

# YTL *life*

The YTL Luxury Magazine

## Powder Perfect

Green Leaf Niseko Village  
Japan, unveiled

## Kimono Couture

Redefining Japan's  
national dress

## Master Class

Trumpeter Chris Botti  
on his life and music

## Fragrant Rice

Island cuisine from Bali

Plus The Ultimate Luxe Escape • Wild Borneo • Highland Glamour



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## A Note from Tan Sri (Dr) Francis Yeoh

Happy New Year and a warm welcome to YTL *life*'s enlivening mix of travel, food, music, fashion, celebrity and, of course, truly luxurious resorts in the world's most stunning locations.

We ring in a new decade ahead from the chic alpine ski village of Niseko, Japan where the latest addition to the YTL family - and our debut in Japan, The Green Leaf Niseko Village opened its very stylish doors in early December. With the ski season already in full swing, guests are already enjoying world-class powder skiing conditions as well as mouth-watering gourmet restaurants, mineral-rich *onsen* and our wonderful new Green Leaf Spa. This is undoubtedly the perfect place to be over the next few months - whether you ski or not.

This issue of YTL *life* is dedicated to Japan and its rich tapestry of culture, gastronomy, bathing, breathtaking landscapes and the innovative interpretation of the Japanese kimono by Cameroon-born designer Serge Mouangue who came to Japan in 2006. In his hands, this iconic timeless symbol of Japan has received a very modern makeover.

As our guests will attest, YTL is deeply committed to protecting nature's unspoiled bounties and natural resources. Two of Borneo's most unspoiled islands are now home to our latest spectacular properties - Pulau Gaya and Pulau Tiga, both scheduled to open in the not-too-distant-future. Framed by lush rainforest and nature's colourful diversity these thoughtfully developed resorts will be the ultimate setting for true lovers of raw nature and real adventure. Don't miss our beautiful photo-essay on Borneo on page 28.

Finally, in our celebrity My Life, we feature the immensely talented Australian singer Delta Goodrem, whom we were fortunate to welcome some months ago along with the celebrated Andrea Bocelli at YTL's *Concert of Celebration* in Singapore and the incredibly successful *A Journey Through Time* gala in Kuala Lumpur.

May the love of Our Lord Jesus Christ give you joy and peace this Christmas and the coming New Year. God bless.



Tan Sri (Dr) Francis Yeoh  
Managing Director  
YTL Corporation

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life on the cover //

# Powder Life

A chic new look for the iconic Green Leaf Niseko Village creates a cool contemporary escape in Japan's premier powder playground. The time is ripe to soak up its stylish attractions on and off-piste.

Text by **Catherine Shaw**

Record breaking snowfall is what first draws most visitors to Niseko, Japan's premier ski destination in Hokkaido, the northernmost of its main islands. Ultra fine dry powder falls daily - especially from mid-December through to February - and combined with spectacular alpine scenery, pristine slopes and a friendly local community, Niseko has rightly earned an international reputation as an adrenalin-packed Asian winter getaway, deserving of its status as sister city to the über glam St. Moritz.

This part of Japan has long attracted international visitors and, thanks to a number of Australian entrepreneurs, English is widely spoken overcoming the country's usual language barrier. But this winter the action isn't only on the mountain as a new hotel and outdoor activities looks set to raise the bar off-piste.

At the forefront of the style setters is the newly unveiled upgrade of the Green Leaf Niseko Village with its contemporary ski lodge experience certain to top the lists for the snow season. The original hotel - which boasts one of the most convenient ski in and out locations in Niseko - now sports a thoroughly modern look with 200 transformed rooms, a sleek bar and lounge, spa, *onsen*, ski and dining facilities.

When it came to creating a makeover for the popular hotel, YTL looked to the creative talents of New York-based Champalimaud Design. Renowned for creating distinctive classic interiors with a modern edge, the award-winning design firm has worked its magic on some of the world's leading hotels from London's Berkeley and Dorchester hotels to the highly acclaimed revamp of the suites at The Carlyle in Manhattan and the Bavarian Inn & chalets at the heart of Wheeler Wilderness area in Taos, New Mexico.

"We wanted to maximize the Green Leaf's unique setting which is amongst Niseko's best with spectacular views of Mount Yotei," says President and Principal Designer Alexandra Champalimaud. "Working within the site and structure was very important to allow us to interpret the hotel's unique qualities and to create a modern social space that would be the ideal experience for its global clientele."

Half the hotel's spacious rooms enjoy close views of Mount Yotei, an 1898m look-alike Mount Fuji dormant volcano. According to Champalimaud, "each room is akin to a viewing platform, looking out onto the birch and conifer forests in the foreground and a snow-capped Yotei in the background. It's a spectacular intimate view."





1. Chef in action 2. Tomioka White Lounge 3. Artist-in-residence Emi Shiratori 4. Sashimi platter 5. Skiing for all ages

The hotel's art theme continues in the public spaces where artist-in-residence Emi Shiratori's installations feature prominently. Guests are greeted by her hand-painted mural in the lobby entrance while the Spa is enveloped in another. Shiratori's bold, undeniably Japanese graphics depicting animals indigenous to Hokkaido also feature on each guestroom door and ski-locker. Meanwhile Goshiki, the hotel's new modern open-plan dining room offers a mouth-watering range of international and Japanese fusion food featuring fresh local seafood and Hokkaido's famous seasonal produce in a setting that celebrates the spectacular mountain views. The culinary team sources the finest local ingredients, all of which are presented with trademark Japanese-style like the Genghis Khan-style lamb barbecue.

The all-important *après* ski scene has not been ignored with the vibrant warm décor of the lobby lounge, cosy fireplace and bar offering the perfect alternative to active pursuits. The Tomioka White Bar offers a carefully curated wine list as well as bespoke Japanese whiskeys, local Sake, Sochu and cocktails - all presided over by renowned mixologist Jacob Ryan.

The Green Leaf Spa, complete with the locally famous Higashiyama *onsen* or hot

The hotel's new look is an intriguing mix of modern whimsical touches and references to classical European alpine style. In the lobby bar, a Scandinavian-inspired cantilevered fireplace is flanked by eccentric white ceramic light sconces moulded from deer antlers – each lit playfully at the tip. A zinc-covered bar and 200-square-foot hand-painted Fromental wall covering from France are statement pieces in the lounge, while cowhide armchairs, deep chesterfield sofas and reclaimed old growth walnut coffee tables make the space the ideal spot for relaxing. For lunch, Altitude, Niseko's only rooftop beer garden complete with gondola cabin seating, is a must with its grand staircase ascending directly from the slopes, a fire pit and open barbecue. Basecamp, an innovative activities centre features birch counter tops and transforms into a cinema with surround sound.

Champalimaud's guestroom design took inspiration from over 190 stunning original prints by acclaimed Japanese artist



#### GETTING THERE

The nearest airport to Niseko is the New Chitose Airport with direct flights between most major domestic and international airports. The flight from Tokyo (Haneda) is around 90 minutes. Niseko is about 2 hours by car and 3.5 hours by train from New Chitose Airport. New Chitose Airport. Tel (0123) 23 0111 [www.new-chitose-airport.jp/en/](http://www.new-chitose-airport.jp/en/)

#### GETTING AROUND NISEKO:

A regular hotel shuttle service enables easy access to neighbouring ski areas, *onsen* and dining establishments. The NISEKO UNITED Shuttle conveniently links each of the four ski resorts and is free to holders of the Niseko All Mountain Pass.

#### CONTACT DETAILS

[www.ytlhotels.com](http://www.ytlhotels.com) or [contact.travelcentre@ytlhotels.com.my](mailto:contact.travelcentre@ytlhotels.com.my)

Soichiro Tomioka which feature prominently in most rooms. The overall result is an elegant and rustic aesthetic manifesting signature Champalimaud touches such as large cuts of live-edge teak and walnut and rich, warm fabrics which plays nicely with classic comfortable modern furniture like Eames shell chairs. Other stylish touches include the LED desk lamp with built-in USB plug, in-room iPod music players. Lighting is soft and subtle throughout to further complement the comforting warm ambience.

Although all rooms – comfortably furnished with Dream beds, wireless internet and luxurious toiletries – look out over the slopes, the very best view is from the eight spacious corner suites that also feature two flat panel televisions, powder-room and a kitchenette.



life on the cover //

only one part of being here, it must also be relaxing and comfortable too and so excellent service is critical."

spring, is an essential part of a Niseko getaway. Here, time-honoured therapies from indulgent facials ('Face the Powder' using customized Ayurvedic Essential Oil to soothe ski-chapped skin is a favourite) to rejuvenating head massages are inspired by the natural surroundings. A dedicated manicure and pedicure studio offers nail care for all ages – the hand-painted signature swan design comes highly recommended.

The hotel's professional team has been equally carefully chosen to deliver smooth Japanese hospitality with a warm friendly style. "Our guests come from all over the world and throughout Japan so service needs to meet diverse needs," explains YTL's Panch Ratanavale. "The outdoors is

Although the new look Green Leaf Niseko Village is clearly a haven for the modern discerning traveller with its intoxicating mix of style, comfort and great skiing, a wide choice of child-friendly activities (Niseko Kids Centre, a full-service indoor and outdoor activity and learning area is located nearby) and flexible room combinations (deluxe King and Twin rooms conveniently interconnect to accommodate extended families) also makes Niseko Village a firm favourite with families who are already booking spring/summer escapes to take advantage of Niseko's outdoor adventure post-ski season.

1. Mount Yotei sunset 2. Tomioka White Lounge 3. Room with a view



#### CHAMPALIMAUD DESIGN

Born and raised in Lisbon and with a degree in the decorative arts from the prestigious Ricardo do Espírito Santo Silva Foundation, Alexandra Champalimaud presides over a global network of design projects. She was named the 2009 designer of the year at the Gold Key Awards for hospitality design. She recently talked to YTL Life about her design aesthetic and some of her favourite things...

##### My personal style...

I would hope that others would see my interior design as sophisticated, grounded in classical design, paired-back, and modern...with an edge. I like to design spaces that are well proportioned, beautifully detailed, layered, open, fluid and easy on the eye. Lighting, both in function and its effect on mood, is of great importance. I use simple lines when designing or

choosing furniture, and add texture and colours to create layers of subtle complexity and character. And, I use iconic art, creative sculpture and the odd, exceptional piece of furniture as anchors to my expression of style. Taken together, these elements create memorable spaces that are, seemingly effortlessly, places in which people simply want to be.

##### Inspiration for my work...

World travel, classical design and architecture, and ancient cultures. **Favourite meal...** Dinner in bed from room service in a great hotel, watching mindless television. **Future plans...** Starting 2011 with skiing in Niseko, Japan and staying in my most recently finished project... The Green Leaf Niseko Village!



#### Night Skiing Niseko-Style

Niseko owes much of its reputation as an adventure powder playground to its liberal policy of allowing visitors to ski the mountain's numerous bowls, gullies and trees off-piste at their own risk and the opportunity to enjoy the snow till as late as 9pm (most resorts close ski lifts at 5pm).

The lure of one of the world's best flood-lit night terrains draws snowbound visitors looking to maximize their favourite activity. Experienced skiers report that conditions at night – from wide groomed slopes to the enticing virgin territory of off-piste tree runs – offer a completely different mountain experience to that enjoyed during the day. Slopes are generally less crowded and calmer nocturnal weather conditions usually

deliver perfect powdery snow conditions and better visibility thanks to the powerful lights that illuminate the slopes from below cloud cover. The toughest decision by far will be between the magical moonlit slopes and the lure of Niseko Village's sski attractions.

#### Other Activities

For those who do not ski, Niseko offers a wide range of other activities from shopping to snowshoeing. The Niseko Village Activity Counter at the base of the Niseko gondola offers activities such as Snow School, Niseko Kids, Snowmobiling, Snowshoeing, Snow Rafting and Cat Skiing. One of the most popular new past-times is reindeer sledding – a unique winter experience for all ages available for a limited period from the end of January to mid-February. ❧





# Haute Horlogerie

YTL's recent and fourth installment of *A Journey Through Time*, a celebration of fine timekeeping and jewellery proved to be a spectacular showcase of all things beautiful. From the delicate mechanisms of timepieces crafted to perfection by master watchmakers to world-class performances by artists including Delta Goodrem and Katie Targett-Adams, the annual event confirmed its position as one of Asia's *haute-est* events, attended by a host of guests as well as key figures in the world of horology. The luxurious 10-day event was complemented by daily fashion shows and performances, culminating in a grand gala dinner, where the seven winners of the Watch of the Year 2010 Awards were announced.



(l to r) 4. Dr Masanori Kondo 5. Jojo Struys and Dato' Yasmin Yusoff 6. Tan Sri Dato' Dr Francis Yeoh and Dato' Sri Dr Ng Yen Yen 7. Chef Wan and Sylvia Chew 8. Dr. Bernard Cheong and Dolly Cheong 9. Delta Goodrem performing on stage 10. Dato' Dr James Dawos Mamit, Deputy Minister of Tourism Malaysia and Steffanie Chua, General Manager of Starhill Gallery launched *A Journey Through Time IV*.

(l to r) 1. Prof. Massimiliano Landi, Su Jia Xian, Peter Speake-Marin, Jonathan King, Nick Lo, Dato' Sri Dr Ng Yen Yen, Delta Goodrem, Tan Sri Dato' Dr Francis Yeoh, Dr. Bernard Cheong, Thierry Gasquez, model, Frank Low, Patrick Gosman, Jean-François Meyer 2. Faisal Abdullah and Tania Sierr 3. Model, Peter Speake-Marin, Tan Sri Dato' Dr Francis Yeoh





# Christmas Celebrations at Cameron Highlands Resort

The annual Christmas tree lighting at Cameron Highlands Resort, heralding the start of the festive season, was made even more memorable with master shoe designer Jimmy Choo OBE as the guest of honour. The boutique hideaway's tranquil and picturesque setting, decorated with a spectacular display of lights, was the ideal setting for a traditional Christmas celebration. The event was hosted by Laurent Myter, Executive Vice President, Resorts for YTL Hotels. Guests enjoyed an assortment of fine Christmas culinary delicacies created by the resort's chefs.

1. A festive atmosphere at The Dining Room 2. Christmas decorations at The Reading Room 3. The Verses Choir 4. Emily Poon, Dato' Jimmy Choo, Parita Mulani, Melissa Lwee, Jonathan Ramsay, Vincenzo Torre



(l to r) 5. Matthew Bellotti, Laurent Myter, YTL's Executive Vice President, Resorts and Michelle Bellotti 6. An elegant table-setting 7. The Verses Choir Team 8. Laurent Myter and Tracy Khee 9. Kirinjit Singh and Jonathan Edward Ramsay 10. Dancing prawns with sweet soy glaze 11. Julian Khor, John Tiong, Vivian Chong, Grace Kue and Andrea Lok



YTL's newest events, attractions and not-to-be-missed experiences



01

### Absolute Wellness

Asian wellness remedies come to the fore at Spa Village in Pangkor Laut Resort. The Chinese Wellness Programme offers four alternatives – Vitality, Flow, Peace and Lightness – all based on traditional Chinese medical philosophy. Meanwhile, the Ayurvedic Wellness Programme provides dietary recommendations and a range of personalised healing therapies from this ancient Indian healing philosophy. Those keen on experiencing the benefits of indigenous Malay treatments can enjoy a menu of traditional Malay massages designed to relieve physical ailments and rejuvenate both mind and spirit.

02

### Raindrop Retreat

Now is the perfect time to indulge in an exclusive pampering package at Malaysia's stunning Tanjong Jara Resort. The 'Everybody Loves Rain' package celebrates time-honoured Malay traditional therapies, conveniently available in two to three-day stays at the resort. The offer includes a pair of return flights from Kuala Lumpur to Kuantan, two-nights accommodation, daily breakfast, lunch and dinner as well as a two-day 'Raindrop Retreat' spa experience. The signature treatments in this experience include a traditional Malay massage and hot stone therapy, best experienced during the wet season. Offer valid until February 2011.

03

### Perfect Powder Package

This winter, The Green Leaf Niseko Village, Japan's premier alpine destination, ushers in the New Year with attractive offers and a complimentary *onsen* (hot spring) experience. Prices for the three-day, two-night 'Perfect Powder' packages range from US\$350 per person for a triple share Deluxe Room to US\$799 for a single occupancy Corner Suite, and includes a full buffet breakfast and dinner overlooking the stunning views of Mount Niseko-Annupuri.



04

### Stepping Back in Time

As a UNESCO World Heritage Centre, the city of Malacca is rich with opportunities for history enthusiasts wanting to retrace the city's Chinese, Portuguese, Dutch and British heritage. The Majestic Malacca, located at the heart of this ancient port, offers fascinating walking tours through historic roads and monuments. Both walks, entitled 'The Route to Malacca's History' and 'Treasures of the Old Malaccan Streets,' start at 10am and 5pm daily and last approximately two hours each.

05

### Gourmet Tea Picnic

Tea culture came to Malaysia by way of the British who established tea plantations in the Cameron Highlands at the beginning of the last century. In recognition of the early days of the tea industry, BOH Plantations, Malaysia's most well-respected tea brand and Cameron Highlands Resort, have created a unique tea immersion experience that brings guests on a guided tour of the BOH tea factory at Sungei Palas and culminates in a private gourmet picnic set in the middle of the tea valley with greenery stretching as far as the eye can see.

06

### Explore National Geographic

Experience the fascinating world of National Geographic at Lot 10, Kuala Lumpur where intrepid explorers, adventure seekers and nature lovers can indulge in exhibits showcasing beautiful and sustainable one-of-a-kind hand-crafted items sourced from locations around the world. The store also hosts public lectures by some of its most renowned explorers, authors and photographers.

*For more information on YTL Hotels' events and promotions, go to [www.ytlhotels.com](http://www.ytlhotels.com)*





Very few are lucky enough to combine a successful business career with a life-long passion. Yip Yoon Wah, affectionately known by all as 'Uncle Yip', is one of the luckiest and his story of a life dedicated to the environment is enough to inspire serious reconsideration of a sedentary working life spent behind a desk.

As resident naturalist at Pangkor Laut Resort, a stunning 300-acre private island off the Perak coast of west Malaysia, Yip indulges his two great loves: conserving and studying the island's complex tropical rain forest and marine ecology and sharing that fascinating information with guests at YTL's luxurious resort and exclusive estates. "For many visitors it is the first time that they have ever seen virgin rain forest," he says. "It's such a rich environment and so much to see. Many of our guests are really surprised because it is right before their eyes. A jungle walk is something so simple but is an unforgettable experience."

The ebullient naturalist leads two-hour guided jungle walks for guests along easy-to-navigate trails through two to three kilometers of natural forest, using his encyclopedic knowledge to highlight

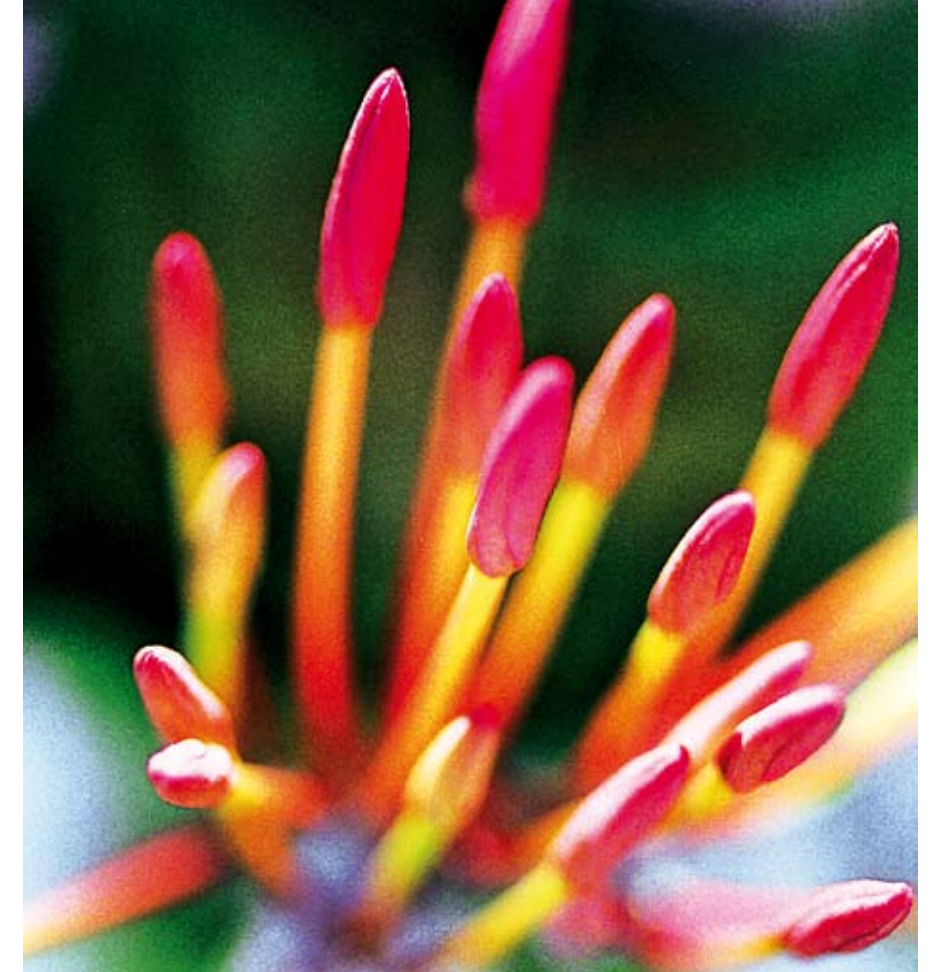
*Affectionately known by all as 'Uncle Yip', YTL resident naturalist Yip Yoon Wah has an encyclopedic knowledge of flora and fauna*

easily missed gems. The rainforest is a virtual treasure trove of orchids, towering dipterocarps, Nibong palms and the aggressive-looking strangling figs, not to mention vipers, spiders and tree snakes.

