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On her: ROBERTO CAVALLI dress; earrings and bracelet, stylist's own.

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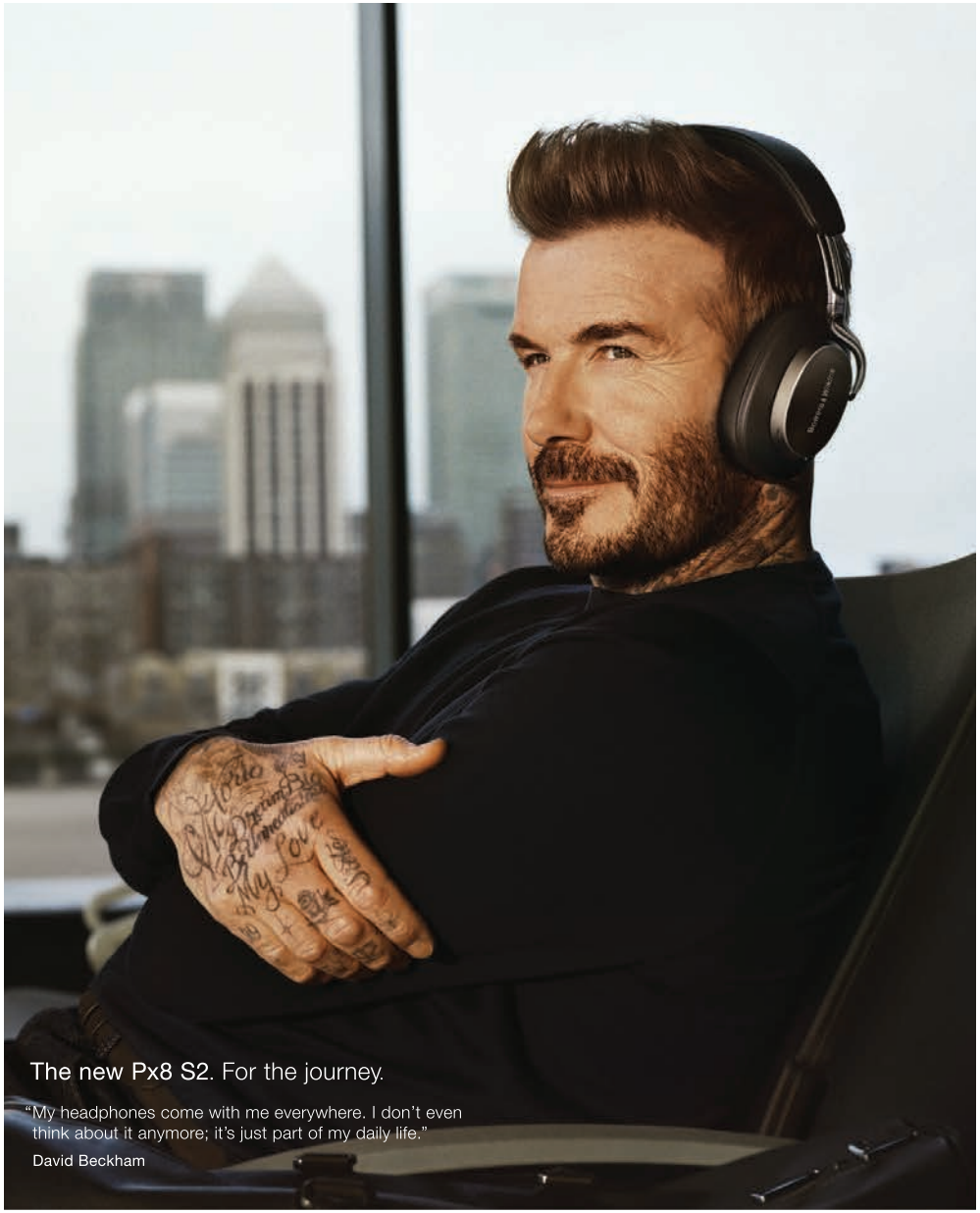

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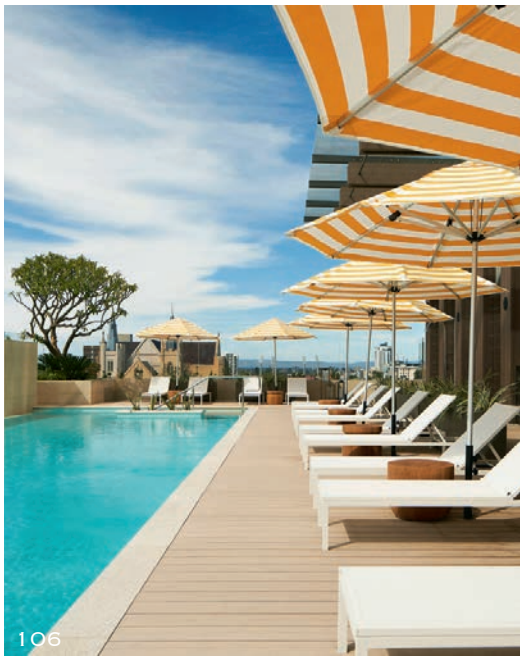

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In this issue of YTL Life, we welcome autumn at our properties in the United Kingdom – principally London, Berkshire, Bath, and Edinburgh, and also bear witness to the changing colours of trees in Niseko Village, where we offer five different choice accommodations and Niseko-yo, our gourmet paradise and entertainment hub in the village.

Down Under, it is springtime with Marriott hotels in Melbourne, Brisbane, and Sydney, as well as The Westin Perth – the last of which offers cool nights with rare celestial events. In Asia, we celebrate sunshine and cooler evenings in properties such as the coastal paradise of Tanjong Jara, island resorts on Gaya and Pangkor Laut, and Cameron Highlands Resort with its perpetual cooling climes.

And in two Malaysian cities, namely Kuala Lumpur and Ipoh, we welcome the two latest properties to the fold. In Ipoh, which developed from the tin-mining boom in colonial-era Malaya, YTL Hotels welcomes AC Hotels by Marriott, Ipoh – the perfectly precise hotel. Located right in the heart of the city centre, steps from the city council and square, the hotel brings Luk Yu Tea House with Chinese soul food and dim sum, as well as pickleball courts, a karaoke room, opulent ballrooms for celebrations big and small, and a rooftop pool with sweeping views of the city and its distant limestone hills.

In the conurbation that is greater Kuala Lumpur, the township of Puchong will also see a new AC Hotel in Puchong, the fifth AC Hotel under YTL Hotels here in Malaysia, joining sister properties in Kuala Lumpur's Titiwangsa, Penang, and Kuantan, Pahang.

Flip the pages and discover all of the experiences that await – from a discovery of Chinese living heritage in Malaysia's East Coast, to the yearly Festa San Pedro at The Majestic Malacca, with its attendant revelry and gastronomic melange that combines Portuguese and local influences that result in a thoroughly unique taste sensation.

Most of all, our many YTL Hotels properties will enable you to enjoy these treasured places in doing things that have the most meaning for you. I'm inspired by the words of jazz singer Stacey Kent, who was recently a guest at The Majestic Hotel Kuala Lumpur. Her best memories of being away from home and on the road are simply in the little joys of doing things with her 'best friend' – her musician husband Jim Tomlinson, whom she enjoys sitting down to a meal with, doing a crossword, and riffing.

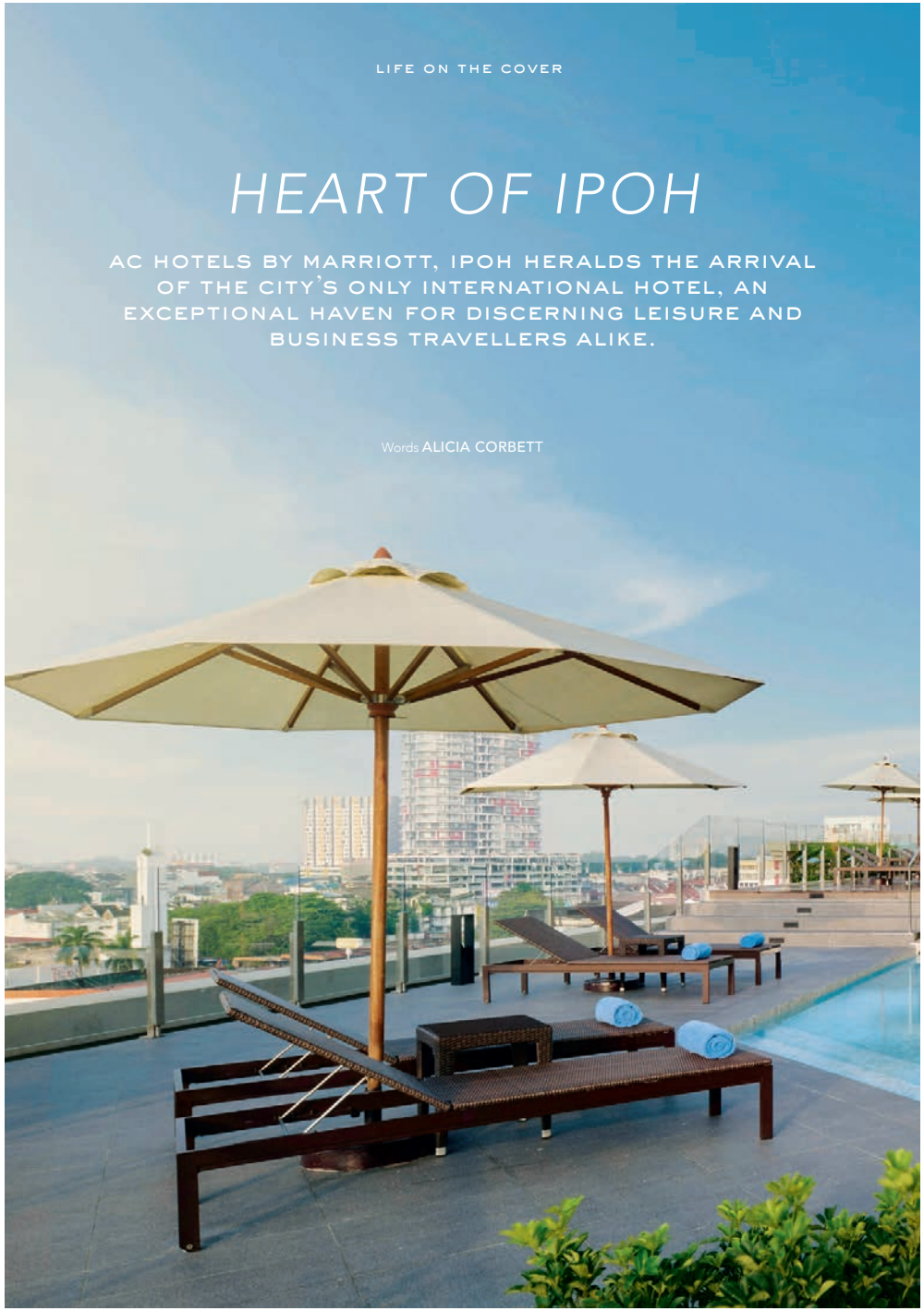
Enjoy the issue!



