS OF THE RIVIERA.

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WWW.MUSE-HOTELS.COM

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THE HEART OF THE VILLAGE IS NISEKO VILLAGE'S MAIN PULSE WHERE PAVED INTIMATE WALKWAYS ARE FLANKED BY CONTEMPORARY SHOPPING AND DINING OPTIONS. JUST MOMENTS FROM NISEKO VILLAGE'S AWARD-WINNING HOTELS, RESIDENCES AND LIFTS, ITS SLOPESIDE LOCATION ALLOWS FOR SEAMLESS SKI-IN, SKI-OUT ACCESS BETWEEN MOUNTAIN ADVENTURES AND INDOOR DIVERSIONS. BOTH MODERN AND TRADITIONAL INTERWEAVE, EVOKING A GENTEEL LIFESTYLE AT THE VILLAGE WITH ITS AUTHENTIC JAPANESE MACHIYA ARCHITECTURAL SETTING. APRÈS-SKI IS EXCITINGLY REDEFINED AT NISEKO VILLAGE.

WWW.NISEKO-VILLAGE.COM

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PHUKET



SITUATED ON PANSEA BEACH, ONE OF PHUKET'S MOST PRIVATE STRETCHES OF SAND, THE SURIN OFFERS A PERFECT SLICE OF THAI BEACH LIFE. THE COTTAGES AND SUITES ARE BUILT INTO A CAREFULLY CONSERVED LANDSCAPE. FROM SUMPTUOUS CUISINE TO WATERSPORTS, THE SURIN COMBINES IDYLIC TROPICAL CHARM WITH THE WARMTH OF THAI HOSPITALITY.

WWW.THESURINPHUKET.COM

BLACK VOLCANIC SAND, THE MAJESTIC MOUNT AGUNG, THE DEEP BLUE OF THE INDIAN OCEAN AND THE MYSTICAL BALINESE WAY OF LIFE COME TOGETHER IN STYLE AT SPA VILLAGE RESORT TEMBOK, BALI. LOCATED IN THE NORTH OF THE ISLAND, THE RESORT IS A HAVEN OF WELLNESS, WHERE GUESTS CAN ENJOY ALL THE BENEFITS AND PLEASURES OF SPA LIFE IN TRANQUIL SURROUNDINGS.

WWW.SPAVILLAGERESORT.COM/TEMBOKBALI



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WWW.MAJESTICMALACCA.COM

FULLY RESTORED TO ITS FORMER GLORY, THIS ELEGANT 1930S PROPERTY MARRIES HISTORY WITH WORLD-CLASS HOSPITALITY. DINING OPTIONS INCLUDE HAINANESE FAVOURITES AT COLONIAL CAFÉ AS WELL AS AN INTERACTIVE DINING EXPERIENCE AT CONTANGO, WHILE THE ROOMS ARE A BLEND OF CONTEMPORARY STYLE AND OLD-WORLD FINESSE.

WWW.MAJESTICKL.COM

FeastVillage

at STARHILL GALLERY



SOUTHEAST ASIA

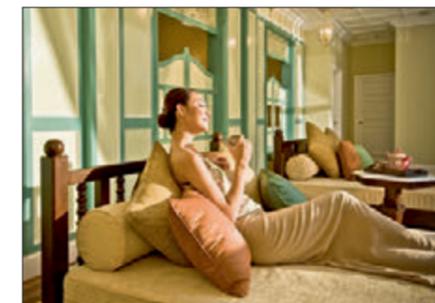


FEAST VILLAGE AT STARHILL GALLERY IS THE FIRST OF ITS KIND IN MALAYSIA. IT OFFERS UNPARALLELED DINING EXPERIENCES FEATURING 13 UPSCALE RESTAURANTS WITH AN EXOTIC ARRAY OF CUISINES RANGING FROM ASIAN TO MEDITERRANEAN. THE LANEWAYS OF THE RUSTIC VILLAGE AND ITS 'TIME TUNNEL' TAKE DINERS ON JOURNEYS OF SENSORIAL DISCOVERY.

WWW.FEASTVILLAGE.COM

THE EASTERN & ORIENTAL EXPRESS EPITOMISES THE GRANDEUR, LUXURY AND ROMANCE OF RAIL TRAVEL FROM A BYGONE ERA. JOURNEY AMID THE TRAPPINGS OF OLD-WORLD OPULENCE ACROSS THREE COUNTRIES, THROUGH THE ENTIRE LENGTH OF PENINSULAR MALAYSIA, ON A ROUTE CONNECTING THE SOUTHEAST ASIAN METROPOLISES OF SINGAPORE AND BANGKOK.