"Just look at that," he exclaims with obvious delight as we enter the forest, disappearing into a dense bush to pull back what seems to be a cluster of simple fern leaves but uncovers to reveal an exotic display of colourful flowers. It is the start of a journey of discovery as Yip excitedly points out hidden features – like the tracks of a wild boar or an especially interesting green lizard - of the dense vegetation that makes up most of the island.

Often guests just enjoy hearing stories about how trees compete with each other for sunlight and the ingenious way the ants travel undercover to avoid being eaten by birds. As he explains this during our tour, he stops and pulls back a tiny sliver of tree bark to show hundreds of tiny yellow ants scurrying along underneath. "It's like an expressway," he smiles.

Yip's keen sense of humour is infectious and the gathered group laugh loudly when he advises an especially keen photographer to avoid standing under a tree heavy with fruit bats. "They urinate upside down to cool themselves,"



he says with a chuckle. "I wouldn't stand right under them if I were you!"

Behind Yip's friendly banter and steady stream of entertaining stories about the wildlife on the island is a lifetime of experience in the natural environment. He was born in 1936 and attended forestry school in Kepong, Malaysia in the late 1950s where he specialized in tree and timber identification, silviculture and forest management. After working as a forestry officer he joined the Forest Research Institute of Malaysia as plantation officer in 1960. In 1971 he established a private consultancy providing landscaping and nursery services advising a variety of international clients including a World Bank-financed Transmigration Project in Indonesia. He went on to be appointed the Chief Executive of the Malaysian Nature Society and joined Pangkor Laut Resort as the resident Naturalist in 1996.

"It is a unique experience working here," he says. "One that is entirely due to the owner's commitment to the environment. The Yeoh family cares deeply about the island's ecology so the resort is planned to minimize its environmental footprint. Eighty

per cent of the island is still rain forest and we even have trees in the middle of the few roads we have built because we didn't want to destroy them unnecessarily. Why not just go around them?"

"We have always looked to improve, to evolve," he adds. "Today most people want something authentic – they don't want contrived luxury – they want something real."

Now 74, Yip is internationally renowned for his encyclopedic knowledge of the island's flora and fauna. His book, *Pangkor Laut: A Guide to its Natural History* documents the plants and animals found on the island, recording two very rare animals: *Delias singhapura*, one of the rarest butterflies in Peninsular Malaysia and the large sized *Camacinia gigantean*, a Libellulid dragonfly. **✎**

#### JUNGLE TOUR

The one-kilometer tour starts at the resort reception area with an informative briefing of the route to be taken, passes through virgin rainforest and ends at Emerald Bay, one of Condé Nast Traveler's top 100 beaches in the world. The tour is free to the resort's guests.



# A Naturalist's Paradise

Yip Yoon Wah explains why he has the best job in the world

Text by Catherine Shaw





life feature //

# WAFRICA Style

The iconic kimono receives a very modern makeover from an unexpected quarter.

Text by Catherine Shaw

For the past few decades Japan has hidden a guilty secret. Its once ubiquitous national dress, the classic kimono, is slowly disappearing...and very little has been done to save it. Although still highly respected as a national icon and still considered *de rigueur* dress for formal occasions, its popularity among fashion-conscious Japanese women has been steadily fading. Today, the glimpse of an elaborate kimono on the streets of Tokyo is becoming a rarity, drawing attention of tourists and local Japanese alike. Even the oldest, most esteemed kimono manufacturers in Kyoto have reported plummeting sales, while many have closed their doors after centuries of business.

Happily, as is sometimes the case with reinventions, help has come from an unexpected quarter: Africa. WAFFRICA, an artful collaboration between two seemingly contradictory aesthetics is the brainchild of Cameroon-born product designer Serge Mouangue, who came to Japan in 2006 to work as a car concept designer for Nissan. Meeting with *YTL Life* on a chilly winter morning at Viron, a cozy French café at the heart of Tokyo's über fashionable Shibuya, to talk about his somewhat controversial take on the country's national dress, the quietly spoken 37-year old is at pains to explain that his vision of WAFFRICA derives from the utmost respect for Japan's formal dress.

"When I came to Japan I instantly fell in love with the kimono. It is a very powerful and timeless symbol of Japan," he says. "I was fascinated by how the kimono is very simple in construction, but in reality is a

very complex garment. A good kimono is like a huge piece of land, it can convey a beautiful view of nature. I see it almost like a *haiku* in how it conveys a sense of more."

Inspired both by his international nomadic lifestyle and a keen interest in his new home in Tokyo, Mouangue found himself experimenting with creating what he calls a new "third aesthetic": creating kimono using vibrant tribal patterned West-African wax cotton fabric instead of traditional heavy silks. Think distinctively tropical African tones of orange and black or striking black and white geometric patterns – what the designer sometimes describes as a "happy explosion" of pattern. This combination of ancient dress form and wild African prints shouldn't work – but it does – and brilliantly so. WAFFRICA's first collection has since expanded to include a series of stunning wedding kimonos and the designer is currently working on his own fabric designs. The result is quite literally a revolution in how the kimono is perceived with strong interest in his designs from younger Japanese women and as far afield as the United States and Europe.

"It looks like a really fun way to wear a kimono," says Tokyo school teacher Yuko Abe, 28, "and the cotton means it wouldn't be heavy, nor would it be expensive to clean. Having a silk kimono professionally cleaned can cost a fortune!" Keen to test the broader appeal of WAFFRICA's kimono, I recently showed a few of the designer's striking images to a young group of Kyoto female university students who agreed wholeheartedly that the designs represented a "fresh look" for Japan's

national dress. "It's difficult to create my own look with my grandmother's kimono," explains Yuki, a 23-year-old student. "This would let me be different but is still Japanese enough to keep my mother happy," she adds with a laugh.

"You can't make something as beautiful as the kimono less than it was before," says Mouangue recounting some early rather hostile resistance from some who were clearly horrified at the prospect of an 'outsider' redesigning their national icon. "I simply want to create a new space for discussion with these designs. Of course Japan and Africa are very different and they view many things from completely different perspectives. Japanese are far more restrained and strive to make a presence felt by being absent – or by what is not said – while Africans tend to give a more direct physical sense of pulse, rhythm and colour presence."

"But there are also notable similarities between Japanese and Africans," he adds. "Like their respect for hierarchy and the appreciation of the power of silence. But when it comes to abstract aspects of design both cultures speak a similar language. It is not at all unusual for me to work with the Japanese designers saying 'this colour looks like tomorrow' and they know exactly what I mean. We have some interesting conversations!" In an inspired move WAFFRICA teamed up with Odasho, a renowned 150-year-old Kyoto-based kimono maker that was open to working with a 'foreigner' in reviving the fortune of the traditional kimono.



"The Japanese have been taking inspiration from other cultures for centuries so I don't see my design as something bad for Japanese heritage. The kimono is almost too Japanese for daily life – it is heavy to wear and you have to wear it according to a formal style – so my design looks at how to create a new value, to make it more connected with today's lifestyle," says Mouangue. "One of my proudest moments was when a Japanese friend tried on one of my kimonos and pronounced that it was like wearing a world heritage piece. I nearly cried."

Creating stories is a natural part of African culture and Mouangue explains how it has influenced his own fabric designs. "I feel the need to tell a story. I am more of a conceptual story teller, even when designing cars I am constantly looking for the story. When I first began designing kimono I really had to learn how the style and fabric worked together so I could bring this element to the dress. It is quite a challenge because kimono can be hung flat or worn – the rules are very strict. The fabric pattern has to take all this into account. My idea was to find the fabric that would tell a story which would resonate when worn."

Mouangue, who was raised from the age of six in Paris and studied Applied Art, Interior Design and Industrial Design in the French capital, says he still feels a strong personal link with Africa but is accustomed to working within different cultures having worked and lived in many different countries. "My parents always gave me a sense of Africa through their own culture. That has been mixed with a strong French aesthetic but I am still African in that the instinctive and impulsive comes first with design. Then I add the story to that. But in fact I am actually very happy to have both African and French influences in my work. I'm not Japanese and I don't know everything about its culture, but I love it anyway."

Long intrigued by Japan, the designer studied Japanese language and culture while living in France so when the offer to work at Nissan presented itself, he jumped at the chance to learn about life in Japan firsthand. The company name, *WAFFRICA*, comes from the Japanese word *wa* and Africa, the perfect description of his continually expanding range of exciting design projects. His latest endeavor involves traditional African stools given a uniquely Japanese makeover by Masaru Ogawara, a renowned 9th generation lacquer artist.



**THE JAPANESE KIMONO**

"Beautiful but impractical is the modern rational consensus on kimono," reports Lisa Dalby Ph.D, author of *Geisha and Kimono: Fashioning Culture*, noting that men largely abandoned the style more than a century ago because they considered it impractical for daily use.

The ensemble, a soft silk robe held together with an elaborate *obi* (a wide fabric 'belt' that feels much like a corset), is eye-wateringly expensive; a single embroidered *obi* can cost several million yen. Thanks to strict dictates on form, the kimono is also extremely difficult to put on without trained assistants. Nor is it particularly comfortable to wear requiring perfect deportment and reducing one's walk to a shuffle of tiny delicate steps.

Japanese kimono origins lie in 7th century Chinese dress drawing from the powerful Sui dynasty. Its basic form - comprised of four common elements: a body made of a geometric fabric width, an overlapping front, a neckband and sleeves - has changed very little since then.

"I call the stools 'Blood Brothers' because the lacquer sap comes from the tree like blood from a body," he explains. "They were exhibited along with *WAFFRICA* kimono and *Ultra MEN*, my series of lacquered masks, at New York's Museum of Arts and Design (MAD) in November. The lacquer has a very Japanese sensibility and combined with African shapes it goes beyond both cultures. In fact, the MAD used *WAFFRICA*'s kimono as the signature image for their exhibition of more than 200 artworks."

Undaunted by the challenge of reconsidering the possibilities for Japan's cultural icons, Mouangue says he is keen to keep exploring new ways of presenting traditional Japanese culture. "There is a lot more on the way: kimono for men and children, furniture etc. It's very exciting. I really can't just design one thing. I'm lucky to be able to go from architecture to car design and clothing."

"Perhaps this is my way of connecting my life in Tokyo to the continent I came from," he adds with a smile. A stylish win-win solution for all, it would seem. [www.wafrica.jp](http://www.wafrica.jp)

"Wafrika is not a fusion of Japanese and African aesthetics – I see it as a new space for a new aesthetic discussion."

-Serge Mouangue





# Wild Borneo

Recognized as the third largest island in the world, Borneo is amongst the most richly diverse ecosystems on the planet. This colourful photo essay offers a taste of what can be found on this exceptional island.

Text and photography **Nick Garbutt/NPL/TCS**

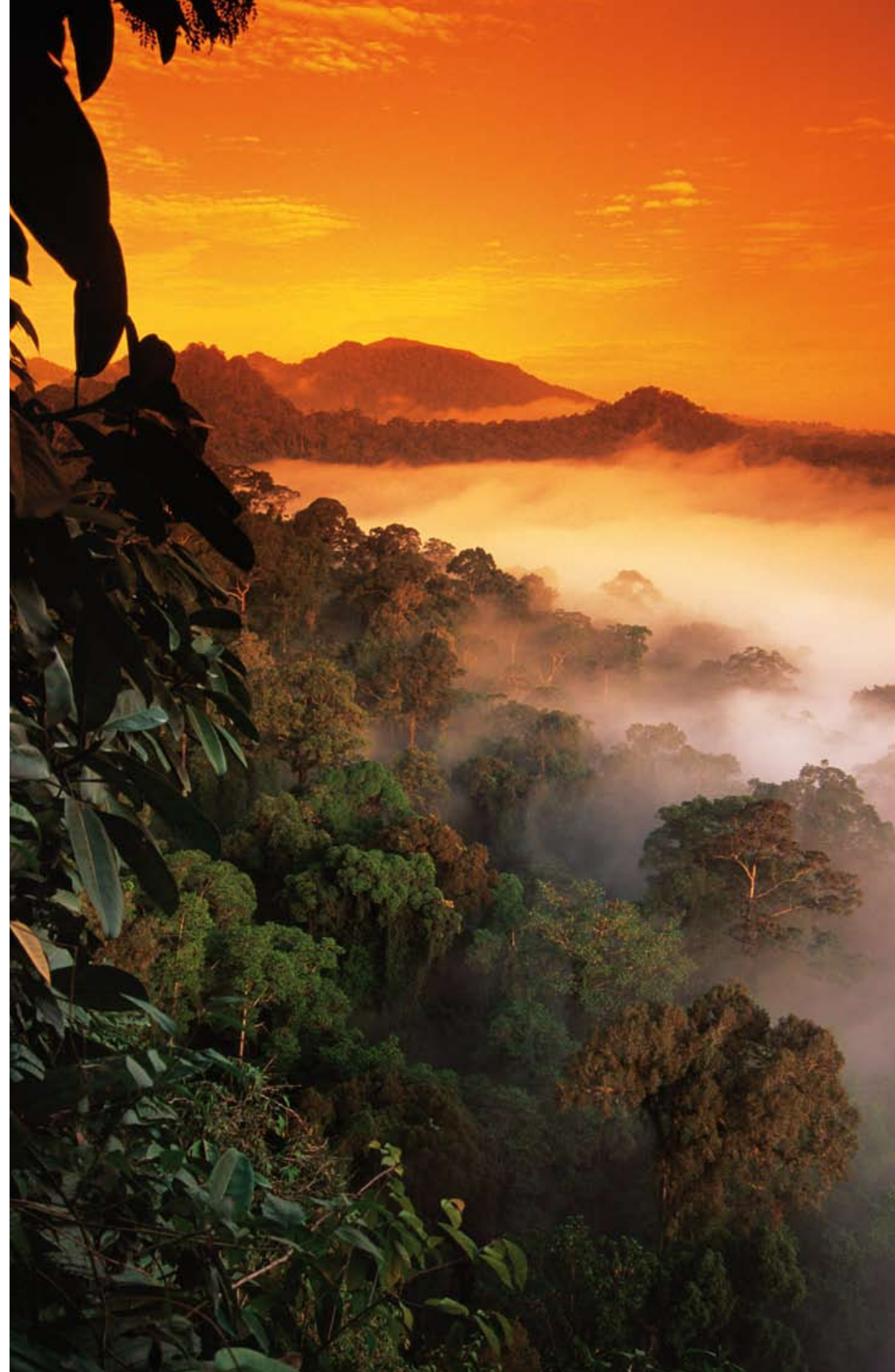
From the world heritage protected Gunung Mulu National Park in Sarawak - home to the oldest virgin rainforest on the planet and a labyrinth of caves and tunnels - to Turtle Island the famed nesting ground for Green and Hawksbill Turtles and the immensely fertile Pulau Tiga island, with some of most colourful and rare wildlife in Borneo, exploring this lush wild landscape is a powerful not-to-be-missed experience. Explore the natural habitats of the Malaysian sun bear, the clouded leopard (the largest wild cat in Borneo), orangutans, the Asian elephant and rhinoceros, bearded pigs, barking deer and mouse deer as well as over 250 species of bird, including exotics like the buffy fish owl, the frogmouth and the rhinoceros hornbill as they while away their days overhead or in the marshes.

*Rafflesia flower (Rafflesia pricei) Tambunan*





Explore the natural habitats of the Malaysian sun bear, the clouded leopard (the largest wild cat in Borneo), orangutans, the Asian elephant and rhinoceros.



life feature //



*Clockwise: Western tarsier (Tarsius bancanus) clinging to tree; Sunrise and mist over lowland dipterocarp rainforest, Danum valley, Sabah; Lankayan island, Sabah; Birdwatcher on canopy walkway.*





*Clockwise: Oriental Pied Hornbill; adult Wagler's Pit Viper (Tropidolaemus wagleri) in thorns on the stemless Asam Paya Palm; black-backed Kingfisher; Green turtle (Chelonia mydas) covering nest after laying eggs in sand.*

Two of Borneo's most unspoiled islands will soon be home to YTL Hotels latest spectacular properties, Pulau Gaya and Pulau Tiga. Framed by lush rainforest with breathtaking views of Mount Kinabalu, adventure-packed Pulau Gaya Resort integrates elements of traditional Sabahan architecture and feature 132 stand-alone hill and seafront villas and a Spa Village. The more intimate hideaway of Pulau Tiga, located 48 kilometers south of Kota Kinabalu and home to the original television reality show *Survivor*, is the ultimate setting for true lovers of raw nature and serious adventure. Formed from many years of accumulation from the eruptions of mud volcanoes, the island's abundant volcanic mud with its skin enriching ingredients will feature on the nourishing Spa Village therapy menu. ■



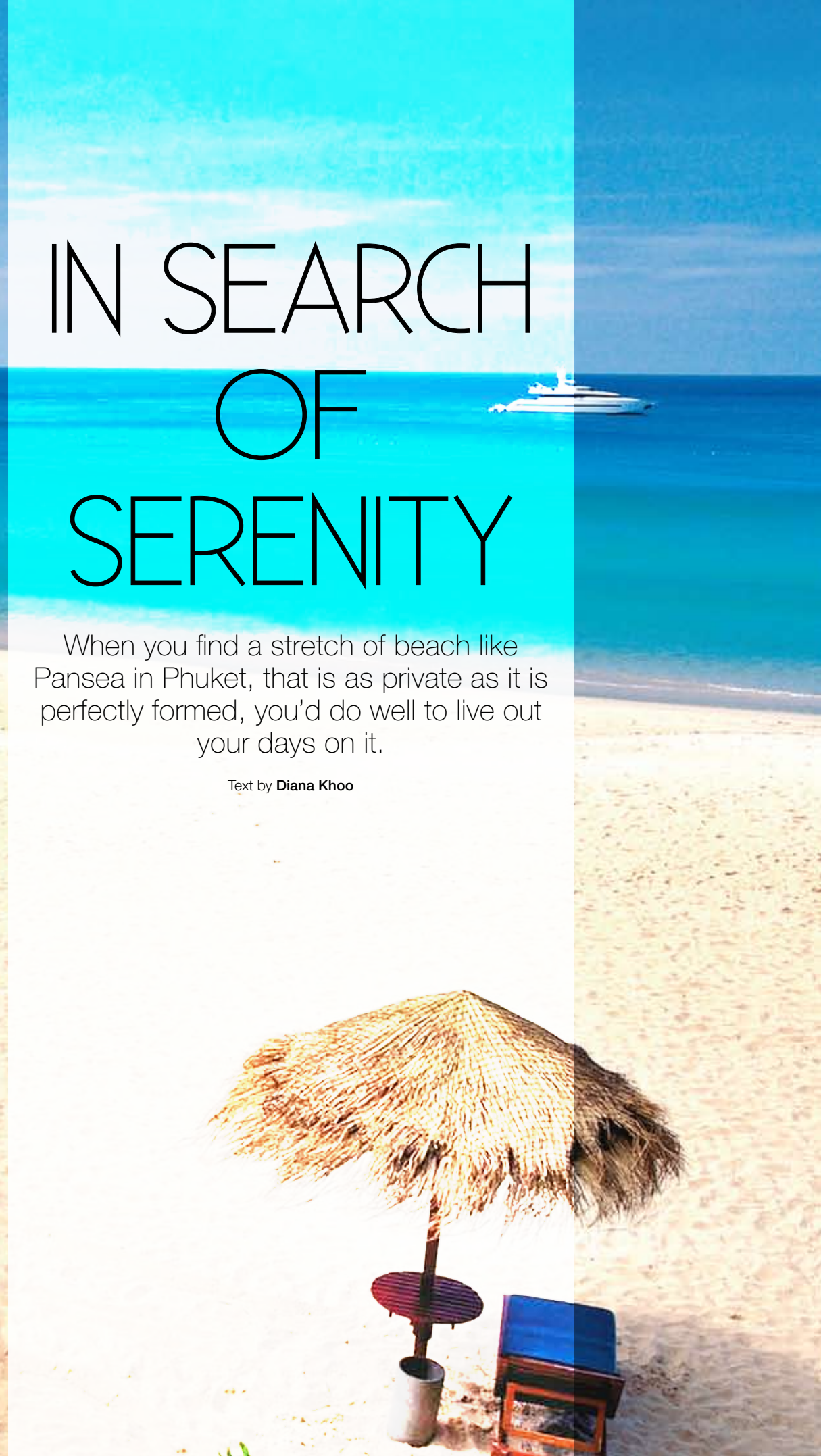


life feature //

# IN SEARCH OF SERENITY

When you find a stretch of beach like Pansea in Phuket, that is as private as it is perfectly formed, you'd do well to live out your days on it.

Text by **Diana Khoo**





Phuket, as a destination, is hardly a secret. For decades, the largest of Thailand's islands has attracted travellers from the young who thrive on the 24-hour attractions of beaches like Patong and Karon to families who flock to the all-inclusive resorts that dot the Bang Tao Bay area. There is, however, a more secret, serene side to Phuket.

Located at the northern end of Surin Beach, Pansea is a small idyllic beach in a secluded, private bay. The crescent-shaped beach is Phuket's most private, accessible only via two very exclusive resorts- the Amanpuri and The Surin Phuket. Formerly known as The Chedi, the latter was recently renamed The Surin, a name which has its origins in the Sanskrit *Sura*, which means 'God', and *In-tar*, after Indra, the Hindu Lord of Heaven.

The Surin is designed by the legendary Paris-based architect Edward Tuttle, the talent behind spaces of sybaritic luxury like the Park Hyatt Milan, Amanjena in Marrakech and the Amanpuri along the same beach. Naturally, here the décor is as sleek as it is luxe blending unobtrusively - in trademark Tuttle style - amidst the surrounding coconut groves.

In collaboration with Bangkok-based designer Jon Vorapot Somton, Tuttle's design for the hotel combines traditional Thai designs and materials with modern comforts. Think thatched pavilions set amid palms; a dramatic black anthracite hexagonal-shaped pool, stunning ocean views and bespoke furnishings; guest cottages with shuttered doors, teak floors and decorated with earth-coloured tones and a private veranda with secluded sun deck that creates a very enticing patch of paradise.