HEART OF IPOH

AC HOTELS BY MARRIOTT, IPOH HERALDS THE ARRIVAL OF THE CITY'S ONLY INTERNATIONAL HOTEL, AN EXCEPTIONAL HAVEN FOR DISCERNING LEISURE AND BUSINESS TRAVELLERS ALIKE.

Words ALICIA CORBETT







LIFE ON THE COVER



In recent years, the 'Tin Mining City' is seeing the emergence of its second heyday, with Ipoh's Old Town transforming into a charming fusion of restored colonial relics, colourful street murals, and boutique cafés that sit alongside traditional Cantonese-style hawker fare. Here, visitors can also frequent the narrow and bustling Concubine Lane, filled with souvenir and craft stalls, as well as Instagrammable hotspots. Ipoh's economic focus in recent years has also shifted from its historic reliance on tin mining toward sustainable development through ecotourism, green infrastructure, local food systems, and community-driven growth.

To cater to both leisure seekers and business travellers who want to discover all of the charms of Ipoh, the hotel the city has been waiting for has finally arrived. AC Hotels by Marriott, Ipoh marks the arrival of the city's first and only international hotel brand, one of more than 150 AC Hotels around the globe. The hotel brand, which was founded in Spain by Antonio Catalan and later made global by Marriott, delivers minimalist, European-inspired aesthetics within purposefully designed environments.

Peter Gomez, General Manager, AC Hotels by Marriott, Ipoh, shared, "Following the success of the AC Hotels by Marriott presented by YTL Hotels in Penang, Kuantan, and Kuala Lumpur, we're proud to unveil the brand's largest hotel in Malaysia. We have introduced a host of distinctive facilities that significantly expand upon the offerings available at our other hotels."

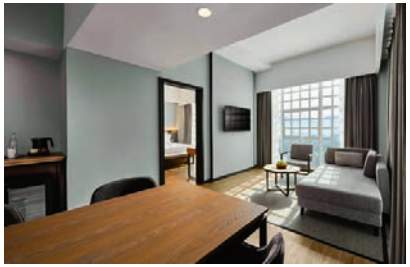
Located at 88, Jalan Sultan Abdul Jalil within Ipoh New Town and a stone throw's away from Old Town, AC Hotels by Marriott, Ipoh is a gateway to the gastronomic and historical offerings nearby. This includes the Sinhalese Bar, one of the oldest in the country, which first opened its saloon-style swing doors in 1931 and still stands today as a living testament to Ipoh's rich heritage. The hotel also offers seamless connectivity, thanks to its strategic location near major transport hubs, with the Sultan Azlan Shah Airport slightly less than 15 minutes away and the Ipoh KTM Railway Station only requiring a seven-minute drive. Just across the road is one of the city's premier shopping destinations, Ipoh Parade, while the Lost World of Tambun is a mere 15 minutes' drive away.

COMFORT REDEFINED

Each of the 291 rooms has been thoughtfully designed for a seamless visit, with AC Hotel's signature focus on optimal comfort and functionality within open spaces. Each room features sleek desks to work from as well as an open closet for easy access to items for the busy traveller. Guests can book a stay in the introductory room offering, the Prime Deluxe King, which includes one King bed and one sofa bed, while the most popular room category is the AC Suite, which includes two bathrooms and spans 65 sq m. Guests can rejuvenate in AC Hotel's vegan and cruelty-free Mangosteen bath amenities, known for their relaxing scents. For an ultimate night's sleep, pick up a sachet of fresh lavender at the DIY Lavender Turndown corner at the lobby before heading up to your room.

For elevated getaways, AC Hotels by Marriott, Ipoh also has three penthouse rooms and a Chairman suite, all with access to the private Penthouse Pool on the 11th floor. The penthouse rooms are duplexes, each styled with interiors reminiscent of a stately English manor and has already hosted members of the Malaysian royal family. The Chairman Suite includes three floors and features a private elevator, an expansive living area, a dining room that seats eight, a meeting room, and a balcony.

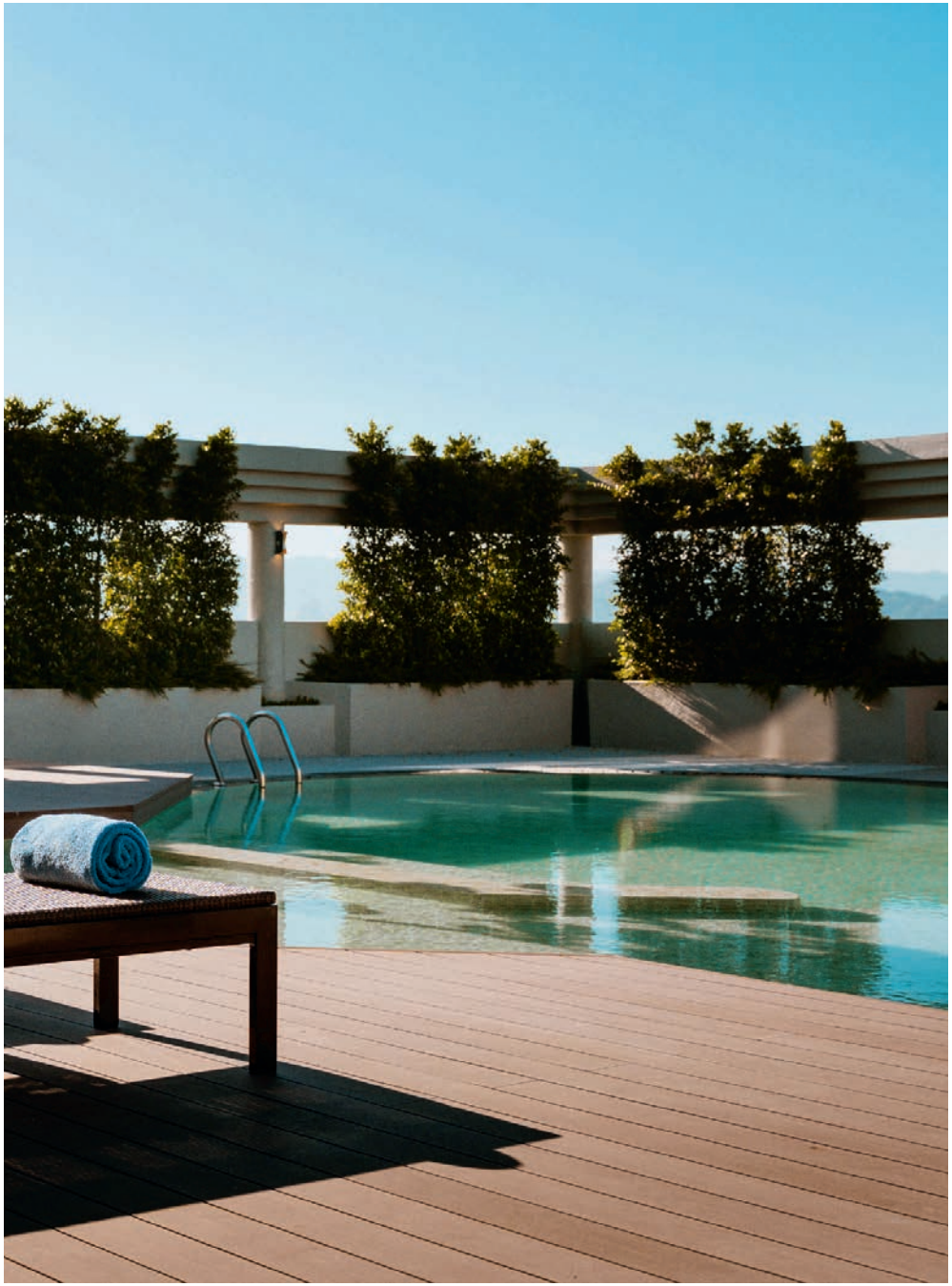




Top: living room of the penthouse.
Below: bedroom of the AC Suite.

Facing page: the private Penthouse Pool on the 11th floor.







Top: The AC Center Court, where guests can play pickleball.
Below: Dim sum offerings at the Luk Yu Tea House.

Facing page: The Ipoh Tin Mine Club Bar.