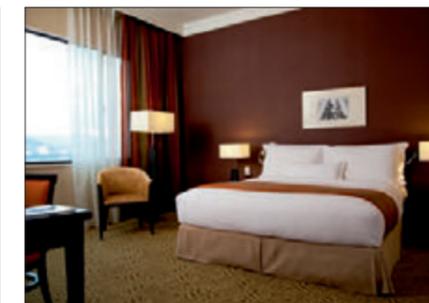
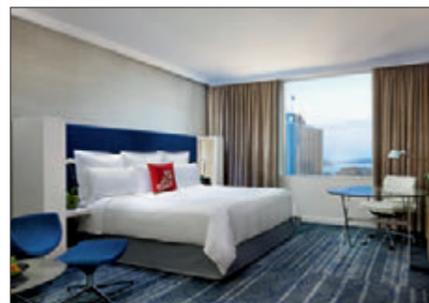
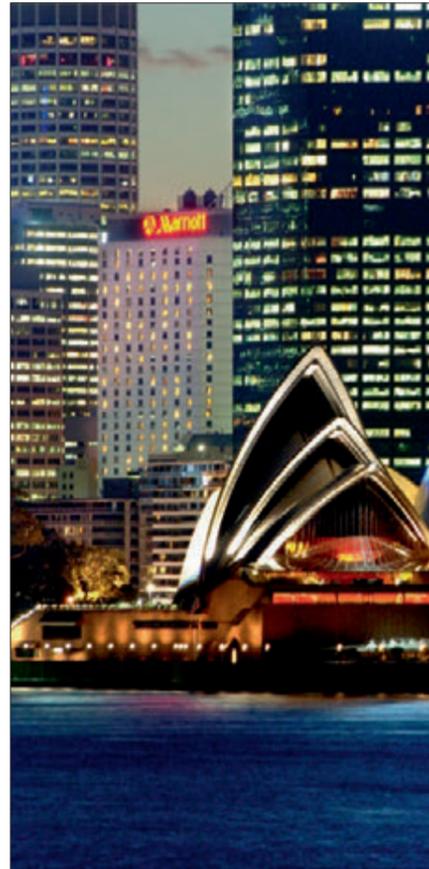
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THE SPA VILLAGES CELEBRATE THE HEALING CULTURE OF THE REGION IN WHICH EACH IS BUILT. EACH SPA VILLAGE HAS ITS OWN CHARACTER AND AUTHENTICITY, HONOURING LOCAL HEALERS AND TRADITIONS THAT HAVE BEEN PASSED DOWN THE GENERATIONS.

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WWW.SPAVILLAGE.COM



EACH AUSTRALIAN MARRIOTT HOTEL IS SITUATED WITHIN THE CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT OF ITS CITY AND IDEALLY POSITIONED TO SERVE BUSINESS AND LEISURE TRAVELLERS. THE 563-ROOM SYDNEY HARBOUR MARRIOTT IS SET IN THE HEART OF CIRCULAR QUAY, OVERLOOKING THE HARBOUR BRIDGE AND OPERA HOUSE. THE 186-ROOM MELBOURNE MARRIOTT IS CLOSE TO THE CITY'S THEATRE PRECINCT, SHOPPING DISTRICTS AND CHINATOWN. BRISBANE MARRIOTT, WITH 263 ROOMS AND FOUR SUITES, IS PLACED BETWEEN BRISBANE'S CBD AND THE FORTITUDE VALLEY HUB, CLOSE TO SHOPPING, RIVERSIDE DINING AND THE CITY'S COMMERCIAL DISTRICT AND CULTURAL ATTRACTIONS.

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Q&A: FELIPE MASSA

THE BRAZILIAN FORMULA ONE RACING DRIVER TALKS ABOUT PACING HIMSELF ON AND OFF THE RACETRACK.

Words RENYI LIM



What goes through your mind when you're behind the wheel? When I'm driving my racing car, I'm trying to do the best job I can by getting the best out of the car. I have to ensure that everything works the right way, from the start, to qualifying and right through to the race itself. I still get to enjoy the racetrack, though. Malaysia's Formula One track has plenty of greenery so it's quite relaxing, even if it does get very hot!

What's your must-have accessory while on the racetrack?

I always drive with a Richard Mille watch. It's very light, a great machine and proves that an expensive watch should do whatever you want it to. I've been an ambassador for the brand since 2004 and Richard has become like family to me. I'm happy to see how much his company has grown and to be a part of it.