A stay at The Surin is also all about unplugged living and that means



splashing about in the pristine bay waters, grabbing fins for snorkelling, digging deep in the taupe-coloured sand with bare feet or simply finding an empty sun lounger and proceeding to spend the better part of the day deep in devotion to the Sun God.

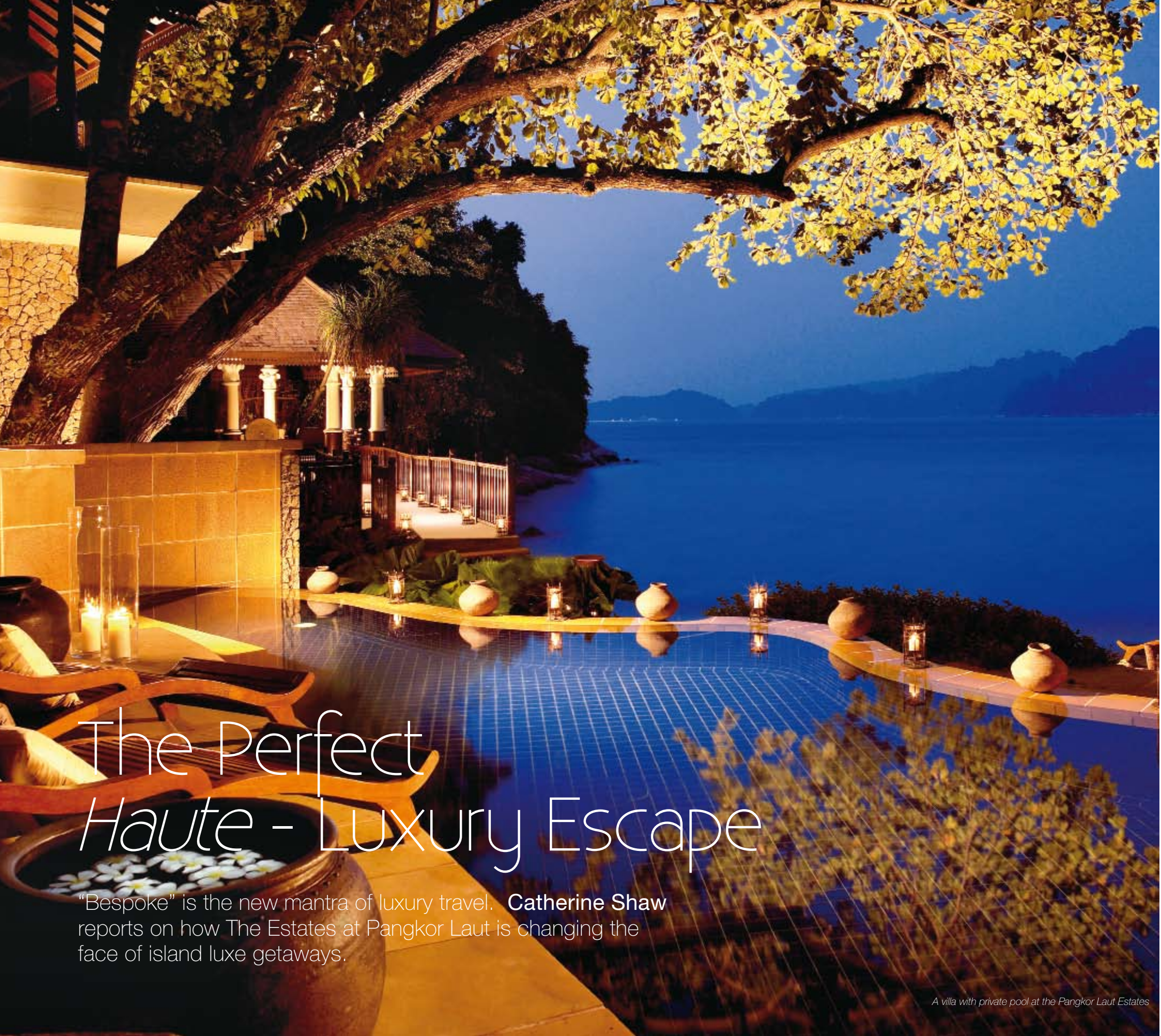
It is not surprising then, for many of us, that we feel most at peace whenever we are by the sea. The words of American author Jill Davis sum it up best: "The waves of the sea help me get back to me". And don't we all need a little extra help these days? 🍹



#### WHAT TO EAT, SEE & DO

- Don't miss trying one (or three) of The Surin's delicious cocktails. The Sunset Bar offers several favourites, including The Surin Delight (a heady blend of light and dark rums flavoured with peach juice and served in a pineapple), passion fruit margaritas and cool, minty *mojitos*. One or all are the perfect accompaniment to sunset gazing on the beach.
- Don your Vilebrequins or Melissa Odabash bikini and head to the resort's dramatic black-tiled swimming pool for a dip.
- Ease any residual city stress at the spa with probably the best Thai massage in the area.
- Visit the resort's little *San Phra Bhum* (spirit house) to pray or simply be in the home of the Gods.
- Enjoy the simple pleasures of a massage right on the beach (all Pansea Beach masseuses are vetted by the hotel).
- The Surin's *Chef de Cuisine*, Khun Sonthaya Kaewpradit, is a master of traditional Thai cuisine. Don't miss his fiery *tom yam goong* (hot and sour prawn soup), *goong sarong* (crispy prawns in vermicelli) or *gaeng phed ped yang* (red curry with roast duck) at the Lomtalay Restaurant.
- Ask The Surin staff for a little *phoum malai* (hand garland) and enjoy the lingering jasmine fragrance as it dangles from your wrist.
- Go diving – the clear waters of the Andaman Sea are teeming with marine life. If you don't have your PADI or NAUI license, enjoy a spot of snorkelling instead.
- Ask the hotel's concierge to book a tee off at the nearby Blue Canyon Country Club – one of the world's most prestigious golf courses.
- Try one of the many small seafood shops along Surin Beach road. Simple and reasonably-priced, there are several but the one we recommend is Nok Seafood for its delicious *fruits des mer* and local Thai dishes.
- If you prefer to combine food with a bit of chill-out vibe, visit *Pla Beach & Restaurant* (pla means 'fish' in Thai) on Surin Beach. A cross between a seafood restaurant and a beach club - it is the perfect place to watch the exceptional sunset and soak up the atmosphere.





# The Perfect Haute - Luxury Escape

"Bespoke" is the new mantra of luxury travel. **Catherine Shaw** reports on how The Estates at Pangkor Laut is changing the face of island luxe getaways.

A villa with private pool at the Pangkor Laut Estates

If ever a word has been abused in the world of travel, it's luxury. Once firmly the preserve of seriously exclusive experiences and artisanal products enjoyed by a select few, today the moniker has been massified to describe all and sundry, sans the discretion that once gave luxe its luster. Meanwhile, for the top-end of the travel market, 'luxury' is quietly being redefined as 'bespoke': where privacy and discreet pampering are the most important criteria for the discriminating traveller. Or, as one especially well-heeled friend puts it, "What I want, when I want it and *exactly* how I want it."

For the truly discerning, the highly personalised luxury travel experience doesn't come more tailor-made than at The Estates, an impressive collection of eight elegant Malaysian-style villas tucked away on the north side of Pangkor Laut, a privately owned island about half an hour by private boat from Lumut, on the west coast of Malaysia. Or for those who prefer, a mere 45 minutes from Kuala Lumpur via a sleek on-demand helicopter. When time is of the essence, and even when it isn't, it's hard to beat the experience of being swept – 007 Bond-style - over the exotic Malaysian landscape of plantations and rain forests *en route* to your own secluded beach paradise.

Once installed in your sprawling island villa, the real pampering begins with that quietly efficient but deeply warming Malaysian touch that continues to bring many guests back year after year. Here, service goes well beyond the *de rigueur* comforts of a well-informed concierge or having your Frette bed linen neatly folded down at night. At The Estate, each guest sets the programme while service – complete with two butlers and a personal chef - assumes a seamless but invisible quality catering to guests' every whim. Prefer a late sleep-in followed by breakfast at a private dining

pavilion overlooking the turquoise sea while reading your favourite, possibly difficult-to-obtain newspaper? Check. Missing your mid-morning New York barista-style cappuccino? Check – it arrives with just the right amount of froth atop. This is luxury, as bespoke as it comes, where the smallest of details are designed to up the luxurious ante.

"It's all about creating an individual experience and having staff who really knows how to interact with our guests," explains the resort's general manager Dalip Singh who, always the epitome of professionalism, politely declines to reveal the names of the estate's world-famous guests who regularly retreat to the Estates for its guaranteed escape from paparazzi cameras.

"Getting away from it all, including other people, is the whole point for many of our guests," he continues. "They come to relax, escape from the crowds and to be themselves – without being on show. That is true luxury for someone who is always in the limelight or always in demand when it comes to business. No one knows they are here – even our main resort staff on the other side of the island are unaware when a well-known personality is staying on the island because only those working at the estate have access." It is an open secret however, that the island is visited by the likes of Joan Collins (on her honeymoon), and more recently by British film actress Kiera Knightley, both of whom clearly prize the luxury of time away from their very public lives. The island has a long relationship with fame: the late Luciano Pavarotti performed at a private concert to celebrate the opening of the resort. More recently the Estates have become the must-go destination for families and couples seeking sanctuary from busy working lives, a place where they can set their own schedule of relaxation and pampering.





(Left) A gazebo overlooking Marina Bay (Right) An outdoor bath



*“For the truly discerning, the highly personalised luxury travel experience doesn’t come more tailor-made than at The Estates.”*

**SPA VILLAGE SIGNATURE TREATMENTS**

Each Spa Village treatment begins with a unique Bath House Ritual representing various bathing traditions from around Asia. All treatments are conducted in private spa pavilions.

*For Him : Urutan Panglima (Warrior Massage), a deep tissue massage designed to renew vitality, stimulate circulation and improve flexibility.*

*For Her : Mian Bu Hu Li (Chinese Herbal Facial) begins with a traditional snuff of aromatic herbs to awaken the senses and is followed by a warm Mulberry facial wash, a Sandalwood and Winter Melon scrub to exfoliate dead skin, a nourishing mask of crushed pearls and ginseng, and an acupuncture massage to tone facial tissues and leave the skin radiantly glowing.*

**A RANGE OF ACTIVITIES IS AVAILABLE AT PANGKOR LAUT WITH THE MOST POPULAR ONES INCLUDING:**

Sailing, fishing, gourmet beach picnic, kayaking, jungle trek with resident naturalist, sunset cruise on an original teakwood Oriental junk, Pangkor Island excursion, cooking class and Batik painting.

**GETTING THERE**

From Kuala Lumpur, take a three-hour four-wheel-drive to Lumut and a 30-minute private boat transfer to Pangkor Laut, or alternatively fly directly from Kuala Lumpur via YTL’s private Agusta Westland 139 twin-engine helicopter that accommodates up to four people depending on luggage.



At the core of the sleek service is the Estate butlering service where each villa is assigned two professional members of staff to cook, clean and manage all activities. Even the smallest of requests is met with unruffled professionalism. During my own recent stay, a request for a new adaptor and charger to fit my miniature Japanese laptop sees me online minutes later, while my personal 24-hour butler, Maja, gamely sets about detangling the mass of electrical cords that always accompany my vast collection of gadgets. My admission of a phobia of spiders (of any size or description) results in a series of highly efficient and regular searches for any eight-legged new jungle friends and a warning about a spider pictured in a nature conservation book available in my villa. A casual mention of a favourite musician sees a red-ribbon wrapped CD presented as a gift later that night. More importantly, Maja has an uncanny ability to judge exactly when to appear with a cup of coffee or flawlessly mixed cocktail. The level of attention is perfectly balanced – just enough to make one feel pampered but not enough to feel overwhelmed.

“I try to anticipate what people need so they don’t have to ask or think about it,” explains the Balinese-born Maja who has been a butler at the Estates for seven years and who is adept at putting guests at ease. “Even basic things like turning down the bed on the side someone prefers to sleep on makes a difference,” he adds. Bespoke service is notoriously difficult to deliver without serious training. After all, what is considered pampering by one guest may be annoying for another. “We have guests from many different countries,” explains Singh. “So the butlers and chefs are taught how to understand cultural nuances and adapt their service accordingly.”

A ‘sense of place’ is another vital ingredient for discerning travelers, and one that The Estates – surrounded by lush rainforest and crystal blue waters - delivers with consummate ease. True rustic elegance is the rarest of things but the Estate villas combine all the low-key warmth of Malaysian-style architecture with high-end comfort and soft natural tones throughout

– all set within a tranquil island sanctuary. Huge Indonesian teak podium beds are a distinctive feature in the generously proportioned rooms while stylish wooden carvings and artwork from around Asia subtly add to the elegantly understated but charmingly rustic ambience. The large modern bathroom comes complete with rainforest shower and suitably luxurious amenities, while an outdoor sunken stone bath adds an exotic touch to everyday bathing. Alternatively guests can retire to the outdoor heated Jacuzzi for some serious relaxation.

Outdoors, each villa (there are four beachside and another four set amid the forested hill) enjoys its own veranda lounge and secluded pool in a landscaped ‘estate.’ The beach villas enjoy access to the picture-perfect Marina Bay beach while the hillside option is preferred by those seeking ultimate quiet.

For those wishing to indulge in the island’s other activities, just five minute’s drive in a chauffeured four-wheel-drive is the

island’s main resort with its garden, hill and spa villas, seven restaurants/bars and award-winning Spa Village. The latter is an enticing collection of eight treatment pavilions and outdoor spaces set over four tropical landscaped acres with Indian Ayurveda, Chinese and Malay traditional healing treatments available.

Island retreats are not generally renowned for their gourmet cuisine but Pangkor Laut’s restaurants, which cover a sublime range of international cuisines, are famed for their quality and presentation. Estate guests are also appointed a personal chef, available 24 hours, trained to cater to individual requests - be it special dietary restrictions or romantic candlelit beachside dining for two.

By any definition, Pangkor Laut Estates is an indulgent experience that impresses on all levels. In today’s ultra competitive world of hotels, it is a sure mark of its success that this deluxe hideaway has consistently maintained its position as one of the most luxurious and desirable island retreats in Asia. ■





# Reef Awareness

As the first initiative of its kind in west Malaysia, Pangkor Laut Resort's coral transplantation project lays the foundation for a sustainable marine environment.

Text by **Mark Lean**



Pangkor Laut Resort is already internationally acclaimed for its respect for the natural environment. The 300-acre island off the west coast of Peninsular Malaysia comprises vast stretches of virgin rainforest surrounded by pristine azure waters. Before the resort opened its doors in the 1980s, the island was also renowned as the location where British Colonel Freddy Spencer Chapman swam to freedom after spending the duration of the Second World War hiding from Japanese forces in the jungles of what was known then as Malaya.

Over the past 15 years, Pangkor Laut Resort has successfully launched numerous environment-friendly initiatives. Last November, the resort took active conservation measures by joining forces with Reef Check Malaysia for this island's third reef and beach clean-up. As the world's largest international coral reef monitoring programme, Reef Check comprises a global network of volunteer teams who correlate information on reef health and support local initiatives to preserve these reefs. Reef Check was first established in Malaysia primarily because the country is part of the Coral Triangle, the area of greatest biodiversity of the world's oceans.

The coral transplantation project centred its activities on both Pangkor Laut and nearby Pulau Giam, a favourite destination for snorkelling enthusiasts where corals have been damaged due to excessive boating.

Pangkor Laut Resort, together with Reef Check, worked together to restore the marine environment by transplanting live corals from nearby reefs. This amazing feat was achieved by utilising coral fragments that were harvested from several locations on Pangkor Laut and nurtured in a coral nursery, enabling these transplanted corals or "nubbins" to thrive before being augmented to the reefs at Pulau Giam. The transplantation procedure enlisted the help of Reef Check personnel and coral ecologist, Kee Alfian from University Kebangsaan Malaysia.

The importance of coral reefs cannot be underestimated. They bring economic value in the form of tourist dollars and support the livelihoods of local snorkel boat operators. In fact, the United Nations Environmental Program estimates each square kilometre of coral reefs at US\$100,000 to US\$600,000. The coral reef transplant initiatives at Pangkor Laut extended to the local community with an education programme taking place throughout local schools. This provided children with the opportunity to learn about coral reef conservation and the steps needed to preserve the local marine environment so that they may be preserved for generations to come. ■

Top: Growing transplanted corals  
Left: The marine ecosystem is an important tourist draw



# A Slice of Paradise

The Balinese are experts at blending cultures and flavours to produce a uniquely compellingly cuisine that celebrates the best of fresh ingredients and cultural tastes.

Text by Cynthia Rosenfeld



Wander down any street or alley across Bali and you won't fail to grasp the role of food in the daily lives of the Balinese, not only for sustenance but as an opportunity to gather, gossip and relax at their local *warung*, or street cafe. Food is central to the complex religious lives of the Balinese as well, with most Hindu ceremonies including an edible component and many feasting holidays throughout the year.



Yet few outsiders know much about Balinese or Indonesian cuisine, which overlap but retain individual flavours and traditions. Indonesian cuisine reflects the diversity of regional cultures and foreign influences accumulated over the country's complex history and vast physical terrain. At the same time Indonesian food exhibits surprising similarities, considering these traditions have travelled across the waters between the archipelago's 17,000 plus islands, 6,000 of which are inhabited.

The ancient Chinese mariners exerted a strong, lasting influence, most commonly manifest today in the street food pervasive across the archipelago. Hawker stall and street vendors announce the items available by distinctive calls. One may hear the *bakso* Chinese meatball soup seller tap the side of a bowl, whereas the chicken noodle vendor will cluck incessantly. Chinese style steam buns with sweet or savory fillings are called *bakpao* in Bahasa Indonesian and are ubiquitous in the cities, towns and villages, as are Chinese noodles known as *bakmie*. The most striking difference in these finger foods to their Chinese ancestors is the lack of pork because most Indonesians outside Bali are Muslim. Chicken congee made the journey from China as well, here called *bubur ayam* ('*ayam*' meaning chicken), as did fried rice, here known as *nasi goreng* and fried noodles, or *mie goreng*. These Chinese influenced staples of Indonesian street food are often taken with quickly addictive crackers called *krupuk*. There seems no end to the variety of *krupuk* available around Indonesia but the most popular flavour may be the Chinese style prawn or *krupuk udang*.

Not all tasty Indonesian delights originated overseas. Open air markets abound with a kaleidoscope of native fruits. Many that play an important role in Indonesian diets will be unfamiliar to Western eyes and palates. Look out in the markets or on fruit platters prepared at resorts and restaurants for the scarlet hard-shelled mangosteens, spiky red rambutans, lime green rough-to-the-touch jackfruits, dragonfruit from the cactus family and the noxious scented durian - a local treat rarely favoured by foreigner visitors. Fruits like bananas and jackfruit get sliced and fried into *kripik*, or crispy chips that make tasty snacks.

Previous page: Satay  
This page: (top) A rice farmer  
(bottom) Wantilan at Spa Village Tembok Bali





Left: Fresh herbs, spices and condiments are an integral part of Balinese cuisine Opposite page; (above) Fried noodles (below) Balinese rice terraces

coconut oil or milk, with Central Java serving up the sweetest fare like *gudeg* made of jackfruit boiled over several days in delicate spices. Most Javanese food is not too spicy, so a Javanese dish may have onion but no garlic or the opposite but rarely both. Expect to find dishes of fried fish, tofu and *tempeh* (fermented beancurd) cooked or served chilled in a Javanese *warung* and lightly spiced meat dishes served atop hot white or yellow rice, sometimes soaked in coconut milk. The Javanese usually skip appetizers and go straight to mains with side dishes, eating with a fork and spoon or with their hands.

On Sumatra, food gets spiced up and curried, revealing Arab, Persian and Indian influences. Coconut based curries are prepared with beef, poultry, goat and fish then served over steamed rice. Indigenous people known as *Batak* do eat pork which they boil in vinegar and pig blood before roasting the mixture into *babi panggang*. They cook a dish called *ayam namargota* in blood with spices like very strong black pepper called *lada rimba*. To the west on Sumatra, buffalo is used in *rendang* spicy curry and the deliciously sweet *amplang dadiah* buffalo yogurt with palm sugar syrup, coconut shavings and white rice.

Balinese say there is no meal without rice, so it makes sense that one of the most venerated Hindu gods here is the Goddess of Rice, Dewi Sri. Rituals associated with rice, from planting to harvesting play essential roles in the life of every Balinese. Daily life revolves around the three meals, with lunch as the heaviest meal. Breakfast is usually *nasi goreng* fried from the previous night's leftovers and a cup of strong local coffee. Lunch begins with a mound of steamed rice topped by *satay lilit*, made from spiced mince meat pressed onto skewers like lemon grass sticks and *bebek betutu* duck stuffed with spices and wrapped in banana leaves or *lawar* made from chopped coconut, garlic, chillies with pork or chicken. On special occasions, Balinese serve *babi guling* spit-roasted pig stuffed with chillies, turmeric, garlic and ginger.

Dinner is a smaller version of lunch. Desserts at both lunch and dinner will likely include seasonal fruits served fresh or fried into favorites like *pisang goreng* banana fritters. Bali's verdant lands especially around the volcanoes are ideal for growing a cornucopia of tropical fruits. Walk around any town's morning market to find dozens of different bananas for example, from finger sized bright yellow ones to the calf length dark green variety. Another traditional dessert is tape fermented sticky

More ubiquitous around Indonesia even than fruit is rice, the staple of any Indonesian's diet. According to stone inscriptions found in central Java, Indonesians were cultivating and eating rice by the 8th century. Nearby at the 9th century Prambanan Temple, carvings show women planting rice and men carrying the crops in baskets tied by a pole across their shoulders. The Indonesians' love for the grain has in fact physically altered their country, as the islands' dense forest have been cleared over the centuries for the snaking rice terraces that define modern Indonesian landscapes. Today rice is eaten with savoury mains and sweetened into rice cakes or cooked with coconut milk. Wherever one travels among the Indonesian islands, *nasi goreng* is sure to be on the menu from the simplest stalls to five star hotels.

