

YTL

Life

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HISTORY ABOUNDS

London's heritage and legacy comes to life at The Threadneedles Hotel

NATURAL SPLENDOURS

Immerse in the beauty of Hokkaido at Niseko Village

TREASURED MEMORIES

How The Majestic Hotel Kuala Lumpur can help you create unforgettable wedding events



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A woman with long dark hair is sleeping peacefully in a business class airplane seat. She is covered with a light blue quilted blanket. The seat is wide and comfortable, with a white pillow behind her head. The cabin interior is visible, showing the seat's controls and a small screen.

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A NOTE FROM TAN SRI (SIR) FRANCIS YEOH



Welcome to YTL Life, where treasured places give birth to treasured moments. In this issue, we first bring you to Threadneedles, our five-star boutique hotel in London and a member of Marriott's Autograph Collection. We invite you to partake in the quintessential English afternoon tea as you luxuriate in our spanking new leather sofas, under the lobby's iconic stained-glass dome built in the time of Queen Victoria.

Then, step out to the city's Square Mile, teeming with eight centuries' worth of stories, from guilds and imperial wealth to the inspirational landmarks birthed from the mind of Sir Christopher Wren following the Great Fire of London.

Three hours west of the city on the M4 takes you to The Gainsborough Bath Spa. Come next year, on the 250th anniversary of Jane Austen's birth, the hotel will toast to one of English literature's most beloved authors through a series of events, including guided tours of the many locations featured in her enchanting novels, dance and embroidery workshops, expert talks, high teas, and celebratory dinners across certain dates in spring and autumn.

In the pages ahead, be regaled by imagery of swimming with turtles at Tanjong Jara Resort, indulging in a New Yorker-themed afternoon tea at The Alchemy, traipsing through gentrified streets of inner Kuala Lumpur around Hotel Stripes and revisiting healing traditions of the Malaccan Straits Chinese at The Majestic Malacca.

Find out how to make the most of your days in Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne and Perth, enjoy the vestiges of summer atop the dramatic garden roof at The Glasshouse in Edinburgh, and savour the changing of seasons in Niseko Village, as the trees and sky embrace the coming of autumn and its kaleidoscope of colours.

Enjoy this issue and stay tuned for our next edition – where we celebrate that crazy little thing called love with destination wedding ideas and honeymoon escapes at our hotels and resorts the world over.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Francis', written over a long, thin horizontal line that extends across the width of the signature.



THE CHALLENGE CONTINUES

THE CHAPMAN'S CHALLENGE RETURNED FOR
THE SIXTH TIME AND WELCOMED TWO NEW WINNERS.

Words by PATRICK LOH · Photos by ANNA-RINA

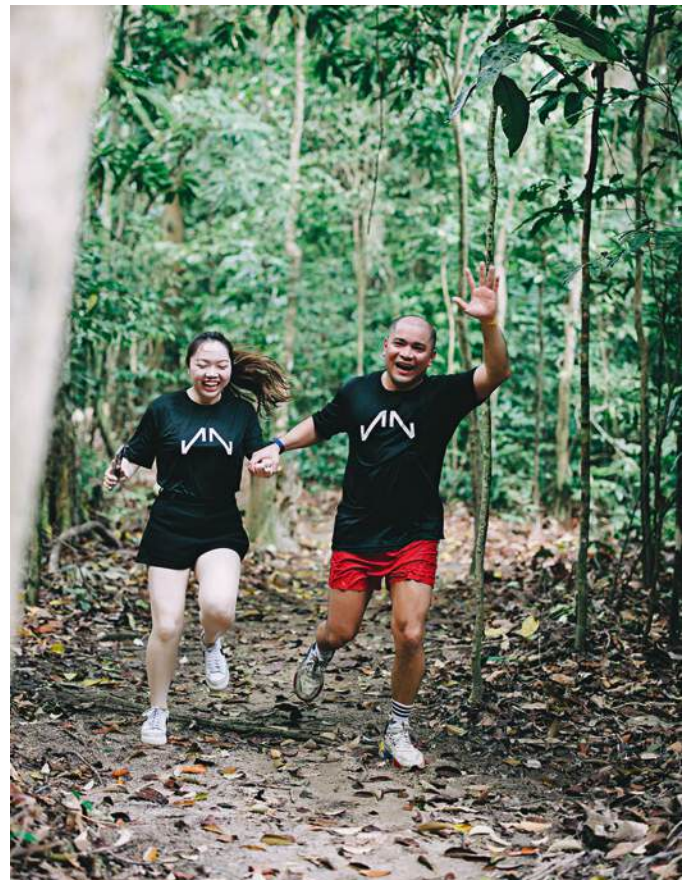


The 2024 edition of the Chapman's Challenge at Pangkor Laut Resort welcomed back the Chapman family and featured a special appearance by Andrew Reid, from the renowned Australian series *Bondi Rescue*. He was invited by YTL Hotels to set a promising path for all the participants and, as expected, the debutante was the first to cross the finish line as a guest. "The roads were unexpectedly steep and challenging, but the breathtaking view made it a little easier," he said.

All participants took on a thrilling 3.8km uphill road run, an exciting 2.4km jungle trek through the two-million-year-old rainforest, and an exhilarating 1km swim in the waters of Emerald Bay. Norqain – together with its official retailer, Sincere Fine Watches – returned as the official timekeeper, offering two luxury sports watches for the winners of the men's and women's categories.

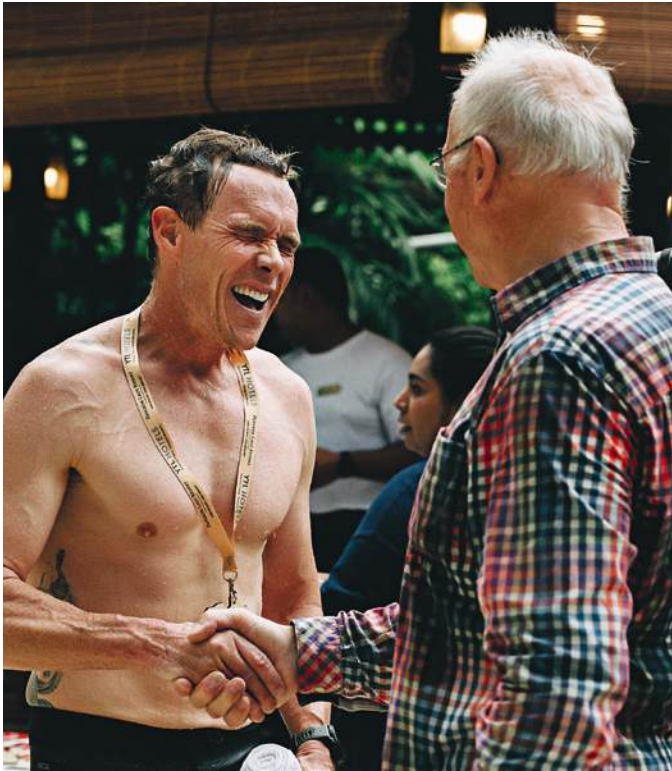
A NEW WINNER

This sixth edition of the challenge also saw new winners: Matt Buckley in the men's category and Claire Louise Jedrek in the women's. Buckley claimed the top prize after exactly an hour of race time. "The route was tough, especially the uphill road run, but I'd like to double the distance," Buckley joked as he walked away with a Norqain Adventure Sport watch valued at RM11,200, as well as a three-day, two-night stay at The



Top: Chapman's Challenge participants crossing the finish line. Above: Chong Yi Wen (left) and Oscar Foo of Sincere Fine Watches also participated in this year's Chapman's Challenge.

EVENTS



Clockwise from above: Andrew Reid of Bondi Rescue (left) shares a handshake with Christopher Spencer Chapman; the Norqain Adventure Sport watch (RM11,200) was the main prize this year; Geraldine Dreiser, Vice President of Marketing and Communications of YTL Hotels, and her three children; creating lifelong memories at Pangkor Laut Resort.





Matt Buckley and Claire Louise Jedrek (centre) with their prizes, as well as and Christopher Spencer Chapman (third from right) and Geraldine Dreiser (far right) during the prize-giving ceremony.

Ritz-Carlton, Koh Samui. Jedrek wasn't too far behind with a recorded time of one hour and 11 minutes, and went home with the same prizes.

The prize-giving ceremony was held over a beach barbecue dinner at Emerald Bay, presented by YTL Hotels, Norqain watches and, of course, Christopher Spencer Chapman.

A FAMILY REUNION

Christopher, the youngest son of Colonel Frederick Spencer Chapman, would like to see a "slightly more challenging route" in the coming years. However, his purpose at Pangkor Laut Resort this year was a little different. "In England, I live a distance away from my children, Stephen and Hazel," he said. "We barely meet, so this trip is like a small family reunion." The three was spotted enjoying their time at the resort before Stephen prepared for the race.

It was no surprise that Stephen made it to the top five with impeccable results, upholding his family's legacy. "It would be great to have a longer route for the swimming portion," he said. "Perhaps another run after the swim and finish the race with another swim." Besides his love for the outdoor challenges, he was enjoying some quality time with his sister, Hazel.

Hazel was once an active sportswoman and had participated in previous editions of the Chapman's Challenge.

Unfortunately, she had to sit this one out to recover from a motorcycle accident injury. "After two years, I finally found a doctor who could perform surgery on my leg. I hope I can be up and running again by next year." At Pangkor Laur Resort, she was happy to be soaking up the Southeast Asian heat, while anticipating the turtle release segment of this event.

A SECOND CHANCE FOR THE MARINE LIVES

The Nature Conservation Centre, an initiative by YTL Hotels, oversees the livelihood of marine animals around Pangkor Laut. Headed by Justin Juhun and his team of marine biologists, the centre nursed three Hawksbill sea turtles back to health for release as part of the event. "We are always looking out for marine animals that need our medical help," said Juhun, who is determined to prevent sea turtles from facing extinction.

As Christopher puts it, the Chapman's Challenge is not just a race, but a get-together for families, an event to build friendships and to give hope to marine lives. "It's everything my father would have wanted."

For more information, visit www.pangkorlautresort.com



The Threadneedles Hotel's breathtaking Dome Lounge.



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HERE FOR YOUR NEXT LONDON HOLIDAY.

Words by JUNE MONG-LOFTIN

Threadneedles

The Threadneedles Hotel is a Classical building made of Portland stone and was originally built in 1856, as can be seen on its facade.

LIFE ON THE COVER

If the Bank of England is nicknamed 'the old lady of Threadneedles', then the elegant Threadneedles Hotel in the City of London is the charming rake who chats her up any chance he gets. This Autograph Collection property is a well-kept secret that seasoned travellers to London keep close to their chests. It is strategically located in the Square Mile, which plays a part in the city's 800 years of imperial wealth, financial scandals and audacious frauds, and is still the heartbeat of banking power today. Threadneedles Hotel's provenance also has links to the Merchant Taylors' Guild, one of the 12 great livery companies of the City of London from the Middle Ages.

This Classical building of Portland stone was built in 1856 for The City Bank branch in London, and a reminder of this can still be seen in two places in the hotel today: the logo on the stained-glass dome over the spacious lobby and the ornate stone crest of The City Bank above the unusual circular front doors of the former Victorian bank.

The famous glass-domed lobby adjacent to the hotel bar is a great place to meet up with friends, have a pre-dinner aperitif or impress a client. The lobby has been re-fitted with floor-to-ceiling bookshelves and leather sofas to give the space the grand but intimate atmosphere of a successful Victorian bank. Opposite the hotel lifts is a History Board with black-and-white photographs from the London Picture



The lounge of the Penthouse suite at The Threadneedles Hotel.

LIFE ON THE COVER

Archive that shows how the 19th-century bank tellers' counters were arranged in a row underneath the glass dome. The board also recounts the story of an American conman, Austin Bidwell, and his four accomplices, who got rich by selling fake Bank of England bills of exchange until they were caught and arrested in 1873. The gang of fraudsters were aptly called the Thieves of Threadneedles Street.

There is a lot to recommend staying in possibly the richest square mile in the world. It is populated during the working week with financiers and lawyers, and buzzing with the pulse of global finance. In addition, the five-star property offers an accessible guest room on the ground floor with a separate ramped entrance. And if this sort of trivia interests you, this guest room is just around the corner from the former Victorian vault of The City Bank. Spread across different floors and wings are eight luxury suites, each named after famous explorers such as Ernest Shackleton, David Livingstone and Edmund Hillary, and come complete with a little information about each of them and their adventures in the suites.



This spread: The Threadneedles Hotel is always a London favourite, thanks to its central location and proximity to the Royal Exchange.

LIFE ON THE COVER



LIFE ON THE COVER

Afternoon tea at The Threadneedles Hotel is always a delight.



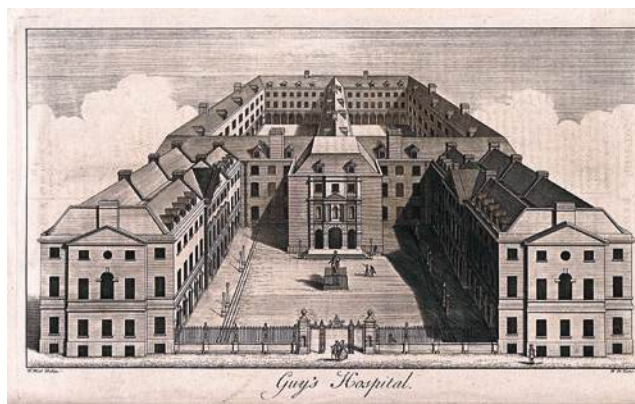
The entire fifth floor of the hotel can be converted into a 125-square-meter penthouse, accessed by private lift.



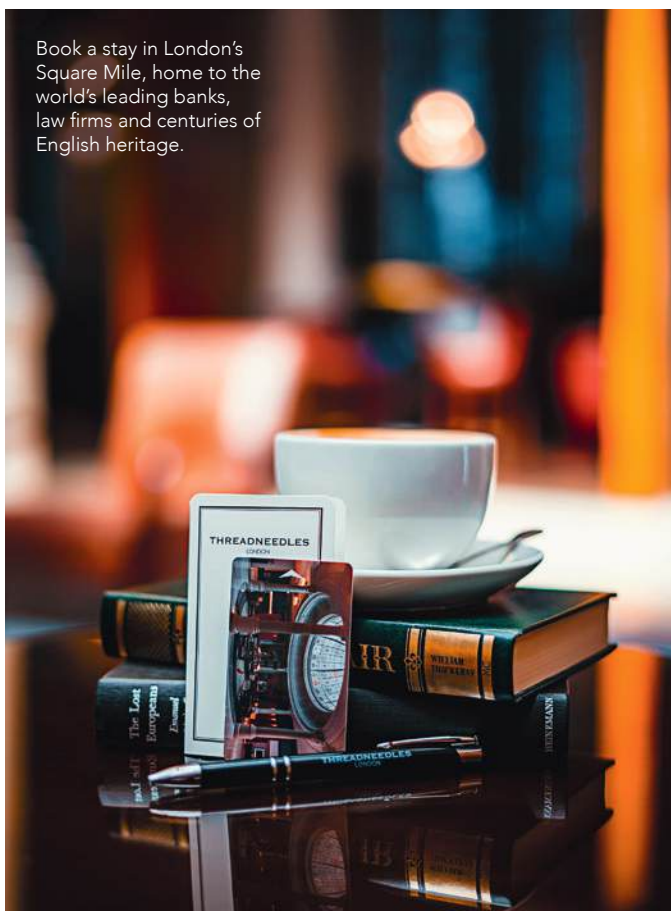


SPARE CHANGE ANYONE?

A five-minute walk from Threadneedles Hotel is the narrow and winding Change Alley, which, in the 1700s, housed the first London stock market. It's impressive, but true, that London already had an active stock market 300 years ago; but it didn't trade under the roof of a grand establishment. Shares were traded, believe it or not, in a handful of London alleyways like Change Alley and coffeehouses. This was because stockjobbers, who acted as dealers for stocks, were judged to be too rude and rowdy for the Royal Exchange.



Change Alley (sometimes referred to as Exchange Alley EC3) was also home to a number of coffeehouses where stock prices were posted and where traders bought and sold their shares. Today, there is still a plaque to mark the location of one of the more famous ones, Garraway's Coffee-House. This coffee establishment was opened by a bookshop owner called Thomas Guy, who grew so wealthy from his stocks and shares that he also built Guy's Hospital, which still stands today near London Bridge.



Book a stay in London's Square Mile, home to the world's leading banks, law firms and centuries of English heritage.

The entire fifth floor can be booked as a Penthouse accommodation, offering you the privilege of private lift access, two Deluxe Rooms, two Suites, and a full-length balcony on which to enjoy pre-dinner drinks at sunset. The Penthouse has a spectacular view of the London skyline of buildings, ranging from 17th-century Christopher Wren churches to 21st-century skyscrapers that locals affectionately call the 'Gherkin' and the 'Walkie-Talkie'.

The hotel's location is right in the heady mix of the Royal Exchange and the Bank of England, as well as former offices of the East India Company. You'll have no doubt that you're staying in what was once the heart of Empire. In fact, some of the guest rooms in the Executive category were once the offices of The City Bank's senior executives, and have grand features such as heavy-panelled mahogany doors and marble fireplaces. Some of the Executive Rooms have floor-to-ceiling windows, while others are smaller, with views over pretty Finch Lane that run between Threadneedle Street and Cornhill, home of luxury boutiques and specialty coffee bars.