WORK, UNWIND, EAT

After exploring the city, guests can find respite from the outside heat by enjoying the numerous facilities at the hotel. AC Hotels by Marriott, Ipoh boasts a large air-conditioned pickleball court on its roof for players of all abilities who want to participate in this fast-growing sport. Just outside is a putting green, where guests can attempt a hole-in-one, while taking in the panoramic views of the city, including the limestone hills. Then, channel your inner songbird with a karaoke session at Studio 88, which comprises six private rooms, with the biggest large enough for a party of 16. After that, engage in some friendly competition at the Games Room, which includes a ping pong table, pool table, table football, and dedicated gaming computers. Guests can also relax and rejuvenate their aching bodies at the AC Day Spa, with massage therapists available upon request. There is also a swimming pool and fitness centre, perfect for guests looking to stay active during their visit.

Guests start their day with continental breakfast offerings, such as Spanish Garlic Egg, complemented by Malaysian favourites such as Ayam Masak Kicap and Roti Canai at the AC Kitchen. Otherwise, unwind with signature cocktails at the AC Lounge along with modern European tapas such as Gambas al Ajillo or Seafood Paella. Sample the homestyle Cantonese specialties or Hong Kong dim sum at the Luk Yu Tea House, with a menu curated by Alex Au, head chef of Hong Kong's famous Pak Loh Chiu Chow, and The Starhill Dining's Chef Leong and Dim Sum Tastemaker Chef Jun.





THE IPOH TIN MINE CLUB MEMBERSHIP

The city is famously known as 'The City That Tin Built', as the discovery of vast tin deposits in the Kinta Valley led to Ipoh's rapid growth and wealth, and transformed the area entirely. Less than 10 minutes' drive from the hotel is Han Chin Pet Soo, the former home of the Hakka Tin Miners Club, which has been turned into a museum that allows visitors to step back in time to the glory days of tin mining.

Similarly at AC Hotels by Marriott, Ipoh, live like a towkay by being a member of The Ipoh Tin Mine Club. Created especially for locals who appreciate exceptional experiences without leaving the region as well as frequent travellers to Ipoh, this programme offers curated perks all year round to members.



WALKING THROUGH MEMORY LANE

Victor R. Corbett, who was born and raised in Greentown, Fifth Avenue, in Ipoh before moving to Penang at the age of 25, reflects on Ipoh's touristic attractions and remembers when his grandfather sold the Capitol Theatre to the Shaw Brothers Studio. "It was one of the few entertainment hubs in the town. However, in the 1960s and 1970s, it showed mostly Chinese movies," he remembers. "Sadly, this has now been demolished and another building, comprising shop lots, now stands in its place.

"I also remember when the *chee cheong fun* now sold in Thean Chun Coffee Shop was first sold at St. Michael's Institution in the canteen for only 10 cents," he continues. "It is now around RM5. It is still run by the same owner, who is now in his 70s. For me, the *kai see hor fun*, or chicken noodle soup, is one of the best and it only used to be 20 cents."





Above and left: the Penthouse pavilion.

MEETINGS & MEMORIES

For those looking to host corporate events or couples wanting to tie the knot, the hotel has an array of spaces to meet their needs. The hotel sets the stage for unforgettable occasions with the city's largest ballroom, accommodating up to 800 guests, while the Junior Ballroom offers a more intimate setting for up to 250 guests, both equipped with LED screens. In between meetings, guests can head to the AC Genius Lab, an innovative co-working space, which includes hot desks, meeting rooms, a spacious lounge, and two private offices that comfortably hosts more than 100 persons. Boardrooms and forum rooms are also available to cater to a variety of meeting formats and professional needs.

The perfect place to exchange vows at the hotel is on the rooftop of the Penthouse pavilion, with views overlooking the city. The indoor cocktail lounge merges seamlessly with the outdoor area decorated with arches draped with lush creepers to create a romantic setting. For an unforgettable banquet, opt for tailored menus from Malaysian to Western cuisine, plus bespoke wedding cakes and desserts. Otherwise, add a touch of Cantonese gastronomic flair to your event with an authentic Chinese feast, with a menu curated by Chef Alex Au, Chef Leong, and Chef Jun. After the festivities, guests can retire to the modern rooms upstairs, while newlyweds can enjoy the elegant suites.

"Whether you're uncovering the layers of Ipoh's history and culture for the first time or rediscovering its timeless allure, AC Hotels by Marriott, Ipoh offers a refined retreat where sophisticated spaces designed with care meets modern hospitality in the city's prime locale," Gomez said.

For more information, visit www.marriott.com/en-us/hotels/iphac-ac-hotel-ipoh/overview.



On him: SANDRO polo tee, pants, and bag.

On her: SANDRO jumpsuit; MAJE bag and belt; scarf, necklace, and bracelet, stylist's own.

URBANE DELIGHTS

WHETHER ON GROUND LEVEL OR ON THE ROOFTOP, EXPLORING ITS NEIGHBORHOOD, OR ENJOYING ITS AMENITIES, HOTEL STRIPES KUALA LUMPUR IS RICH WITH HERITAGE, SPLENDOUR, AND PIZZAZZ.

Producer and creative direction: JEMMIE CHEW
Photographer: HERRY CHIA EE
Photographer's assistant: HAILEY TAN
Lighting: ZACHARY LLEWELLYN
Fashion stylist: BIRDY LEE
Styling assistant: BUNNY LEE
Make-up and hair: ELAINE CHAN
Models: JUNYAO AND SIMON (WU MODEL)



On him: PHILIPP PLEIN shirt and pants.

On her: PHILIPP PLEIN dress; necklace, bracelet, and shoes, stylist's own.



On him: ROBERTO CAVALLI shirt, pants and shoes.

On her: ROBERTO CAVALLI dress; shoes, stylist's own.





On him: COACH lounge shirt and lounge shorts; sunglasses, stylist's own.

On her: COACH dress and bag; necklace, glasses, and bracelet, stylist's own.



On him: SANDRO
shirt and pants; shoes,
stylist's own.

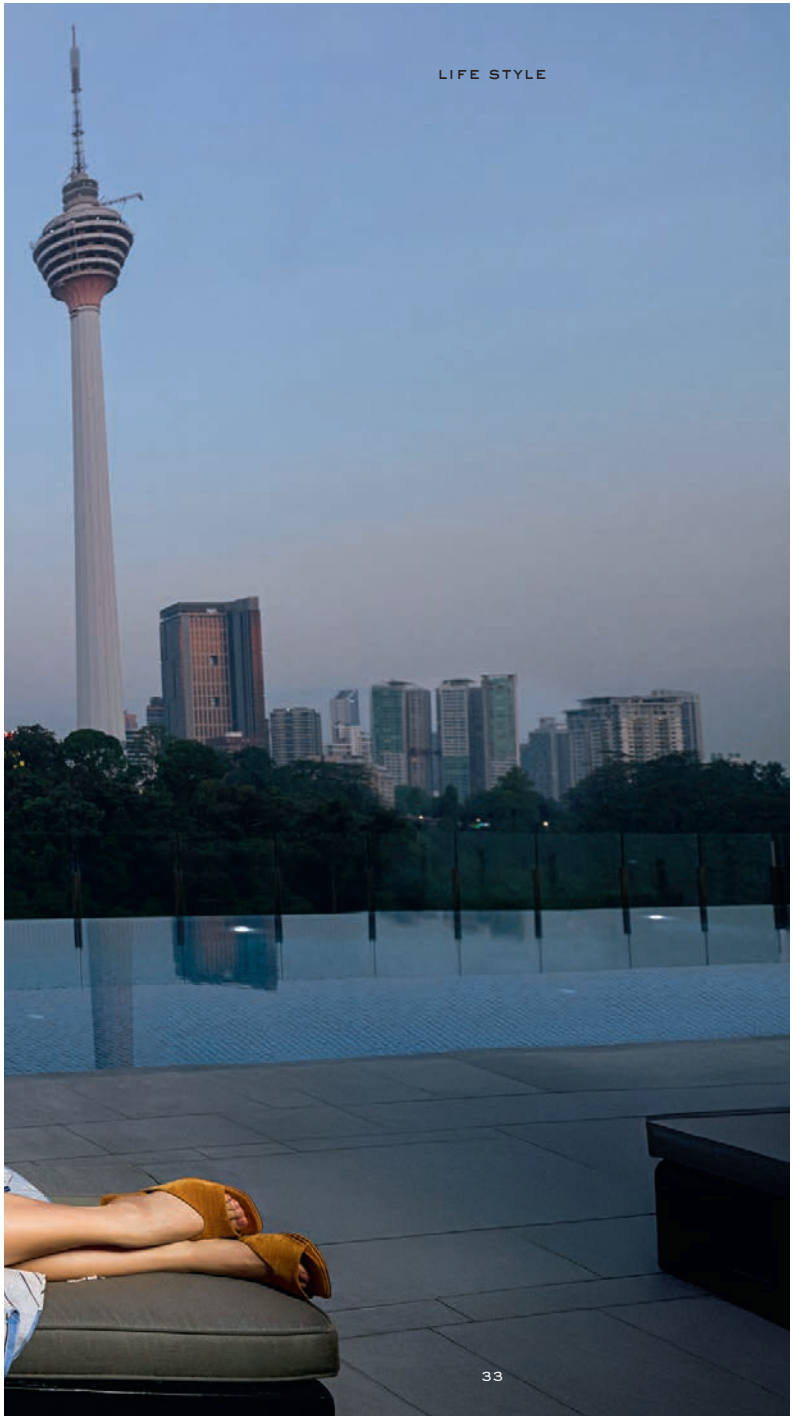
On her: SANDRO dress;
shoes, earrings, and
bracelet, stylist's own.



On him: PAUL & SHARK
shirt and shorts; shoes,
stylist's own.

On her: SANDRO top
and shirt; glasses,
bracelet and shoes,
stylist's own.





On him: SANDRO
shirt and pants.

On her: SANDRO
top and bottom;
shoes, stylist's own.