The famed spice trade originated among these islands and Indonesian cuisine still takes full advantage of those indigenous flavours like clove, *galangal* and the nutmeg that the Dutch East India Company valued above precious metals. Indonesian fondness for hot and spicy food was enriched when the Spanish introduced chili pepper here in the 16th century, enjoyed as *sambal* paste to spice up *entrées*. Other spices originally traveled with sailors from India like black pepper, cinnamon, clove, coriander, lemongrass and tamarind but now pervade local dishes, as does ginger and garlic brought from China.

Books have been written detailing regional culinary varieties across Indonesia but a brief overview conveys a sense of the similarities and diversity. Javanese cuisine for example gets its sweetness from

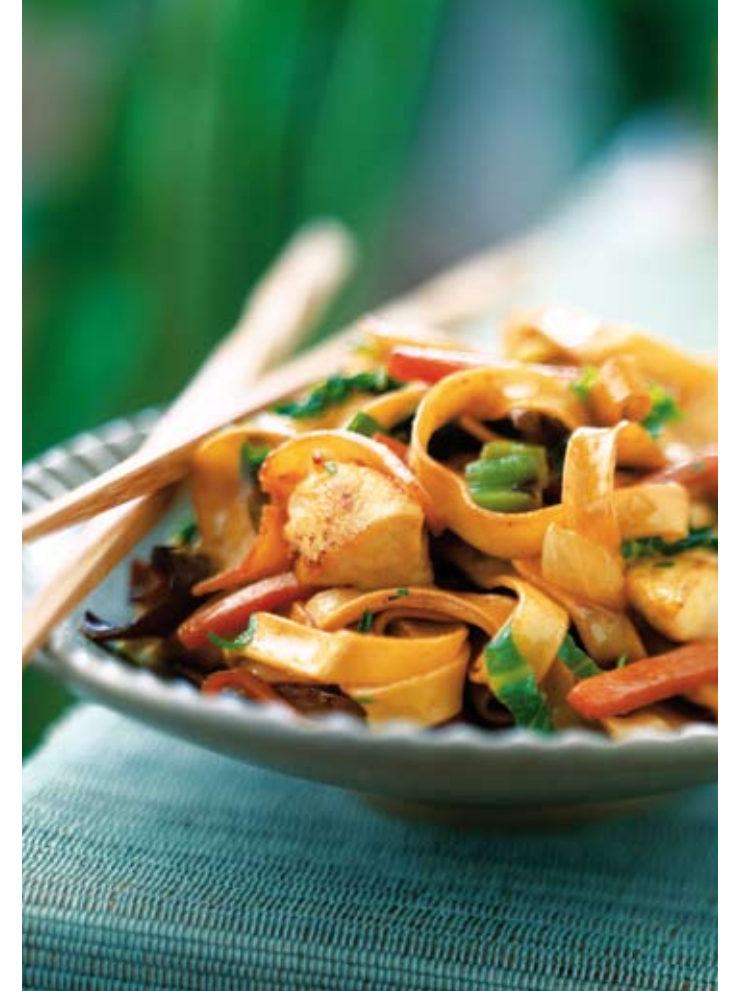
rice or cassava, made by first steaming the sticky rice or boiling cassava then adding yeast powder before storing it for several days to ferment. Worth the wait, this traditional Balinese dessert delivers some of Bali's sweetest edible memories.

Visitors to Spa Village Resort Tembok Bali can experience the highlights of Balinese flavors at the open air Wantilan restaurant surrounded by cool breezes, azure waters and shimmering midnight sand. Chef Danny and his local team make daily visits to nearby produce markets and farmers who till Bali's most fertile lands, in search of the finest organic flavours and ingredients. Spa Village Resort's ever changing menu fuses the tropical and traditional to treat guests to Bali's finest flavours, like the island's most delicious steamed fish or local free range chicken wrapped in young banana leaf, inspired by the location and presented to international standard. Chef Danny and his team prepare fresh barbecue seafood in homemade Balinese chili sauce finished with a hint of local kaffir lime juice and Bali crystal sea salt and served in traditional style with soup made from local *jukut nangka* jackfruit in fresh homemade coconut broth.

As Chef Danny explains, "This art of blending traditional Balinese ingredients with healthy modern cooking is a good way to introduce our wellness minded guests to Balinese and Indonesian food. On our menu you will find Balinese spices, chillies and aromas restrained so as not to overpower foreign palates." His like-minded Balinese *sous* chefs promise that the experience of taste on the tongue remains entirely authentic, with one Balinese chef summing it up so eloquently: "This is our inheritance from our ancestors, so we care about very much to keep these customs, which are the same as those we use when cooking at home for our Balinese ceremonies. What we cook here tastes as good as at home because we make it with our soul and from our hearts." ■

#### COUNTRY INFORMATION

Indonesia is an archipelago of more than 17,000 islands, including Bali. At 473,481km<sup>2</sup>, Sumatra is the largest of the islands. Java, the world's 13th largest island, sits between Sumatra and Bali. The nation's capital Jakarta, can be found at Java's northwestern tip. With a population of 136 million, it is the world's most populous island and one of the most densely populated places on earth. Yogyakarta, in Central Java, sits between Jakarta and the island of Bali, to the south east of Java.





# PLAYING HIS TUNE

In an exclusive interview with YTL Life, acclaimed trumpeter Chris Botti takes time from his current frenetic international tour to chat about the most important thing in the world to him – music.

Text by **Mark Lean** Photography by **Fabrizio Ferri**

With nominations for five Grammy Awards and three of his albums reaching the number 1 spot on the Billboard Jazz Albums chart, it's clear that North American trumpeter and composer Chris Botti's brand of contemporary jazz and adult contemporary pop is as popular today as the current chart toppers. Collaborations with luminaries of the music world like Sting and Paul Simon have also imparted added lustre to a career built solidly on exemplary technique and inspired showmanship.

**Who are your favourite musicians to perform with?**

I've been able to perform with so many of my favourite people in the world. My first professional concert was with Frank Sinatra and of course, that was a thrill but I would say that when reflecting on my entire career, Sting would be at the top followed by other greats such as Andrea

Bocelli and the people who performed on "Chris Botti in Boston": John Mayer, Steven Tyler, Yo-Yo Ma, Josh Groban and Katherine McPhee.

**Which is your favourite venue to perform at and why?**

There are so many great venues. Carnegie Hall is amazing as is the Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles. I think what makes a great venue is the way the night is, not necessarily the venue itself. The audience reaction and the magic of a particular night are very important. You can play a little tiny club in New York City like the Blue Note or you can go uptown and play Carnegie Hall - which is grandiose and regal - and you just never know when the good nights are going to happen, but generally, the classic beautiful places like Carnegie Hall and the Hollywood Bowl are probably the best in the world.







**Can you describe the moment when you decided upon a career in music?**

When I was nine, I saw Doc Severinsen on television and thought the trumpet would be cool. I picked one up and then a few years later, when I was twelve years old, I heard the first three notes of Miles Davis' "My Funny Valentine" and at that moment I knew I wanted to be a jazz musician. To this day, I listen to and follow the music of Miles Davis.

**You have appeared alongside many legends of the music scene, is there anyone who continues to inspire you?**

The one person that I would love to work with is Peter Gabriel. He has a great voice and is an amazing musician.

**What projects are you currently working on?**

We're on the road 300 days a year and will be performing all over the world in 2011. Also, I'm going to start on another record and hopefully it will be out later this year.

**A few years ago, you performed with the Boston Pops. How did you select the repertoire for that concert?**

We select the musicians first, in other words, they are our special guests. We asked them first because they are our friends and I like to make music with them. Then I selected the repertoire to fit the individual. It's artist-driven first; the music comes second. Who is appropriate for each song? I thought long and hard about it. It means a lot to get a correct fit and this made the Boston show even more memorable. I'm very proud of it.

**What is the piece of music you are most inspired by?**

That's a tough question. From night to night, it varies depending on how the trumpet is acting towards me or the orchestration, anything like that. Certainly, I always love to play "Time To Say Goodbye" or the repertoire from "Chris Botti In Boston" with Sting is really fun such as, "Seven Days" and "If I Ever Lose My Faith In You".

"Every day I wake up and tour with my band and feel incredibly fortunate. I think that most musicians would feel the same way; very fortunate to be chosen by music to guide their lives."

**Any plans to focus on performing vocals to a greater extent?**

No. The trumpet is an instrument that requires daily attention to keep up your chops. I've worked so hard my whole life to get the trumpet to have a beautiful, low-end and not shrill-type of sound. My focus is maintaining the sound of my trumpet and also consistently asking myself "do I have a growing audience?" and "are my fans at my concerts enjoying themselves?" As long as these things are taking place, I am more than happy.

**Do you have plans to branch out to Asia on a greater scale?**

Yes, it's a huge priority. We went to Japan twice in 2010 and are planning an extensive tour of Asia in late 2011. We are also working on securing dates in Singapore, Korea, Vietnam, Japan and China, amongst other countries.

**Besides it being your profession, in what other ways can you describe your fascination with music and the emotions it brings forth?**

I don't really look at it as a profession. It's my life and it has been my life since I was nine and I feel very grateful for that. Every day I wake up and tour with my band and feel incredibly fortunate. I think that most musicians would feel the same way, very fortunate to be chosen by music to guide their lives. ■





# BACK TO GLAMOUR

AT CAMERON HIGHLANDS RESORT

Add instant chic to resort-wear with these new looks  
from fashion's most forward-looking brands.

Photography **Eric Chow, Blink Studio** Styling **Victor Goh** Assistant stylist **Joe Chia** Makeup **Bong**  
Model **Nina/Faces Models** Location **Cameron Highlands Resort**



## PICTURE PERFECT

Strike a pose in the elegant lobby at the Cameron Highlands Resort, a perfect setting for the seductive allure of this Kenzo dress's subtle colour blocking and metallic hues. Bag by Louis Vuitton and accessories, stylist's own.



## MAKE A STATEMENT

Classic white-on-black gets a thoroughly modern update. Dress from Bottega Veneta; gold tone bangles, stylist's own.



## MISSONI MAGIC

The return of the sophisticate: this multi-coloured ruffle dress from M. Missoni is the embodiment of easy elegance. Shoes by Bottega Veneta and accessories, stylist's own.



## SIZZLING SHOW- STOPPER

Up the glamour quotient with the epitome of chic. Pink organza dress by Fendi perfectly accessorised with silver hoop earrings and a flower-shaped cocktail ring, stylist's own.







### HIP TO BE SQUARE

Lady-like elegance meets modern design with this sleek magenta-grid design dress by M. Missoni. Accessories, stylist's own.

### AMAZING JADE

A dazzling display of the perfect modern cut and colour: this timeless combination in green is by Jendela KL. Accessories, stylist's own.





designer life //



Set amidst tea plantations and rolling hills, Cameron Highlands Resort promises all the splendour, romance and nostalgia of the location's grand colonial heritage.

## COOL AND COLLECTED

A powder blue dress from Bottega Veneta adds a measure of fresh elegance to any stylish wardrobe. Accessories, stylist's own.





The M. Missoni store at Starhill Gallery, Kuala Lumpur

# Signature Patterns

M Missoni transforms knitwear into every season's must-have fashion.

Text by **Cheong Phin**

There is no greater comfort and versatility in women's dressing than soft, luxurious knitwear. Designer Coco Chanel may have boldly introduced jersey knit in 1916 but it was the husband-and-wife team at the Italian fashion house Missoni who literally transformed the identity of modern knitwear in the late 1960s with a kaleidoscope of colours, patterns and textures weaved in a mix of luxurious materials. Their chic knitwear in soft, easy-to-wear shapes became a fashion statement that was instantly recognisable by their distinctive colourful stripes, zigzag and wave patterns. From cardigans and dresses to trousers and swimwear, the brand has, for the past five decades, connected its traditional Italian craft of weaving knit with a luxury clientele of stylish women across the globe, including celebrities like Cameron Diaz and the Olsen twins.

Thanks to the creation of a special partnership with the Valentino Fashion Group S.P.A. In 2002, a relatively younger version of the distinct style of the Missoni world is now offered in more affordable "M Missoni" seasonal fashion collections. "It's more of a little-sister to the main line" explains Alberto Damian, director of the fashion division of Valentino Fashion Group – M Missoni. "We are the worldwide licensee and distributor of M Missoni and together with Angela Missoni, the creative director of Missoni, we develop and produce every seasonal collection for our worldwide distribution with a sharp focus on the DNA of the brand."

Damian was in Kuala Lumpur recently for the official launch of their fourth mono-brand boutique in Asia at the prestigious Starhill Gallery. The new Kuala Lumpur store has been created with a minimal approach to the interior design featuring opalescent wallpaper, metal in unusual hues, marmorinos plaster and a hint of natural wood - all lending a soft and sophisticated feel. An inviting light and colour combination were specially conceived to highlight and enhance the colours and textures of the "M Missoni" seasonal collections.





“Once you own a piece of M Missoni, you can keep it forever in your closet because it can be used and reinvented season after season.”

Apart from mono-brand stores in countries as diverse as Italy, United Kingdom, USA, China, Hong Kong, Macau, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Kuwait and Qatar, “M Missoni” is also available in over 40 countries including major department stores like Saks Fifth Avenue, Neiman Marcus, Bergdorf Goodman, Harrod’s, Selfridges, Harvey Nichols, Galeries Lafayette, La Rinascente, Attika, Takashimaya, Tobu and Tokyu.

### The Missoni Brand

Founded in 1953, the unique style of Missoni brand was the result of a romantic (and creative) union of Ottavio “Tai” Missoni and Rosita Jelmini. With their combined knowledge of yarns and sports tracksuits, the unconventional mix of colours and textures in their innovative knitwear soon began to make waves in the fashion world. Influential Vogue editor of the time, Diana Vreeland was especially impressed and famously commented “Who is talking about colours these days? There are only shades!” Her remarks



were instrumental in bringing the Missoni brand to the attention of America and the rest of the world.

Winning the prestigious Neiman Marcus fashion award in 1973 for “having influenced in a decisive manner the field of fabric and fashion design, creating an unmistakable style”, the much-revered global Italian fashion brand remains a family-run business today, operating out of the Missoni factory in northern Milan by their three children – Vittorio as company president, Luca as director and Angela as creative director. Together, they carry on the rich heritage of colourful patterns, stripes and liberal use of many different fabrics that maintains the brand at the forefront of Italian fashion.

### The next generation

After a brief stint with her own collection, Angela Missoni took over the creative role from her mother in 1997 and breathed

new life into her inheritance by expanding her choice of cuts and fabrics to include non-knit items, and introducing a younger, sexier look to appeal to the changing generation of fashion consumers.

She applies the same “fresh” approach to her “M Missoni” line with the Valentino Fashion Group and targets young women (and young at heart) with a mix of cool, contemporary easy-to-wear pieces that are an imaginative interpretation of the distinctive Missoni heritage style - rich in colour and elegance, with refined patterns and prints based on figurative or abstract motifs inspired by nature, culture, art and architecture. Materials used are comfortable and luxurious yet practical while construction, cut and fit represent the essence of an open-minded idea of fashion today which is creating your own individual look.

“Once you own a piece of M Missoni, you can keep it forever in your closet because it can be used and reinvented season after season. The enduring appeal and wearability of our collection is one of the strong characteristics of the brand,” Damian explains. His aim is to try to sell more affordable fashion and have luxurious brands like Missoni become more accessible to today’s younger fashion market.

Damian also stresses that the quality of this secondary line is never sacrificed, adding that “Missoni has an internal lab where they develop, make and produce their own unique fabric. For us, it’s



a question of working with them using less expensive yarns and adjusting to cost-effective weaving time. A combination of different yarns is often experimented on a design and it’s amazing to see the interesting results it produces. Similarly, a combination of different colours on the same pattern can also produce some amazing effects.”

Such is the beauty of the way the unique Missoni-knitwear reinvents itself and with Angela’s more adventurous take on this secondary line by mixing with contemporary styles in printed fabrics, tweed, denim and jersey, it has not only created a connection with the way fashion is moving today but inspires an interest in every girl’s individual expression of fashion style season after season.

### The Fall/Winter 2010/2011 collection

Following her main “Missoni” collection for Fall/Winter, Angela was evidently focussing on layering too in her “M Missoni” collection this season. From cosy wrap coats in colourful knit, wool and tweed covering knit dresses with frayed ends or signature zigzag pattern to cashmere prints in primary brights and mini dresses over tube socks or wool leggings, it was an eclectic mix of a delicious colour palette and textures in contrasting proportions and weights. Apart from innovative knits like the blister-effects on jacquard knits, there were also arty paisley prints on woven silk rendered in draped pants or blouse and pullovers held together with punk-influenced safety pins, all styled with structural pleated scarves and metallic platform sandals. For nights out, short velvet dresses and pleated miniskirts were added to the mix.

Angela’s message is not about conforming to one look but different looks which can be layered and mixed in bohemian-meets-urban style or simply wear on its own. She has not only become more adventurous with her designs and execution but is firmly grounded with her “Missoni” roots of mixing colours and textures in the most unconventional ways. Few designers can pull off a daring combination of muted coral, cocoa, aqua, cerulean blue, maroon, magenta, brown and mauve in one outfit. ■

Previous page (left): Alberto Damian, YB Dato Yeoh Soo Min and H.E Folco De Luca Gabrielli; (right) Interior of the M. Missoni store  
This page: A selection from the latest collection





### Colour Codes

For most fashionistas winter months call for darker colours and sombre tones, but with their new Inox leather collection Italian fashion house Fendi adds a touch of much needed lightness and fun with emphasis firmly on style. This stunning collection of candy-hued accessories adds a splash of colour to any look. Available in vibrant hues such as cyclamen, gold, turquoise, violet, pink, copper, red Ferrari and silver, items from the collection are crafted from Inox leather and sport an attractive lures knit effect, created by laminating the top layer with a dazzling pixel embossed look.



### Dior Perfect

Inspired by creative director John Galiano, Dior's print campaign entitled "Lady Dior" is a stylish and sophisticated narrative shot by some of the world's greatest photographers. Divided into four instalments and set in the cosmopolitan cities of Paris, New York City, Shanghai and London, these visual masterpieces were created by Peter Lindbergh, Annie Leibovitz, Steven Klein, Mert Alas and Marcus Pigott.

# In Fashion Now

From the perfect accessories to exquisite jewellery, our selection of must-have items this season combines high style with absolute inspiration.

### Crafting Perfection

As the creator of Louis Vuitton's *Les Ardentes* and *L' à me du Voyage* (the soul of the trip) collections, Lorenz Bäumer explores new territories in *haute* jewellery with his trademark spirit of discovery, daring and escape. In the designer's own words, "My inspiration comes from very different parts of my personality, from an idea comes a sketch then a drawing and finally the making by the best craftsmen". The *L' à me du Voyage* collection was recently unveiled during the 25th edition of the Biennale des Antiquaires.



### He Writes the Songs

This year, in commemoration of what would have been John Lennon's 70th birthday, Montblanc reveals the most exclusive of writing instruments, the John Lennon Limited Edition 70. Each of the 70 pieces available is embellished with the word "Imagine", taken from the artist's internationally renowned song. Encased in white gold, the writing instrument features a blue-hued transparent precious resin on the cap and barrel, a playful reference to Lennon's trademark blue glasses, while the 18K gold nib elegantly traces the singer's self-portrait signature.





# Timeless Japan

For centuries the purifying powers of water have been at the heart of healing Japanese-style and even today, bathing rituals remain at the core of Japanese society.

Text by **Kate O'Brien**

A visit to Japan is the perfect opportunity to experience something truly different. The culture of pure, clean simplicity depicted in countless movies is still taken extremely seriously in modern Japan. From the meticulous preparation and presentation of traditional foods like *sushi* and *sashimi*, the straw *tatami* mats omnipresent in homes throughout the country and the importance of bathing to daily life, these traditions have survived the test of time, and in many ways are re-emerging in a contemporary context. It is well known that long before the advent of indoor plumbing, most Japanese took their daily plunge in a communal bathhouse or *senjo* fed by natural springs.



"Go quickly to this river-mouth and wash your body with its water. Then take the pollen of the *Kama* grass of the river-mouth, sprinkle it around, and roll on it. If you do this your skin will certainly heal as before."

-The Kojiki (712AD)

According to the Kojiki (Record of Ancient Matters), the Shinto deity *Opo-namudi-no-kami* outlined the above prescription for the white rabbit of Inaba who lost his fur to the sharks while attempting to return to his homeland across the ocean. The three native Japanese healing methods of exorcism, purification and herbal therapy are employed in this famous Japanese myth with *Opo-namudi-no-kami*, being the archetype of the ancient *shamans* or medicine men who performed exorcisms; the bath in the waters of the river-mouth purifying the white rabbit of Inaba; and the *Kama* grass pollen representing herbal therapy.



Clockwise: Bathing rituals remain at the core of Japanese society

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Traditional Japanese belief held that disease was the result of possession by vengeful spirits or *kami* and the cure was purification rites (*harai*), or exorcism by *shamans*. Purification was of utmost



importance and even today, bathing rituals to clean and purify the body and careful attention to personal hygiene are an inherent part of Japanese society.

Cleansing the spirit and warding off disease are the reputed benefits from some 3,000 *onsens* or hot spring baths dotted throughout the mountainous islands of Japan. The term '*onsen*' can refer to both a single bathing facility and an entire town or hot spring area.

Unlike most other spas where the healing experience is essentially a private ritual involving only the therapist and recipient, *onsens* typically offer a communal atmosphere. Not your typical spa by any stretch of the imagination, but when in Japan, *onsens* are the only way to go and

the Japanese take this ritual as seriously as sipping their tea – it is done regularly, leisurely and sometimes with company.

With bathing Japanese-style the tub is used exclusively for soaking with the body being very thoroughly washed before entering the bath. Devotees attest that a long soak at the end of the day cleanses and feeds the body and spirit.