The hotel is an ideal base for shopping, as the Royal Exchange nearby is home to many luxury brands, while the historic Leadenhall (film location of Diagon Alley in the Harry Potter movie franchise) and Spitalfields markets are a pleasant 20-minute stroll away.

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



MAJESTIC MOMENTS

WITH FOUR WONDERFUL SPACES TO CHOOSE FROM, DISHES THAT WILL DELIGHT YOUR GUESTS AND MORE, THE MAJESTIC HOTEL KUALA LUMPUR WILL HELP YOU TO CREATE UNFORGETTABLE MEMORIES FOR YOU AND YOUR LOVED ONES.

Words by ALICIA CORBETT



LIFE FEATURE

Choosing a wedding venue is one of the most important decisions you'll have to make for your special day, and The Majestic Hotel Kuala Lumpur offers you a chance to exchange your vows in a magnificent space of timeless glamour. Few venues in the nation's capital evoke a sense of opulence and elegance quite like this luxury five-star hotel with a legacy spanning nearly one century. Back in the day, the hotel was favoured by the colonial elite and prominent visitors, and it continues to be a preferred location for the *crème de la crème*.

Constructed in a hybrid of Neoclassical and Art Deco styles, its main building is characterised by tall, white, classically proportioned Roman columns and detailed cornices. Correspondingly, a curved driveway and covered porte cochere emanate a sense of grandeur as guests pull up to the lobby.

The hotel has several spaces to bring your dream nuptials to life – be it large or small, intimate or grand. This includes the Majestic Ballroom, which boasts one of the largest pillarless function spaces in the city. The space is a realm of absolute luxury, with dazzling hand-cut crystal chandeliers suspended from the high ornate ceiling, plush carpeting and a custom built-in stage for the proceedings. This is accompanied by three state-of-the-art LED screens, combined with stage lighting, to create a dreamy wedding atmosphere with unlimited content possibilities or to display meaningful moments, all in high-definition.

For those looking for a distinctive space for a small party, The Orchid Conservatory will add a touch of floral magic to your nuptials. The only one of its kind in the country, this lush area showcases a hanging garden and an orchidscape within a glass atrium. Here, thousands of stunning large-petaled phalaenopsis orchids in bloom create an enchanting backdrop – perfect for unforgettable wedding photos.

Another enthralling and cosy space is The Canopy, which provides an abundance of natural daylight or a stunning view of the historical mile of the city by nightfall. Its interiors of cream tones and fluted glass are similarly inspired by Art Deco like the building's exterior.

Steps away, hidden near the hotel's pool, is The Roof Garden, a gem of an outdoor terrace with its surrounding beautifully manicured landscape. For those favouring romantic outdoor settings, host your reception for 30 to 100 guests at the covered gazebo, with the sunset creating a glorious atmosphere.

Another vital element of the event is, of course, the food. A gastronomic experience featuring a diverse culinary offering is on offer, with options including an exquisite Western-style menu, a lavish Chinese feast and a sumptuous Malay banquet.

Besides the magical venue choices, the in-house florists at The Majestic Kuala Lumpur will transform your festivities with glorious floral creations. For everything from guest tables to bridal bouquets and installations, colourful blooms will add visual intrigue to your big day.

To look your best before you walk down the aisle, indulge in ultimate pampering treatments, such as a Cellular Firming Facial, body scrubs and more, at The Majestic Spa.

After a busy day of saying "I do", head upstairs for a time of relaxation at one of the 47 suites of The Majestic Wing, which exudes old-world elegance, or the comfortable 253 guestrooms and suites, decked with dark marble and polished chrome, at The Tower Wing.

With a professional staff team that will ensure that every detail is meticulously managed, The Majestic Hotel Kuala Lumpur is the ultimate address to celebrate the start of your life together.

For more information, visit www.majestickl.com



Left: The Roof Garden.

Facing page: The Orchid Conservatory.

Previous spread: The Canopy.



ARIAS IN PARADISE

THE SECOND EDITION OF OPERA IN PARADISE
INTRODUCES A HOST OF NEW NAMES AND
RETURNING FAVOURITE ANDREA GRIMINELLI.

Words by KENNETH TAN Photos by JZUNG THE PHOTOZ AND YTL HOTELS



From 18 to 20 October 2024, the hotly anticipated Opera in Paradise returns for its second edition, buoyed by the sold-out crowd and magnificent reception for its inaugural edition last year. This year, the roster of artistes includes returning musical director and flautist Andrea Griminelli, along with multi-album mezzo-soprano Laura Wright, award-winning soprano Cathy-Di Zhang, and celebrated tenor John Longmuir, who has performed more than 500 times for Opera Australia.

At last year's Opera in Paradise, musical director Andrea Griminelli remembers his very first trip to Pangkor Laut Resort back in 1994, when he travelled there as part of the musician ensemble to the late Luciano Pavarotti. At the time, when asked on his first encounter with the private island resort of Pangkor Laut Resort, Pavarotti, one of the legendary Three Tenors, exclaimed: "This place is enchanting, it is paradise here. This morning when I woke up, I went out and I was really moved, almost crying to see how beautiful things has been done by God – because this is really paradise."

In the intervening years, Griminelli would continue visiting Pangkor Laut Resort on his sojourns into Asia. "I came again in 2002 with Pavarotti when he inaugurated the spa, and I've probably been here between eight and 10 times." So, when the idea for Opera in Paradise was conceived, Griminelli remembers wondering what it would be like, being the

musical director of an opera set within a tropical island instead of a concert hall. "It was an honour when I was asked because of the relationship I enjoy with the YTL family," he says.

Dato' Mark Yeoh, YTL Corporation's Executive Director, remembers being in Modena – the birthplace of Pavarotti – and reflecting on his own family's memories of Pavarotti. "We used to visit Luciano there. And, of course, I called Andrea to become the music director for Opera in Paradise."

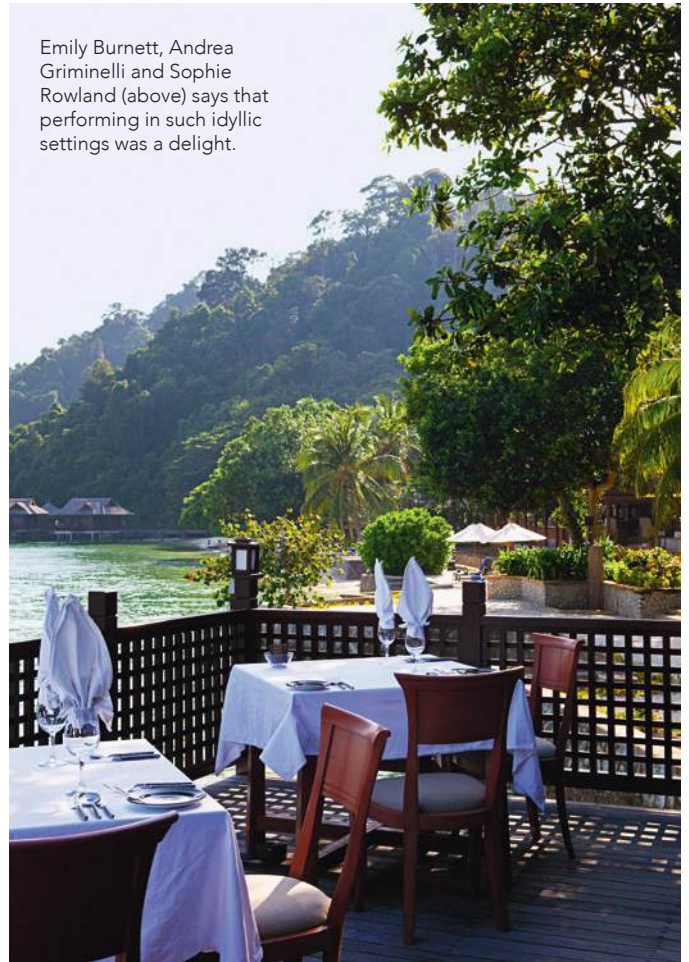
Thus Opera in Paradise – a tribute to Pavarotti and also intended to benefit Hospis Malaysia – made perfect sense to Griminelli. "God gives us talents and we have to give back," he says, "and to remember Pavarotti as well at this island resort that is rich with his legacy." (The resort's highest-tier accommodation is named The Pavarotti Suite.)

Having worked with him at more than 200 concerts around the world, Griminelli likens Pavarotti to a father. "I remember him asking me, when I was a young musician, to join him for a concert – I was just studying in Paris then." To many, Pavarotti was a myth. Griminelli, however, possesses an enduring memory of the maestro's great generosity. "He loved a lot of people and was always generous with his advice. He even ordered a gold flute for me."

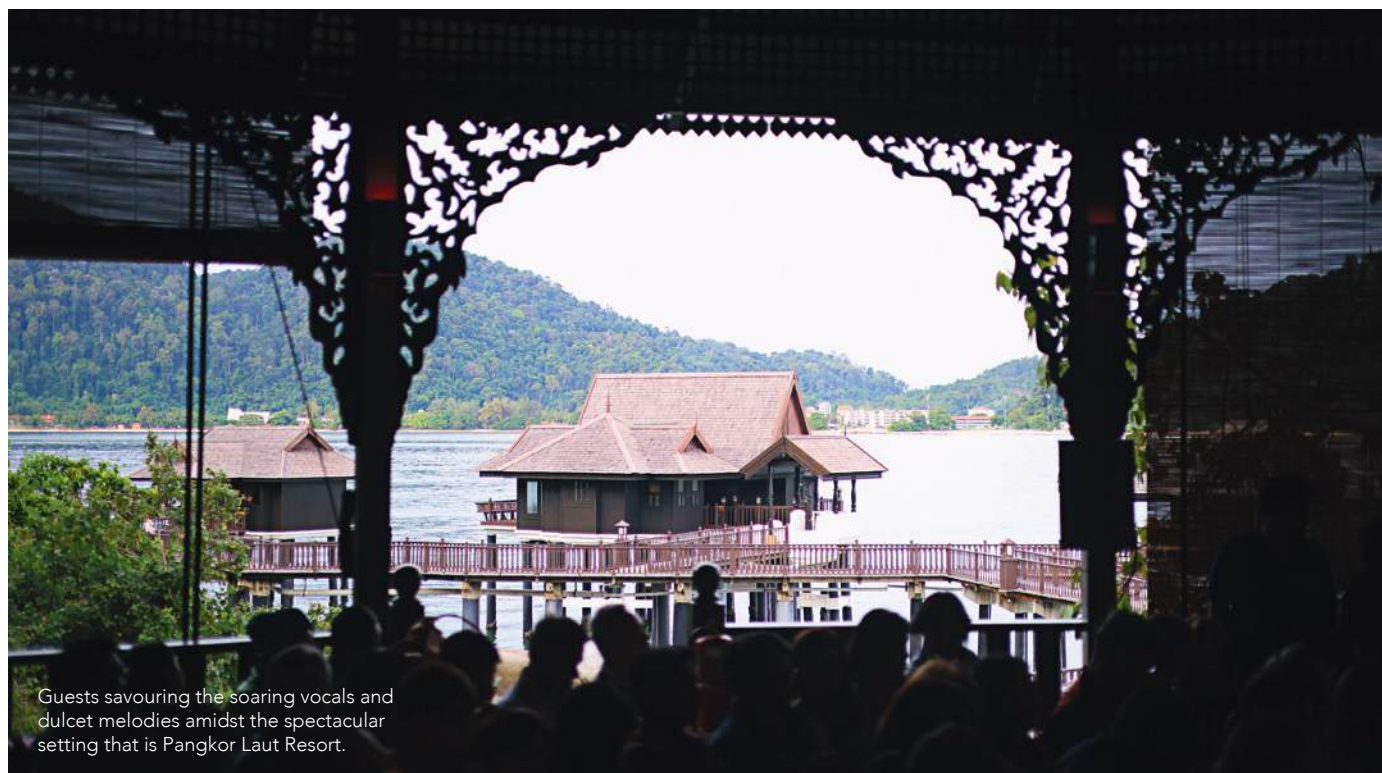
It's no wonder, then, that the wheels quickly whirred into motion for the inaugural edition of Opera in Paradise. Thanks to Griminelli's global renown, he was able to assemble a star lineup comprising American tenor Michael Austin, who is



Opera In Paradise began in the Samudera gazebo in Pangkor Laut Resort.



Emily Burnett, Andrea Griminelli and Sophie Rowland (above) says that performing in such idyllic settings was a delight.



Guests savouring the soaring vocals and dulcet melodies amidst the spectacular setting that is Pangkor Laut Resort.

known for his starring role in Verdi's *Othello*, as well as Belle Voci (Italian for 'beautiful voices'), a soprano duo from the UK who featured on the live finals of *The Voice UK* and also performed at the 2019 FA Cup Final at Wembley Stadium.

Emily Burnett and Sophie Rowland, who make up Belle Voci, comments: "It's just bizarre that our voices brought us somewhere as idyllic as this – we just can't stop smiling." During soundcheck, Burnett and Rowland observed that amid the melody of string quintet and the piano, the rhythmic waves added 'another level' to their performance that they couldn't believe.

Austin, whose his life-long career began as a five-year-old singing in church, describes his first-ever visit to Pangkor Laut Resort in much the same way as Pavarotti did. "You see a paradise when looking at the beautiful waters, the greenery and the people here, who are so nice." The tenor, who fancies a game of golf or chess in between work, says the greatest gift that music has given him is humility. "If you really study the literature of all the composers, and really understand it, it makes you a better human being. These were brilliant people and they knew what they were doing – and I'm thankful every day for the lessons that we are still learning through their music, especially given the state of the world today."

Throughout the Opera in Paradise programme, guests enjoyed the many charms of Pangkor Laut Resort, from a 'Pasar Malam Night' welcome dinner, which recalls the flavours and aromas of nearby Ipoh city's street food scene, to scenic cocktails at Fisherman's Cove, overlooking the Strait of Malacca.

At Samudera, the resort's al fresco gazebo, and against a rock face, the inaugural Opera in Paradise went into full

swing with Griminelli launching into a repertoire of Bizet, Morricone, Puccini's *O Mio Babbino Caro*, and Czardas by Vittorio Monti, among others. Of note was Austin's rendition of *O Paradiso*, harking back to Pavarotti's evocative description of the resort.

Then, a stirring trio of songs by Belle Voci with *Flower Duet*, *Nessun Dorma* and *Time to Say Goodbye*, before Griminelli and Austin brought up the rear with *O Sole Mio*. The final song for the evening, Verdi's *Brindisi*, even saw a rainbow colour the horizon, which prompted Griminelli to quip that Pavarotti himself was smiling on, and approved of, the proceedings.

An opera gala dinner that followed at Feast Village also included the Pavarotti Pasta, reconstructed by the kitchen team from notes found in the 1988 Metropolitan Opera cook book (in which Pavarotti contributed two recipes – both for pasta). For mains, the King's Medallion of roasted wagyu and shaved truffle recalled the repeated requests by the present-day King Charles III at Pangkor Laut Resort during his 2017 official tour of Malaysia. To conclude, opera cake was served as dessert, a French classic popularised in the mid-century as a tribute to the Paris opera.

Reflecting on the inaugural Opera in Paradise, Griminelli says: "I'm very moved because I see so many friends here – people I've known for so long. And for us to do a concert every year here – it gives me a kind of happiness, and I'm excited to bring the best musicians and the best singers to this paradise."

For more information, visit www.pangkorlautresort.com

BEAUTY FROM LAND TO SEA

FROM THE FISH OF THE WATERS TO THE TURTLES
OF THE BEACHES, TANJONG JARA RESORT
IS A TRUE PLACE TO IMMERSE IN
THE NATURAL BEAUTY OF TERENGGANU.

Words by KARMUN NG

If the real meaning of travel is to live and breathe as the locals do, then a real beach vacation should involve nothing less. Get to know the critters and creatures of the sand and sea on your next beach holiday at Tanjong Jara Resort, where kaleidoscopes of fish paint the underwater scene a myriad of colours, just as the turtles meet and greet visitors both on land and in the water.

In and around the island of Tenggol, just a stone's throw away from the resort, many stunning dive sites await both serious divers as well as casual snorkellers. The smooth currents of Tanjung Api make for great drift-diving along sheer underwater walls adorned with splashes of brightly coloured soft and hard corals, while the soft tree corals of Batu Tokong Kamudi set a bed of delight for sea anemones and nudibranchs. More leisurely dives of a shallower nature can be found at the rocky outcrop of Tokong Timur, which bursts into life with schooling fish, thanks to its nutrient-rich waters, as well as Nyireh Point, where large bumphead parrotfish can be sighted along with the lovable pufferfish. In high season, divers may even spot whale sharks – gentle giants that can measure up to 18m in length – languidly gliding near the surface of Tenggol.

Depending on your luck, the graceful sight of a sea turtle soaring through the waters may or may not greet you. But don't be disappointed if one isn't on your dive logbook; there's a second chance to spot them on land.

On the sandy stretch of beach near the resort, turtle-nesting walks welcome guests of all ages. Just a short stroll from the resort, Dungun beach stretches out as a protected beach, where, between May and September, green turtles come ashore to lay eggs. Terengganu is famously known as the 'Land of Turtles' and it keeps to its reputation to this day. The warm, grainy sand and the gentle slope of this particular stretch make it relatively easy for the turtles to negotiate their way across.

To keep the eggs from harm, they are retrieved by authorities from the nest and reburied in warm sand in a safely guarded hatchery – a step unfortunately now necessary because it remains legal to eat turtle eggs, driving up their demand. If you stay at Tanjong Jara Resort, your chances of being part of a turtle's cycle of life, from nesting and hatching to release and inevitable return, are exclusively high.