Which cars do you drive in your own time?

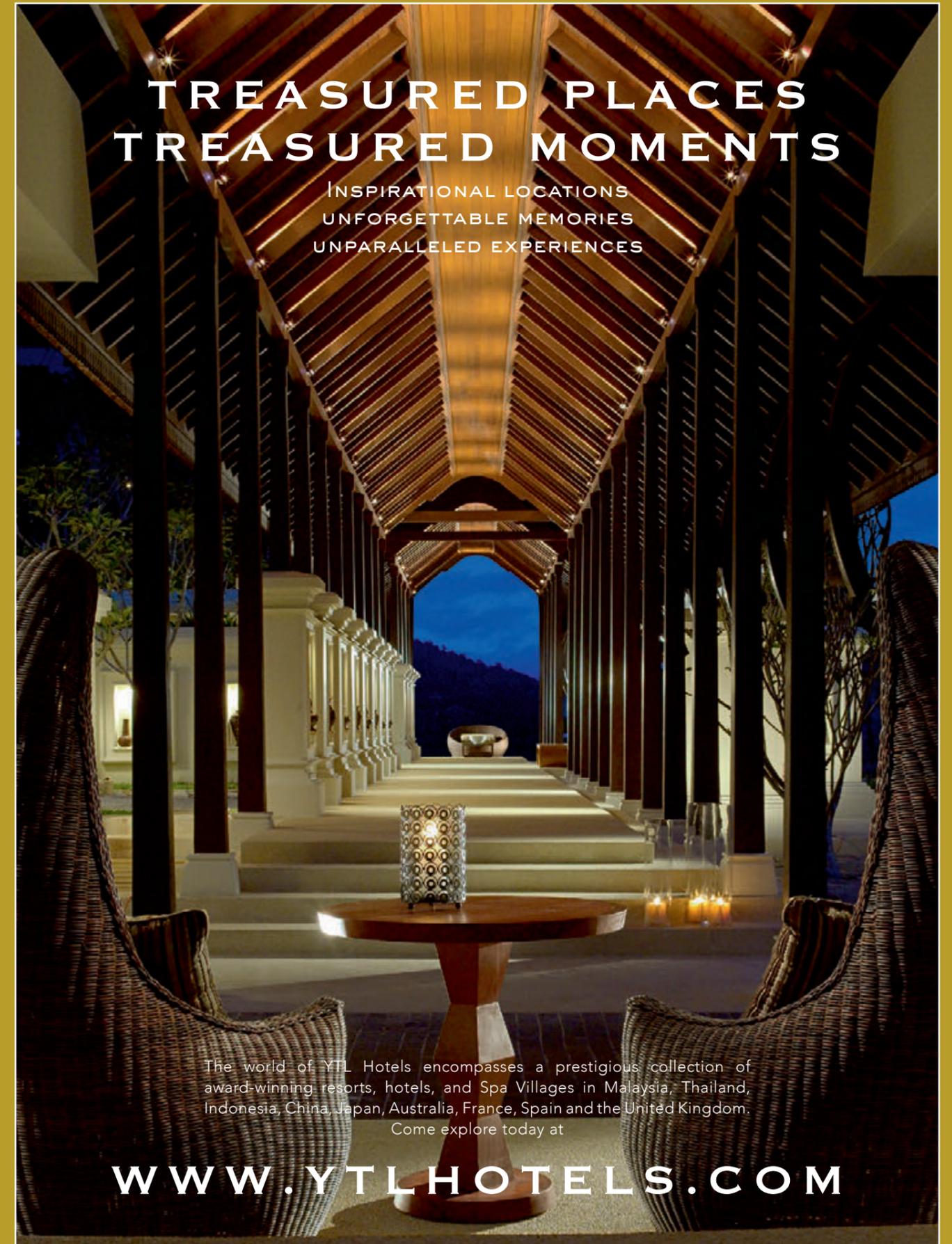
Cars are my life, my job and my love. It's so interesting to see as many new cars as possible. The favourites from my collection are my LaFerrari and Ferrari F40.

Name a perfect vacation spot.

In Malaysia, I like Pangkor Laut Resort – it's beautiful. I've been there many times with my family. We like the beach and the sea.

Would you encourage your son to follow in your F1 footsteps?

He loves sports so I've been pushing him to learn as many as possible. But if he wants to be a racing driver, he needs to decide that for himself. As his father, I will try to help him by giving him the right education and information, and the most important lesson of all: to always be humble in everything he does.



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