*Onsens* range in size from small tubs for one person to enormous pools that can accommodate over 100 bathers. The baths are measured in *tatami* mats, a traditional Japanese unit based on the size of the straw mats used in the home. A variety of springs can be found throughout the country including *uchi-buros* (indoor baths), *rotenburos* (outdoor baths) and

*mushi-yus* (steam baths). Baths can be for lying or standing as well as being designated for men only or exclusively for women. Mixed bathing is unusual today although many *onsen* do sometimes allow for private reservations so that families can enjoy bathing together.

As with many aspects of Japanese life, etiquette is all important. When bathing, the extra-deep tub is filled to the top with very hot water (usually 40 degrees and above), in which the person sits submerged to the neck. Japanese *onsen* do not permit bathing suits and the body must be washed and scrubbed perfectly clean, and carefully rinsed, before entering the bath. Soap should never get into the tub. The only item that can be taken into the bath is a small hand-towel

that most bathers fold and place on top of their head. Sitting on one of the small stools provided in the shower area, soap is rubbed into the *tenugui* (small toweling cloth) before being rubbed into the body. Once the dead skin cells are removed and the circulation is stimulated, a rinse leaves the skin soft and smooth. Then the real *onsen* experience begins. Most people spend about half an hour in the bath every night and parents with young children will bath together. It is not unusual to bath several times a day to maximize the benefits.

Many *onsens* are found close to areas of volcanic activity as bathing in mineral-rich waters is believed to cure numerous illnesses with people suffering from ailments as diverse as rheumatism and





“When in Japan *onsens* are the only way to go and the Japanese take this ritual as seriously as sipping their tea—it is done regularly, leisurely and sometimes with company.”



#### GREEN LEAF ONSEN

The *onsen* at The Green Leaf Niseko Village originates from a 100 percent natural mineral spring and is widely regarded as one of the most beautiful natural rock pools in Hokkaido. The crystal clear waters emerge from the ground at 53.2 degrees and are let cool to just over 40 degrees before entering the perfectly positioned baths. Flowing at 270 liters per minute the waters are extremely rich in healing mineral salts from deep within the earth including sodium, potassium, magnesium, calcium, chlorine and sodium bicarbonate amongst others reputed to help treat a range of ailments including muscle and joint pain, stress, and chronic digestive ailments. The skin is not forgotten either as the *onsen* waters are said to have emulsifying properties that help give a smooth glowing radiance.

The setting of the Green Leaf *rotenburo* or "open air bath" could not be more authentically Japanese, with the steaming waters surrounded by large boulders, pine trees and breathtaking views of Mt. Yotei. Floating in the mineral-rich *onsen* waters while snow falls gently as the night skiers' descend from an exhilarating day on the slopes is a quintessentially Japanese experience not to be missed.



Reiki is an effective healing modality

nervous disorders to circulation problems, skin irritations, aches and fatigue often traveling many hours to bathe in these therapeutic mineral laden waters.

The seasons are important too as bathing washes sweat off during the hot summer months and warms the body during the cold Japanese winter. Naturally perfumed baths are gaining in popularity with fruits, herbs and spices used to complement the seasons. For example, mandarin orange peel is used during autumn, *yuzu*, an aromatic lemon is traditionally used on the winter solstice in December, and ginger helps to warm the body during the colder winter months.

In addition to the exclusively Japanese *onsen* rituals, other Japanese therapies are widely offered in spas worldwide. Most of these have their roots firmly grounded primarily in Chinese medicine, the most popular of which include the following:

#### Shiatsu

Literally translated as finger (*shi*) pressure (*atsu*), *shiatsu* is a relatively modern therapy popularized just a century ago by Japanese physician Tokujiro Namikoshi. Often described as 'acupuncture without the needles,' it uses a variety of hands-on movements and, when appropriate, more dynamic rotations to manipulate the body's acupoints and improve the flow of

energy or *qi*. Therapy is tailored to individual concerns be it back pain, migraine, neck and shoulder discomfort, menstrual issues, sports injuries or rheumatic pain. Regular sessions are believed to improve digestion and concentration, relieve stress and calm both mind and body.

#### Reiki

Reiki is believed to have been discovered in ancient Tibetan Sanskrit sutras (Buddhist teachings) during the late 1880s by Dr Mikao Usui, who went on to teach the technique in Japan. *Reiki* is an extremely calming form of touch therapy during which the attuned practitioner harnesses his ability to control *qi* to heal others.

During a typical session, the skilled practitioner transmits energy to the client by placing his hands over or on specific body parts requiring attention. When this life force is channeled through his hands, it is believed to activate the recipient's innate healing ability to rebalance their internal energy. For example, placing a hand over or on the abdomen is believed to cure a digestive problem or ease menstrual cramps, while hands placed over the head can relieve upper body tension and headache. Reiki is reputed to be effective in relieving many illnesses including arthritis, insomnia and migraine and apart from treating others, it is also considered

#### THE GREEN LEAF SPA

The Green Leaf Spa at Green Leaf Niseko Village is the perfect place to recharge both body and mind after a hard day on the slopes. A range of soothing and uplifting treatments are available with many exclusively created for snow-weary skiers including:

#### BAMBOO TAPPING BACK MASSAGE

Believed to have originated some 1500 years ago in the Chinese countryside, bamboo tapping helps warm the muscles by increasing circulation, dispersing wind and cold from the body and relieving stiffness. The tapping is combined with deep acupressure point massage, completely revitalizing the body after a cold day in the outdoors.

#### HOT BUTTERED RUM THERAPY

The deliciously rich and instantly warming Green Leaf signature Hot Buttered Rum therapy is a well-earned treat for ski-weary feet and frozen hands. Dry skin is thoroughly buffed to supple softness with a spiced brown sugar scrub that is followed by a luxurious moisture drenching massage of creamy spice-infused body butter. Heated mitts and booties ensure the cossetting warmth and goodness deeply penetrate to leave the skin thoroughly nourished and glowing.





Hawaiian healer and YTL Director of Operations (Spa Division)  
Enola S.K. Kaneta

# Healing Heritage

In our continuing Healing Heritage series, YTL Director of Operations (Spa Division) and Hawaiian healer Enola S.K. Kaneta reveals her passion for indigenous Hawaiian healing. Born on the island of Oahu, Enola now lives in Kuala Lumpur with her husband and two children and through her dedication inspires YTL's spa staff to work with both their hands and hearts.

I am incredibly fortunate to have grown up on the Hawaiian Islands - a magical place of deep spiritual power where love and healing are one. As I reminisce on my life journey, I understand that every twist and turn was carefully laid out for me to bring the gift of *Lomi Lomi* to others.

Traditionally, the healing practices of Hawaii are passed down verbally from one generation to the next by one's *Kapuna* (parent, grandparent or ancestor). There is no written text. The eldest of nine, I learned my craft from my grandmother Theresa D.I'i - a sweet and humble woman with a passion for Hawaiian healing that came about following an unfortunate miscarriage during her second pregnancy. My grandmother lost her child but embarked on a 10 year journey of Hawaiian *Lomi Lomi* and herbal healing to help her family and loved ones maintain health and harmony in life. She went on to have 11 children.

Top: A *Lomi Lomi* treatment

By the age of five, when most children were out playing on the beach, I was capturing the essence of Hawaiian Healing; the Spirit of *ALOHA*. To a Hawaiian, this is the foundation of life and the true power behind *Lomi Lomi* as it reinforces our intention to be in unity and harmony with our real self, with God and with mankind. Once this is instilled in our being, love and healing flow naturally. Another rite of passage for a young Hawaiian is to learn the ancient dance known as *Hula* that encourages the flow of energy through the body and has proved to be an integral part of my *Lomi Lomi* practices.

Some of my earliest memories are of my grandma teaching me *Opu Huli* (literally meaning 'to turn over the stomach'). She believed the stomach to be a person's physical and spiritual centre and therefore should be treated with care. As well as teaching me how to perform the actual *Lomi Lomi* strokes over the body, she focused on the spiritual aspect of *Lomi Lomi* - the prayers performed before and after therapy and the "cleansing" of the hands, the space and the body. I earnestly practised my new-found skills on family members until I was finally ready to work on my grandma at the age of ten.

My interests strayed somewhat during my early teenage years (as most teenagers do) while I was living with my aunt in Washington state. However, every day when I came home from school, I would massage my sick bedridden uncle to help improve his circulation. He suffered from pulmonary edema and being a stubborn man, did not do well with medical regimes. After about 8 months of *Lomi Lomi* therapy he made a complete recovery. It was so satisfying to know that my skills could have such a profound effect on others. Some time later, back in Hawaii, my father suffered an aneurism when out fishing. He was rushed to the hospital but died shortly afterwards. From that moment on I knew my life had changed forever and that my grandmother's teachings would refresh my

soul. I embarked on a life of helping others in need and at the age of 24 qualified as a massage therapist. I never imagined where this journey would take me.

In 2002 I was selected to be the trainer of the newly opened Spa Village at Pangkor Laut Resort. It was a new country, a new culture and a magical adventure. Spa Village quickly embraced the virtues of *Lomi Lomi* and within one year I had created the Enola's four handed *Lomi Lomi* - a Spa Village exclusive and firm favourite with our guests.

I remain as passionate and committed as ever to Hawaiian healing and will use my skills to help others and ensure the healing benefits of *Lomi Lomi* will continue to inspire people all over the world. ■



Heal the mind, body and spirit with *Lomi Lomi*



# Baby, It's Cold Outside!

A taste of the latest nourishing beauty armoury to protect the skin against harsh weather conditions.

## Émulsion Écologique, Sisley

Infused with healing ingredients like centella asiatica, ginseng, rosemary, hops and horsetail, this star product from Sisley is the perfect comfort for stressed winter skin. It also helps prime the skin and maximise the effects of subsequent products.

## Génifique Youth Activator, Lancôme

Active anti-aging compounds speed up the cellular rejuvenation process and are purported to reveal younger looking skin in just seven days. No matter what type of adverse weather conditions you are faced with this winter, the highly acclaimed Génifique Youth Activator will deliver visible results.

## High Recharge Energy Shot, Biotherm Homme

This recharging skin therapy for men is infused with energising ingredients such as Vitamin B5, Vitamin E, ginseng and pure thermal plankton to leave the skin clean, smooth and vibrant looking.

## Skin Perfection Catalyzing Serum, Biotherm Source Thérapie

The perfect travel essential for that winter holiday, Skin perfection Catalyzing Serum is suitable for both male and female skin as it renews and hydrates the skin from deep within. After just one week pores will be visibly tightened and the skin clearly rehydrated.

## Satin Revitalizing Nectar, Dior Prestige

Rose Satine Nectar is the essential ingredient in this star product from the Dior Prestige range. Used regularly it completely revitalises the skin leaving it gloriously soft and glowing.

## Triple Crème Skin Rehydrator, Estee Lauder

Estee Lauder's Triple Crème Skin Hydrator is an easy-to-apply 10-minute super-hydrating mask that lifts moisture levels and revitalises tired and stressed skin.

## Moisture Liposome, Cosme Decorte

Impart some much needed radiance and combat dry skin with this multi-layered liposome-based moisturiser that significantly increases the skin's absorption of moisture. This revolutionary product targets red, rough or dry patches and delivers constant hydration for up to 12 hours leaving the skin thoroughly nourished and invigorated.



1. Emulsion Ecologique, Sisley 2. Génifique Youth Activator, Lancôme 3. Skin Perfection Catalyzing Serum, Biotherm Source Thérapie 4. Satin Revitalizing Nectar, Dior Prestige 5. Triple Crème Skin Rehydrator, Estee Lauder 6. Moisture Liposome, Cosme Decorte 7. High Recharge Energy Shot, Biotherm Homme

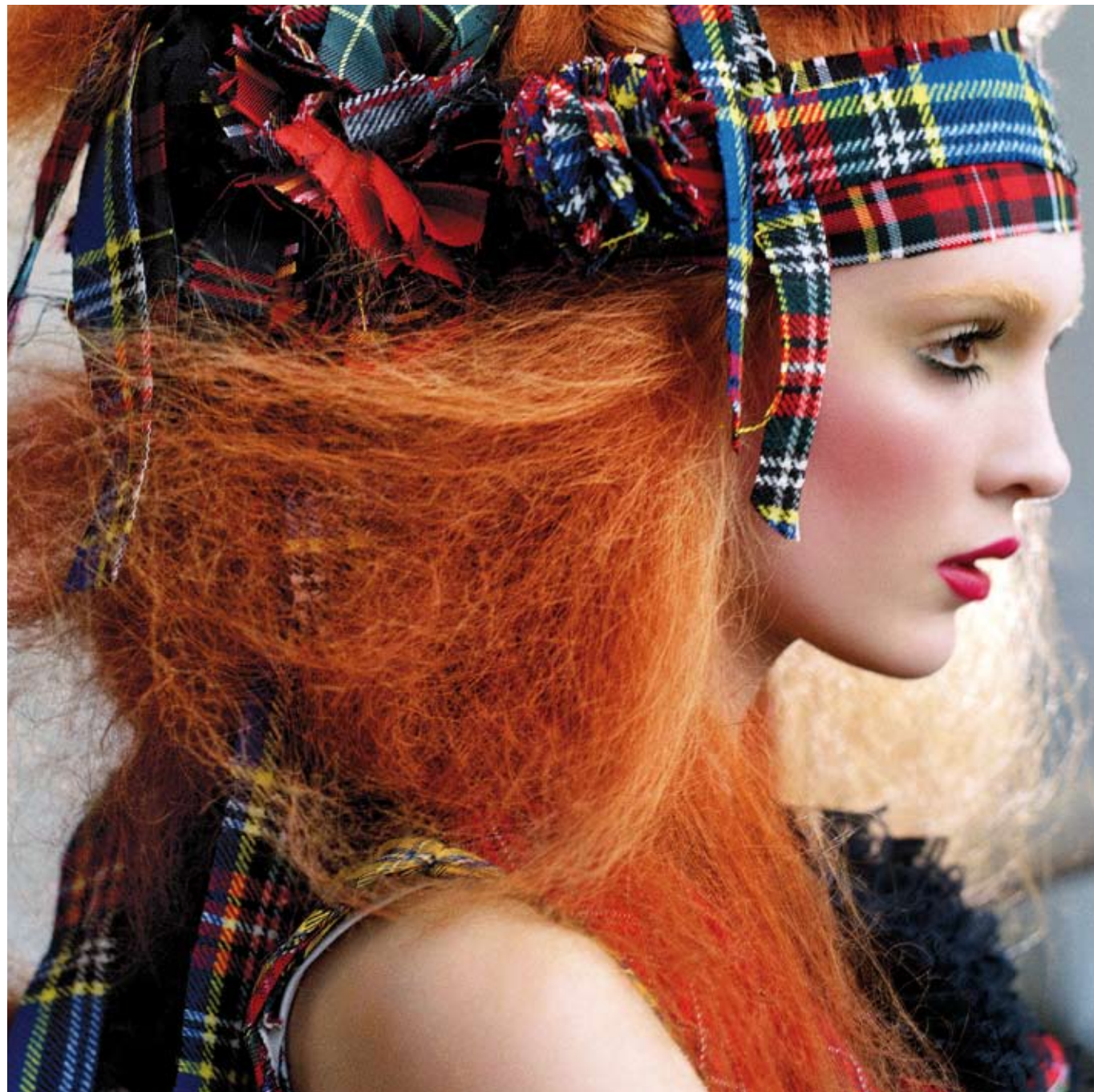


# Cherchez la beauté

Pampering products and treatments guaranteed to make a lasting difference.

## Tartan Temptations

Dazzling crèmes, lush lipsticks, mineral-based eye shadows in tartan striping and a satin powder blush are at the core of M.A.C's latest collection. Colours and patterns collide in a celebration of bold lip colours, tartan striped shadows and fun makeup kits, perfect for fun or glamorous occasions.



## Lip Service

Keeping lips perfectly moisturised with brilliant bursts of colour is what Chubby Stick Moisturizing Lip Colour Balm from Clinique is all about. Luscious ingredients like shea butter, mango seed butter and jojoba seed oil combine to deliver moisture to lips under strain from harsh weather. This perfect ski accessory offers a double-dose of nourishment and colour for lips and is available in delectable flavours including Pecan Pie, Mimosa, Grapefruit and Berry Burst.



## High-powered skincare

The skin-pampering Impress Granmulla range from Kanebo is the ultimate beauty indulgence. Its star product, the divine-sounding Exquisite Aura Lotion helps the skin come alive and to feel and look its best. With active ingredients like bisamin, carnitine and rhododendrol, products from this range, when used in unison, have skin brightening, revitalising and firming properties.



## The Ideal Solution

Introducing Sisleÿum for Sisley, the latest revolutionary skincare product designed exclusively for men. This multi-function "global revitaliser" is the brand's very first anti-ageing, revitalising and after shave solution targeted specifically for men's skin as it works to restore energy and vitality to fatigued skin. Superior moisturising and anti-shine properties also help to ensure oil-free, matt-looking and super smooth skin.



# Read & Listen

Monaco-based businessman and intrepid adventurer Chris Cecil-Wright is also a partner of Edmiston & Company, renowned as the purveyor of the ultimate in luxury yachts. He reveals his all-time favourite books and music to YTL *Life*.



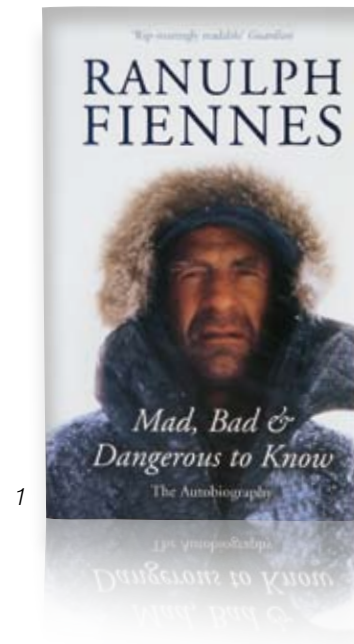
Chris Cecil-Wright

## My Favourite Books

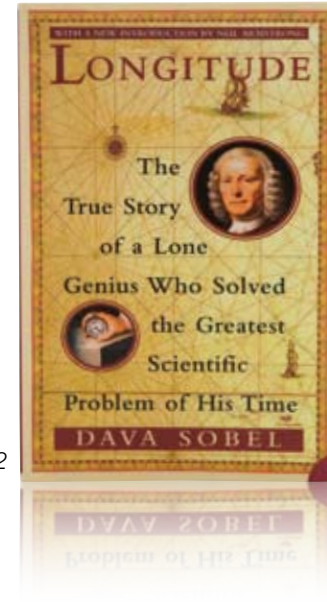
1. **Mad, Bad and Dangerous to Know** by Sir Ranulph Fiennes – This is one of the most inspirational books I have ever read because Ranulph embodies the spirit of adventure that I, as well as many other 40 year-old men, wish they could be a part of. His extreme antics and extraordinary physical achievements affirm that anything is possible if you want it badly enough. They also remind me of the immense costs of achieving these goals, which in turn helps keep my ambitions in check. Not long ago I was lucky enough to hear him give a talk. I have since walked to the North Pole. In December 2011, I plan to visit the South Pole on foot, too.

2. **Longitude** by Dava Sobel – This is the true story of John Harrison who solved the greatest problem of his time. In the early 1700's trade and shipping were at an all time high but due to poor navigation techniques, countless ships, men and fortunes were lost at sea. The British Parliament offered £20,000 to anyone who could devise an instrument that was successful in accurately establishing the longitude of a vessel at sea. It was assumed that someone from either the astronomy or scientific establishments would win the prize. Instead, the invention of the simple, accurate pocket watch was the answer! It is a wonderful story that inspires me because Harrison was the underdog who prevailed against the establishment.

3. **Trees** by Hugh Johnson – I love this book because Hugh writes so beautifully and with such insight on a subject that is vital for both the aesthetic and biological future of our world. The more people who read this book and take inspiration from it, will create a better world. The book has had a profound effect on how I look at trees and plants.



1



2



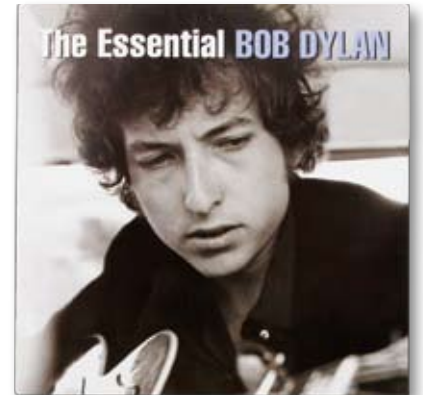
1

## My Favourite Music

1 **Mothership** by Led Zeppelin – The best rock music of all time now provides the background music for all my annual skiing and adventure videos. Led Zeppelin has transcended generations, a feat that very few bands have achieved. My five-year-old daughter's favourite track is 'Rock and Roll', while mine is 'Communication Breakdown'.

2. **The Essential BOB DYLAN** – This is a collection of his greats. Dylan's tone and lyrics never fail to conjure times during my adolescence but when I listen to the same tracks today they resonate in a contemporary way. For instance, the famous saying, "Times they are a changin'" seems as relevant today as it ever did! Although Dylan is a master poet, with his brand of music he would never have been able to make it on X Factor!

3. **Flowers** by Echo and The Bunnymen – Just before the album was launched during dinner at a client's house, the frontman Ian McCulloch played the album's first track 'King of Kings' on an acoustic guitar. I had met him on several other occasions, but he and his music encapsulated a very distinct and memorable 10 year period in my life. This was the time when I transitioned from being a hard working hopeful entrepreneur to a moderately successful and independent businessman.



2



3





# Home and Away

Add a touch of luxe to life with the newest designer products and accessories for your home and travels.

## More than just a phone

N8, Nokia's latest must-have offering, combines the functions of a mobile phone with a 12-megapixel camera complete with Carl Zeiss optics and Xenon flash. The device also acts as a portable entertainment centre and with 16GB of built-in storage (expandable to 48GB with a micro SD card), allows seamless connections, creativity and entertainment – all in one very slickly designed unit.