For more information, visit www.tanjongjaresort.com

LIFE FEATURE



This and facing page:
The wonders of the
natural world are
all around you at
Tanjong Jara Resort.



CLASSIC HIGHLANDS FEAST

SAVOUR THE BEST OF THE NEW GREAT HIGHLANDS
ROAST MENU WITH JUICY ROASTED LAMB LEG,
FRESH LOCAL VEGETABLES AND CLASSIC ENGLISH
DISHS AT CAMERON HIGHLANDS RESORT.

Words by ALICIA CHOO Photos by MARCUS WONG



The Dining Room of Cameron Highlands Resort affords stunning views of abundant greenery.



Having evolved from a hill station during colonial times, Cameron Highlands did not gain significant attention until 1925, when British governor Sir George Maxwell documented its discovery, subsequently drawing expatriates and planters who recognised the potential of its fertile mountain slopes for growing tea. Perched 1,500m above sea level amidst a forested mountainscape, Cameron Highlands Resort is a picturesque plateau matched by its cool climate, greenway trails and flower beds.

To revisit the traditional English customs in this cottage-styled mountain retreat, the resort has introduced a new menu called The Great Highlands Roast. Held every Saturday at the Dining Room, this dinner feast centres around a succulent roast lamb leg sourced from the hills of Darling Downs, Australia. The lamb is marinated with fragrant herbs before being slow roasted at medium heat for one hour. "This process tenderises the meat and locks in the juices, which gives it a nice, even char," says chef Mohan Deligannu, corporate executive chef of YTL Hotels.

This four-course menu begins with a choice of either mossy forest salad or chicken liver pâté with mango chutney, leafy greens and toasted bread. The former is a nod to the nearby mossy forest, where guests can embark on calming hikes and treks through a nature paradise reminiscent of the movie *Avatar*. Local herbs and greens form the base of this salad, with watercress, locally harvested mushrooms and cherry tomatoes, topped with balsamic vinaigrette. A sesame feta cheese cigar adds a crispy finishing touch to the salad.

Next on the menu is a sweet corn chowder, with the main spotlight on the region's well-favoured Pearl corn that is known for its salient natural sweetness. To prepare the chowder, the corn is boiled with the husk to fully extract its rich flavours into a stock. The kernels are then removed and sautéed with onions, garlic and leeks. After incorporating butter and flour to create a velouté, this mixture is combined with the corn stock, pureed with cream and served with golden-brown croutons on top.

For the mains, guests can choose from two meat options or a vegetarian dish. The highland vegetable Wellington



Clockwise from top: Wellington with Cameron Highlands vegetables; Eton Mess for dessert; the classical environment of the Dining Room.

Facing page: The Great Highlands Roast is served every Saturday.

is made with a bijou-sized Kabocha squash, wrapped in a crepe and layered with a rich sweet-potato spinach filling. Alternatively, the roasted free-range chicken is classically prepared with brine and then roasted with a thyme and lemon finish. The *pièce de resistance* is, undoubtedly, the lamb roast, accompanied by a selection of farm-fresh sides including broccoli, cherry tomatoes, roast potatoes, sweet potatoes and seared onions. Freshly baked Yorkshire pudding, prepared on the day of the roast, is also included with all main course options.

Capping off the meal is the Eton Mess, a classic English dessert derived from the resort's storied colonial past. This dessert contains homegrown strawberries, crumbly meringue and whipped cream, all draped with an artisan strawberry coulis.

More than just a meal, The Great Highlands Roast at Cameron Highlands Resort is a dining experience that transports you through a rich tapestry of history and flavour. Whether you're a local or a visitor, this Saturday feast offers the finest highland cuisine, set against an idyllic backdrop.



For more information, visit www.cameronhighlandsresort.com



LOVE IS IN THE AIR

PAINT YOUR SUMMER ROMANCE WITH A TOUCH OF KRISTANG HERITAGE AND TRADITION – BREAKFAST, SPA AND DINNER INCLUDED – WITH THE MALACCA ROMANCE PACKAGE AT THE MAJESTIC MALACCA

Words by KARMUN NG



Along the coasts of Peninsula Malaysia, no place comes alive with romance as much as the historic town of Malacca, the port city of lore that, in ancient times, welcomed royal princesses from afar with hands betrothed to local Kings and Sultans for marriage. The romantic mosaic of cultures, heritage and traditions of this cross-border love stories makes Malacca a place of timeless passions and allure.

Paint your own modern fairy tale set amidst elements of Kristang heritage traditions at The Majestic Malacca with its Malacca Romance package. Designed to take you back in time to add a sense of nostalgia and serendipity to your own courtship, the package comes with a night's stay at the historic hotel, complete with breakfast, spa session and dinner for two.

Escape to an era of timeless romance amidst the streets of Malacca, which has a storied past that is globally recognised and well preserved as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The day's excursion done, come home to the heart of the hotel that is restored from a 1920s Straits Settlement mansion, complete with its original porcelain tile flooring and teakwood fittings. Here, be pampered by a 50-minute couple's massage at Spa Village Malacca, the world's only spa to base its therapies on the healing heritage of the Baba-Nyonya or Peranakan culture.

Inspired by the elaborate and colourful 12-day Peranakan Wedding Ceremony, every guest enjoys a pre-spa experience at Spa Village Malacca that includes a soothing hair care ritual. Therapies are moulded around a person's cool or warm energies based on Peranakan beliefs and inspired by traditional Chinese medicine.

Once rejuvenated and ready for dinner, you have a choice of a celebrated Kristang Dinner for two at the Mansion or a Malacca Sunset Street Food Tour. Rooted in a 500-year-old legacy, Kristang cuisine is influenced by a harmonious mix of culinary styles. An ode to Malacca's cosmopolitan past, Kristang cuisine entices with a heady mélange of Dutch, Portuguese and Malacca-Portuguese influences, where the

restaurants chefs simmer, sizzle and sear up a repository of tantalising colonial heritage intertwined with local flavours. Its trademark lies in its simplicity, emphasising high-quality and the freshest ingredients.

Alternatively, immerse yourself in the colourful food culture of the city through the exclusive Sunset Street Food Trail. Experience the street food of Malacca and follow in the footsteps of the locals for a lively neighbourhood night out. Eat like a local, taste delicious bites and hear personal stories from a food guide who will introduce you to local delights such as Capitol Seafood Longkang Siham and Bunga Raya Fried Oyster.

Awaken in the morning with a scrumptious breakfast for two, serving up an eclectic selection influenced by Malacca's rich multicultural flavours contributed by the Kristang, Portuguese, Malay, Chinese and Indian cultures. Take your time because, while true love prevails, the hours tick by way too fast when falling into the face it.

For more information, visit www.majesticmalacca.com





LAY IT ON

AT GAYA ISLAND RESORT, ITS JAPANESE CUISINE INVOLVES A BIT OF TRUST AND A LOT OF TASTE.

Words by KARMUN NG



Those seeking authentic Japanese flavours and an *omakase* experience will be most delighted to find that after a day out that began with morning kayaking through mangroves and sipping on beers at Tavajun Bay will eventually lead to a most unexpected *omakase* dinner.

Here at Omakase – which doubles as the name of the restaurant – one has the choice of three dining options: *shabu-shabu*, *teppanyaki* and *nabe*. Perched atop a cliff and with panoramic views of Malohom Bay and Mount Kinabalu, the two-storey Omakase restaurant offers the perfect finale to a day well spent.

The crucial element about the restaurant – and the reason for its name – is that it relies solely on fresh ingredients and the day's catch from the sea. Expect fresh cuts of fish used for your sushi, sublime pieces of beef swirling about your *shabu-shabu* pot, and all manner of fresh vegetables, seafood, meat and noodles in your comforting *nabe* broth.

The most classic of Japanese cuisine comes served with lashings of *omotenashi* – the Japanese spirit of wholeheartedly looking after guests – and you will find yourself revisiting this dinner-only destination time and time again, for the service as you do the food. Among the highlights are *teppanyaki* dishes with chicken and mushroom; tuna, prawn and beef with bell peppers; as well as seared *unagi*, marinated *tako*, crab tempura, and hearty garlic egg fried rice.

Spoilt for choice? That's the beauty of it – you can literally leave things to the chef, as per the name of the restaurant.

For more information, visit www.gayaislandresort.com



MEETINGS WITH A DIFFERENCE

WORK AND LUXURY MEET AT THE RITZ-CARLTON, KUALA LUMPUR
FOR MEETINGS AMID ITS OPULENT ENVIRONMENT.

Words by ALICIA CORBETT





A wide variety of canapés and small bites are available for all meetings, events and conferences held at The Ritz-Carlton, Kuala Lumpur.



Although many industries have now shifted to hybrid or remote working, convening in person for group meetings or conferences continues to prove its benefit of strengthening relationship-building and improving team collaboration. Making the essential great first impression with potential clients can also be ensured by converging at a world-class hotel. The Ritz-Carlton, Kuala Lumpur is one such beacon of sophisticated contemporary luxury in the Golden Triangle business district, steps away from the Petronas Twin Towers and a short drive from the KL Sentral Train Station. For organisations, time is naturally a valuable resource and its prime location allows guests to get down to business swiftly.

Business clients would be impressed merely by the drive up to the hotel, as its magnificence is evident even before the glass doors are opened by the serving Gentlemen. Guests can opt to arrive and depart through a private entrance at the Club Wing, which also houses the Club Lounge, exclusively for The Ritz-Carlton Club Guests.

Meetings may be held at the Carlton Conference Center, which includes a Banquet Hall and 13 meeting and function rooms spread over two floors, many with natural daylight. This includes spaces for intimate gatherings, classy business meetings, as well as conferences and corporate functions, with the largest space catering up to 504 persons. Here, every tastefully appointed room is outfitted with swanky chandeliers and plush carpeting.

TRULY COMPREHENSIVE FACILITIES

Every room is equipped with state-of-the-art technology, including a PA system, teleconferencing equipment, walkie talkies and more. In-house technology support includes a decorator, event lighting, a photographer, a translator, and a dedicated event team to ensure the seamless execution of every occasion. To make the corporate event a success and



The Carlton Conference Center includes a Banquet Hall and 13 meeting and function rooms spread over two floors.

prove that you anticipate the needs of your future clients, extensive event equipment and supplies are available upon request. Furthermore, meeting rooms can be set up according to the desired layout such as conference, hollow square, e-shape, u-shape, theatre and more.

Making every meeting truly memorable is the exemplary culinary team at The Ritz-Carlton, Kuala Lumpur, which has impressed discerning palates for decades. A Chef-on-Call Service, providing a private dining service, is available for bespoke corporate occasions, where guests will be served by their very own chef, butler and hostess. For exemplary guests who value elegance, indulge in a selection of International Buffet, Chinese and Western cuisines with the banquet menu packages available. Otherwise, guests may enquire about the various food and beverage options available, including

special themed breaks and meeting package lunches from The Starhill Dining.

After a busy day of meetings, guests may book a stay at one of the luxurious accommodations upstairs, which boasts exquisite furnishings, opulent marble bathrooms and premium appointments. A Club Level Residential Meeting Package is available for a limited time, which comes with dining discounts and an overnight stay in a Club Executive Deluxe room.

Each Ritzy meeting is brought to life by the unique and thoughtful service of their Ladies and Gentlemen, and is sure to delight every guest.

For more information, visit www.ritzcarlton.com/kualalumpur

WELLNESS DESIGN



Technogym Personal Line, designed by Italian Architect Antonio Citterio, offers a unique home training experience with hundreds of video workouts available on the integrated display and through the Technogym App. Experience it yourself at the Technogym Experience Center in Bangsar with a body composition test and a half-hour workout on any of our cardio equipment*. Exclusive for YTL Life readers - call to make an appointment.

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A RITZY WEEKEND FEAST

FROM BOUILLABAISE AND
CARBONARA TO PAD THAI AND SUSHI,
THE RITZY WEEKEND FEAST
AT THE RITZ-CARLTON,
KUALA LUMPUR WILL HAVE ALL OF
YOUR CRAVINGS COVERED.

Words by PATRICK LOH
Photographs by LAW SOO PHYE



As the clock ticks closer to 6.30pm on Fridays, the anticipation to start the weekend escalates and the whole city begins the journey with lavish dinners. Despite being spoiled for choice, deciding on what cuisine to savour can be tough. For that reason, The Ritz-Carlton, Kuala Lumpur's The Cobalt Room has now opened up its nighttime space for a weekend of culinary bliss – The Ritzy Weekend Feast – featuring dishes from 10 different countries, including Spain, Italy, India and Japan.

The Ritzy Weekend Feast brings together different food cultures, pampering guests with various food choices. Each buffet station serves an array of dishes from around the globe, all carefully curated to elevate your dining experience.

Start by exploring the appetiser towers that feature large shrimp and squid, infused with British flavours and presented in martini glasses, before moving on to Southern Thai cuisine with pad thai, wok-fried squid, and Pla Thod Rad Pring, all curated by Thai Tastemaker Chef Rasikan. The open kitchen area continues to impress with the Chinese-style roast chicken and delightful Japanese yakiniku.

The culinary adventure flows into Spanish territory, with seafood paella, seared tuna tataki, and octopus carpaccio in tapas style. Beside it, the French counter

features bouillabaisse, a traditional Provençal fish soup from Marseille. At the next station, poultry and seafood are refined with authentic Indian spices. The mutton curry, chicken and shrimp are cooked with high-quality ingredients to highlight their best aromas.

The journey continues at the American section, where you can choose from seven house-made sausages crafted by Master Butcher Willie for your hot dog. The same counter also serves Italian dishes, offering diners the freedom to choose from an assortment of pastas and pizzas baked with the heartiest Italian ingredients.

Go the extra mile and add some savoury roast beef cube roll and succulent lemon thyme roast chicken to your plate from The Ritz-Carlton, Kuala Lumpur's signature carving trolley. Also from the cart, the Yorkshire pudding deserves a spot on your plate.

End your culinary journey on a sweet note at the dessert island table, where a parade of Persian desserts, such as creamy fruit tarts and chocolate-covered puffs, await. Curated specially by Persian guest pastry chef and cake designer, Zahra Mohaghegh and Chef Hoss, the dessert line-up also includes a display of decadent French pastries and classic cakes.

The Ritzy Weekend Feast buffet is not to be rushed through, especially with the variety of food and drinks on offer. Forget about driving home through heavy traffic and spend the night instead at The Ritz-Carlton, Kuala Lumpur – another reason to eat and drink with a clear conscience. Turn the weekend into a short getaway in the city, and explore the many amenities that the hotel possesses. Relax your mind with the Sensory Sound Bath treatment, enjoy a drink at The Library or savour scrumptious Chinese cuisine at Li Yen. Before checking out, shop at The Starhill next door to perfect your weekend getaway.

The Ritzy Weekend Feast is available on Fridays and Saturdays at The Cobalt Room from 6.30pm-10pm for RM170++ per person.

For more information, visit www.ritzcarlton.com/kualalumpur



Preparing the grilled meats and seafood.



Roast beef cube roll and Yorkshire pudding from The Ritz-Carlton, Kuala Lumpur's signature carving trolley.



A cornucopia of epicurean delights await.

Persian and French
desserts curated
by guest pastry
chef and cake
designer, Zahra
Mohaghegh and
Chef Hoss of Nlop.



JW
garden

BOTANICAL AESTHETICS

AT THE JW MARRIOTT HOTEL KUALA LUMPUR, ONE FINDS THE IDYLIC JW GARDEN, A SPACE FOR TRANQUILITY, MEMORABLE MARRIAGE PROPOSALS AND MORE.

Words by ALICIA CORBETT | Photos by MARCUS WONG

The capital of Malaysia may be a chaotic blend of towering skyscrapers and crumbling colonial-era buildings, but it is still home to some great green spaces. One of these is the JW Garden by JW Marriott Hotel Kuala Lumpur, hidden in the heart of the Golden Triangle, along Bintang Walk. It is part of the legacy of the brand's founders J. Willard Marriott and Alice Marriott, who were known for their great love of the outdoors, and JW Marriot believes that a connection to it is a necessary part of nourishing one's soul.

From creating a serene sanctuary to becoming a source of fresh ingredients for culinary creations at the hotel, JW Garden brings the outside into the five-star address. Besides the opulence and grandeur of its interior that it is known for, this has become a signature element of the JW Marriott experience. It has been inspired by other gardens at properties such as JW Marriott Essex House New York, created by renowned Los Angeles-based landscape designer Lily Kwong who aims to reconnect guests to nature.