CULTURAL REVIVAL

THE MAJESTIC MALACCA CELEBRATED THE FESTA SAN PEDRO WITH DANCE, SONG, AND GASTRONOMY TO PAY HOMAGE TO THE TRADITIONS, CULTURE, AND HERITAGE OF THE KRISTANGS.

Words **ALICIA CORBETT**
Photography **LAW SOO PHYE**

Malacca City's Portuguese Settlement is home to the Kristang community, who descended from early Dutch and Portuguese settlers who intermarried with locals in the 16th and 17th centuries. The settlement was established in the 1930s, after the ruling British authorities, who sought to place ethnic groups in separate areas, gave them a stretch of land in the Ujong Pasir district and houses to reside in. Like the ethnic Goans from Goa, India, and the Macanese from Macau, these people are wholly unique to the state. Only around 1,500 people remain in the small but vibrant coastal village, with other Kristangs having emigrated elsewhere in the country and overseas.

"The community is known for its rich cultural blend of Portuguese and local Malaysian influences, reflected in their language (Papia Kristang), music, cuisine, and religious traditions," said Oliver Lopez, Regedor of the settlement. "The village is especially lively during festivals, such as the Festa San Pedro and Christmas, drawing visitors eager to experience its unique charm and warm hospitality."

With the older generation concerned about the fate of the Kristang cultural identity and values, The Majestic Malacca is also doing its part to imbue elements of the culture throughout guest stays. Alvin Kessler, Comprador of the hotel and a Kristang descendent, heads this initiative. "I can trace my Portuguese and Dutch ancestors back to the 1700s. As our Portuguese community in Malaysia is rather small, we are very close knit and united," Kessler said. "At The Majestic Malacca, we hope to continue our efforts in keeping traditions and cultures alive. In Kristang, we say *konservah tradisang*, which translates to 'conserving traditions'."

The five-star establishment is proudly the only hotel to serve Kristang cuisine in Malacca, not to be confused with Peranakan fare, which is found easily throughout the state. This is served at the hotel's restaurant, The Mansion, for breakfast and dinner, as well as high tea at The Library, which showcases the very best of Malaccan-Portuguese fare.

The hotel also employs members of the Kristang community from families such as Lazaroo, Hendroff, Marsh, De Silva, Pinto, Gemino, De Mello, and Kessler, who are all happy to share their heritage with any curious guests.



Above: Alvin Kessler, Comprador of The Majestic Malacca.





Facing page, from top: the dances continued throughout the dinner at The Mansion; Ezekiel, Dominic, and Marina Linda from the Danker family performing.

Once a year, excitement fills the air at the hotel, set within a stunning 1920s colonial mansion, as it celebrates Festa San Pedro, also known as the Feast of Saint Peter. The Majestic Malacca was the very first hotel in the state outside of the settlement to honour this festive tradition several years ago; this year, the celebration was held on 21 June.

"Many of the Kristang folk were fishermen, as the settlement was close to the sea," Kessler explained. "The feast honours Saint Peter, the patron saint of fishermen, linked to his former occupation, according to biblical records. Coincidentally, right behind the hotel is St. Peter's Church, the oldest functioning Roman Catholic church in Malaysia, where the festival is held yearly on 29 June.

"This annual tradition has transcended religious purposes and become a sacred way to strengthen the bond of the community," Kessler added. "As someone who grew up Kristang, I take immense pride in my heritage. It's an honour to share this cultural experience with our hotel guests in a way that embraces Malaysia's multicultural community, while respectfully setting aside its religious elements."

In the settlement, hundreds gather to witness the blessing of the boats, along with various games and competitions, while the hotel marks the occasion on a more intimate scale but with all the comforts of a five-star hotel.

"The Majestic Malacca is a pioneer in championing this initiative at a corporate level, whereas most efforts have so far been confined to the Portuguese Settlement," Kessler said. "This stands in contrast to the Peranakans, who benefit from the support of numerous cultural associations."

Lopez agreed: "It is a great initiative by The Majestic Malacca to promote Kristang culture, heritage, and food. Not many Malaysians or tourists truly know about the Portuguese community and the unique way of life in Portuguese Settlement. Efforts like this help shine a light on our traditions and identity, which are often overlooked."

FLAVOURS OF HERITAGE

During Festa San Pedro, guests converged at The Mansion for a one-night-only dinner with a specially curated menu. The meal began with *tirabontadi*, or appetisers such as Croquettes Pesce, which are sliced fluffy fish rolls that are breaded, fried, and served with chilli sauce – a nod to the festival's nautical roots. This was accompanied by traditional side dishes that added a tangy, spicy element to the meal: Achar Pesce (salted fish pickle), Cincalok kung Limang (pickle made from a condiment of fermented small shrimps), and Achar Mangga (mango pickle).

The meal continued with Prato Principal, or mains, including the signature Kari Debal, or Devil Chicken Curry. It is a spicy, sour, and bold dish, created using meats such as chicken with lots of dried chillies and spices, as well as vinegar and mustard seeds, which give it a tangy taste. Guests also savoured the flavours of the Asa Pece, seabass with sambal in banana leaves, as well as Karang Fretu kung Sabola, clams and mussels cooked with spices and onions.

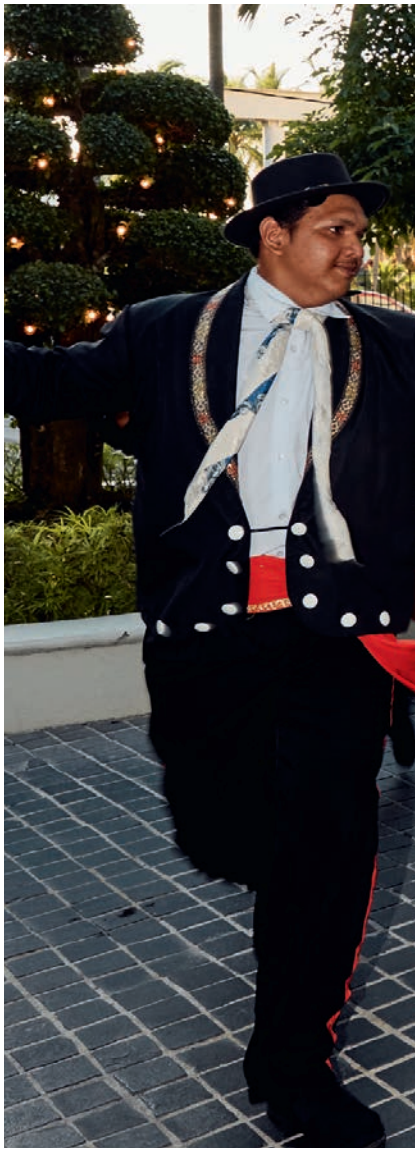
TRADITION IN FULL SWING

Enriching the revelry was the DomMarina Trupe Cultural Portuguêsa Melaka (the DomMarina Malacca Portuguese Cultural Troupe), who represent Malaysia on an international stage. It was founded 20 years ago by the husband-and-wife duo of Marina Linda and Dominic Danker, and they currently have a group of dozens of performers from the settlement in the troupe. "We not only do dance but we also preserve our heritage and culture through music, traditional mock wedding shows, Portuguese food demonstrations, and costumes," said Marina Linda Danker.

Guests gathered to watch the troupe at the courtyard of The Majestic Malacca, which was outfitted with a boat bearing the legend of Festa San Pedro and decorated with lights and a flagline. They added literal colour to the festivities through performances of songs by donning traditional Portuguese clothing with vibrant shades coupled with geometric and floral patterns. The ladies' voluminous skirts and embroidered aprons swirled to the rhythm of the music, catching the light in bursts of yellow, orange, and red. They were dressed in long-sleeved white blouses, fitted vests, distinctive headscarves, ornate filigree jewellery, and the traditional *balsek*, or pouch. Meanwhile, the men looked dapper with their black jackets and trousers, accessorised with scarves around their neck, a red sash, and a broad-brimmed black hat.

Throughout the night, they entertained guests with songs such as the *Jingli Nona* (which bears similarities to a Malay folk dance *joget*), *O Maliau Maliau*, and *Tianika*. Marina and Dominic also took to the floor for a heartfelt performance, singing to the strum of an acoustic guitar by their son Ezekiel. The evening ended on a joyful note, with guests enthusiastically joining in for a lively dance.

For more information, visit www.majesticmalacca.com



LIFE FEATURE







Above: enjoy Afternoon Tea in the Tea Lounge of The Majestic Hotel Kuala Lumpur.

Below: Colonial Café.

A MAJESTIC SIGNATURE EXPERIENCE

HARKING BACK TO A BYGONE AGE, AFTERNOON TEA AT THE MAJESTIC HOTEL KUALA LUMPUR IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO SAVOUR CULTURE AND HERITAGE AT ITS FINEST.

Words **LAE-HOON TAN**

It's 3:00 o'clock in the afternoon. Time for the iconic British tradition of afternoon tea. And there's no better place to indulge in this timeless custom than at The Majestic Hotel Kuala Lumpur, Autograph Collection.

Afternoon Tea at The Majestic Hotel Kuala Lumpur is a meticulously recreated heritage experience, which is highly recommended for those keen to partake in this cultural ritual in the era of British Malaya. The Majestic tea service is hallmarked by bone china tableware and white linen napkins. Hot savouries; delicate finger sandwiches; freshly-baked scones with jam and clotted cream; and delectable pastries and cakes are all presented on a three-tier stand in the shape of a moon gate. Rounding off the repast is a selection of fine teas or coffee (for those who desire a more intense brew).

Experience Afternoon Tea in these unique spaces at The Majestic Hotel Kuala Lumpur, between 3pm and 6pm daily.

TEA LOUNGE

An open, airy space, the Tea Lounge conveys an immediate sense of calm and relaxation.