## Armani at home

Legendary designer Giorgio Armani extends his creative talents to the home describing it as "a place possessing a special ambience, an intimate and very personal space where you can create your own world". According to Armani, it is here that one's notions of beauty are realised, not as luxury or ostentation, but "as a sensuous and emotional experience". With that in mind, Armani/Casa has created a collection of furnishings and pieces with an undeniably stylish design aesthetic inspired by the spirit of the 1930s.



## Packing Up

Functionality and sleek design combines with Samsonite's Pro-DLX 3 collection featuring five stylish lightweight business cases and three durable travel cases. Constructed from top quality materials and featuring the skilled workmanship for which the brand is renowned, the Pro-DLX 3 collection answers the needs of style conscious travellers everywhere.



## The Tumi Story

One of the world's most highly recognisable brands Tumi is synonymous with durable yet stylish luggage. The company was established in 1975 by ex-Peace Corps member Charlie Clifford who discovered the special hard-wearing Columbian leather with which he crafted the first Tumi bags. As a tribute to these inspirational styles, the brand recently unveiled the Tumi Originals Collection featuring five signature styles including the first tri-fold garment bag, soft satchel and tote.



# Dining By The Sea

Fisherman's Cove, with its tropical island setting and gourmet food is a destination in its own right.

Text by Catherine Shaw



It's the Holy Grail for gourmands: the perfect *al fresco* dining experience where the food matches - or in this case - exceeds the spectacular picture-perfect edge-of-the-sea setting. Add sleek, highly professional and friendly service and the freshest of fresh seafood (much of what is served up at dinner has been caught that same day) presented in an artful, but never pretentious way, and it is no wonder why Pangkor Laut Resort's Fisherman's Cove remains amongst Malaysia's finest.

And, as is usually the case with truly unforgettable dining experiences, behind the impeccably presented culinary delights is a chef with an obsessive passion for food. At Fisherman's Cove in Pangkor Laut Resort the maestro in question is Chef Ali Harun. The quietly spoken Malaysian, who was born on nearby Pangkor island, is a firm favourite amongst those in the know for creating food that is a clear cut above just about everything else you'll find elsewhere - and dramatically different to standard island resort fare.

"I like to tailor food to meet different expectations: some of our guests are used to very spicy food and others not, so I have to find ways to balance it all. This necessitates being creative on the spot but I enjoy that kind of challenge," he says. "Of course that also means that I cook the 'catch of the day' in four different ways but that is the way in Malaysia where we have so many different cultural influences. I have five exceptional Malaysian, Chinese and Indian chefs working with me at Fisherman's Cove so we already cover three major food cultures."

Chef Ali Harun

"But first comes freshness - that is the main concept here," explains the accomplished chef. "We use local seasonal foods, especially seafood and we fly in excellent quality fresh meat from Australia. I like to buy line fish and prawns from Europe and for local fish I catch a boat to the local fish market on Pangkor."

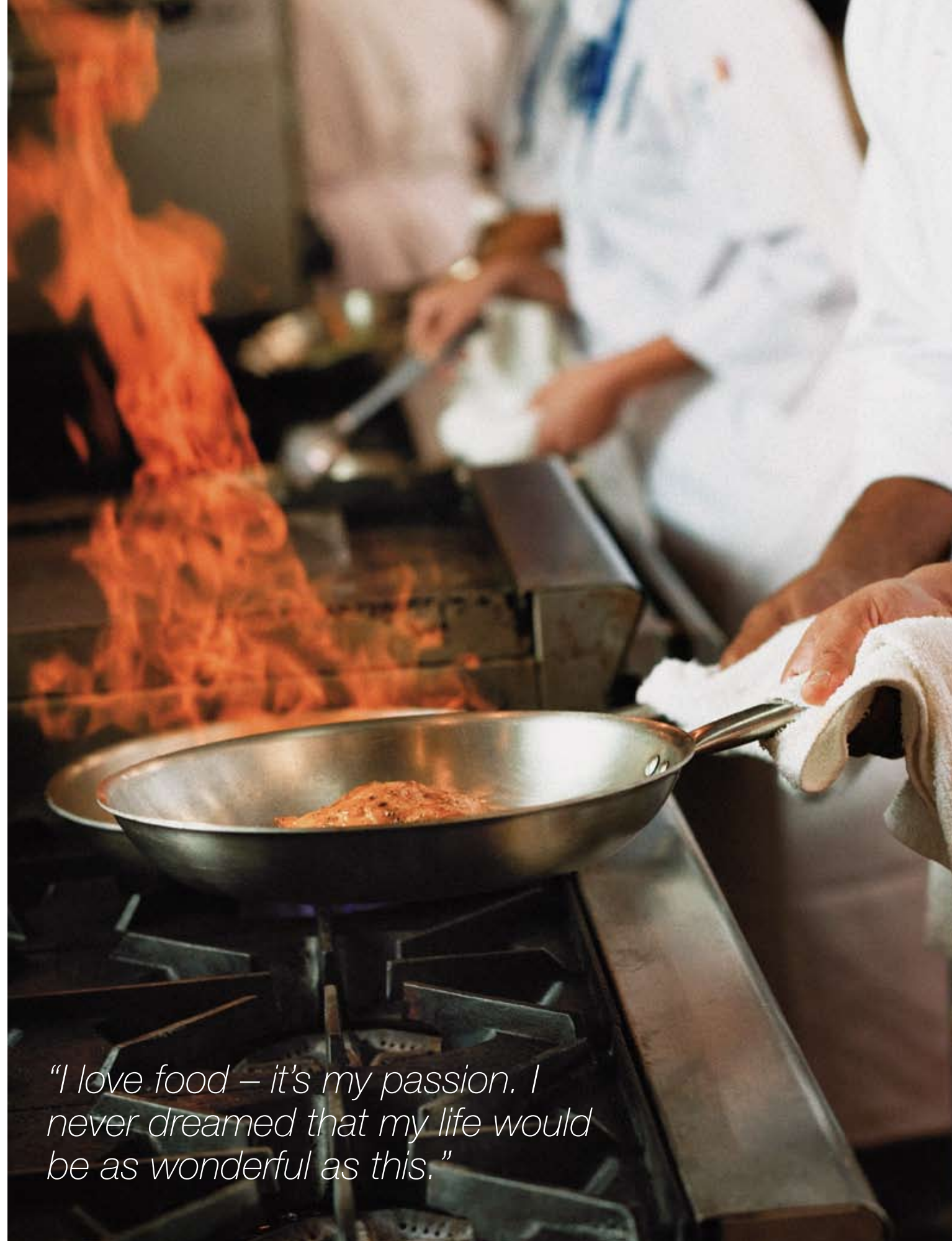
"The suppliers know me well because I grew up there," he laughs quietly. "And they know what I am like! I only take the very best quality. We like to serve food that has been caught that day because you can really taste the difference in freshness, especially with the crab and scallop salads."

A striking feature of dining at Fisherman's Cove is the refined sense of food presentation that successfully balances simplicity and elegance - with an added touch of style. "Presentation is most important," explains Ali. "Indeed when I later try to recreate my favourite dish of a swirl of succulent prawns atop a tower of crisp seaweed salad (see recipe below), I notice that what looked effortlessly put together actually requires a deft hand and considerable artistic ability." The rest of the modern fusion menu is equally enticing with a perfectly balanced mix of cultural delights - think filo-wrapped fillet of sea bass and grilled *wagyu* striploin. Sweets include the deliciously exotic caramelized Sarawak pineapple and chocolate praline mousse with toffee-crust *feuille de brick* and mini popcorn. Enough said.

The 42-year-old chef says he enjoys experimenting with new recipes but finds his regular guests insist that







"I love food – it's my passion. I never dreamed that my life would be as wonderful as this."

#### CHEF ALI'S SUGGESTIONS...

- Seared Pacific Scallops on Slow-Cooked Avocado
- Lobster Cappuccino with Mango-Cinnamon Dumplings
- Caramelized Black Cod with Shiitake, Baby Kailan and Soy Reduction
- Fried Vanilla Cheese Cake with Milk Chocolate Cream and Dark Chocolate Sauce



signature dishes like the pan roasted local Barramundi and Tiger Prawn with *vongole beurre blanc* or the poached lobster and *momotaro* tomatoes remain unchanged. "About 70 per cent of our orders are for seafood. It's the perfect choice to eat sitting on our deck overlooking the sea. I also like to try to make life interesting for vegetarians and guests with special dietary needs so I spend time discussing their preferences or what they would like to try. I want dining here to be an exciting experience." It appears to be a case of mission accomplished as the restaurant accommodates a range of diners from those eating solo to others who come with an entourage.

A winning feature of Fisherman's Cove is the modern open kitchen, which Ali says is imperative for keeping the food experience interactive. "An open kitchen is like a theatre and we are like actors. People are watching us so it is also entertainment." The busy restaurant competes well with the setting that enjoys views over the iridescent ocean and Pangkor Laut Resort Spa Village.

"I met the previous chef from here when I was very young and knew straight away that cooking food was the only thing I wanted to do" says Ali. "I first trained and worked at Fisherman's Cove as an assistant chef and have now been at the restaurant for 15 years. I am constantly inspired by other chefs as well as by television and reading books. You have to keep trying and looking."

"I love food – it's my passion. I never dreamed that my life would be as wonderful as this," he proudly concludes basking in the picture perfect sunset. 🌅

#### Fisherman's Cove signature recipe – Baked Tiger Prawn

##### INGREDIENTS

- 2 Tiger prawns
- 50ml paprika and cumin oil
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ tsp pepper powder
- 40g Tako Salad
- 10g Salted Kelp (Japanese seaweed)

##### METHOD:

1. Clean the prawns. Remove vein
2. Season with salt, pepper and cumin oil
3. Bake in oven; 180 Celsius/4 minutes

##### TAKO SALAD

- Mix and keep chilled
- 50g sliced boiled tako (octopus)
- 70g sliced Japanese cucumber
- 20g sliced onion
- 15g Wakame
- 60ml white vinegar
- 30g sugar
- 5g salt (to taste)





# Gourmet Delights

Decadent ingredients and age-old culinary traditions are explored to delicious effect.



## Mansion Dining

An artful blend of Malay and Chinese cooking styles, *Nyonya* or Straits Chinese cuisine originates from the cultural melting pots of Malacca and Penang on Malaysia's west coast. At The Mansion restaurant in The Majestic Malacca, Nyonya culinary traditions are brought to life with popular delicacies including: *Otak Otak* or baked fish mousse with kaffir lime leaves; *Ayam Cencaluk* or sautéed chicken morsels in an authentic Nyonya spice-mix; and *Pan-fried Snapper Assam Pedas* or marinated snapper in spicy-sour sauce with aubergines and okra.



## Breakfast Luxe

The opulent breakfast spread at Cesar's in The Ritz-Carlton, Kuala Lumpur is definitely worth waking up for. Specially created dishes include the Black Truffle Omelette with asparagus, tomatoes and chive *jus* and the Truffled Egg Florentine. Both items are featured in the *a la carte* menu priced at RM68++ per person, which also includes a Viennoiserie Basket, Continental Buffet and other appetizing selections.

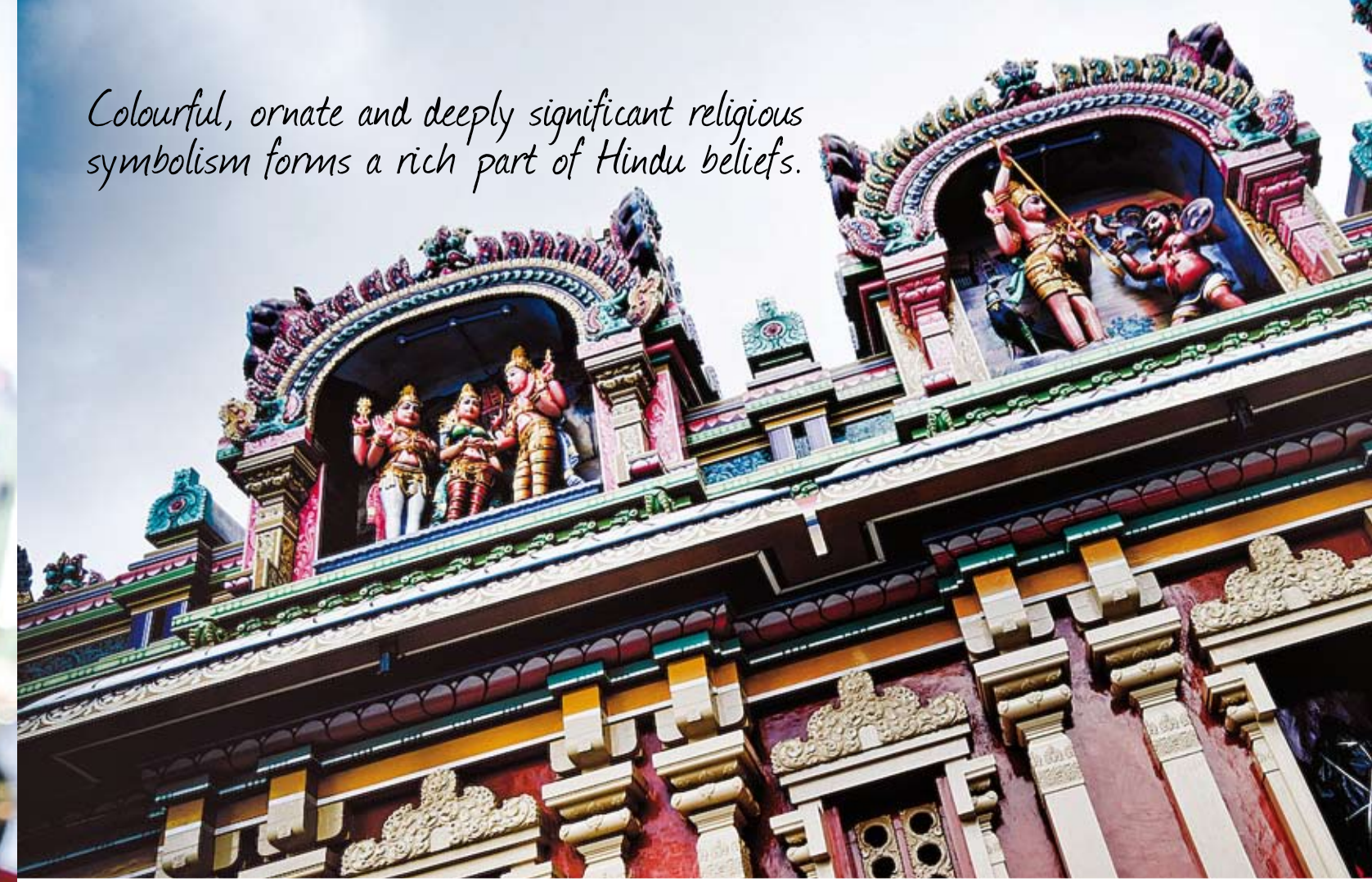


# The Heart Of The City

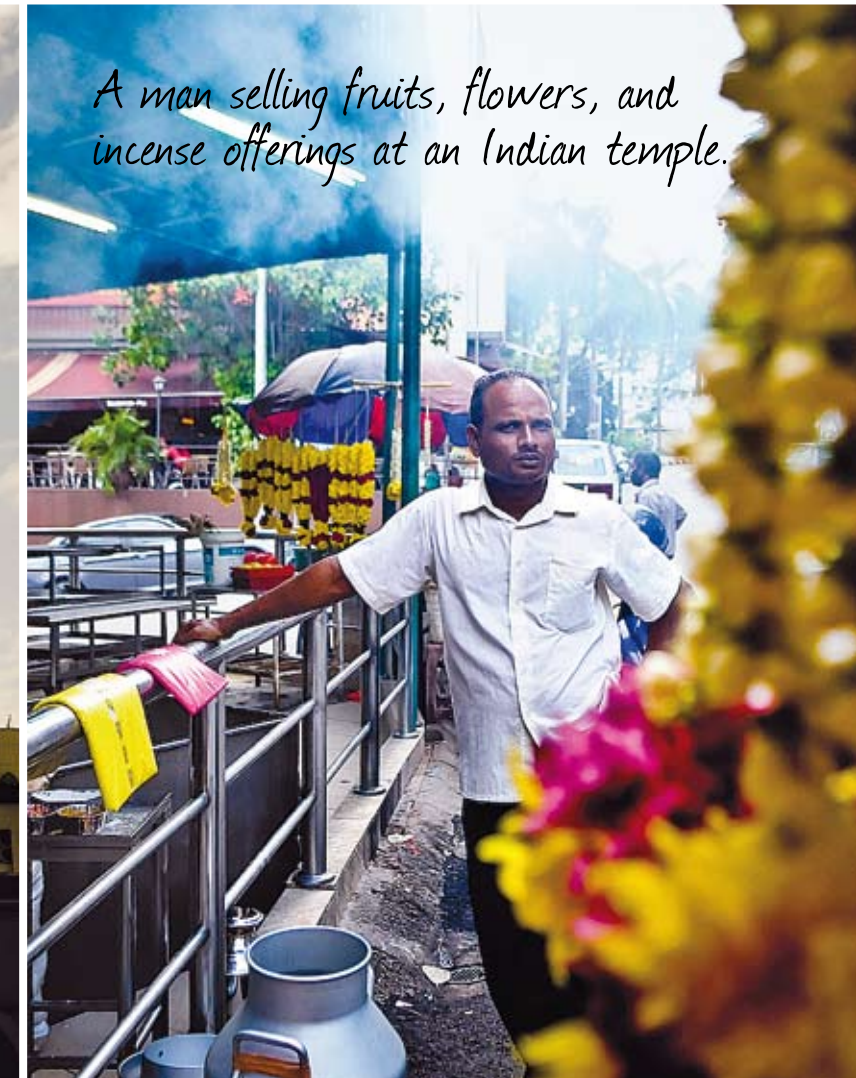
Malaysia's capital, Kuala Lumpur, is a multi-ethnic metropolis of unforgettable sights, scenes and tastes. Photographer Sharon Lam's visual journey through relatively unexplored districts and colourful secret quarters recounts a compelling tale of a city's evolution from colonial outpost to one of Asia's most dynamic destinations.



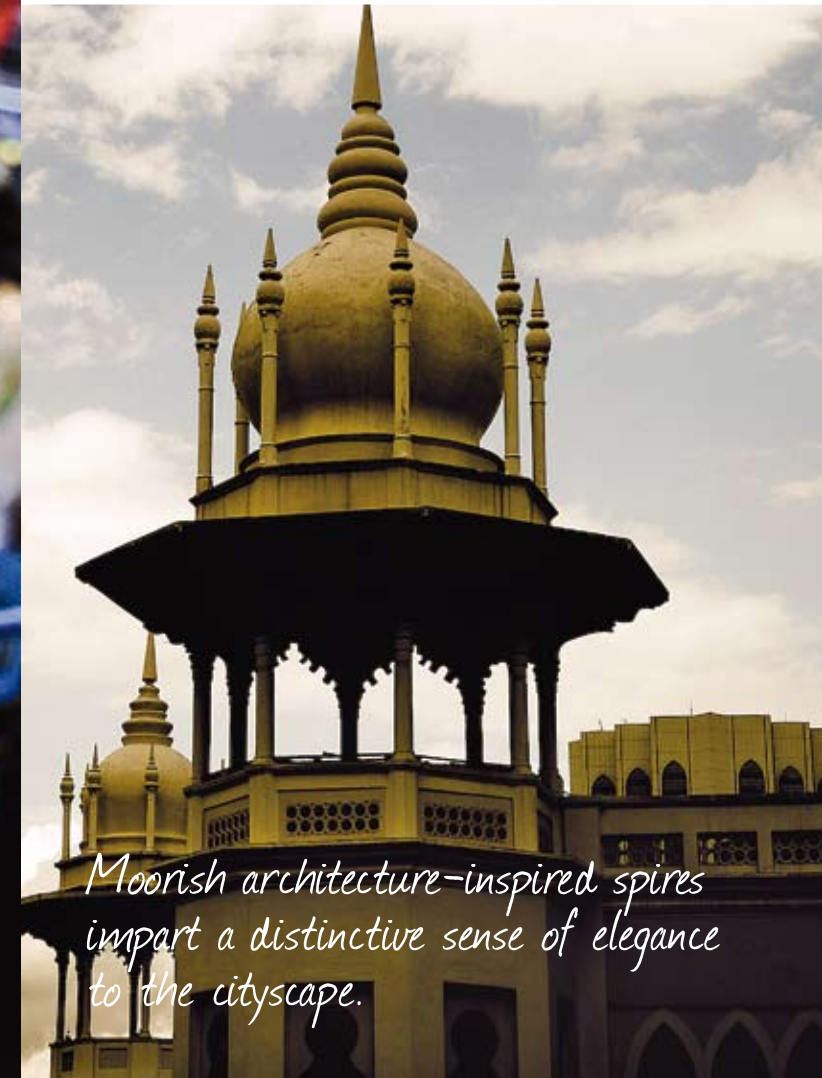
*Colourful, ornate and deeply significant religious symbolism forms a rich part of Hindu beliefs.*



*A man selling fruits, flowers, and incense offerings at an Indian temple.*

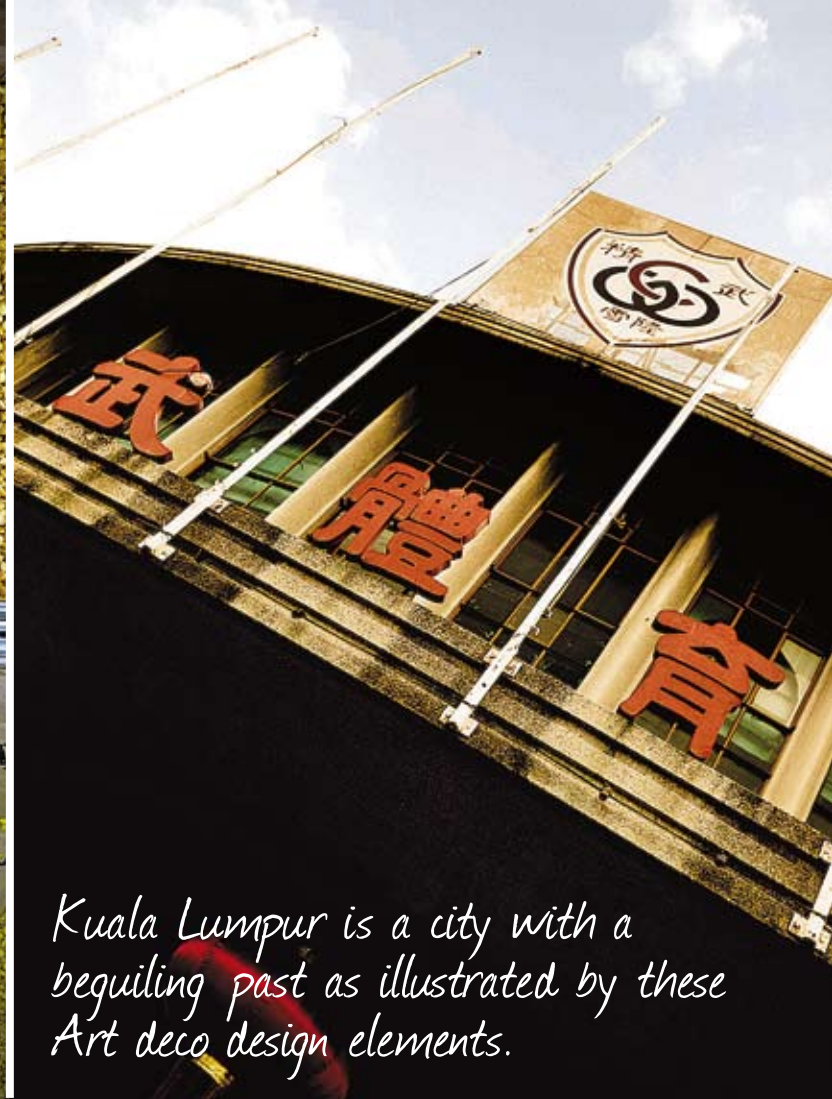


*Moorish architecture-inspired spires impart a distinctive sense of elegance to the cityscape.*





An old quarter of the city seems unchanged despite the passing of time.