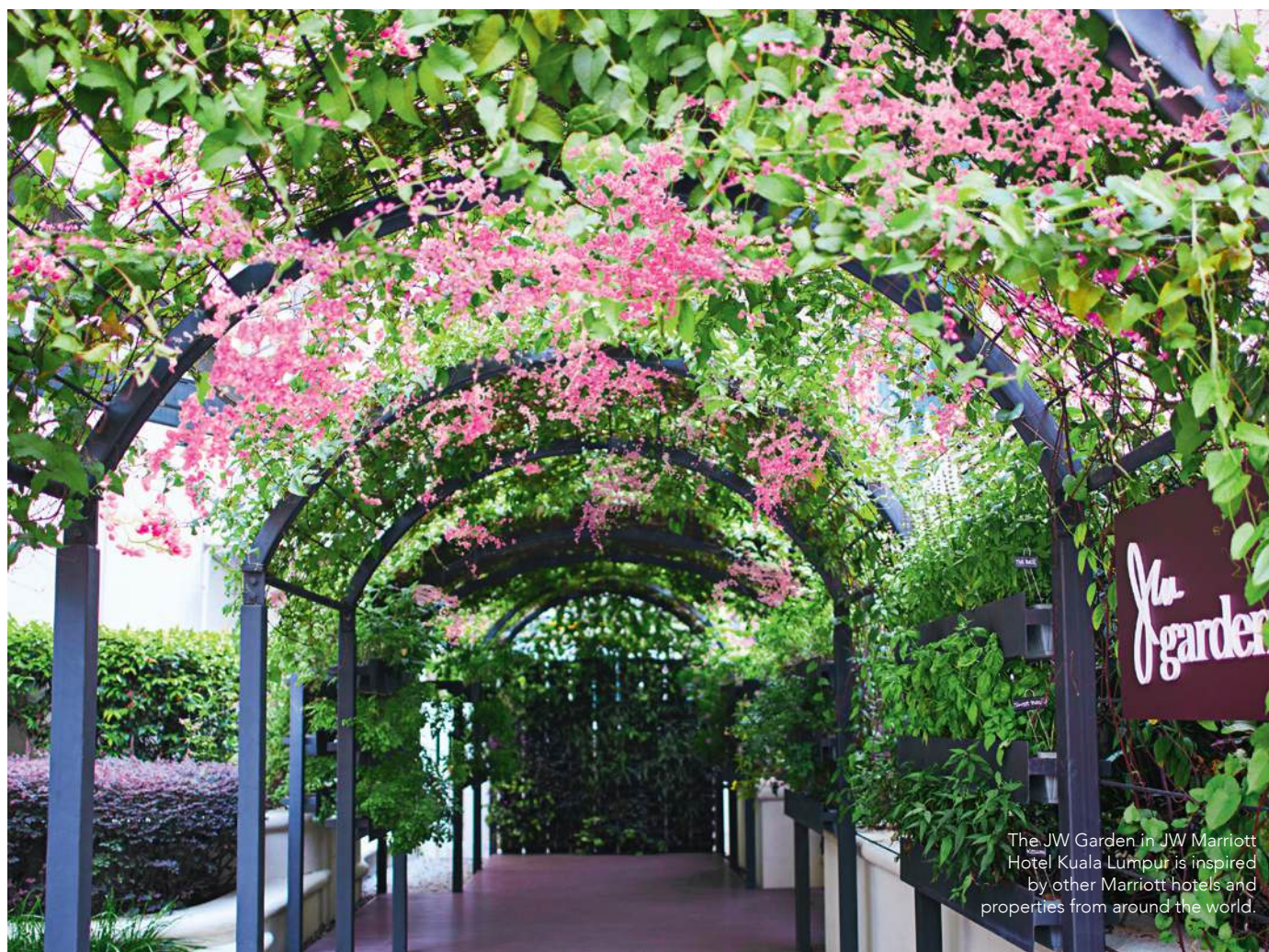
The JW Garden, situated next to the outdoor pool, has been carefully curated to offer inspiration and as a place of

respite. Surrounded by verdant flora and fauna, guests are encouraged to escape from travel itineraries at the tranquil space and take a pause to experience healing. It has also been designed for sustainable sourcing of fresh herbs, including Thai Basil, Sweet Basil and kesum, which are later transported to the plate for unforgettable meals.

The JW Garden is also a refreshing alternative to holding your nuptials before retreating indoors to continue the festivities. The beautifully manicured space is an idyllic garden setting for a fairy tale garden wedding, with a twinkling skyline in the background come nightfall. It acts as a gorgeous, lush green open canvas to which your preferred colour palette can be added and can be personalised for romantic setups in any way that suits you.

The private hideaway is also a truly gorgeous spot to get down on one knee and pop the question, and we suggest picking a sunset moment for that perfect photo op. Afterwards, celebrate by dining at one of the splendid culinary offerings at the hotel, such as The Alchemy or the Shanghai restaurant.

For more information, visit www.jwmarriottkualalumpur.com



The JW Garden in JW Marriott Hotel Kuala Lumpur is inspired by other Marriott hotels and properties from around the world.



A SIP OF THE BIG APPLE

EXPERIENCE A BEAUTIFUL UNITY OF TWO
CONTRASTING LIFESTYLES COMING TOGETHER WITH
THE ALCHEMY'S NEW YORKER AFTERNOON TEA.

Words by JUERN NG

LIFE FEATURE

Afternoon tea is a cherished English tradition, introduced by Anna, the seventh Duchess of Bedford, in the 1840s. While the tradition is often revered for its timeless charm, The Alchemy reimagines this beloved custom with a distinctly interesting twist on the experience.

Located in the heart of the city centre at The Starhill Dining, The Alchemy offers easy access to its stylish venue. With its inviting plush teal velvet and tan leather seats, complemented by soft ambient lighting and a soothing atmosphere, The Alchemy provides a swift escape from the busy city. Its cosy setting fosters an intimate ambience ideal for leisurely conversations.

Here, experience the taste of its New Yorker Afternoon Tea, blending urban flair with the refined elegance of English tea traditions. Influenced by the diverse culinary scene of the Big Apple, The Alchemy offers an array beyond traditional teas, featuring a broad selection of hot chocolate, coffee and even spirited coffee blends for those seeking to add some excitement to their day.

The pastries are served on a three-tier stand, with sweets arranged on the side. Begin with the bottom tier, which consists of finger sandwiches that come in unique flavours like salt beef with sauerkraut and lingonberry compote with brie and walnut. Served alongside the sandwiches are smoked salmon and cream cheese bagels – a popular New York staple – and lemon brioche topped with whitebait shrimp, showcasing contrasting yet complementary flavours, which I quite enjoyed.

The savoury delights don't just stop there. On the second tier, you'll find more delectable options that are globally inspired. The Upstate Smoked Cheddar, Chicken, and Leek Pithivier boasts a robust and hearty filling, encased in a flaky, buttery pastry crust. The Truffle and Chives Deviled Eggs are rich and velvety, accompanied by a dill pickle relish for that sour crunch to cut through the creaminess. Those who appreciate the slightly tangy profile of goat cheese will enjoy the Goat Cheese Gateux with Pistachio Crumble, which offers a unique combination of textures and flavours.

Moving on to the last tier, the scones come in both buttermilk and cranberry options, served with clotted cream and Meyer lemon curd – its sweet and nuanced citrus flavour the perfect alternative to jam. Finally, as you turn your attention to the sweets plate, you'll discover a tempting array, ranging from classic treats like the Almond Bar and Blueberry Cake, to innovative creations such as the Vertical Lemon Fromage Tart, Orange Charlotte and Raspberry Chocolate Petite Gateau. Sweets lovers will find it a heavenly experience, indulging in a variety of sweets that satisfy every craving.

After afternoon tea, if you're in the mood for drinks, The Alchemy lives up to its name with its extensive collection of gins, crafted into magical cocktails. For those who prefer non-alcoholic options, there are also mocktails to indulge in. It's the best way to conclude the overall experience.

For more information, visit www.thestarhilldining.com





LIFE FEATURE

MIXING BUSINESS AND PLEASURE

FROM SAVOURY TAPAS TO CHARCUTERIE BOARDS,
THE AC LOUNGE AT AC HOTEL KUALA LUMPUR, KUANTAN
AND PENANG IS A CONVENIENT DESTINATION
WHERE GUESTS CAN CONNECT AND REFUEL.

Words by ALICIA CHOO



The AC Lounge at AC Hotel Kuala Lumpur.



From top: Gambas al ajillo, spaghetti gennaro, seafood paella and patatas bravas.



The AC Lounge at AC Hotel Kuantan.

Set in the industrial district of Titiwangsa Sentral, the AC Hotel Kuala Lumpur provides business travellers a combination of convenience and local authenticity. Its strategic location places guests in the hub of Kuala Lumpur, with direct access to the busy light-rail transit (LRT) and the Monorail rapid interchange station. Within minutes, guests can reach the commercial centre, retail precincts, entertainment venues and healthcare services.

Residing within this business hotel is the AC Lounge, an ergonomic space for guests to work, collaborate

and unwind. Similarly, the lounge is replicated at two other AC establishments in Kuantan and Penang, where guests can mingle over food, signature cocktails, local craft beer and wine on tap. Among these offerings is a special menu featuring an eclectic mix of tapas and small plates.

Ease into your afternoon or evening with a table of savoury bites, starting with appetisers – the classic tomato bruschetta marinated in olive oil, herbs and garlic; the golden crispy chicken leg paired with homemade aioli sauce; the *patatas bravas* cooked in smoky *bravas* sauce; and the succulent *gambas al ajillo* infused with sizzling garlic olive oil. Moving on the mains, the spaghetti *gennaro* is delicately prepared with minced anchovies delivering robust umami notes, while the slow-cooked seafood paella is a symphony of rich aromas melding together vegetables, shrimp, claims and juicy calamari.

A signature you should not miss out is the AC grazing platter, which contains an assortment of cheeses, smoked salmon, lamb prosciutto, dried fruits, grapes, nuts and sliced artisanal bread in a curated charcuterie board – this platter illustrates a Mediterranean-style experience and is perfect for sharing with friends. Finally, end your AC Lounge experience on a sweet note with their deep-fried churros coated in cinnamon sugar and served alongside a velvety chocolate sauce.

If you're looking to recharge or indulge in their tapas selections, the AC Lounge at the AC Hotel Kuala Lumpur – as well as its counterparts in Kuantan and Penang – facilitates as an exemplary backdrop for undisturbed productivity and an escape from your hectic surroundings. The tapas menu is available daily at AC Lounge Kuala Lumpur, Penang and Kuantan from 2:30pm to 10:30pm.

For more information, visit ac-hotels.com



Tortilla de patatas.



AC grazing platter.



WHERE THE OLD AND NEW COEXIST

IN RECENT YEARS, THE NEIGHBOURHOOD
AROUND HOTEL STRIPES KUALA LUMPUR HAS
TRANSFORMED TO SEAMLESSLY BLEND HERITAGE
OFFERINGS AND MODERN EXPERIENCES.

Words by ALICIA CORBETT Photos by LAW SOO PHYE

Over at Jalan Kamunting, Kuala Lumpur, sits Hotel Stripes Kuala Lumpur. The hotel perfectly exemplifies the unique blend of contemporary design and traditional charm of its surrounding neighbourhood. Its distinctive feature is its brick façade, where 120,000 pieces of bricks were specially moulded to be mounted horizontally without using mortar or cement. Throughout the building, horizontal bands are interspersed to frame the progression of the brick screening, resulting in a 'stripes' effect, which gave the hotel its distinct name.

Besides being a unique piece of architecture, this design also pays homage to the rich history of the surrounding neighbourhood, one of the oldest in Kuala Lumpur. In the days of old, Jalan Kamunting was the main settlement for tin

mining during the colonial era. At the end of the 19th century, a devastating flood and fire destroyed the early settlements, which had been mostly constructed from wood and thatch. Following this, most of the buildings were replaced with 'brick and tiles' as stipulated by the British colonial administration.

The piece of land on which Hotel Stripes currently stands eventually became YTL Corporation's very first office and headquarters. In 2017, this was transformed into the current hotel, the second Autograph Collection hotel in Malaysia within the Marriott International portfolio. After the pandemic, the area has since blossomed into a lively and vibrant hub but, only seven years ago, it was still a quiet street with a smattering of 1940s shophouses and decades-old family-owned businesses.

One such establishment is Yut Kee Restaurant, which





is now run by third-generation owner Mervyn Lee, with his father Jack occasionally helping him. Long queues can be seen outside the restaurant at most times, which serves traditional Hainanese dishes such as stir-fried Hailam Mee and Kaya Roll.

Jack, who turns 80 soon, says: "Our restaurant was established in 1928, and it was moved from its former premises at Jalan Dang Wangi to the unit next door in 2014. I grew up in our current unit at No.1, Jalan Kamunting. We were the first unit here to commercialise. When we acquired both units, we restarted the restaurant in 2014. In fact, the late Tan Sri Dato' Seri Yeoh Tiong Lay, the founder of YTL Corporation, dined at our shop 10 days before he passed away.

"When Hotel Stripes came up, this was still a residential area," Jack continues. "It has definitely gotten busier in the past few years, which is good for all the residents here."

Another living treasure of the area is Loke Kwong Yuen, a dapper gentleman with perfectly coiffed silver locks and the second-generation owner of Ah Loke Tailor. He has continued his father's legacy of being one of the most reputable tailors in the Klang Valley for decades. The 'sifu' (or master) has

Clockwise from top: Yut Kee restaurant, run by a third-generation owner, remains a hit with both locals and tourists; enjoying local delights in Yut Kee; a local friendly neighborhood barber; a textile store along Jalan Tuanku Abdul Rahman; Loke Kwong Yuen has been operating his tailor shop for more than 50 years.

LIFE FEATURE

dressed notable figures, including Bob Hawke, former prime minister of Australia; Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad; and boxer Joe Bugner.

"I've been here for more than 50 years already. I learned the trade from my father," Loke says. "In recent years, the neighbourhood has become more developed with more people renting as it is quite near the city centre."

Sitting alongside these old-school businesses is a plethora of modern eateries to dine in, offering cuisines such as Japanese, Western, contemporary Chinese, and authentic Italian. Many locals and international tourists can be seen frequenting these establishments to whet their appetites and to populate their social media. And thanks to a delightful selection of cafes in the area, the corporate crowd and digital nomads have also made the neighborhood a second office.

Another notable addition is the reincarnation of The Row, formerly known as the Asian Heritage Row. Here, a total of 22 pre-war shophouses feature an amalgamation of great restaurants, dazzling nightlife, cafés, and creative businesses. For instance, visitors can shop for eclectic designer household pieces at Haus or customise their bicycles at The Bike Artisans. Opposite sits a cutting-edge boutique Neo, which offers effortlessly chic monochrome pieces for all genders.

A stone's throw away, is the Loke Mansion, the former residence of the late tin tycoon Loke Yew, which is an amalgamation of Dutch, Malay, and Chinese architectural styles. Its exterior is a magnificent sight to behold. Then, hop on a taxi to nearby Jalan Tuanku Abdul Rahman, which is a veritable textile haven. Here, shoppers hunt for bargain deals for traditional wear that are available in a plethora of colours.

Due to the hotel's proximity to the heart of Kuala Lumpur,

the marvels of the city landscape can also be experienced here, including a postcard-worthy shot of the Petronas Twin Towers by standing at the intersection of Jalan Kamunting and Jalan Yap Ah Shak. For unobstructed dazzling views of the KL Tower, ride the elevator to the rooftop of Man Tao Bar at Hotel Stripes Kuala Lumpur, where you can sip on cocktails and nibble on yakitori.

The hotel is also home to other mouthwatering dining experiences such as a quintessential English Afternoon Tea derived from sister hotel, The Academy London, with a delightful Asian twist. During Fridays and Saturdays, an immense platter of delectable Beef Brisket, Farmer's Sausages, Chicken with Sumac Spices, and more awaits at the You Chill, We Grill experience at Brasserie 25.

For more information, visit www.stripeskl.com





RESTORING BALANCE

WITH A FOCUS ON PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH,
SPA VILLAGE RESORT TEMBOK, BALI SERVES AS
A PEACEFUL ENCLAVE WITH EXCLUSIVE RETREATS,
SCENIC VIEWS AND CONSCIOUS DINING.

Words by ALICIA CHOO

Steeped in ritualistic theatrical arts and meditative practices, Spa Village Resort Tembok, Bali stands as a sacred sanctuary on the island's northeastern tip, near the village of Desa Tembok in Tejakula. Despite its quietude, a gentle vitality permeates this part of Bali, where soaring peaks cascade down grassy lowlands and black volcanic sands meet the blue Bali Sea. Beyond standard spa treatments, the resort's integrated approach to wellness includes intentional activities, purposeful living and nutritious dining.

The resort's architectural design combines understated Western influences with Balinese aesthetics, blending natural Balinese timber with neutral fabrics and native touches. Each accommodation – the Kamar Room, the Surya and Purnam

Suites, and the Baruna and Samudra Villas – is built as an intimate refuge, offering secluded privacy and sweeping scenic views. Guests can unwind on spacious terraces or balconies, take a refreshing dip in the pool or explore at their own pace.

Dining at the Wantilan Restaurant provides an enlightening experience as it overlooks the slate-hued beach, and is nestled beneath a thatched roof allowing the sea breeze to billow through. Here, diners can sample regional Balinese flavours and international dishes, amidst traditional artwork, rattan furnishings and teakwood tables handcrafted by local artisans. The restaurant also caters to various dietary preferences, offering vegetarian, vegan, gluten-free raw and high-protein options.

Daily dynamic yoga sessions are part of The Creativity Retreat at Spa Village Tembok, Bali.





Above: the postcard-perfect pool at Spa Village Tembok, Bali.
Right: artist Chang Fee Ming presents his travel journal, *Journey To Tembok*, with Geraldine Dreiser, Vice President of Marketing and Communications of YTL Hotels.

What sets Spa Village Resort Tembok, Bali apart, however, is its focus on specialised retreat programmes. This year, YTL Hotels launched two new retreats around the region's indigenous healing traditions. These retreats are intricately tailored to submerge oneself into the artistic and soulful dimensions of the land, where every aspect is dedicated to holistic well-being and authentic connections.

Central to these programmes was The Creativity Retreat led by Malaysian artist Chang Fee Ming, which spanned four days and three nights. This retreat aimed to combine art with spirituality by stimulating creativity through Bali's raw beauty. Retreatants engaged in guided tours of Balinese art centres, private sketching classes and insightful talks conducted by Fee Ming. Sunny afternoons were dedicated to restorative therapies, while late evenings were spent gazing at the stars. Enriching activities included daily dynamic yoga sessions, Mandala (circle) painting classes, Balinese spa rituals and a guided excursion with Fee Ming on the island.