Natural light pours through a series of French doors that open out to a landscaped lawn. Ceiling fans and classic cut-glass chandeliers hang over clusters of comfortable sofas in neutral tones, rattan-back armchairs, and plush velvet seats, arranged around low tables of rich wood tones. Oriental rugs, large potted ferns, and fresh tropical flower arrangements add a sense of lushness to the space; while below a gold-leafed domed ceiling, a pianist plays melodies from a distant past on a baby grand piano.

The Tea Lounge makes for an elegant and inviting space to enjoy tea with friends, engage in light-hearted conversations, or simply lose oneself in quiet contemplation.

COLONIAL CAFÉ

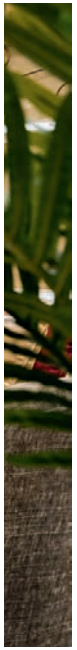
Across from the Tea Lounge is the Colonial Café, a dedicated dining space that can accommodate up to 120 guests.

The Colonial Café evokes a more formal ambience than the Tea Lounge. Timber floorboards, dark wood panelling, and dark-stained wooden chairs with leather seats and rattan backs contrast strikingly with crisply starched white tablecloths and plump cushions in neutral shades and floral print upholstery.

Dining tables for different group sizes are thoughtfully positioned across the space that flows out into indoor courtyards, dotted with potted palms and tropical plants.







WRITER'S ROOM

Discreetly located in a corner of the hotel's historical wing is the Writer's Room, a cosy, private space that transports you back to the bygone world of British Malaya.

It is a haven of tranquillity, with vintage pieces that evoke a sense of adventure. Rattan peacock chairs, Oriental rugs, worn leather travel trunks, and travel-inspired curios add a unique charm. Framed vintage prints of exotic birds and botanicals hang on the cream-coloured walls; while tropical plants and palm leaves in tall brass vases provide refreshing green accents. Old leather-bound books take pride of place on open shelves, a tribute to famous authors, including William Somerset Maugham and Graham Greene, who found rest and inspiration in the hotel in years past.

Sink into the plush sofas and comfortable armchairs to enjoy your afternoon tea, read, write, or simply relax and reflect. The Writer's Room is the perfect place for a quiet kind of joy.

DRAWING ROOM

The Drawing Room exudes classic British elegance and understated luxury.

Its dark hardwood floors and wall panelling create an ambience of warmth and refinement. Brown leather wing chairs, rattan arm chairs with deep cushions, and sturdy coffee tables in dark wood dominate the room that can comfortably accommodate up to 20 guests. Heavy brocade draperies on the windows offer privacy, while wall sconces and table lamps cast a calming glow.

The Drawing Room is the consummate retreat in which to enjoy some respite and afternoon tea.

ORCHID CONSERVATORY

Across from the Drawing Room is the Orchid Conservatory, whose general splendour is simply breathtaking.

Against a backdrop of pristine white walls, gorgeous orchid blooms of different varieties and colours create a visual feast of mesmerising beauty, while classic pendant lights add an air of refinement and romance. Seating in the Orchid Conservatory is a combination of sofa clusters with low coffee tables, and white table-clothed café tables with gold Chiavari chairs.

Conveying an invigorating sense of life, the phalaenopsis orchids elevate the space into one that is extraordinary and poetic, making the Orchid Conservatory the quintessential venue for the luxury pastime of afternoon tea.

For more information, visit www.majestickl.com



Facing page, from top: Writer's Room; Drawing Room.

Below: Orchid Conservatory.



QUIET IS THE NEW LOUD

STACEY KENT'S BRAND OF JAZZ HAS ALWAYS EVOKED A SENSE OF LIGHTNESS, CALM, AND WANDERLUST. SHE OPENS UP ABOUT HER MUSIC, THE ART OF TRAVEL, FAMOUS FRIENDS, LITTLE LUXURIES, AND MORE.

Words MINDY TEH
Photography BENOIT PEVERELLI, JUDY MAXWELL, SASHYN MITAL



Jet lag should have caught up with Stacey Kent by now. Yet, for someone who has flown halfway across the world from Brazil to Kuala Lumpur just the day before and is set to perform in a few hours, the acclaimed jazz singer moves with the practised ease of someone who has made a life and career out of transience. Radiant and unhurried, she speaks in the same melodic cadence that shapes her music – light, effortless, and, at the same time, full of intention.

The air is cool inside The Majestic Hotel Kuala Lumpur, a welcome contrast to the damp afternoon heat outside. That Kent's just come back from a walk around Lake Gardens at high noon is not at all evident, and she settles into the interview as if already attuned to the collected elegance of the place.

The singer's sojourn to this part of the world is a very quick layover – it's been an incredibly busy time for Kent, beginning with her album, *Summer Me, Winter Me*, and capping with the aforementioned trip to Brazil.

"We go there a lot but this year was particularly special, because Jim [Tomlinson, her musician husband and long-time collaborator] and I are on a tour with a musician called Danilo Caymmi, who played with [Antonio Carlos] Jobim for many, many years, and grew up with him. They were very close and Danilo asked if we would tour with him to celebrate the life of Jobim. We did a few dates around the world, culminating on the eve of the 30th anniversary of his death. Jobim's daughters were there, lots of family, and it was very emotional," she says. "For me, it's such an honour to be asked to be part of this universe that I've grown up listening to."

Kent is no stranger to the frenetic pace of getting off a plane, stepping onto a stage, and getting back on a plane again. She sees this as part of her vocation, attributing her world view to growing up with her French grandfather, learning his language as a means to bond with him in his yearning for his home country, and his love for poetry and music. The singer is a polyglot who also speaks German, Portuguese, and Italian. "I became a student of languages (including Latin) because of him and, even in those days, when I didn't know I was going to be a singer, I knew I wanted to be connected to the world," she says.



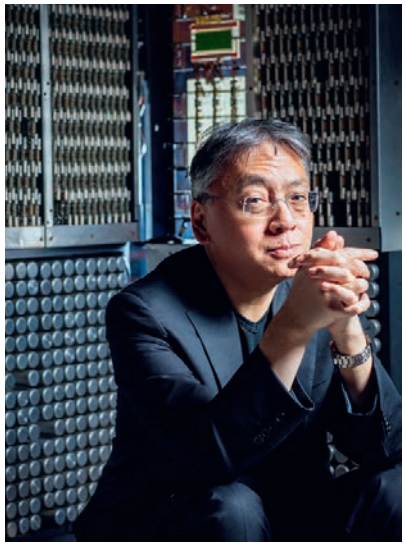
Kent's album *Summer Me, Winter Me* was released in 2023.



Kent has never been the kind of artist to dwell on numbers, but the fact that her music has been streamed half a billion times internationally is something the platinum-selling, Grammy-nominated performer acknowledges with a kind of detached wonder. "The elements of the songs that I'm drawn to are so universal that it doesn't matter if I'm in Southeast Asia, Scandinavia, or the United States," she says, identifying what her listeners are drawn to. "I have these intense emotions but I'm not a screamer," she says. "It's great that the world has musicians who do this," gesturing to indicate loud and over-the-top. "I belong in a more quiet category."

It isn't just the far-reaching quality of the music that has cemented Kent's popularity. Her euphonious voice carries an easy intimacy, a closeness that draws one into a more discerning listening experience. It is mellow, tinged with a warmth that invites listeners into the song's world. Many of her albums carry a Bossa Nova undertone, a style that has long shaped her approach to phrasing and tonality. "There's something about the music I choose, not just lyrically but also rhythmically, that's like a human heartbeat."

Summer Me, Winter Me is suffused with this subtle dynamism. Comprising jazz standards and original compositions, it is a love story to Kent's fans as much as it is about departures and arrivals, and the shifting nature of memory. Fitting, then, that one of the album's songs, Postcard Lovers, is written by Nobel Prize winner Kazuo Ishiguro.



Nobel Prize-winning Japanese author Kazuo Ishiguro is close friends with Kent and her husband Jim Tomlinson.

Kent, Tomlinson, and Ishiguro formed a creative connection that first sparked when the latter mentioned her on BBC radio show *Desert Island Discs* in 2002, speaking about the way her music carried an intimacy that felt like storytelling itself. That led to an email exchange and a tight bond that spawned multiple songs across many albums, all of which are compiled into a book of Ishiguro's lyrics, *The Summer We Crossed Europe In The Rain: Lyrics For Stacey Kent*, published last March.

"We – me, Jim, Ish, and his wife, Lorna – actually had multiple dinners together for many years as good friends before we started to do any work together," she says. "I think that was really important because we had already known each other so well, and realised what a shared sensibility and vision we had.

"As we started to speak around dining tables, we wondered how we converged like this – what happened in our own stories that allow us to be so connected, our stories in terms of being travellers, a little bit yanked out of our original cultures, which kind of gave us a certain shared vision," Kent continues. "The three of us got so intense about what words we would use, what kinds of stories, what language would come out of my mouth. When Ishiguro wrote a piece about me from my album *In Love Again*, he so completely understood me as a modern woman in a modern world. I'm not old fashioned and, yet, the songs that I was singing came from once upon a time. He wanted to explain what it was that made such a connection. I think that's what made it so easy for him to write these stories for me and, when I read them out to Jim, he could hear the musicality from them."

Her relationship with jazz is both reverent and deeply personal. Born in New Jersey, Kent came to music through a love of stories – something she credits her



The album *In Love Again* features the songs of Richard Rodgers.



Above: Kent has won multiple awards, including a BBC Jazz Award for Jazz Vocalist of the year, and another BBC Jazz Award for Album of the Year for *The Lyric*.

Facing page: Kent on stage with Brazilian singer and musician Danilo Caymmi.