Kuala Lumpur is a city with a beguiling past as illustrated by these Art deco design elements.

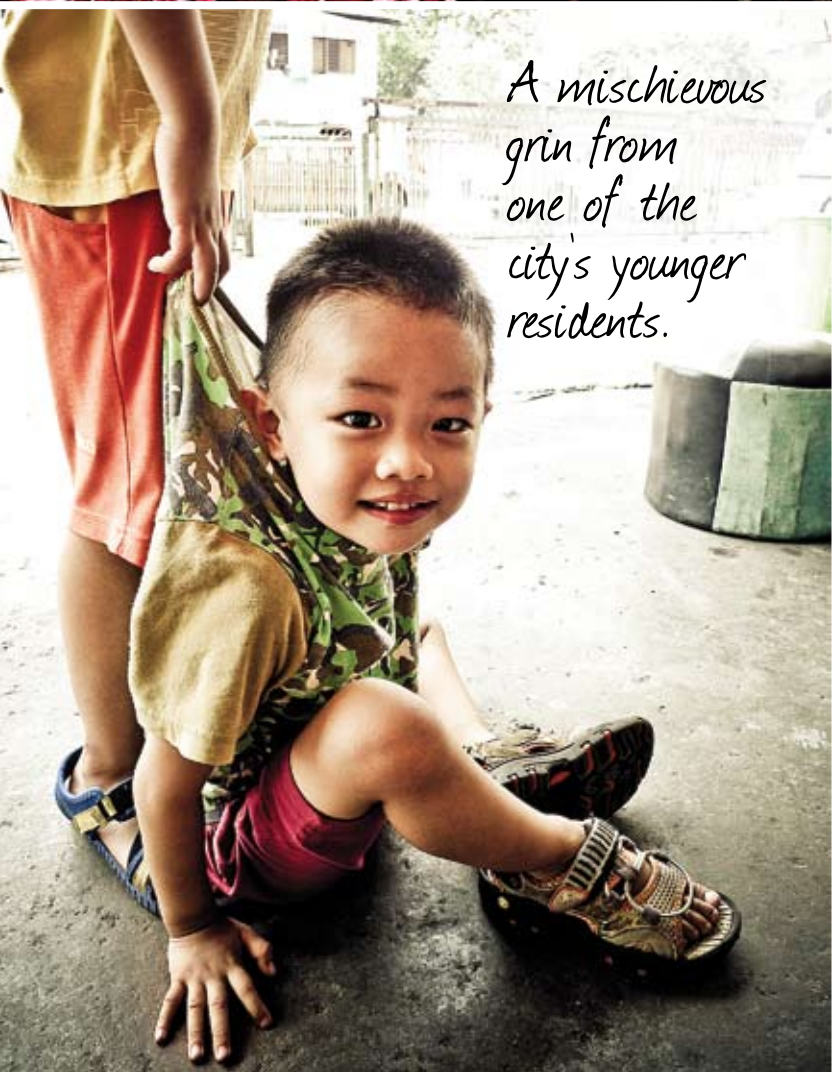


A scene from one of the city's coffee shops.

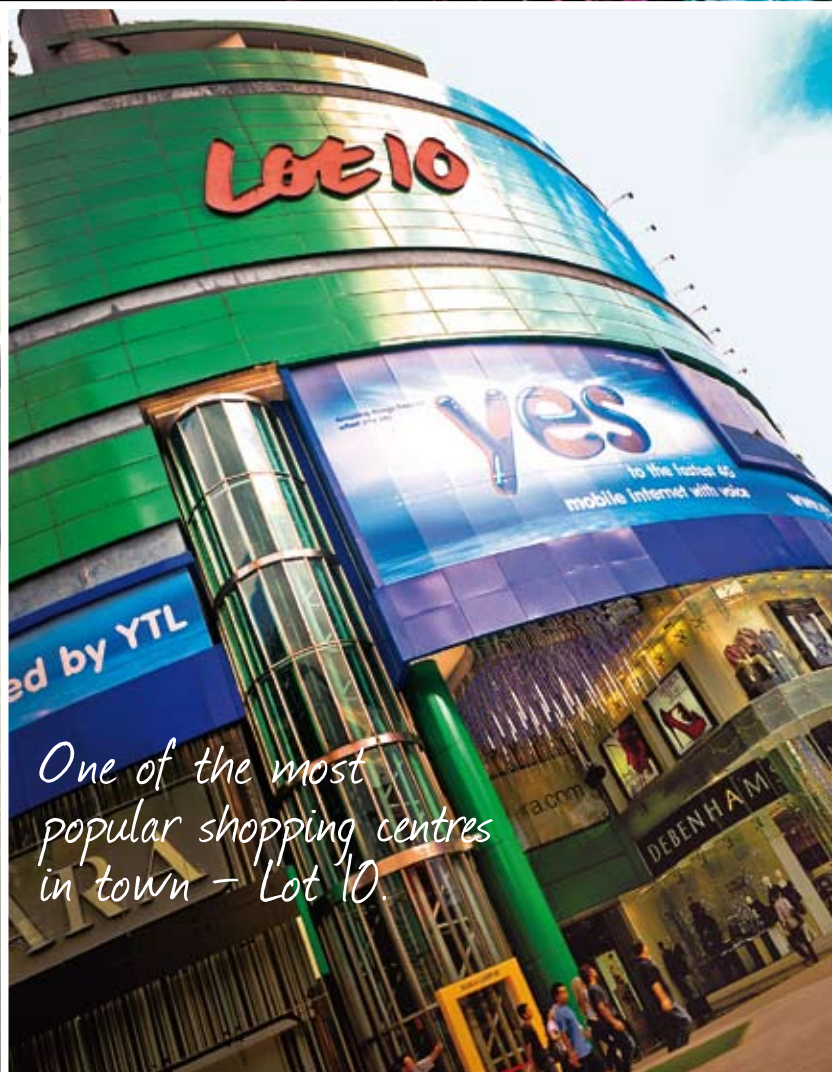




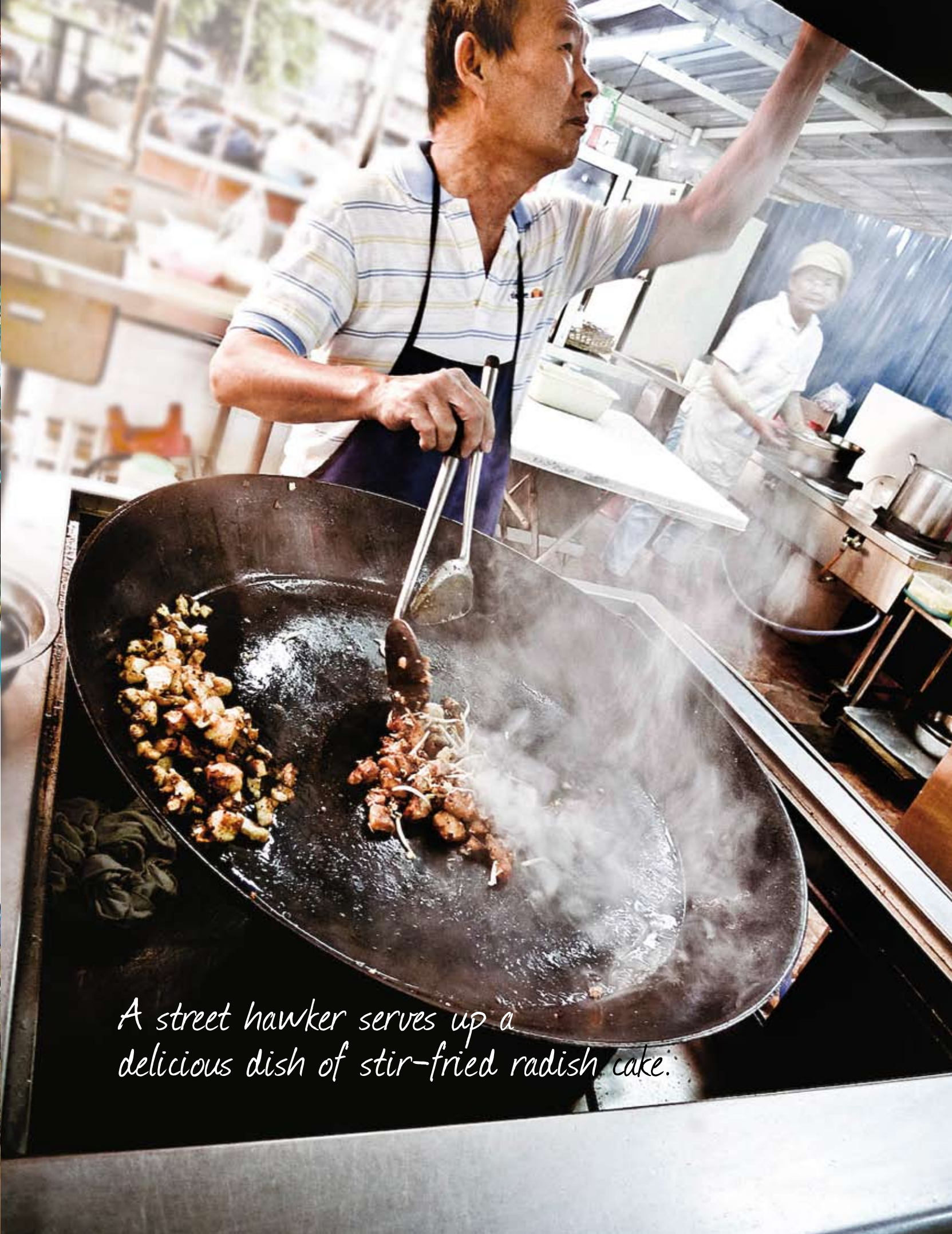
*Brightly hued blooms add liberal blasts of colour along the city's streets.*



*A mischievous grin from one of the city's younger residents.*



*One of the most popular shopping centres in town - Lot 10*



*A street hawker serves up a delicious dish of stir-fried radish cake.*





*The Lai Foong coffee shop is a Kuala Lumpur landmark that serves an array of delicious fare.*



*One of Malaysia's most recognisable icons, the Petronas Twin Towers.*



*A tree-lined city street.*



*Birds of a feather on a concrete ledge.*



*Jalan Alor, an area where one may find delicious local hawker fare.*



*A scene at the city's commercial centre: an ancient doorway where tradition and modernity stand in harmony.*



# Explore The World of YTL Hotels...



## SHOOK! SHANGHAI AT THE SWATCH ART PEACE HOTEL CHINA

(Opening 2011)

Perched on a space of symmetry and proportion, Shook! Shanghai features the skills of four epicurean chefs with four distinct cuisines. A show kitchen – dubbed the ‘Ferrari’ of kitchens, is where its signature dishes are created around the senses. The menu flirts with seasonal trends with whispers of Chinese, Japanese, Southeast Asian and modern Western, yet flexible enough to transport you anywhere your heart and palate desire. Another highlight at Shook! Shanghai is the showcase of the world’s finest wines and champagnes, including rare vintages from 1945 through 2000. Shook! Shanghai also houses The Time Bar and The Swatch Art Peace Hotel Terrace on the roof top overlooking a stunning backdrop of the Pudong skyline.

The Swatch Art Peace Hotel Residences which YTL Hotels will manage opens early 2011.

Tel: +86 (21) 6321 0021

[www.shookrestaurantshanghai.com.cn](http://www.shookrestaurantshanghai.com.cn)



## GREEN LEAF NISEKO VILLAGE HOKKAIDO, JAPAN

Located in the heart of Niseko Village in Hokkaido, the newly unveiled Green Leaf Niseko Village is the premium contemporary resort in Niseko, appealing to guests who want to enjoy a seamless experience of stay, snow and ski. The 200 room ski-in, ski-out resort is perfectly placed for all activities and a variety of dining options including the Lookout Café and the hotel's rooftop bar, Altitude. Alternatively relax in the forested *onsen*, a therapeutic natural volcanic hot spring guaranteed to soak away tension and time.



Tel: +81 (0)136 44 3311

[www.thegreenleafhotel.com](http://www.thegreenleafhotel.com)





portfolio of life //

## THE MAJESTIC MALACCA MALAYSIA

The historic city of Malacca is steeped in a rich tapestry of multicultural influences reflected in its heritage architecture, diverse lifestyles and eclectic cuisine.

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

The Majestic Malacca is an integral part of Malacca's colourful history. The original serene mansion, dating back to the 1920s, remains at the heart of the hotel, whilst a new building has been created, mirroring the original architecture, to house 54 spacious rooms and suites.

From the original porcelain flooring, teakwood fittings, intricate artwork and antiques, to the finely crafted Nyonya cuisine, every aspect echoes the history of the region, and offers a beguiling journey through this enchanting heritage.

Tel: +60 3 2783 1000  
www.majesticmalacca.com



## CAMERON HIGHLANDS RESORT MALAYSIA

Set amidst tea plantations and rolling hills, this tranquil hideaway promises visitors all the splendour, romance and nostalgia of Cameron Highlands' grand colonial heritage.

Cameron Highlands is Malaysia's largest hill resort and is largely unchanged since its colonial heyday, this 'little corner of England in Asia' is still dotted with Tudor-style cottages, a place where scones and afternoon tea will not seem out of place.

The resort with its tall French doors, timber-beamed ceilings, plantation shutters and a fireplace add old-world charm to the surroundings. It also houses a Spa Village as well as an eighteen hole golf course and 56 luxuriously appointed rooms and suites which weave in wondrous colours and textures of Jim Thompson's famous silks.

Tel: +60 3 2783 1000  
www.cameronhighlandsresort.com







## PANGKOR LAUT RESORT MALAYSIA

Pangkor Laut is a privately owned island located three miles off the west coast of Malaysia along the Straits of Malacca. This piece of paradise has been 2 million years in the making, and it is here one finds one of the world's premier award-winning resorts nestling in the shade of forest giants as old as the land.

There are no other resorts – just secluded bays curled around pristine beaches, evening skies woven with colour, and a deep sense of serenity reserved exclusively for guests. A combination of luxury, natural beauty and age-old wilderness woven together to produce an environment where peace and magically memorable moments are the currency.

Of the island's 300 acres, only a fraction has been developed to house the resort and its eight estates. Wooden buildings blend seamlessly with the forest as if nature had been the architect dictating how walls curve around foliage, and roofs open up to allow trees to continue on their journey to the sky.

Tel: +60 3 2783 1000  
[www.pangkorlautresort.com](http://www.pangkorlautresort.com)



## THE ESTATES AT PANGKOR LAUT RESORT MALAYSIA

In a small secluded cove near Pangkor Laut Resort rests the eight wonders that comprise The Estates. Each of these individually crafted enclaves is reminiscent of the traditional south east Asian way of living of days gone by, when an 'estate' was made up of a number of special purpose buildings placed amidst gardens of astounding beauty.

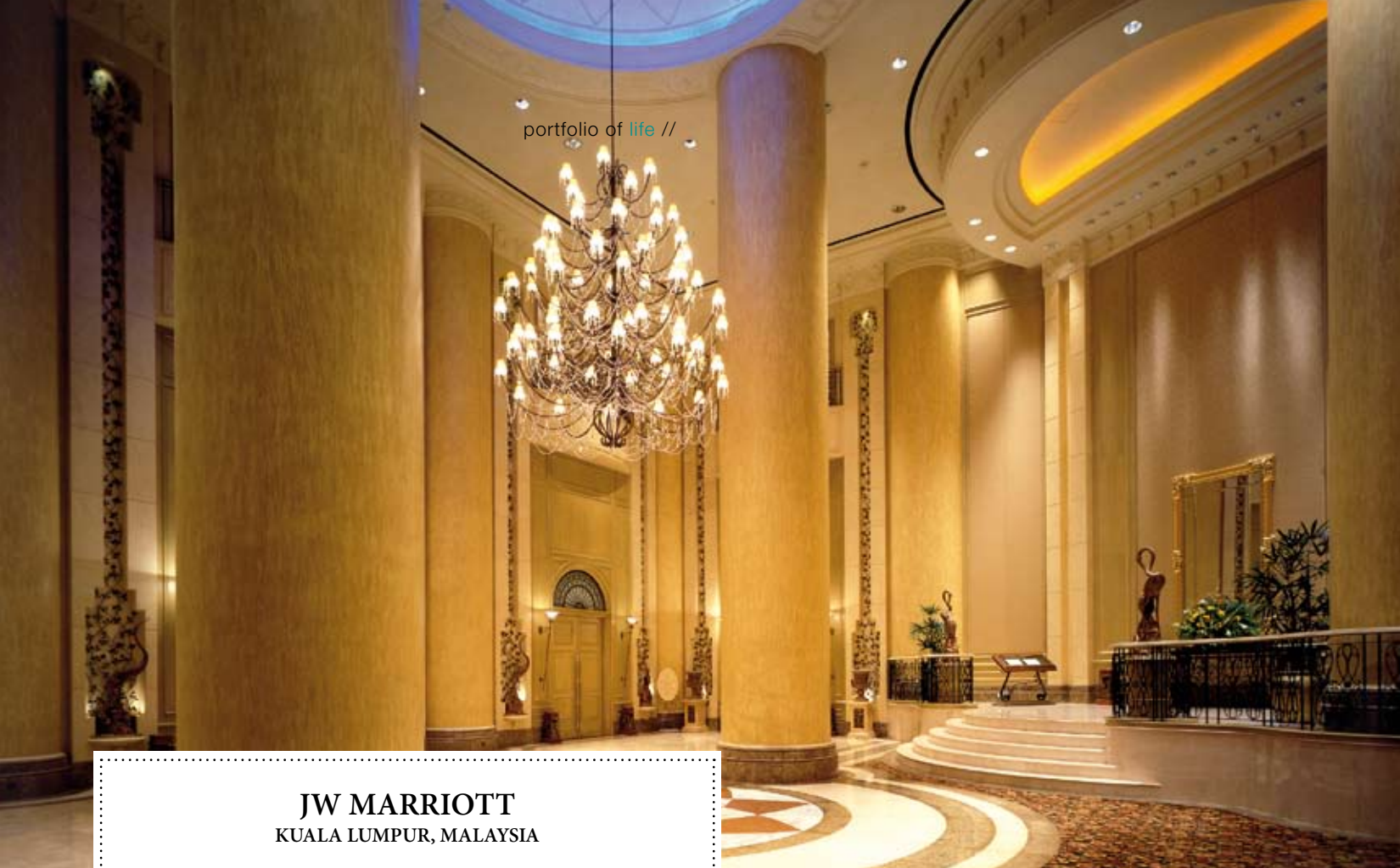
Comprising two, three or four bedrooms, each Estate offers a private infinity-edge pool, as well as pavilions in various adaptations of Malay architectural traditions.

There is also a private vehicle and driver assigned to each Estate should guests decide to leave the seclusion of their villa to dine at one of the resort's restaurants or to go for a treatment at the Spa Village.

Tel: +60 3 2783 1000  
[www.pangkorlautestates.com](http://www.pangkorlautestates.com)







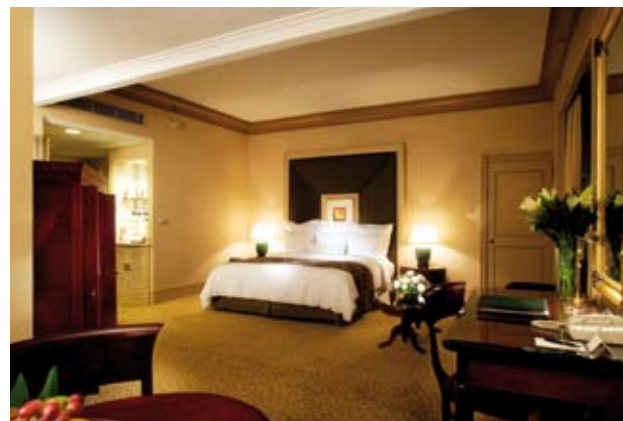
### JW MARRIOTT KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA

Guest rooms at JW Marriott Kuala Lumpur offer the ultimate in comfort and convenience, designed with the discerning business traveller in mind. An ample work area with adjustable desk lighting and ergonomic chair provides a comfortable environment for executives. Desk-mounted electrical outlets, two-line speaker telephones with call-waiting facility, fax modem and voice mail make for easy communication around the world.