A self-taught artist from Terengganu, Fee Ming began his artistic journey in the early 1980s and has grown into one of Asia's most eminent artists, specialising mainly in watercolours. His artworks have appeared in exhibitions worldwide and are regularly featured in auction houses like Christie's and Sotheby's. With a penchant for travel, Fee Ming's primary interest revolves around the locales of Southeast Asia, which are depicted through textures, colours, light and composition. He has also authored a



perceptive travel journal with Spa Village, titled *Journey To Tembok*, documenting his expedition of the island's latent charm over the years through dirt roads and dusty tracks on his little motorbike. This journal unfolds as a compilation of moments, resembling a treasure map that directs readers to places of inspiration.

Whether indulging in therapeutic solitudes, participating in workshops or simply soaking in the botanical surroundings, every facet of Spa Village Resort Tembok, Bali is designed to nurture our mind, body and spirit.

For more information, visit www.spavillageresort.com



Lapis Lazuli (above) and May We Be Blessed, both by Chang Fee Ming.



GRILLED GOODNESS THE THAI WAY

YOU'VE PROBABLY HAD THAI MOOKATA, BUT HAVE YOU HAD IT SERVED BY THE BEACH WITH LIVE BAND MUSIC AND FREE-FLOWING BEVERAGES IN ONE OF THE MOST STUNNING RESORTS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA? NOW YOU CAN AT THE RITZ-CARLTON, KOH SAMUI.

Words by KARMUN NG



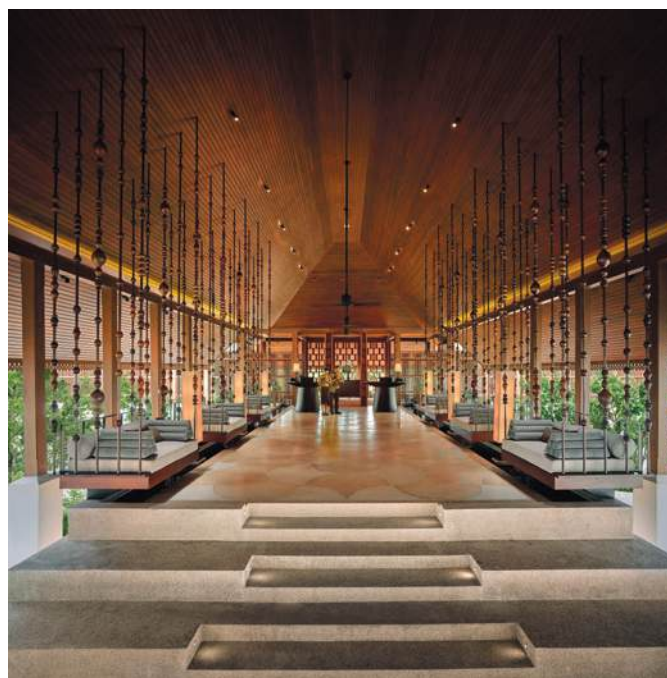


Of Thailand's countless fiery flavours, it does one particular well: grilling. From streetside *moo ping* skewers to hot wok *pad thai*, no one harvests the finest and most fragrant of the flames like the Thais. Fire and flame lend to another unmistakable Thai way of dining that has taken over the region – *mookata*.

Known in original Thai as *mu kratha*, *mookata* is both barbecue and hotpot in one seating and, more importantly, one combined contraption. It marries the best of grilling meats and seafoods atop a hot domed griddle, heated up by traditional charcoal. As they cook, the juices of the meat and more drip down to flavour a moat of broth in a surrounding catchment pot, adding to its flavour. This brilliant sizzle and simmer combo brings forth a delicious dual option way of savouring sweet seafood and prime meats, whether you like them charred or poached. It literally poses the question: why not both?

At The Ritz-Carlton, Koh Samui, this quintessential Thai dining experience gets elevated in a seaside setting, where lapping waves and gentle breeze accompany your meal. Premium meat and local seafood take centre stage, served tableside so you can effortlessly cook them up on a barbecue griddle of your own. Sizzle up the ingredients to your idea of perfection before dipping them into a punchy dipping sauce of a secret house blend. In between bites, sip on a golden broth that builds in flavour and fervour the longer you tend to your dinner. It promises the perfect servings of deliciousness and interactivity.

Have it all on the sandy strip of beach accompanied by music from a live band and free-flow drinks. Take your pick



from wine, beer, cocktails and more for a true taste of the unhurried and unhindered Samui way of life. Sit back, relax and enjoy a Thai tradition meant to be a true treat for the lips, eyes and soul.

The *mookata* gourmet adventure is available every Monday from 6.30pm–10.00pm and is priced at THB3,500 net per person, inclusive of drinks and alcoholic beverages.

For more information, visit ritzcarlton.com/kohsamui

CAPTIVATING SUMMER ACTIVITIES AT NISEKO VILLAGE

WITH ITS REMARKABLY COOL SUMMERS AND ITS GLORIOUS SURROUNDINGS, NISEKO VILLAGE OFFERS A WIDE VARIETY OF EXCITING ACTIVITIES TO ENJOY THIS SEASON.

Words by ALICIA CORBETT

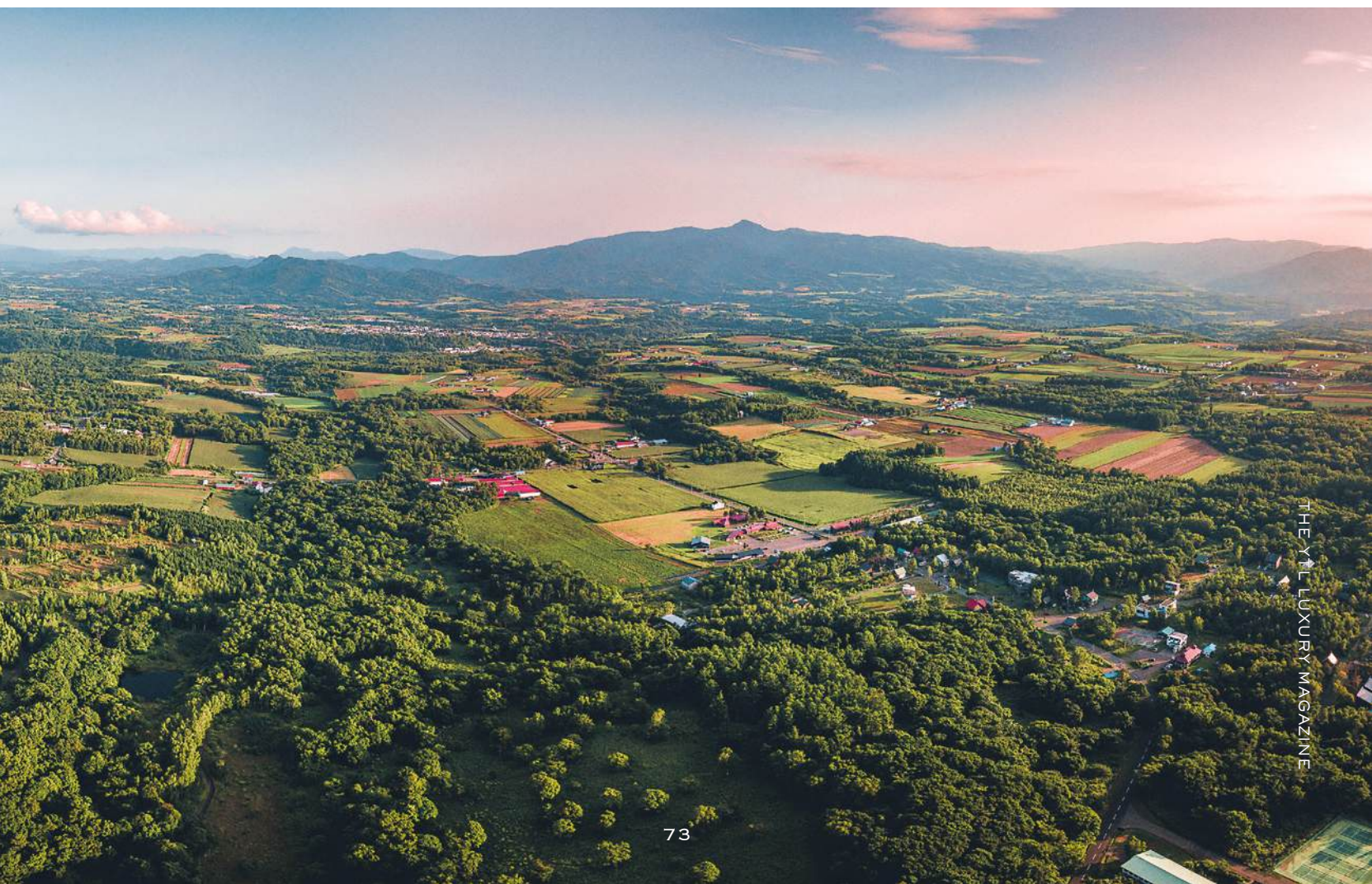


The name Niseko may evoke imagery of an enchanting snowy landscape covered with champagne powder snow and some of the world's best skiing, but as summer arrives, a myriad of charming adventures await in the town. Each year from the months of June to August, Japan faces hot and humid summers that linger in the air – but not Niseko. The island of Hokkaido is far enough north that warm rainstorms don't affect the region and the weather hovers around 21°C, transforming it from a winter wonderland into a cool summer paradise.

During the Green Season, there are various activities to be enjoyed in Niseko Village against its sensational alpine scenery.

WORLD-CLASS GOLFING

Come summer, tee off among white birch and pine trees at the glorious 6,805-yard, 18-hole Arnold Palmer-designed Niseko Golf Course. Its centre of interest is the fifth hole, which includes an exhilarating tee shot towards the magnificent Mount Yotei, which also acts as a picture-perfect backdrop for the course. A must-visit for golf enthusiasts is also the Niseko Village Golf Course, a strategic course with a 721-yard ultra-long hole and a green surrounded by ponds. Attached to the Hilton Niseko Village, the par 73 championship course has garnered acclaim as a three consecutive year winner of Japan's Best Golf Courses at the World Golf Awards.





Clockwise from top left: enjoy the best of Japan's freshwater fish, caught by your own hands; a dynamic seven kilometres of whitewater rapids courses await; Hinode Hills Niseko Village includes 79 elegantly furnished boutique apartments; Kasara Niseko Village is the ideal base for outdoor adventures.

FISHING EXCURSIONS

There is nothing quite like fresh fish – caught amid the stunning scenery of Niseko – consumed over a dinner table filled with tales of the day itself. Cast a line at the Shiribetsu River, considered one of the cleanest rivers in all of Japan, home to an array of freshwater fish, including prized trout and salmon. A variety of fish species can be found near the shores of Lake Toya and Lake Shikotsu, equally picturesque caldera lakes that were formed from collapses in the earth after volcanic activity.

WATER ACTIVITIES


Visitors on the search for their own Japanese adventure can conquer the rapids of the Shiribetsu River on whitewater rafting trips or opt for a leisurely paddleboarding journey while being surrounded by stunning scenery. Thrillseekers can sign-up for canyoning to explore a network of canyons and deep pools, where you will jump, slide, swim and finish off with a 6m jump into the stunning Lion Falls.

E-BIKE

You may have pictured yourself leisurely cycling through the cobblestone roads of Europe, but a superior choice is an e-bike adventure to experience the beauty of Hokkaido's countryside. Riders can set off on scenic trails according to their abilities and discover hidden gems such as Nishiyama No Oka, where you can capture stunning views of Mount Yotei, or venture to Higashiyama Hana No Oka, where spectacular vistas over the Niseko basin await.

NISEKO GOURMET TRAIL

For those whose travels are led by their tastebuds, discover a potpourri of culinary journeys at Niseko Village. Delight in local delicacies like Makkari pork through the Culinary Treasures of Hokkaido, and visit the whiskey and gin distillery along the way to discover the artistry behind Japan's finest spirits. Taste the bounty of Hokkaido's waters with The Seafood Tour, where you can tuck into succulent sea urchins and Hanasaki crabs.


 A woman with dark hair tied back is sitting in a hot spring bath. She is looking out a window with a white grid pattern. The bath is set in a stone-walled enclosure. In the foreground, there are blurred orange and yellow lights, possibly from a fire or a lamp.

The Green Leaf,
Niseko Village
offers natural hot
spring baths.

To accompany the perfect summer getaway, book a stay at one of Niseko Village's charming accommodations. Discerning travellers will delight in the Kasara Niseko Village, a series of eight exclusive heritage townhouses designed with a nod to traditional Japanese charm and infused with contemporary elegance. Situated at the base of Mount Niseko Annupuri, each two-story townhouse comes with a personal resident concierge, ready to cater to every need.

Another worthy option is the Hinode Hills Niseko Village, which boasts views of Mount Yotei and is positioned at the heart of the Village. The five-star, tastefully appointed boutique apartments embrace *wabi-sabi* aesthetics with urban comfort, complete with luxury services and amenities.

For an especially indulgent wellness experience as you bask in nature, The Green Leaf Niseko Village offers a tranquil retreat with its renowned indoor and outdoor onsen.

Its *rotenburo*, an open-air bath, is fed by a natural mineral spring and is said to be one of the most beautiful natural rock pools in the village.

There are exclusive offers for all three properties:

- Kasara Golfing Getaway: Enjoy one complimentary round of golf for every night of your stay.
- Kasara Summer Adventure: Go on a whitewater rafting adventure this season.
- Kasara E-Bike Summer Exploration: Explore and take in the breathtaking summer views on two wheels.

For more information, visit niseko-village.com, kasara.com/special-offers.html, hinodehills.com/special-offers.html, and thegreenleafhotel.com/en/special-offers.html.





TWO AND A HALF CENTURIES OF AMUSEMENT

CELEBRATE JANE AUSTEN'S
250TH ANNIVERSARY NEXT YEAR
IN GRAND FASHION AT
THE GAINSBOROUGH BATH SPA.

Words by JUNE MONG-LOFTIN

“It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife.” This first line from Jane Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice* is one of the most famous openings to a novel in literary history. It establishes at the start of the book the importance of an advantageous marriage in Regency England. In 2025, literary buffs, and fans of Regency society and Austen film adaptations will celebrate the 250th anniversary of her birth. Although these celebrations will take place all over the world, there really is only one place to fete Jane Austen and that is at The Gainsborough Bath Spa in the fashionable city of Bath.

For six days and five nights in April 2025 (from the 7 to the 12) and again in October 2025 (from the 13 to the 18), there is to be an advantageous marriage between Strictly Jane Austen Tours and The Gainsborough Bath Spa for guests who have booked in advance and are the lucky few to experience

the immersive bespoke celebrations of Austen’s birth year. This is the best sort of marriage of luxurious convenience, celebrated over six days of curated amusements. Austen herself once wrote: “One cannot have too large a party. A large party secures its own amusement.”

The author and her family lived in Bath from 1801 to 1806 and, in her novels, she often satirised the social scene of balls, assemblies and promenades. Her father and brother Thomas also took the healing thermal waters at Cross Bath. The Gainsborough Bath Spa, which is a five-minute walk away from Cross Bath, has its own private spa for its guests today that taps into the city’s natural thermal springs. It is no wonder that the protagonist Catherine Morland in *Northanger Abbey* says: “I really believe I shall always be talking of Bath when I am home again.”

For the Austen celebrations next year, if you would like to immerse yourself even more in the refined customs of the times and dress up in Regency period costume, you are welcome to bring your own, or apply (for an extra charge) to the Austen tour organisers ECT Travel to hire one or several different outfits for you. These will be delivered to The Gainsborough Bath Spa hotel in time for your arrival.

Some of the many celebration highlights include a private visit to No 1 Royal Crescent Museum, one of city’s most recognisable Georgian architectural landmarks. No 1 was the first house to be built on the Crescent and was where Austen often walked to when her family lived on Gay Street.

A visit to the Whitchurch Silk Mill, a 19th-century water mill that weaves English silk fabrics using 19th-century machinery, tells the story of Austen’s interest in the dress and fashion of the times. Far from being a dowdy spinster, Austen’s 161 known letters reveal a woman who was a keen observer of style, and whose thrifty characters reuse and



LIFE FEATURE

repurpose clothing to keep up with fashion. You will also visit Chawton House, an Elizabethan manor house that once belonged to Austen's brother Edward and which Austen referred to as the 'Great House' in her letters. Edward offered the bailiff's cottage nearby to his mother and sisters, Jane and Cassandra. This is now the Jane Austen House Museum, which is also on your celebration itinerary, and is where the author enjoyed the most prolific phase of her writing life.

These entertaining visits are interspersed with workshops hosted in a former chapel at The Gainsborough Bath Spa. These 'jovial and illuminating experiences' include a Regency dance class replete with a caller, piper music and

dance helpers, as well as an embroidery workshop, where needlewoman Alison Larkin will teach you to stitch a sprig. Several sumptuous feasts prepared with a Regency-theme by the head chef of the hotel is also on the cards.

As Jane Austen herself once wrote: "It's such happiness when good people get together."

To book one of the celebrations, please visit strictlyjaneausten.com/celebrating-jane-austen-2025
For more information about The Gainsborough Bath Spa, please visit thegainsboroughbathspa.co.uk



This and facing page: The Gainsborough Bath Spa is a five-star luxury hotel that's steeped in history and culture – including the world of Jane Austen and the influences of Regency England.