This compilation accompanies Ishiguro's illustrated book of the same name.

grandfather and her years studying comparative literature. It was in London that her musical path took shape and where she met Jim. "It's always gently nudging you forward," she says of his compositions. "It's also metaphorically telling you to have hope and move on." Their creative partnership is fluid, marked by an instinctive understanding of phrasing and tonality. Tomlinson's solos often act as an extension of Kent's voice, a conversation within the music itself. "I find this the simplest way of telling a story so profound and deeply emotional," she says.

Life on the road may be filled with impermanence, but Kent has her own ways of making it less so. "Well, first of all, I go out with my best friend," she says, referring to her husband. "To be on the road with him means I get to experience the little things with him, like sitting and doing a crossword puzzle, have a meal, do some riffing."

"As far as the luxuries go, you're trying to judge how to move swiftly and more streamlined. Yet there are things you always bring with you that are important," Kent adds. "Like, I always bring a particular pair of slippers. When I unpack, they are right at the top, and I take them out and put them by the door. It might not sound like a huge luxury, but no matter the hotel or where I am, those are with me. They make me feel at home.

"Then for the rest, you just roll with it," she says, smiling. "We are so lucky that we are so warmly invited everywhere we go. People are very generous and they know we have flown a long way so they say, 'Come and experience this!' We get to pick up on the many luxuries and rituals we don't necessarily get back home," Kent says. "And every country has its own delicious details."

For more information, visit www.majestickl.com and staceykent.com



SPOONED BEAUTY

AT JW MARRIOTT HOTEL KUALA LUMPUR'S SHANGHAI RESTAURANT, THE TIME-HONOURED *XIAO LONG BAO* GETS THE SPOTLIGHT IT DESERVES.

Words **ALICIA CHOO**
Photography **LAW SOO PHYE**

Somewhere in the misty kitchens of 19th-century Nanxiang, under the rule of the Qing dynasty, a resourceful chef named Huang Mingxian folded warmth and comfort into soft dough. What emerged was *Xiao Long Bao*, a broth-filled dumpling so tender it was meant to be enjoyed with care and attention. Little did anyone know that this bite-sized creation would one day find its place on tables across the globe.

Xiao Long Bao may be a staple in dim sum culture, often enjoyed with Chinese tea, but its appeal isn't limited to a specific time of day. From breakfast to dinner, it's a dish that welcomes you, no matter the hour. For some, however, the dish carries more than just flavour. "I still recall a traditional dim sum shop across from my childhood home," says Wong Wing Yuek, executive Chinese chef at JW Marriott Kuala Lumpur's Shanghai Restaurant. "Their *Xiao Long Bao* was exquisite. Each morning, long before dawn, the aroma drifting from their kitchen would rouse even the sleepiest of appetites."

Wong has since channelled that childhood memory into his work at the hotel's Chinese dining establishment, where his passion for Shanghainese cooking truly shines. Today, his kitchen serves not only *Xiao Long Bao*, but also more than a hundred









Facing page, clockwise from top left: Chilled Drunken Chicken in Chinese Rice Wine.; Sautéed Freshwater Shrimp; Shanghai restaurant also provides private dining options.

Shanghainese classics, including chilled drunken chicken in Chinese rice wine, smoked duck with Chinese tea leaves and herbs, and sautéed freshwater shrimps.

What may seem effortless in a round bamboo steamer basket is, in truth, a test of precision, effort, and discipline. Devoured and gone in seconds, each *Xiao Long Bao* is the product of countless hours of repetition, with folding being the most difficult step to master. For beginners, it can take six months to a year to get the pleats right. Even then, only through time and patience does the skill become second nature. Consistency, above all, is key. "Mastering the craft of *Xiao Long Bao* takes time and varies for everyone," Wong says. "But with a love for food and a discerning palate, I believe most can learn to perfect it."

So, what's the secret behind Shanghai Restaurant's *Xiao Long Bao* that keeps diners coming back for more? Wong breaks it down to the basics. "To meet expectations, the skin must be thin, but strong enough to hold the filling," he explains. "Once stuffed, the dumpling must be pleated with more than 18 folds to produce a fine finish, resembling a lantern-like shape." The result, when steamed, is a dumpling with an elastic-like texture. "If it's thin-skinned, soupy, and well-filled with fresh meat, you've got the makings of a great *Xiao Long Bao*," Wong adds.

Wong likens the perfect *Xiao Long Bao* to something almost ethereal. "For me, the perfect *Xiao Long Bao* is like a delicate white ballet tutu – with evenly folded pleats and just a touch of flour on top. The skin should remain unbroken when lifted and, when held to light, it glows with a crystal-like allure." Such attention to detail, from visual grace to structural integrity, is evident in every dumpling that leaves his kitchen's steady rhythm of hands and heat.

Inside the dumpling, the superior broth is a rich, aromatic blend made from chicken feet, pork tenderloin, and ham – patiently simmered to extract deep, layered flavours. Timing is everything, and these dumplings go straight from wrapping to steaming to preserve their freshness. As with classic *Xiao Long Bao* etiquette, the best way to enjoy it is to place it on a spoon, nibble a small hole to release the steam, sip the broth, then savour it with slivers of pickled ginger and a dash of vinegar.

It's not just the craftsmanship that brings Wong satisfaction, but also the joy of witnessing the delight that follows. "There is a special joy in watching guests unveil the steamer lid – eyes alight with anticipation, cameras poised to capture the moment," he shares. "I often smile and gently remind them: enjoy it while it's hot."

Shanghai Restaurant is open from Tuesday to Sunday, serving lunch from 12pm to 2:30pm (10:30am on Sundays), and dinner from 6pm to 10pm. For reservations and enquiries, email shanghairestaurant@ytlhotels.com.my, contact +6018 6230 069, or visit https://www.marriott.com/en-us/dining/restaurant-bar/kuldt-jw-marriott-hotel-kuala-lumpur/87669-shanghai.mi



THE RONNEFELDT WAY

STEEPED IN BERRIES, FLORALS, AND HERBS, RONNEFELDT'S TEA BLENDS OFFER A WORLD TOUR IN EVERY CUP AT THE RITZ-CARLTON, KUALA LUMPUR.

Words ALICIA CHOO
Photography LAW SOO PHYE

"I see a future in which tea is not just a drink," says Jan Holzapfel in an excerpt from *The Ronnefeldt Tea Lookbook II*, "but a cultural symbol of solidarity, exquisite enjoyment, and ecological responsibility." Some teas are pressed for time. Others, like Ronnefeldt's, are crafted with centuries of care in every cup. Founded in 19th-century Frankfurt, the venerable tea house built its name on purity and patience, using slow-processed leaf teas sourced from the world's finest gardens in India, Japan, China, and beyond.

After the passing of founder Johann Tobias Ronnefeldt in 1845, his wife Friederike and their sons carried the business forward, expanding its reach as tea culture swept across Europe. Frank Holzapfel – Jan's father – assumed ownership in 1984, elevating the brand onto the gilded trays of some of the world's most discerning addresses. Today, Jan carries that heritage forward, bringing the Ronnefeldt name to new international markets while staying true to its founding values.

"As the 11th-generation owner of Ronnefeldt, I inherited the business from my father," Jan Holzapfel says during his recent visit to The Ritz-Carlton, Kuala Lumpur. "Although the company has evolved over time, our commitment to quality remains unchanged. Our teas, the services we offer, and the training we provide are all tailored for the world of luxury hospitality. That's why you won't find Ronnefeldt teas on supermarket shelves, and I believe that's a good thing."

Still family-owned and ethically driven, Ronnefeldt is a staple among the finest names in tea. Nowhere is this more apparent than at The Ritz-Carlton, Kuala Lumpur, where more than 30 blends are offered in its Ritzy Afternoon Tea experience at the Lobby Lounge. This longstanding partnership, brewed over time, was brought to the table in an intimate tea pairing session hosted by Holzapfel himself. A sensory journey told in six teacups, the experience featured the hotel's signature blend of Chinese Tie Kuan Ying; Colombia Especial & Cacao from the TeaStar Exclusive Collection; and four rare selections from the 1823 Anniversary Collection – the forest berry-tinged Rainfall in Paralai, zesty Sunrise Over Cederberg, Tibetan goji-based Winds Of Tibet, and Clouds Over Baiyun Shan flavoured green tea.

Although these rare teas were offered for a limited time only, a generous display of Ronnefeldt favourites remains at the hotel, inviting guests to pick their own blend for a personalised afternoon tea experience. And if guests are caught in a tea-time dilemma, they can turn to Sally Cheah, the hotel's friendly master tea sommelier and lobby lounge manager, who's always ready with a suggestion or two. "I always start by asking what kind of flavours they enjoy, whether it's fruity, floral, green, black, or white," she says. "It helps me guide them to something they may not have tried before but will love." One of her go-to recommendations is Morgentau Chai, a flavoured green tea. "This one's quite special. It's green tea, but not the grassy kind people often expect. It's infused with mango and citrus, which makes it distinct but approachable. Most guests love it from the first sip. It's also a great palate cleanser."



For most casual drinkers, tea is simply a comforting ritual. But Cheah believes that every brew is a delicate distillation of time, place, and purpose. "When guests come in for our afternoon tea, they tend to gravitate toward familiar classics such as English Breakfast or Earl Grey. But I always encourage them to try something new and unique that they won't easily find elsewhere," she says. "That's the beauty of our offering here at The Ritz-Carlton, Kuala Lumpur: we serve loose-leaf Ronnefeldt teas, unlike many places that rely on tea bags."