Accommodation comprises 561 guest rooms with 294 Deluxe Kings, 172 Deluxe Twins, 25 Executive Deluxe Rooms, 19 Studio Suites, 32 Junior Suites, 2 Executive Studio Suites, 2 Executive Junior Suites, 8 one-bedroom Suites, 3 two-bedroom Suites, 2 VIP Suites, a Chairman's Suite and a luxurious Presidential Suite.

The 29-storey hotel recently opened three new floors comprising mainly suites with contemporary design and luxury fittings. Marriott Marquis Platinum and Gold card members and guests occupying suites enjoy access to the JW Lounge – with its complimentary breakfast, light refreshments and evening cocktails.

Tel: +60 3 2715 9000  
www.marriott.com



### THE RITZ-CARLTON KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA

Discover the exclusive Ritz-Carlton, Kuala Lumpur and experience a place where ancient rivers converge and a modern city beckons guests to explore the sights, sounds and flavours of Malaysia. Located downtown in the Golden Triangle business district, this distinctive five-star luxury hotel in Kuala Lumpur is conveniently accessible to upscale shopping, dining and entertainment. At The Ritz-Carlton, Kuala Lumpur, guests can indulge in soothing spa treatments, delectable cuisine or simply relax in the exceptional comfort of their rooms and take in the best the city has to offer.

The Ritz-Carlton, Kuala Lumpur is the city's first award-winning full-buttler hotel featuring 250 guest rooms including 30 suites. The fresh style of The Ritz-Carlton, Kuala Lumpur is influenced by a variety of themes reflecting Malaysia's diverse artistry of ethnic cultures. The dark toned woods with angular designs reflect masculinity while details like brass inlays add a touch of elegance. Rich earthy tones in the carpet and wall coverings are used to create a cosy, warm home-away-from-home ambience, while hidden modern technologies add a modern yet subtle flair.

Tel: +60 3 2142 8000  
www.ritzcarlton.com







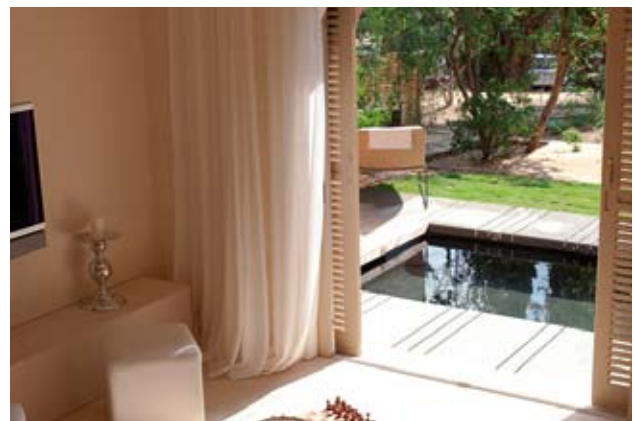
### MUSE HÔTEL DE LUXE FRANCE

Bardot would no doubt approve of Saint-Tropez newcomer, Muse Hôtel De Luxe, just minutes from the Place de Lices by car, situated on the stunning Ramatuelle 'route de plages' road set amongst an ecological landscape of terraced gardens.

Fifteen ultra chic suites (ten featuring private plunge pools) are dedicated to famous muses such as 'Edith', after Edith Piaf, 'Catherine', after Catherine Deneuve and 'Lauren' after Lauren Bacall. Each suite sports a unique interior but all blend seamlessly with cool stone floors and mamorino wall finishes. Thoughtful touches include a 42" Loewe plasma screen with over 100 channels, a PlayStation, iPad and iPhone.

Designed with pure lines, a cool elegant reception area and outdoor water cascades, the hotel is a reflection of architectural simplicity, immediately stamping its original and stylish signature on the Saint-Tropezian landscape.

Tel: +334 94 430 440  
www.muse-hotels.com



### THE SURIN PHUKET, THAILAND

The Surin Phuket offers guests a choice of 108 thatched cottages that sit cosily under a canopy of coconut groves, where landscaped slopes gently descend to meet a private stretch of sandy shore.

The appeal of the spacious 89 one-bedroom and 19 two-bedroom cottages is further enhanced with private verandahs, secluded sun decks, and handcrafted teak floors.

Renowned for its warm island hospitality and rustic serenity, The Surin Phuket also provides spa services, dining venues, meeting facilities and recreational activities. The Surin Phuket – a veritable gateway to a tropical island paradise.



Tel: +60 3 2783 1000  
www.ytlhotels.com





### VILLA TASSANA PHUKET, THAILAND

Set amidst a tropical forest on a craggy cliff overlooking the beautiful emerald green of the Andaman Sea is a gem on the YTL Hotels portfolio of luxury holiday destinations. Located just 15 minutes away from Phuket International Airport on the island's quiet, undeveloped North Western coastline, Villa Tassana offers guests a vacation of modern sophistication married with Thai hospitality.

Spread over a generous 2,800 square metres, the villa features 2 large bedrooms with ensuite bath and dressing areas, a 15 metre swimming pool, separate living and dining pavilions, a kitchen and a maid's room. For those looking to get away from it all, Villa Tassana is staffed by one dedicated attendant and a chef specialising in delicious home-style Thai dishes.

Guests can also enjoy the first-class spa and sports facilities located at the nearby Trisara Hotel. There are three excellent golf courses nearby, including the exclusive Blue Canyon course, and a range of luxury motor yachts available to explore Phuket's many bays, islands and dive locations.

Tel: +60 3 2783 1000



### BRAY HOUSE ENGLAND

An elegant private home dating back to the late 17th century, Bray House has been restored and transformed into an elegant, high design boutique home stay. Featuring an eclectic mix of interiors spanning the Art Deco period of the early 1900s, Bray House is a unique experience of the gentrified English lifestyle complete with bespoke service and intimate atmosphere.

Designer furniture, vintage accessories and vivid splashes of colour create an atmosphere that marries the modern and the classic. Each of the bedrooms has its own theme: a lullaby of white or a symphony of Tuscany red in another. Bray House also features a private courtyard and a natural spring found in the garden.

The idyllic village of Bray, near Windsor, is quintessentially English with its period houses, traditional pubs with beamed ceilings and fireplaces and a beautifully restored church dating back to 1293.

Tel: +44 162 858 3505







### HILTON NISEKO VILLAGE JAPAN

Set at the foot of the Niseko Anupuri Mountain, the Hilton Niseko Village is the perfect base from which to enjoy a huge variety of outdoor activities throughout the year. Ski on powdery slopes during the winter season, and enjoy family-friendly facilities such as the Niseko Ski Village ski school, Niseko Kids ski programme, a luxurious spa, and five restaurants.

There are also two 18-hole championship golf courses nearby (one designed by Arnold Palmer), a tennis complex, an equestrian centre and a unique nature-based activity area called 'PURE' complete with tree-trekking and beginners golf.

Tel: +81 136441111  
[www.niseko-village.com](http://www.niseko-village.com)



### EASTERN & ORIENTAL EXPRESS

The Eastern & Oriental Express is more than a train service: at its maximum length the quarter of a mile in length train is a haven of comfort, style and luxury and the perfect vantage point from which to tour the region. The Restaurant Cars, Saloon Car and Bar Car are located at the centre of the train, while the Observation Car with its open deck area is located at the rear.

The interior walls of the compartments are panelled with cherry wood and elm burr, with decorative marquetry friezes and intricate design inlays. The delicate embroidery work was done in Malaysia, and the bespoke carpets hand-tufted in Thailand. While guests dine at night, the steward transforms the compartment from a living room to a luxurious bedroom.

Chefs onboard the E&O Express are internationally renowned for their tantalising variety of Eastern and European dishes, using the finest fresh seasonal ingredients.

[www.easternandorientalexpress.com](http://www.easternandorientalexpress.com)







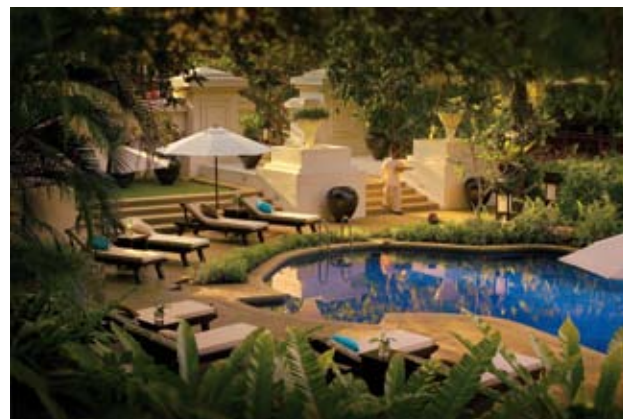
### TANJONG JARA RESORT MALAYSIA

Located on the east coast of peninsular Malaysia, Tanjong Jara Resort is a sanctuary of luxury and well-being steeped in age-old Malay traditions. Designed to reflect the elegance and grandeur of 17th Century Malay palaces, Tanjong Jara is a 99-room resort embodiment of the gentle Malay art of service and hospitality.

The philosophy of the Resort is as unique as the Resort itself. Based on the Malay concept of *Sucimurni*, which emphasises purity of spirit, health and well-being, Tanjong Jara encourages true rejuvenation of both body and spirit.

Tanjong Jara is an opportunity to withdraw from the pressures of this ever-changing world by offering a chance to immerse oneself in a sanctuary of serenity and beauty.

Tel: +60 3 2783 1000  
www.tanjongjararesort.com



### SPA VILLAGE RESORT TEMBOK BALI, INDONESIA

Dawn rises and an indigo curtain of stars is drawn back from the sky, exposing a dramatic landscape of soaring peaks that sweep down across grassy lowlands to the black volcanic sand that kisses the blue of the Bali sea. You are in Spa Village Resort Tembok, Bali and the day has just begun.

Inspired by the award-winning Spa Village Pangkor Laut, Spa Village Resort Tembok Bali embraces the same healing ethos of celebrating the local culture, honouring the ancient remedies of the region and infusing each visit with the essence of the surrounding scenery.

Spa Village Resort Tembok, Bali is a place of peacefulness and calm, combining the therapeutic value of its beautiful location with an ancient and rich cultural heritage. Reflecting the spirituality of ages the environment here is soft and serene; its people go about their days in a caring manner that brings calm to the harried and peace to the stressed; here, at Spa Village Resort Tembok, Bali it is possible to recapture one's sense of self.

Tel: +60 3 2783 1000  
www.spavillage.com





### 1. Spa Village Kuala Lumpur Malaysia

This unique retreat offers the world's most sophisticated therapies integrated with traditional healing practices of the region. Paying tribute to Malaysia's fascinating cultural diversity and rich healing heritage, this most stylish of spas seamlessly blends ancient and modern practices, using natural local ingredients to deliver blissful relaxation and rejuvenation.

### 2. Spa Village Tanjong Jara Malaysia

At Spa Village Tanjong Jara, time-tested health and beauty traditions are revived in the most comforting surrounds. Guests can benefit from a comprehensive programme of therapies created using unique ingredients from indigenous herbs and plants, along with the skills of resident Malay healers.

### 3. Spa Village Malacca Malaysia

The Spa Village Malacca is the world's only spa to base its therapies on the healing heritage of the Baba-Nyonya or Peranakan culture – a unique combination of Chinese and Malay influences. The spa is spread across the first two floors of the new wing and provides a serene environment in which one can rest, recuperate and rejuvenate in the care of some of the world's best therapists.

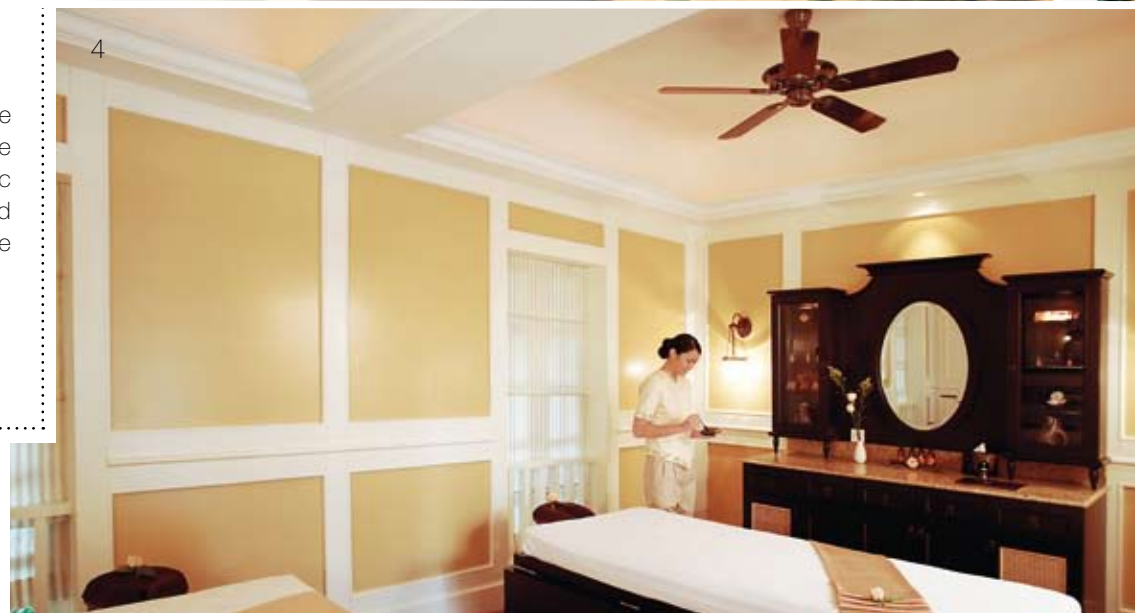
### 4. Spa Village Cameron Highlands Malaysia

Cameron Highlands Resort features the third wellness centre of the award-winning Spa Village brand with a wide range of sophisticated treatments and healing therapies inspired by the restorative properties of tea. Each guest luxuriates in a signature tea bath before every treatment. Cameron Highlands Spa Village offers tranquil indoor and outdoor treatment rooms, tea bath rooms and a fully-equipped gymnasium.

### 5. Spa Village Pangkor Laut Malaysia

The Spa Village at Pangkor Laut Resort is a unique ultra-exclusive retreat that extols the healing cultures of Malaysia's diverse history of people and cultures and vast abundance of exotic natural resources. The abundance of Malay, Chinese, Indian and Thai practices make this the ideal tranquil setting for complete rejuvenation of body and soul.

Tel: +60 3 2783 1000  
[www.spavillage.com](http://www.spavillage.com)







portfolio of life //

**FEAST VILLAGE**  
KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA

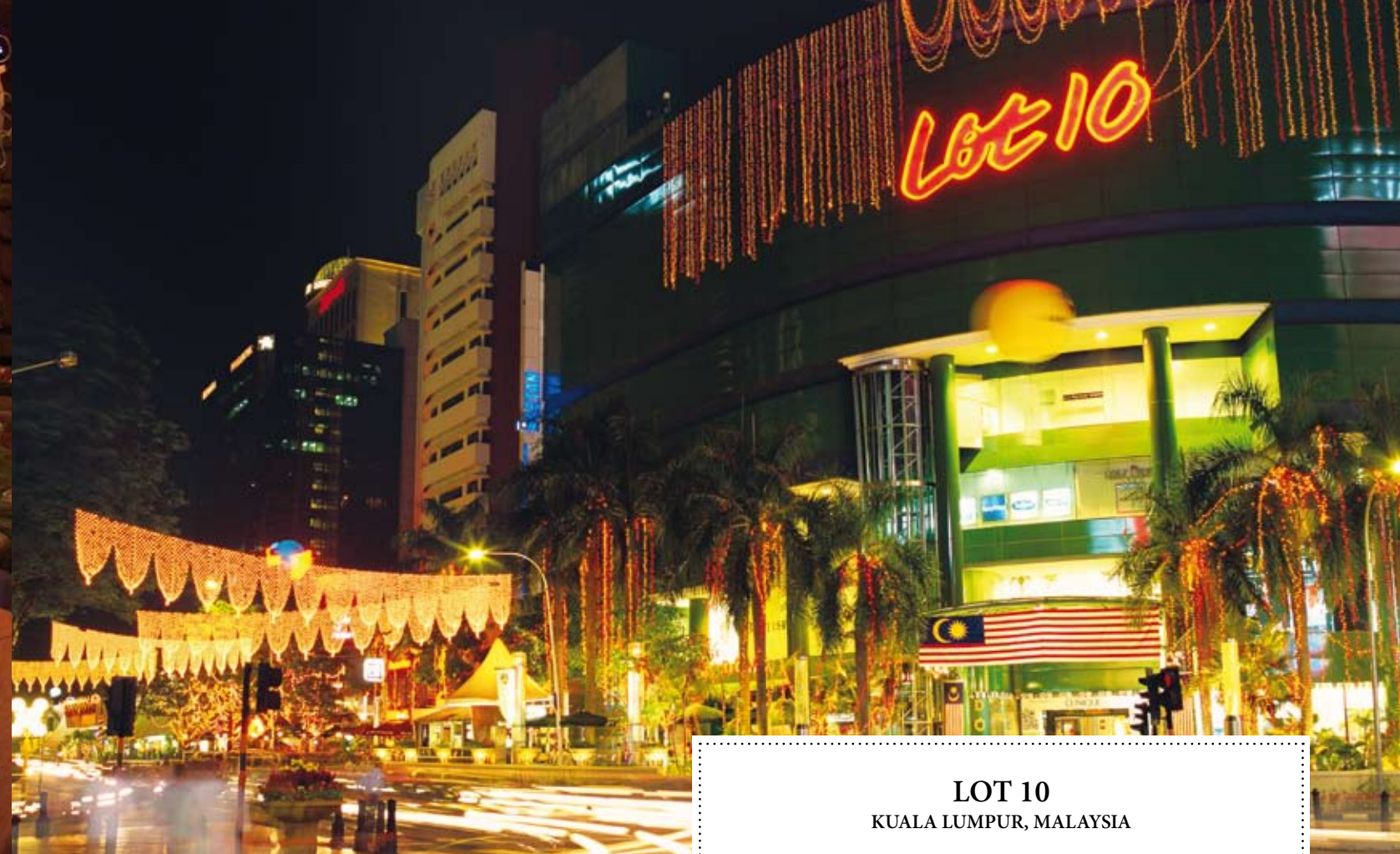
Feast till your heart is content in our Feast Village, a dramatic, stylish dining haven with a village charm. Here, you will find 11 uniquely designed restaurants serving a mix of world-class cuisine and providing a display of culinary skill embodied in a chic and contemporary atmosphere.

Restaurants and bars at Feast Village include Fisherman's Cove, Luk Yu Tea House, Pak Loh Chiu Chow, Tarbush, Sentidos Tapas, Shook!, Jake's Charbroil Steak, Vansh, KoRyo Won, Enak, My Thai and Village Bar.

The design of Feast Village is inspired by nature. Walls are asymmetrical and serve not to separate, but rather to provide peace enclaves where people may relax.

Rice paper from Japan combines with slate and ikat from Indonesia, granite from China, silk from Thailand, and timber on Myanmar to create the essence of Asia from a design perspective, making Feast Village truly one-of-a-kind.

Tel: +60 3 2782 3855  
www.starhillgallery.com



**LOT 10**  
KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA

An iconic architectural landmark since the 1990s, the shopping and lifestyle destination, Lot 10, has undergone significant renovation from its basement to its rooftop bringing in a new age of modern style.

The Forest in The City theme is immediately apparent in the inspiring drama of the rooftop of Lot 10. Mature trees of dappled barks and emerging foliage rise above manicured shrubs to greet guests with a refreshing welcome of abundant green.

A dramatic landscape that emulates towering cliffs of overhanging ferns and flora, and a variety of tropical plants against the skies of Kuala Lumpur serve as the stunning backdrop for a unique host of urban lifestyle pursuits and experiences that are exclusive only to Lot 10 at the rooftop.

www.lot10.com.my





# Delta Rising

Singer, songwriter, pianist and former actress of the hit television series *Neighbours*, Delta Goodrem is the latest Antipodean sensation to create a phenomenal impact in the international entertainment scene. Her 2003 album *Innocent Eyes* sold a million copies in Australia and three and a half million copies internationally. YTL *Life* talks exclusively with this performer who sang along side Andrea Bocelli at YTL's *Concert of Celebration* in Singapore and *A Journey Through Time* event in Kuala Lumpur.

**An indulgence I would never resist is...** chocolate.

**My favourite room is...** my piano room [in Los Angeles]. It has wonderful acoustics. I can play and look out at the beautiful lights over the city outside.

**The book(s) on my bedside table are...** normally notebooks where I write my thoughts and ideas for songs.

**My favourite way to relax is...** playing music, lighting candles and just having some 'alone' time.

**In my fridge you will always find...** Vegemite.

**Style is...** individual. It is a quality I'd like to think everyone has!

**My playlist includes...** lots of old songs and current top 40 hits... anything from Fleetwood Mac to Jewel to Jay-Z and Justin Timberlake.

**The most memorable place I have travelled to recently...** is Bali, which always holds a special place in my heart. It's where Brian [McFadden] and I were engaged and there is something very magical about that place.

**The people who have inspired me the most...**

many different people I have met throughout my life. They range from nurses at hospital when I was sick, to my parents, to friends and Olivia Newton-John. I have always been inspired by her talent and what a beautiful incredible person she is.

**What makes me smile...** kindness and being surrounded by those whom I love.

**The projects I am currently working on are...**

I'm writing my new album and working on some charity projects such as my work for the Delta Goodrem Foundation and the Saint Vincent Hospice in Australia where I received care while recovering from cancer.

**A lasting memory from my childhood is...**

wonderful Christmas holidays with my family and my friends.

**When life doesn't go my way I...** remind myself that we are not always in control of our destiny.

**If I wasn't doing what I am doing now, I would be...** an actress or a professional snow skier.