A ROOM WITH A ROOF- GARDEN VIEW

THE GLASSHOUSE HOTEL OFFERS AN
OASIS FROM THE SUMMER BUZZ OF
EDINBURGH'S WORLD-CLASS FESTIVALS.

Words by JUNE MONG-LOFTIN

To borrow and adapt a line from E.M. Forster's *A Room with a View*, "One doesn't come to [Edinburgh] for niceness, one comes for life."

Although small compared to London (population 9.7 million), Edinburgh, with a population of slightly more than 550,000, is considered one of the world's leading festival cities. Each summer, there are eight festivals happening at once, not to mention the Storytelling Festival in the autumn and the Edinburgh Hogmanay to usher in the New Year in December.

Families and film buffs come in May and June for the Edinburgh International Children's Festival and the Edinburgh International Film Festival. Founded in 1947, the latter was the UK's first international film festival and was originally focused on documentary filmmaking. Today, it hosts Hollywood stars and world premieres.





Above: the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo.

Facing page: the Edinburgh Fringe Festival (above); the Edinburgh Jazz & Blues Festival.

In July, music and art lovers are spoilt for choice during the 10 days of the Edinburgh Jazz & Blues Festival, with more than 170 concerts crammed into a packed schedule. The Edinburgh Art Festival, which also takes place in July, attracts more than 250,000 visitors each year, making it the UK's largest annual celebration of visual art.

As summer rolls into its twilight in the month of August, the festival circuit moves up another gear altogether, hosting three separate mega events. In the space of just three weeks, the Edinburgh Fringe Festival sells around 2.3 million tickets for more than 50,000 performances of about 3,500 theatre, dance, comedy, opera, music and cabaret shows.

Meanwhile, The Edinburgh International Festival's roots go right back to the post-war era, as Europe looked to forge a brighter future through artistic inspiration and expression. The festival brings together artists and organisations from across the globe to present an annual programme of music, dance, theatre and opera in the major theatres and grand halls of the Scottish capital.

Perhaps the most spectacular of them all is the annual Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo that takes place at the historic Edinburgh Castle Rock. The Tattoo has never had a cancelled performance since its inception in 1950, and sells out its entire 220,000 ticket allocation each and every year. Although 100 million people also watch it each year on television screens around the world, there's nothing quite like being there yourself.

If you are looking for a more chilled August experience, we recommend the Edinburgh International Book Festival. In

a tented village created each year, visitors will find an oasis of calm, where book lovers rub shoulders with world-famous authors. Book festival ticket holders often can be seen taking a break in the sunshine on a deckchair, nursing a drink in one hand and a favourite book in the other.

As the population of Edinburgh doubles in August, when visitors from across the world come to the city, the ideal way to enjoy these shows and entertainment is to stay at The Glasshouse Autograph Collection hotel in the city centre. This five-star property is that rare gem in a city hotel, a lushly planted rooftop garden that offers sweeping views of the UNESCO site, Calton Hill, and is the perfect calming oasis amidst the excitement of the festivals.

Out of the 77 rooms at The Glasshouse, 51 have direct access to an outdoor space in the form of either the rooftop garden or a terrace. From May to September, the Rooftop Bar collaborates with The Botanist on a summer menu of cocktails. Hotel guests also have a choice of outdoor yoga or Pilates sessions in the garden. If you have more ambitious events in mind, The Glasshouse team can help you plan anything, from an al fresco wedding ceremony to a rooftop summer barbecue social in the garden. The hotel enjoys an enviable location in Edinburgh, with the Picardy Place tram stop opposite the property. It is only a few minutes' walk from Edinburgh Waverley train station, while the lively St James Quarter is but a stone's throw away from The Glasshouse.

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

SUITE DREAMS

THE SPECTACULAR WEDGWOOD SUITE IN MONKEY ISLAND ESTATE IN BRAY IS WHERE NEPTUNE AND MERMAIDS DELIGHT THE DAYDREAMS AND EVENING REVERIES OF PAMPERED GUESTS.

Words by JUNE MONG-LOFTIN





At the heart of Monkey Island Estate in Bray is the dignified statue of the late Tan Sri Dato' Seri Yeoh Tiong Lay, seated under the shade of a tree. Years ago, something about the islet property touched his imagination, and he had the foresight to purchase the estate on a visit to the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. His statue now looks out peacefully towards the river.

More than 200 years ago, Monkey Island caught the eye of someone else who possessed equal foresight. It was the 17-year-old Honourable Charles Spencer, who had, at that time, neither inherited the title of Duke of Marlborough nor Blenheim Palace yet. What he saw was a fish-shaped island on the Thames, built on rubble from the Great Fire of London. Even at that young age, Lord Spencer knew he would need a retreat from the cares of the world one day and, in 1723, commissioned Palladian architect Robert Morris to create two new buildings on the island. These are now the Grade I-listed Temple and Pavilion of Monkey Island Estate.

It is in the former billiard room of the Temple that we have the most exclusive, jaw-dropping accommodation in Maidenhead, which is known as The Wedgwood Suite. Two years after Spencer acquired the island, he engaged Thomas Roberts of Oxford to decorate the suite. Roberts used intricate ivory jasperware plasterwork that he sculpted into mythical sea creatures.

When YTL Hotels purchased the property, it underwent 18 months of meticulous renovation to turn it into a splendid luxury hotel. Monkey Island Estate opened in the summer of 2019 and bookings for The Wedgwood Suite started to flow in, as did rave reviews. Carefully preserved was the fine ceiling, with the god Neptune, seashells and mermaids in classic blue and white Wedgwood, which is definitely the singular feature of this suite.

Guests at Monkey Island Estate can also book pampering treatments at the Floating Spa, quirkily housed on a cobalt-blue barge on the water that rocks soothingly when other boats pass. It's a truly unique space for decompressing – but it closes once a year for maintenance, so check before you book. Transport options to get to this unique property includes mooring for yachts. Would you expect anything less from the jewel in the crown of YTL Hotels' UK properties?

For more information, visit www.monkeyislandestate.co.uk

LIFE FEATURE

SOFT FEMININE POWER IN BLOOMSBURY

TAKE A HISTORICAL WALK FROM THE ACADEMY HOTEL
THROUGH 200 YEARS OF BRITISH ARTS AND SCIENCES.

Words by JUNE MONG-LOFTIN



The Academy Hotel is a quintessentially Bloomsbury property, a member of the exclusive stable of Small Luxury Hotels group and perfectly situated between a neighbourhood rich in British history and the world-famous West End theatre district in London. Within three blocks of The Academy Hotel are landmarks of remarkable British women from the past 200 years. They span the arts, medicine, space travel, politics, the suffrage movement and espionage. We recommend this self-guided walking tour from the 50-room, 240-year-old Georgian property the next time you check into the bijou address.

Start at Heal's on Tottenham Court Road to remember Lucienne Day (1917-2010), the 20th century textile designer who lit up postwar British homes because she believed that good things should have an affordable price tag. Lady Ottoline Morrell (1873-1938), at 44 Bedford Square, is famous for sponsoring, and bedding, many Bloomsbury artists. She was first cousin to the late Queen Mother and the inspiration for DH Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley*.

The rallying cry of suffrage leader Dame Millicent Fawcett (1847-1929), who lived at 2 Gower Street, was "Courage calls to courage everywhere!" Meanwhile, Fanny Eaton (1835-1924), Britain's most visible Victorian woman of colour and an icon of mixed heritage beauty, is associated with the Pre-Raphaelite studio on 7 Gower Street. She was the muse and model for artists like Rossetti and Millais. Nearby is Malet Street and Birkbeck University, whose alumni include Dr Helen Sharman (born 1963), the first British astronaut and first woman to visit the Mir space station in May 1991.



Clockwise from top: Lucienne Day; Lady Ottoline Morrell; Tottenham Court Road is a minute's walk from The Academy London.

Facing page: 33 Fitzroy Square.



Gordon Square Gardens is associated with British secret agent Noor Inayat Khan (1914-1944), who assisted the French resistance and contributed to the success of the D-Day landings. Descended from Indian royalty, Noor was eventually captured and killed.

In 1963, at the corner of Gower Street and Euston Road, superstar photographer Fiona Adams (1935-2020) took one of the defining images of 20th-century culture. It was a picture of four young men in dark suits jumping in the air, which would become the iconic cover of The Beatles' *Twist & Shout* album. Artist Gwen John (1876-1939) lived at 21 Fitzroy Street. She was a pupil of Whistler, an admirer of Cézanne and lover of Rodin, but was famous for her paintings of solitary women in quiet interiors.

In July 1913, Vanessa Bell (1879-1961) founded the Omega Workshops at 33 Fitzroy Square, famous for producing bold printed fabrics and textiles, ceramics, furniture and clothing. Her sister, Virginia Woolf, resided nearby at 29 Fitzroy Street.

Five of these accomplished nine women are linked to the Bloomsbury set, whose aesthetics and history are so much a part of the signature style of The Academy Hotel. Lady Ottoline Morrell, Dame Millicent Fawcett and Vanessa Bell were all acquainted with one another and visited each other's homes in the vicinity of the hotel. We recommend spending a quiet hour at the hotel's Alchemy Bar, nursing a cocktail and leafing through one of the Bloomsbury novels in the lounge to remember this remarkable constellation of talent by.

For more information, visit www.theacademyhotel.co.uk/

THE WONDERFUL WEST

OFTEN OVERLOOKED IN FAVOUR OF HER STYLISH
SISTER CITIES SYDNEY AND MELBOURNE, PERTH HIDES
A WEALTH OF COSMOPOLITAN DINING, INSPIRED TIPPLES
AND COOL CULTURAL ENCOUNTERS.

Words by LUANN ALPHONSO

Easily one of the most underrated cities in Australia, Perth sets itself at a glorious easy pace, enticing travellers with its unapologetic disregard for whims and trends that seem to take over other cities. Beyond the concrete skyline, the Margaret River region thrives on its beautiful landscapes and lush wines, but Perth city itself captivates with a growing list of excellent food and beverage concepts, and provocative art that is rising to the attention of global travellers.

Here are just a small yet robust sampling of what you and your loved ones can savour, experience and enjoy when making a trip to the capital of Western Australia.

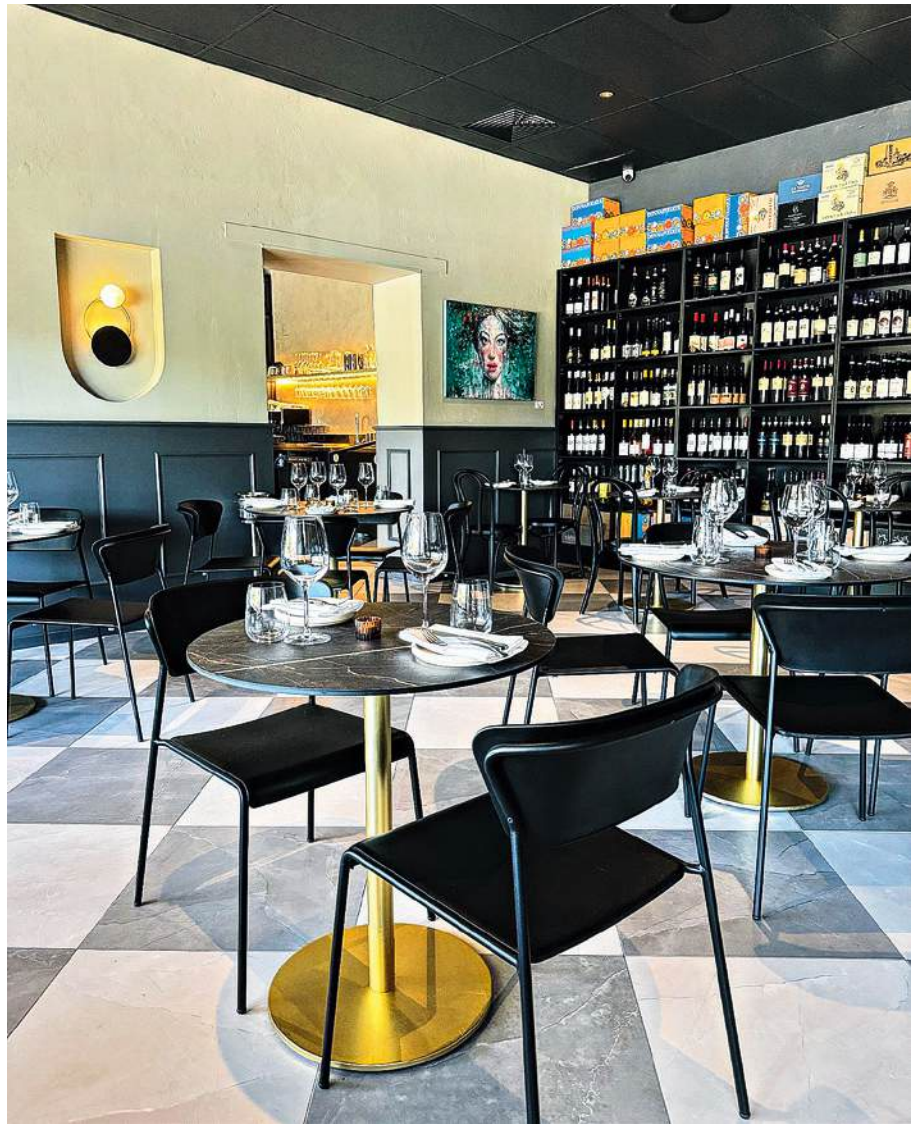
1. SANCTUARY OF SERENITY

Identified by the stunning 22m mural by Australian artist Tyrone Wright (aka Rone), The Westin Perth is an establishment that offers luxurious five-star experiences in the heart of Perth. Situated within Hibernian Place, the location provides convenient access to all of Perth's attractions. Savour exceptional Italian at Garum, their signature outlet; or rejuvenate your weary body at their world-class wellness facilities, which includes a heated infinity pool, fitness studio and a spa featuring botanical ingredients. For more information, please visit www.westinperth.com



2. FROM THE HEAVENS

Although inspired by the Roman god of wine, you'll find no unhinged revelry at Italian-Australian dining outfit, Bacco. What you do get is a modern, comfortable space anchored by an open wood-fire grill and a robust 140-label wine list. Classic, hearty dishes are complemented with local Australian ingredients, such as lamb rump with coffee and wattle seed jus, and fried Montanara dough topped with whipped nduja-spiked ricotta – a feast fit for kings. www.baccoshentonpark.com.au



3. MEDITERRANEAN WARMTH

A steady stalwart in the neighbourhood, this cozy mezze bar never fails to satisfy. Brika is lively, authentic and comforting, and patrons can choose to graze on *spanakopita* and sip a glass of Greek wine on the sidewalk during balmy evenings, or pop by the hole-in-wall coffee window for a spot of coffee and *yiros* (gyro) in the morning. Its wallet-friendly prices also mean that you can indulge in a plethora of delicious small plates without a second thought. www.brika.com.au





4. SPIRITED AWAY

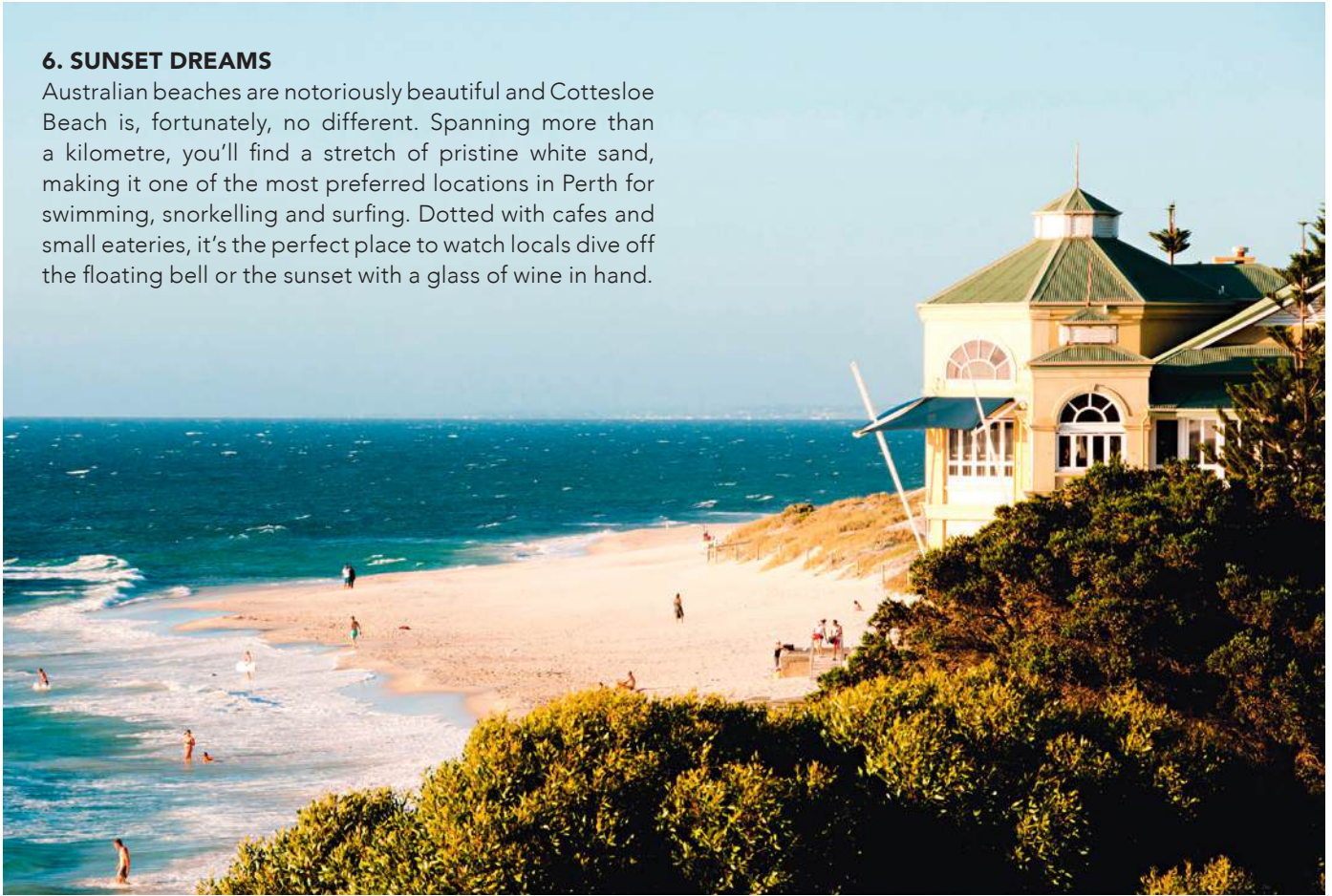
Take inspiration from off-beat urban locations that traditional izakayas usually embed themselves in, throw in a dash of cyberpunk and you'll get Papi Katsu, the city's latest Japanese offering, swathed in all its neon-lit glory. The menu leans towards fresh seafood, with an interesting selection of caviar and other raw dishes like oysters and Exmouth scallop. Patrons can also dig into safe, meatier options such as duck breast and premium A5 wagyu sirloin. Wash it all down with a highball or choose from their wonderful list of sake. www.papikatsu.com



5. METRO VINO The perks about an offering like H&C Urban Winery is not just the shortened trek to a vineyard in Margaret River; it also features an inspiring focus on spirits, thanks to a multi-talented ownership collective. At its fully operational winery located in Fremantle (half an hour's drive from the city centre), grapes are sourced within the state and produced onsite, and are best enjoyed with family-style platters that boast the best in local produce. www.urbanwinery.co

6. SUNSET DREAMS

Australian beaches are notoriously beautiful and Cottesloe Beach is, fortunately, no different. Spanning more than a kilometre, you'll find a stretch of pristine white sand, making it one of the most preferred locations in Perth for swimming, snorkelling and surfing. Dotted with cafes and small eateries, it's the perfect place to watch locals dive off the floating bell or the sunset with a glass of wine in hand.