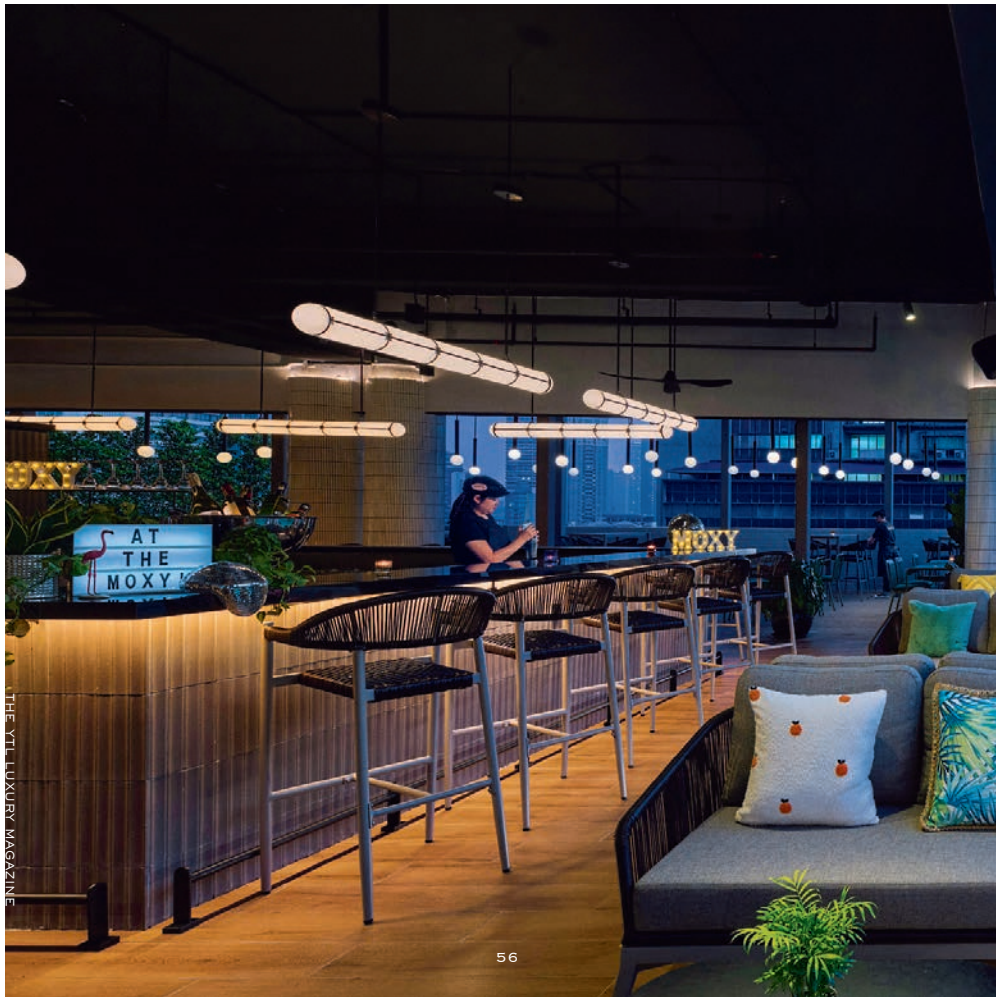
For reservations or enquiries, email dining@ritzcarltonkl.com, contact +6018 623 0036, or visit www.ritzcarlton.com/kualalumpur

GOOD VIBES

LIFE FEATURE

BAR MOXY TURNS CHINATOWN INTO UNEXPECTED COCKTAIL FLAVOURS THAT WILL SURPRISE THE PALATE AND UNLOCK FORGOTTEN MEMORIES.

Words JUERN NG





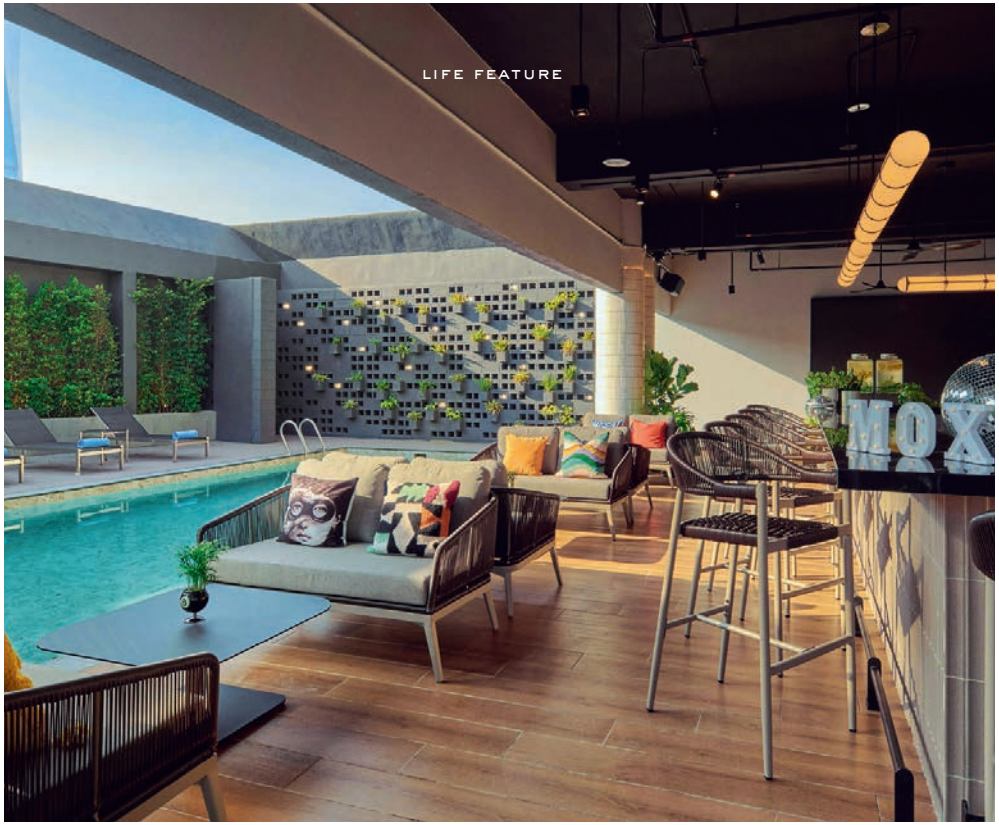


The heart of the new Moxy Kuala Lumpur Chinatown beats from level 9 of the property. This is where Bar Moxy calls home – with pumping music, stylish cocktails, and an infinity pool where you can sip and raise a toast to the dazzling view of the iconic KL Tower. Grab a drink by the bar before hitting the streets of Kuala Lumpur or wind down after a day of strolling around the city – Bar Moxy is the perfect pit stop for a pause.

The cocktails are inspired by the electric charm of Chinatown – bright, punchy, and laced with attitude. Shandy Chic is a sassy stunner, dressed prettily in pink. She's bold, flirty, and radiates the same magnetic energy as the city's nightlife. For the zesty and rebellious, Sexy Moxy is the bar's signature cocktail, turning heads with its striking purple gradient that reflects the bold palette of Moxy's house colour.

Local ingredients are cheekily blended into a few standout cocktails as a fun touch to celebrate the Malaysian identity. Chinatown Jungle, for example, pairs vodka with green tea and pandan syrup, resulting in a crisp and refreshing drink, like the city's revitalising night breeze. Then, there's Haw Haw Haw, a playful drink that nods to the past. This hawthorn-infused whisky, inspired by the beloved Haw Flakes candy, reboots childhood memories with every sip.





Above: sip and splash at the infinity pool situated just next to Bar Moxy on the rooftop.

Facing page, from top: Moxy Kuala Lumpur Chinatown is perfect for the young at heart and the adventurous in spirit; Bar Moxy invites you to enjoy a laidback groove with a Chinatown view.

Bar Moxy doesn't stop at just cocktails. From tropical flavours to floral, fruity, and even spicy notes, the Moxy Coolers are zero-proof, but are just as vibrant as the rest of its creations. Moxy Boi leads the line-up with its unapologetic edge that is sharp, citrusy, and electrifying – the reason why it also serves as the hotel's welcome drink. But on Ladies' Night, held every Saturday, Moxy Boi gets a makeover, taking on a new persona. As Moxy Girl, the foundation of the cooler remains but she comes with a boozy twist. She's wild and fearless, joining the mix of drinks that flow freely for the ladies from 8pm onwards.

Ladies' Night is just one of many promotions at Bar Moxy – here, every day is a reason to party. From Monday to Friday, swing by for one-for-one drink offers, perfect for after-work catch-ups with friends. When the weekend rolls around, live DJ sets take over, cranking up the beats and transforming the space into a hub of good vibes only. Then, wrap up the weekend with Moxy Sundaze, a hotel brunch ritual that serves every drink order with a pizza or kofta for just RM1.

Bar Moxy may be known for its drinks, but its food should not be overlooked either. Equipped with an in-house pizza oven, the bar offers a selection of crowd-pleasing flavours – from the comforting Beef Pepperoni to more adventurous options such as the Lamb Kofta Pizza. The kofta menu is equally impressive, consisting of dishes such as the Paneer Tikka, Fish Kebab, and Lamb Koobideh.

Bar Moxy truly has it all – killer drinks, delicious bites, smart promotions, and striking views, set in one of Kuala Lumpur's liveliest neighbourhoods.

For more information, visit *www.marriott.com/en-us/hotels/kulok-moxy-kuala-lumpur-chinatown/overview/*

SUNSET SESSIONS

EACH SATURDAY, THE MAN TAO BAR AT HOTEL STRIPES KUALA LUMPUR IS THE PLACE TO BE FOR VIBRANT LATE-NIGHT DRINKS WITH A MESMERISING VIEW.

Words ALICIA CORBETT
Photography LAW SOO PHYE



Hotel Stripes Kuala Lumpur is set in a vibrant area in downtown Kuala Lumpur, with old-school eateries and aesthetic cafes aplenty. But unbeknownst to casual passers-by below, it also houses a hidden haven – the Man Tao Bar (open daily from 3pm to midnight). Walk-in visitors and hotel guests alike can ride the elevator to the 21st floor to find a cosy yet lively rooftop terrace. Although there are many bars in the city centre boasting views of the Petronas Twin Towers, this one offers unobstructed and front-row views of the KL Tower, its surrounding lush greenery, and the skyscrapers of the city.