7. TAKE FLIGHT

Get a bird's eye view of everything Perth has to offer with Fly Perth's scenic flights. You can pair various durations, ranging from two hours to two days, with seasonal highlights to make the most of your time. These include tours to Rottnest Island (a protected nature reserve with quokkas); a more adventurous Pinnacles Desert, Sand Dunes and Beach 4X4 tour for the brave; or a Margaret River fly-wine-lunch round trip for those who prefer a slower pace. www.flyperth.com.au



8. WALL-TO-WALL ART

Melbourne street artist Rone is world-famous for his large, lavish murals of beautiful Jane Does dotting the city's public spaces – including at The Westin Perth. But he is also known for creating immersive art encounters in abandoned buildings, and he brings his latest installation, *TIME*, to the Art Gallery of Western Australia, taking over 12 rooms of various themes and experiences that include his version of a prohibition themed bar, as well as a limited capacity sensory dining experience. www.time-rone-agwa.com



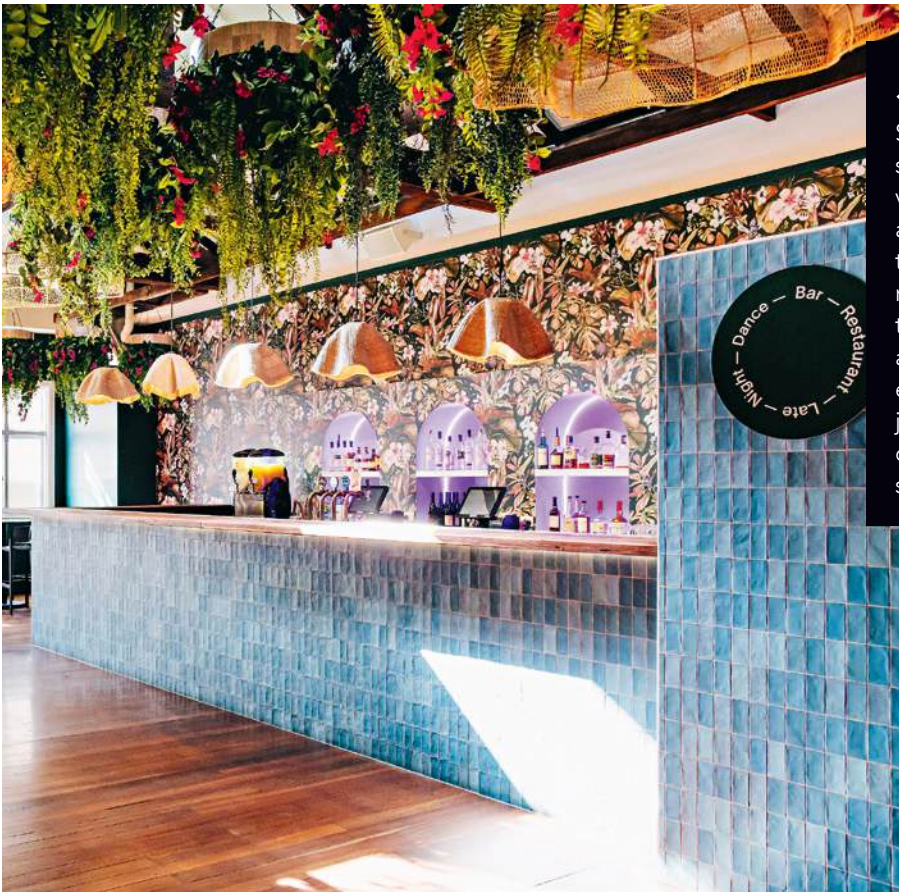
9. AN ASCOT HORSE-DRAWN CARRIAGE RIDE

In the stately elegance of a horse-drawn carriage, take in the sights of the surrounding countryside in the manner of lords and ladies. Relax and explore ancient woodlands, 18th-century lakes, grand avenues and delightful garden scenes, all the while being regaled by a carriage driver or guide who will provide insights into the history and lesser-known facts of the area. This horse-drawn carriage ride includes a 'romantic proposal' package for those who wish to make it a very special experience with their loved one.



10. HIDDEN PROVENANCE

To discover the hidden stories of Perth, follow Noongar guide Walter McGuire from Go Cultural Aboriginal Tours and Experiences. Walter shares his cultural heritage and personal stories through an enlightening walk around the city centre and Elizabeth Quay on the Swan River. Discover traditional Australian names for local plants used in medicine and feel the warmth of Australia's indigenous culture that has endured over time. www.gocultural.com.au



11. SPRING BREAK

Spring on Queen harkens back to the superclub era, where large multi-level venues were the ultimate in entertainment and nightlife. Updated to reflect current trends, this 450-person venue is a year-round party extravaganza with bottomless teapot cocktails, girls' night out packages and even a rave cave. You need not even leave if you're feeling peckish – just revitalise yourself at the restaurant offering an international menu of family style plates. www.springonqueen.com

12. OVER THE MOON

Explore our enduring fascination with the moon at the captivating *To the Moon* exhibition at WA Museum Boola Bardip. This enlightening encounter illuminates the significance of this particular natural satellite in popular culture, history and art. It uses a combination of lunar art, aboriginal beliefs and planetary science to help us understand the moon's significance within humanity's narrative. www.museum.wa.gov.au



MELBOURNE'S OASES OF HEALING

LET OFF STEAM AND SOAK UP THE MANY HEALING BENEFITS OF NATURAL GEOTHERMAL MINERAL WATER AT THESE HOT SPRING SPAS CONVENIENTLY LOCATED IN AND AROUND MELBOURNE.

Words by KARMUN NG



As a species made of mostly water residing on a planet covered largely in water, it stands to reason that the human body has plenty to benefit from water. When it comes to healing, nature's remedy spouts forth from geothermal hot springs, naturally occurring sources of water heated by the Earth's interior.

A soak immediately opens up pores and glands to drain toxins from the body, while trace minerals absorb into the body to heal skin issues, boost blood circulation, reduce arthritis symptoms, decrease blood pressures and more. In and around Melbourne, natural hot spring spas are aplenty, making it a destination of nature and wellness as much as city-skirting and food-tripping.



HEPBURN BATHHOUSE & SPA, DAYLESFORD

Known as Victoria's spa country, Daylesford has healed, treated and rejuvenated generations of guests with its pure, mineral-rich waters drawn directly from their natural source. Hepburn Bathhouse & Spa is a historic bathhouse that has been providing traditional wellness bathing since 1895. It draws its healing waters from the iconic Hepburn Mineral Springs, from which it also borrows its name, and offers unforgettable stay and dine packages via its signature Lake House experience that promises to transport you back in time and reconnect with the therapeutic benefits of mineral bathing.

PENINSULA HOT SPRINGS, MORNINGTON PENINSULA

More than 30 globally inspired bathing experiences await at Peninsula Hot Springs, from a Turkish hammam steam bath to Thalasso hydrojet pools and aquatherapy exercises. Located 90 minutes from Melbourne, the coastal oasis is proud to offer hot springs classified as 'true mineral springs', with water of dissolved solids measuring more than 2,500 parts per million (PPM) as verified by the Institute of Geological and Nuclear Sciences in New Zealand. Enjoy its healing baths alongside a serene natural setting and experiential daily activities.

ALBA, MORNINGTON PENINSULA

Nestled in native bushlands on a beautifully landscaped 15ha property, Alba offers a retreat of rejuvenation with 31 pools of varying sizes, including geothermal pools, cold plunge





pools and forest pools. Embrace the transformative power of water in a natural, coastal setting of the outdoor geothermal pools, or relax in any of its 22 spa treatment rooms. Once that has worked up an appetite, step into Thyme, where an all-day menu focused on locally sourced, seasonal produce, created by well-known Melbourne chef, restaurateur, cookbook author and television presenter, Karen Martin, can be savoured in the comforts of your bathrobe.

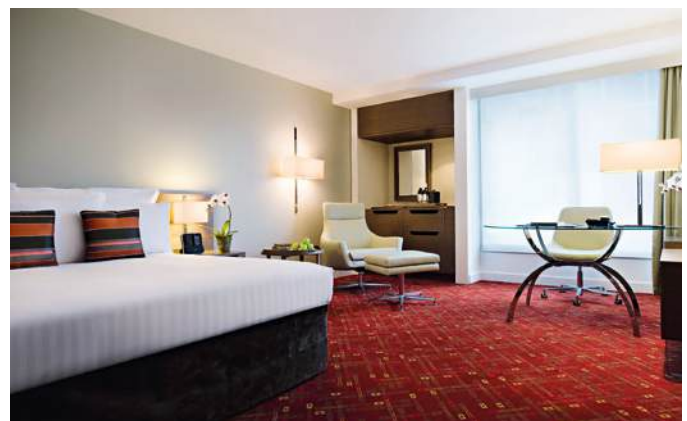
DEEP BLUE HOT SPRINGS, WARRNAMBOOL

The mineral waters of this award-winning geothermal mineral bathing sanctuary spill forth from open-air rock pools, sensory caves and cleansing waterfalls, gathered from 850m below the ground. Its unique mineral composition and surface temperature of 35-42°C support a range of physical and emotional health benefits. They are accompanied by other therapies including foot spas, cold plunges and twilight meditative sessions, all drawing from the benefits of the same healing waters.

WHERE TO STAY

Be conveniently located just a splash away from these springs of life with a stay at the Melbourne Marriott Hotel. The perfect home away from home for your family getaway or a luxe romantic staycation in the heart of Melbourne’s city centre, this five-star hotel is central to the Theatre District and popular attractions such as Parliament House, State Library of Victoria, Royal Exhibition Building and, of course, the best of the region’s natural geothermal hot springs.

For more information, visit marriott.com.au/melmc



THE WINNER'S CIRCLE

FROM THE EXHILARATING CITY2SURF TO THE DRAMATIC CLASHES OF THE BLEDISLOE CUP, SYDNEY OFFERS A RICH TAPESTRY OF SPORTING EVENTS AND HISTORIC VENUES. PARTICIPATE IN THE VARIOUS GAMES OF THE CITY AS A PARTICIPANT OR SPECTATOR – WHERE EVERY RACE AND MATCH LET YOU TELL YOUR STORY OF ATHLETIC TRIUMPH.

Words by LUANN ALPHONSO





The majestic Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race (this page) is world-famous, as is the colourful 14km City2Surf run (facing page).

Sydney's allure extends beyond its picturesque landscapes and vibrant culture. The city has long been a beacon for athletes and sports enthusiasts alike. However, sport in Sydney is not without its share of controversies. The city has witnessed heated debates over the Bledisloe Cup clashes, dramatic finishes in the Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race, and even contentious moments in tennis. Whether you're looking to participate in exhilarating races or spectate momentous matches, here's a good list for any aspiring athlete to join in the dynamic pulse of the city.

A RUNNER'S DREAM

Just think of the early morning sun, casting golden rays over the Sydney skyline, as you prepare to join thousands of runners for the iconic City2Surf. The event takes place on 11 August, and participants of all levels will complete a thrilling 14km distance. It begins in the heart of the central business district (CBD), passing through streets that signal each suburb with every step taken, and ends at Bondi Beach,

where a cool sea breeze meets those who had managed this far. The run is a colourful spectacle, with a strong charitable aspect further enhancing a lively atmosphere.

Meanwhile, the Sydney Marathon takes place in September and passes through Sydney's CBD. It's one of several options to enjoy breathtaking views of the Harbour Bridge and Sydney Opera House, which is a major incentive to finish every kilometre. Supporters and tourists alike can take advantage of the marathon to experience Sydney's busy streets, which are lined with enthusiastic spectators and live performances, transforming the entire city into one giant festival.

EXPERIENCE THE THRILL OF SPECTATING

For the rugby fanatics, this year's Bledisloe Cup represents the ultimate drama in sports. On 21 September, Wallabies will be seen facing their arch rivals – the All Blacks – in a fight for the prestigious accolade. Expectations and tensions are at an all-time high as Australian coach Joe Schmidt gets ready to confront his previous team.



The Sydney Marathon takes you to world-famous places such as the Harbour Bridge (above) while the Sydney Cricket Ground Museum (below) showcases sporting excellence from Australia and around the world.





From top: The Golden Sheaf; New Zealand's All-Blacks celebrate winning a The Bledisloe Cup; Sydney Harbour Marriott Hotel.

The summer season means that the Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race is just around the corner. Find a good spot on any of Sydney Harbour foreshore points on 26 December for a chance to see this breathtaking start of the ocean race with your own eyes. Colourful sails adorn the yachts, which will see them on their journey through 630 nautical miles (1,170km) up to Hobart. There's also opportunity to take a follow-up trip along with cruisers like Silver Spirit or Coast Cruises' luxurious catamaran.

STEP INTO SPORTING HISTORY

Located in the Eastern Suburbs, The Golden Sheaf – which was once called Double Bay Grounds, a significant venue for tennis history – is a must visit for all tennis aficionados. For instance, its wall of fame is dedicated to its Davis Cup past, and it is here where one discovers that, in 1909 and 1919, the Davis Cup and Australasian Championships (now the Australian Open) took place at Double Bay Grounds; both events were won by Australian tennis legend, Gerald Patterson.

Sydney Cricket Ground Museum is another ideal place to visit when one seeks to explore Sydney's sporting heritage from within. The precinct has witnessed some of the most celebrated figures on earth, such as Pele, Maradona, Muhammad Ali and Don Bradman. This museum provides an alternative angle to sport and social activities that have been part of Sydney's cultural fabric over the years.

Where To Stay

Nestled in the middle of all Sydney's major landmarks is Sydney Harbour Marriott Hotel at Circular Quay. Conveniently located at the cusp of all major transportation crossroads around Sydney, dining at the Marriott is equally effortless. Choose from a heritage gastrobar, a rustic laneway bar, or the award-winning Silvester's Restaurant and Lounge. Relax in one of their 595 rooms while you enjoy the best views of Sydney.

For more information, visit www.marriott.com



LIFE FEATURE

CULTURE ON THE COAST

BRISBANE IS UNDOUBTEDLY A CITY THAT EMBRACES A WIDE RANGE OF ARTISTIC EXPRESSION, FROM INTENSE MUSIC FESTIVALS TO BOUNDARY-PUSHING FASHION EVENTS, AS WELL AS THOUGHT-PROVOKING ART EXHIBITIONS TO SATIATE THE APPETITE OF EVERY CREATIVE TRAVELLER.

Words by LUANN ALPHONSO



Brisbane is a lively city and a city of plenty. It's also one that mesmerises with a stunning full cultural calendar of activities to rival most heritage cities. Look forward to unexpected pop-ups, deep dives into Australian history, as well as edgy independent films and music that celebrate humanity.



RHYTHM NATION

Wynnum Fringe is an award-winning festival that transforms the bayside suburb of Wynnum into a bustling creative hub. Every year, disused spaces are brought back to life through colourful street dressing, imaginative light design, and gourmet food trucks, fostering an atmosphere alive with people from diverse backgrounds. With free and ticketed events on offer, this fringe extends cultural access beyond Brisbane CBD by presenting various forms of art, entertainment and culture suitable for all age groups.

Since its establishment in 2013, Listen Out has become Australia's number one national dance music festival circuit across Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth and Sydney. What sets this particular festival apart from others is the broad mix between hip hop and electronic music. This year, current international acts such as 21 Savage, Tyla and John Summit will feature in the line-up.

CELEBRATING STYLE

Brisbane Fashion Festival is one of Australia's biggest fashion events on the calendar and it marks the beginning of Spring/Summer collections. Here, you will find some established iconic Australian names as well as promising new talents. Expect lots of glitz and glamour, creativity and stellar craftsmanship that reflect sustainability, inclusion and diversity for all.

One of the first designers to adopt 3D printing as a textile technique, Dutch visionary Iris van Herpen counts Beyonce, Bjork, Lady Gaga and Tilda Swinton among her fans. Her signature sculpturesque silhouettes capture intricate natural forms at various levels – from marine biology to quantum physics – so it's a must-see event for both fashionistas and art buffs. This exhibition, *Iris van Herpen, Sculpting the Senses*, is exclusive to Brisbane.



KEEPERS OF CULTURE

An Aboriginal and contemporary art hub that offers true immersion into First Nations culture through visual arts, music and dance performances, Birrunga Gallery also showcases artefacts as well as conducts food tasting sessions for a comprehensive insight into Australia's indigenous lifestyle. Led by Birrunga Wiradyuri, he hopes to share his rich understanding of Australia's first peoples' artistic practices while fostering respect for the nation's historic pasts.

WHERE TO STAY

A mere stone's throw from lively areas like Story Bridge and Howard Smith Wharves, where cafes and bars are aplenty, the Brisbane Marriott Hotel also offers panoramic river views and comfortable accommodation in the centre of it all. Motion Dining provides top-of-the-line Australian cuisine, served in a sleek atmosphere. The hotel is perfect for those seeking some indulgence during their stay, alongside an attractive outdoor pool to take in the capital of the Sunshine State.

For more information, visit brisbanemarriott.com

This page, from top: The Wynnum Fringe festival; artist Birrunga Wiradyuri; the Executive Suite of the Marriott Brisbane.

Facing page: The Iris van Herpen, *Sculpting the Senses* exhibition.





GAYA ISLAND RESORT
DISTINCTIVELY BORNEO



PANGKOR LAUT RESORT
ONE ISLAND. ONE RESORT



SET WITHIN TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN MARINE PARK, GAYA ISLAND RESORT IS A JEWEL LOCATED OFF THE CAPITAL OF SABAH, KOTA KINABALU. GOLDEN SANDY BEACHES AND CRYSTAL-CLEAR WATERS TEEMING WITH MARINE LIFE ARE COMPELLING ATTRACTIONS, WHILE ITS SPA VILLAGE OFFERS OPPORTUNITIES TO SAMPLE AUTHENTIC BORNEO-INSPIRED THERAPIES.

GAYAISLANDRESORT.COM



THIS LUXURIOUS RESORT IS SET ON A PRIVATE TROPICAL ISLAND ON THE STRAITS OF MALACCA. VILLAS EITHER FRINGE THE HILLSIDE OR ARE GRACEFULLY BALANCED ON STILTS OVER WATER. AN AWARD-WINNING SPA VILLAGE OFFERS WORLD-CLASS TREATMENTS DERIVED FROM CHINESE, INDIAN AND MALAY HEALING TRADITIONS.

PANGKORLAUTRESORT.COM





TANJONG JARA RESORT
UNMISTAKABLY MALAY



CAMERON HIGHLANDS RESORT
TRAILS, TALES AND TRADITIONS



TANJONG JARA RESORT ON THE EAST COAST OF PENINSULAR MALAYSIA EMBODIES THE ESSENCE OF MALAY CULTURE AND TRADITIONS. FACING THE SOUTH CHINA SEA AND SURROUNDED BY THE LUSH GREEN BEAUTY OF THE LOCAL COUNTRYSIDE, THIS RESORT REVEALS A QUIETER BUT EQUALLY ATTRACTIVE SIDE TO MALAYSIA.

TANJONGJARARESORT.COM



EVOKING THE SPLENDOUR, THE ROMANCE AND THE NOSTALGIA OF ONE OF MALAYSIA'S OLDEST HILL STATIONS AND ITS GRAND COLONIAL HERITAGE, CAMERON HIGHLANDS RESORT, WITH ITS LUXURIOUS ROOMS AND AWARD-WINNING SPA VILLAGE, IS THE BEST PLACE TO TAKE IN THE AREA'S ROLLING HILLS, TEA PLANTATIONS, ROSE GARDENS AND STRAWBERRY FARMS.

CAMERONHIGHLANDSRESORT.COM





THE RITZ-CARLTON

KOH SAMUI



THE RITZ-CARLTON

KUALA LUMPUR



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

RITZCARLTON.COM/KOHSAMUI



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

RITZCARLTON.COM/KUALALUMPUR




JW MARRIOTT
KUALA LUMPUR

HOTEL
STRIPES
KUALA LUMPUR
—
AUTOGRAPH COLLECTION®
HOTELS



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

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

JWMARRIOTTKUALALUMPUR.COM



STRIPESKL.COM



S
THE
STARHILL



THE STARHILL IS THE NEW HOME OF THE TASTEMAKERS IN KUALA LUMPUR THAT OFFERS THE BEST OF EXPERIENTIAL RETAIL IN A BOUTIQUE ENVIRONMENT, EXUDING ELEGANCE AND A REFINED HOME-LIKE AMBIENCE INFUSED WITH WARM HOSPITALITY AND STYLISH AESTHETICS FOR ALL ITS TOUCH POINTS. A FINE CURATION OF ONE-OF-A-KIND FLAGSHIP STORES OF GLOBAL PREMIUM BRANDS IN HIGH FASHION, TIMEPIECES, JEWELLERY, WELLNESS AND LIFESTYLE INDULGENCES PAIR UP WITH THE BEST OF INTERNATIONAL AND ASIAN CUISINES IN CAFES, BISTROS AND RESTAURANTS, AWAITING ALL WHO HAVE A DISCERNING PALATE FOR STYLE AND TASTE.

THESTARHILL.COM.MY



S
THE
STARHILL
DINING



THE STARHILL DINING CELEBRATES CULINARY SOPHISTICATION, BRINGING TO DINERS FRESH, SEASONAL AND GLOBALLY INSPIRED DINING EXPERIENCES WITH A DIVERSE SPREAD OF GASTRONOMIC CREATIONS SERVED BY THE TASTEMAKERS, EACH WITH A UNIQUE FOOD PROGRAMMING. THE STARHILL DINING'S COLLECTION OF CAPTIVATING DINING AND ENTERTAINMENT CONCEPTS INCLUDES SHOOK!, KUALA LUMPUR'S CHOICE RESTAURANT THAT CONTINUES TO FUEL THE IMAGINATION; LUK YU TEA HOUSE THAT EMBRACES A POETIC CHINESE HERITAGE; THE ALCHEMY, FEATURING GIN BOTANICALS FOR EVERY SEASON; THE POPULAR JOGOYA RESTAURANT; AND FINE ARABIC CUISINE AT TARBUSH LOUNGE.

THESTARHILLDINING.COM



THE SURIN

PHUKET



VILLA TASSANA

PHUKET



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

[THESURINPHUKET.COM](http://thesurinphuket.com)



VILLA TASSANA IS SET ON PHUKET'S IDYLIC NAI THON BEACH, SET AMID A TROPICAL FOREST AND OVERLOOKING THE EMERALD ANDAMAN SEA. IT OFFERS 2,800 SQUARE METRES OF LIVING SPACE, WITH THREE OPULENT BEDROOMS, A 15-METRE POOL, AND LIVING AND DINING PAVILIONS. SPA, SPORTS AND GOLFING, INCLUDING THE BLUE CANYON COURSE INCLUDING THE BLUE CANYON COURSE, ARE WITHIN EASY REACH.

TRAVELCENTRE@YTLHOTELS.COM.MY



REGARDED AS THE CRADLE OF MALAYSIAN HISTORY, MALACCA IN ITS HEYDAY WAS A PORT CITY THAT WELCOMED SPICE TRADERS, SULTANS AND WARRIORS. SOAK UP THE MAGIC AND THE HISTORY AT THE MAJESTIC MALACCA, THE CITY'S FINEST HOTEL, BUILT IN THE 1920S AND FURBISHED WITH INTERIORS INDICATIVE OF THE CITY'S RICH CULTURE.

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

MAJESTICMALACCA.COM



MAJESTICKL.COM



THE
GAINSBOROUGH
BATH SPA

THREADNEEDLES
LONDON



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

THEGAINSBOROUGHBATHSPA.CO.UK



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

HOTELTHREADNEEDLES.CO.UK



THE ACADEMY

LONDON



MONKEY ISLAND ESTATE
BRAYON-THAMES



SITUATED IN BLOOMSBURY, THE ACADEMY COMPRISES A COLLECTION OF FIVE GEORGIAN TOWNHOUSES COMBINED INTO ONE CHARMING LUXURY HOTEL. THIS REJUVENATED 50-GUEST ROOM/SUITE BOUTIQUE HOTEL JUXTAPOSES TIMELESS GLAMOUR AND A CONTEMPORARY TAKE ON TOWNHOUSE LIVING.

MONKEY ISLAND ESTATE IS LOCATED ON A PICTURESQUE ISLAND ON THE RIVER THAMES IN THE HISTORIC VILLAGE OF BRAY, BERKSHIRE. SET ACROSS SEVEN ACRES, THE PROPERTY FEATURES 41 EXQUISITE ROOMS DESIGNED BY THE AWARD-WINNING NEW YORK-BASED CHAMPALIMAUD DESIGN AS WELL AS SIX PRIVATE RESIDENCES.

THEACADEMYHOTEL.CO.UK



MONKEYISLANDESTATE.CO.UK



THE GLASSHOUSE

EDINBURGH



THE YTL LUXURY MAGAZINE

THIS LUXURY BOUTIQUE HOTEL IS CONSIDERED ONE OF THE BEST PLACES TO STAY IN EDINBURGH, WITH COSY CONTEMPORARY INTERIORS, WARM SCOTTISH SERVICE AND CONSISTENTLY SPECTACULAR VIEWS OF THE CITY CENTRE AND CALTON HILL FROM THE HOTEL'S TWO-ACRE ROOFTOP GARDEN.

THEGLASSHOUSEHOTEL.CO.UK



CENTRALLY LOCATED NEAR THE HAGUE CITY CENTRE AND THE NORTH SEA COAST, THE HAGUE MARRIOTT FEATURES CONTEMPORARY STYLE WITH A WARM AMBIENCE. THE 306 COMFORTABLE AND SPACIOUS ROOMS AND SUITES ARE THOUGHTFULLY APPOINTED WITH STYLISH DESIGN ACCENTS AND COMPLIMENTARY WI-FI. MANY OF THE CITY'S ATTRACTIONS ARE LOCATED NEARBY.

THEHAGUEMARRIOTT.COM





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

SPAVILLAGERESORT.COM



A GLAMOROUS AND PRIVATE HIDEAWAY IN THE SOUTH OF FRANCE, MUSE SAINT-TROPEZ IS ALL ABOUT THE HIGH LIFE. LOCATED IN RAMATUELLE AND SURROUNDED BY FORESTS OF UMBRELLA PINES, THIS BOUTIQUE PROPERTY FEATURES JUST 15 SUITES, EACH OF WHICH IS NAMED AFTER FAMOUS 'MUSES'.

MUSE-HOTELS.COM





MARRIOTT
MELBOURNE



MARRIOTT
SYDNEY HARBOUR



THE MELBOURNE MARRIOTT IS CENTRALLY LOCATED, CLOSE TO THE CITY'S THEATRE PRECINCT, SHOPPING DISTRICTS AND CHINATOWN. FEATURING WORLD-CLASS SERVICE, ALL 186 WELL-APPOINTED ROOMS AND SUITES ARE MODERN AND ELEGANT. FACILITIES INCLUDE A HEATED INDOOR POOL, GYMNASIUM, SIGNATURE RESTAURANT AND VIBRANT LOUNGE.

MARRIOTT.COM/AU/MELMC



THE 563-ROOM SYDNEY HARBOUR MARRIOTT IS SET IN THE HEART OF CIRCULAR QUAY, OVERLOOKING THE HARBOUR BRIDGE AND OPERA HOUSE. GUESTS WILL FIND THEMSELVES NEAR DINING, FASHION AND ENTERTAINMENT HOTSPOTS. THE SYDNEY HARBOUR BRIDGE, OPERA HOUSE, THE ROCKS AND HYDE PARK ARE ALL MOMENTS AWAY.

MARRIOTT.COM/SYDMC





THE WESTIN

PERTH



THE BRISBANE MARRIOTT, WITH 267 ROOMS AND SUITES, IS IDEALLY PLACED BETWEEN BRISBANE'S CBD AND THE FORTITUDE VALLEY HUB. WITH A STUNNING BACKDROP OF THE BRISBANE RIVER, STORY BRIDGE, KANGAROO POINT CLIFFS AND CITY SKYLINE, THE HOTEL IS CLOSE TO SHOPPING, RIVERSIDE DINING, THE COMMERCIAL DISTRICT AND CULTURAL ATTRACTIONS.

BRISBANEMARRIOTT.COM



THE 368-ROOM WESTIN PERTH IS LOCATED IN THE REVITALISED EAST END OF PERTH KNOWN AS THE HISTORIC HEART OF THE CITY, CLOSE TO SHOPPING MALLS, ELIZABETH QUAY AND THE VIBRANT SWAN RIVER PRECINCT. THE HOTEL IS THE CORNERSTONE OF HIBERNIAN PLACE, FEATURING A LIVELY AND ECLECTIC MIX OF BARS, CAFÉS AND RESTAURANTS.

WESTINPERTH.COM



NV Niseko Village
Always in Season



HINODE HILLS
NISEKO VILLAGE

THE
GREEN *gb* LEAF
Niseko Village


Hilton
Niseko Village

KASARA
NISEKO VILLAGE
—TOWNHOUSE—



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

NISEKO-VILLAGE.COM



Higashiyama
NISEKO VILLAGE A RITZ-CARLTON RESERVE



HIGASHIYAMA NISEKO VILLAGE, A RITZ-CARLTON RESERVE, SETS A COMMUNION WITH NATURE WITH EVERY ELEMENT OF THE EXPERIENCE. HOKKAIDO'S SEASONS TRANSFORM THE UNIQUE LANDSCAPE, SETTING THE SCENE FOR UNFORGETTABLE ADVENTURES INTO THE SOUL OF NISEKO. THE FIRST RITZ-CARLTON RESERVE TO GRACE JAPAN, HIGASHIYAMA NISEKO VILLAGE RESIDES AT THE BASE OF MOUNT NISEKO ANNUPURI, WITH PANORAMIC VIEWS OF MOUNT YOTEI AND THE SURROUNDING MOUNTAIN RANGES. EMBRACE A NEW LEVEL OF BESPOKE LUXURY IN HOKKAIDO WITH THE EXQUISITE REFINEMENT OF A RITZ-CARLTON RESERVE TO RETURN TO EACH DAY.

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

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Q & A: MOTOKAZU YONEZAWA

THE AFFABLE CHEF, KNOWN TO HIS FRIENDS AND FAMILY AS CHEF MOKA, SHARES WHAT HE LOVES ABOUT NISEKO VILLAGE AND WHY YOU SHOULD VISIT IT SOON.

Words by EUGENE PHUA

Please tell us about your new restaurant Moka in Niseko Village.

Tourists from all over the world visit Niseko, so I have been able to serve my own original Italian cuisine to people from all over the world at Moka. This experience has allowed me to learn about their food preferences and values as well. I am also grateful for the opportunity to serve dishes made with ingredients from Niseko as well as various regions of Malaysia by working together with YTL. Many of the employees have been working for the group for a long time, and I have the impression that there is a strong sense of stability in YTL.

What is your favourite thing about Niseko and why should guests visit Moka and Niseko Village?

I recommend Niseko because it's a place with clean air, beautiful views, and high-quality water and ingredients, while Niseko Village has plenty of well-equipped facilities and a frequent shuttle bus service, which makes it so convenient for guests.

A lot of my dishes are made using ingredients from Niseko as well as the rest of Hokkaido. I'd say that my cuisine is a 'marriage' of ingredients and unique flavours, which uses seasonings and cooking methods to bring out the best of each ingredient, and create a beautifully balanced dish and a taste that lingers in the mouth. I'm also very particular about cooking and meat preparation methods, to ensure that the meat and food we serve is juicy, tender and safe to eat. And I'm also a professional sommelier, so guests can savour our dishes with wine and sake pairings.

You and your wife Noriko have been in Malaysia for many years. What's unique about Malaysians and their love of Japanese cuisine and culture?

It seems to me that because Malaysia is a country with a lot of multiracial diversity, we need to serve and also adjust the dishes we create depending on their culture and to match their preferences. But I think that, over the years, Malaysians' love for Japanese food and culture has barely changed at



all. However, I've noticed that the number of Japanese food ingredients and seasonings available in Malaysian supermarkets has increased, and it seems that Japanese food culture is becoming more and more popular.

Finally, could you please explain the spirit of *omotenashi* and why it's so important in Japanese culture and cuisine?

Omotenashi is the highest level of taking care of our guests, and showing them our very best attention, consideration and thoughtfulness. I think that *omotenashi* is very important in Japanese culture because many Japanese people have it in their DNA. It values the spirit of harmony in terms of communicating with one another, instead of thinking of eating as merely a means of maintaining health or supplying energy for living.



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