Part open-air and part set under a canopy, Man Tao Bar offers spaces where guests can relax on pool loungers or sit at dining tables as they watch the KL Tower entrancingly and slowly change colour to different hues of pink, blue, red, and more.

The space features modern décor, highlighted by geometric ceiling decorations, as well as a sleek, backlit bar stocked with bottles of premium spirits. The warm gold tones and sharp, modern accents contribute to the refined yet inviting environment. Its elegant setting makes it the ideal spot for couples going for dates or friends catching up any time.

Every Saturday, during their Sunset Sessions, the Man Tao Bar truly comes alive for an unforgettable night out as guests watch the sun go down. From 5pm to 10pm, imbibers can indulge in glasses of Carlsberg or Sapporo draught beer, or red or white Sangria with a one-for-one deal. The deal also includes a refreshing Matahari Twist cocktail, concocted using tequila, white wine, Cointreau, grenadine, elderflower syrup, lime juice, orange juice, and soda water.

Beyond this, you'll find other cocktails creatively crafted using local ingredients such as basil leaves and *assam boi*, alongside an extensive menu of wines and spirits, including rum, gin, tequila, vodka, and whisky, to sip as the night unfolds.

Throughout the month, a rotation of different live performers takes the stage as the clock strikes 6.30pm. This includes local talents like Haris & Sulayman, who croon out romantic tunes to create a relaxed, jazzy vibe. Things heat up further at 9.30pm with various guest DJs, like DJ Sofia, who keeps the party spinning.



A selection of delicious cocktails (above) and bar bites (facing page) is available at the Man Tao Bar.

Naturally, like its name, the Man Tao Bar offers a menu of white and soft steamed buns in a variety of fillings, such as Chicken with Shiitake, Enoki Wraps, and Yaki Tofu, which are grilled right next to the bar. For those who get the munchies after a drink or two, the Air-Fried Cheesy Wedges with Turkey Bits and Shoestring Fries with Shaved Parmesan are well worth a try.

The Man Tao Bar is truly a fantastic place to sip on an aromatic cocktail while basking in the breathtaking skyline away from the hectic city buzz.

For more information, visit www.stripeskl.com



FOLKLORE & FABLES

AUTHOR CHOONG CHI-YING TALKS ABOUT HER BOOK, *THE TALES OF THE HIGHLANDS*, INSPIRED BY THE MAGNIFICENT SURROUNDINGS OF THE CAMERON HIGHLANDS RESORT.

Words ALICIA CORBETT







Right: Choong's writings were inspired by the book *One Hundred Years Of Solitude* by Gabriel José García Márquez, which has a magical realist style.

Below: Choong Chi-Ying.

Situated 1,500m above sea level, high above the clouds amidst a misty forest filled with moss-covered trees and unique flora, Cameron Highlands Resort feels almost fantastical. The five-star resort naturally promises an enchanting stay within its Tudor-styled cottages, but a novel placed in every room will transport you to an unseen world, beyond what meets the eye. Crack open the spine of the *Tales of the Highlands* by Choong Chi-Ying, and you will step into a land of talking animals, ghosts, and princesses.

Struck by the beauty of the landscape surrounding the resort, Choong was inspired to write a series of short tales about the highlands in the magical realism genre, which blurs the line between reality and invention. The Penang-born, UK-based author said, "I set about interviewing naturalists, explored the jungle trails nearby, and read up on books on the area, such as *Jim Thompson: The Unsolved Mystery by William Warren*."

The tales include the adventures of explorer William Cameron, whose name is commemorated in the Cameron Highlands. In Tea and Archie Russell, the reader may consider a fictional version of the events that led to the formation of BOH Plantations, the largest black tea manufacturer in the country. In The Second Origin of Man, a lerng-rik tree extraordinarily has a baby with a village girl, which leads to the creation of a myriad of different races across the earth.

"In the collection of stories, a theme that is important to me is the idea of finding a place to belong, as not everyone fits into society," Choong says. "In The Were-Tiger, Haji Ali, a wealthy man and his sons move from village to village to hide his identity and struggle to find a place to settle down."

Thompson's mystery, which captures the imagination, also inspired the overarching story in the novel and the concluding tale, The Four Lives of Jim Thompson. The American businessman, who also founded the renowned Thai silk company that bears his name, famously disappeared in 1967, which led to one of the largest land searches in Southeast Asian history and numerous conspiracy theories. Told from his point of view, the story follows the events leading up to his disappearance and unfolds within a parallel world that weaves all the narratives together.

"There are a lot of theories about his disappearance, but a naturalist I spoke to believed that he may have been eaten by a tiger, which explains the lack of a body. But I guess we will never know the true story," Choong says. The enigmatic individual has also lent his name to the Jim Thompson Tea Room and the Jim Thompson Suite at the resort. "Guests at the property have mentioned they enjoyed the book," Choong shares. "It's a sentiment that is, of course, the highest compliment for any author."

For more information, visit cameronhighlandsresort.com





WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE

REVISITING GAYA ISLAND RESORT CREATES ABUNDANT OPPORTUNITIES FOR FRESH, NEW EXPERIENCES AS WELL AS NEW APPRECIATION FOR THIS GREEN PARADISE.

Words TAN BENG HUI
Photography CHERYL MILLER-YELL

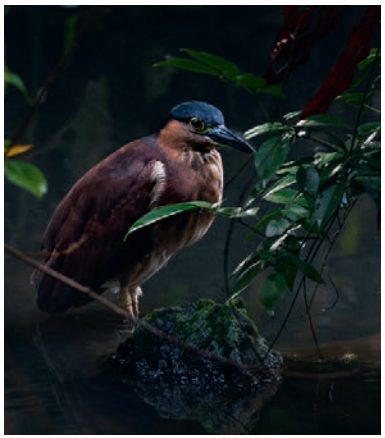
Located off the coast of Borneo, Gaya Island is the largest jewel within the Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park. As aficionados of birds, nature, and tropical rainforests, we needed little convincing to return for the official launch of the book, *Wildlife Wonders at Gaya Island Resort: A guide to its feathered friends and indigenous fauna.*

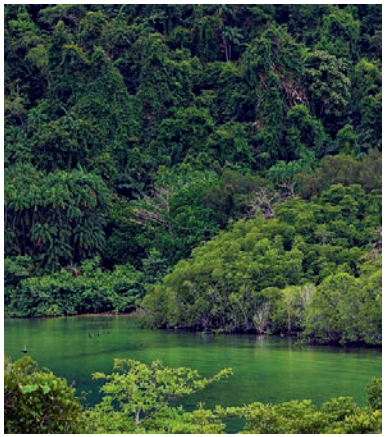
Conceived under the guidance of YTL's Conservation Director, Justin Juhun, our team of four had earlier been tasked to document some of the island's natural attractions for this publication. This involved profiling and photographing 37 bird species, as well as the seven natural wonders of Gaya Island Resort, including the proboscis monkey, Sunda pangolin, mangrove wetlands, and the elephant foot yam plant.

The experience of contributing to this book gave us a small but important insight into the remarkable work of the YTL conservation team, over many years, to safeguard, restore and promote the island's unique biodiversity. This has been propelled by Justin's love of flora and fauna, his passion for sharing his knowledge, and his drive to inspire the next generation of young conservationists who will continue to build on his achievements. This, and the book's publication, are testament to YTL's commitment and investment into environmental conservation and ensuring that nature is central to the signature experiences of their resorts.

Gaya Island Resort's latest offering, coinciding with the book launch, is the Wildlife Wonders package, a carefully curated adventure for nature lovers, designed for guests to discover, learn, and enjoy the island's natural wonders. It affords at least three days of nature-themed activities focusing on expert-led explorations of the resort's coastal vegetation, mangroves, and lowland dipterocarp forest trails.

Each morning, from the balcony of your villa, nestled up high amongst the tree canopy, you can watch the sun rise and shift its shadows across Mount Kinabalu, while the hornbills effortlessly glide past. The





This page, from left: a Nankeen Night Heron in the mangrove nursery; the wonders of the mangroves wetlands on Gaya Island.

Facing page: the male Brown-Throated Sunbird is one of the many diverse species spotted at Gaya Island Resort.

Wildlife Wonders experience offers a chance for a closer look, whether it is a sea- or tree-view you seek, through the telescope and binoculars provided at each villa. You never know, you might be lucky and see an astonishingly shy Philippine megapode – a scrubfowl whose population is on the decline – making a furtive dash into the bushes.

Stop by the resort's Wildlife Centre to help plan your daily adventures with local specialists. This is a place of learning, to better understand the island's biodiversity and the team's conservation programmes that support both the forest and marine ecosystems. Here, you may also encounter rescued wildlife undergoing rehabilitation. Past star attractions include Yoma, a juvenile Red Giant Flying Squirrel, as well as owls and sea turtles.

Be up with the birds and the morning bird chorus, join a guided dawn birdwatching session looking for both resident birds and species that make an island stop during the migratory season, or end your day with a twilight trek to see what happens after dark with the island's nocturnal residents. If you prefer to take to the waters, snorkelling amongst the corals, finding Nemo, or swimming with the turtles are just some of the aquatic treats possible.

Another absolute highlight is kayaking through the century-old mangroves, which continue to be restored by the resort's conservation team. These are a vital element in the island's ecosystem and provide a safe haven for many species. Kayaking in the dappled light amongst the intricate, botanical structures of the mangroves, with only the slow hum of insects and birdsong, takes 'slowing down' to the next level.

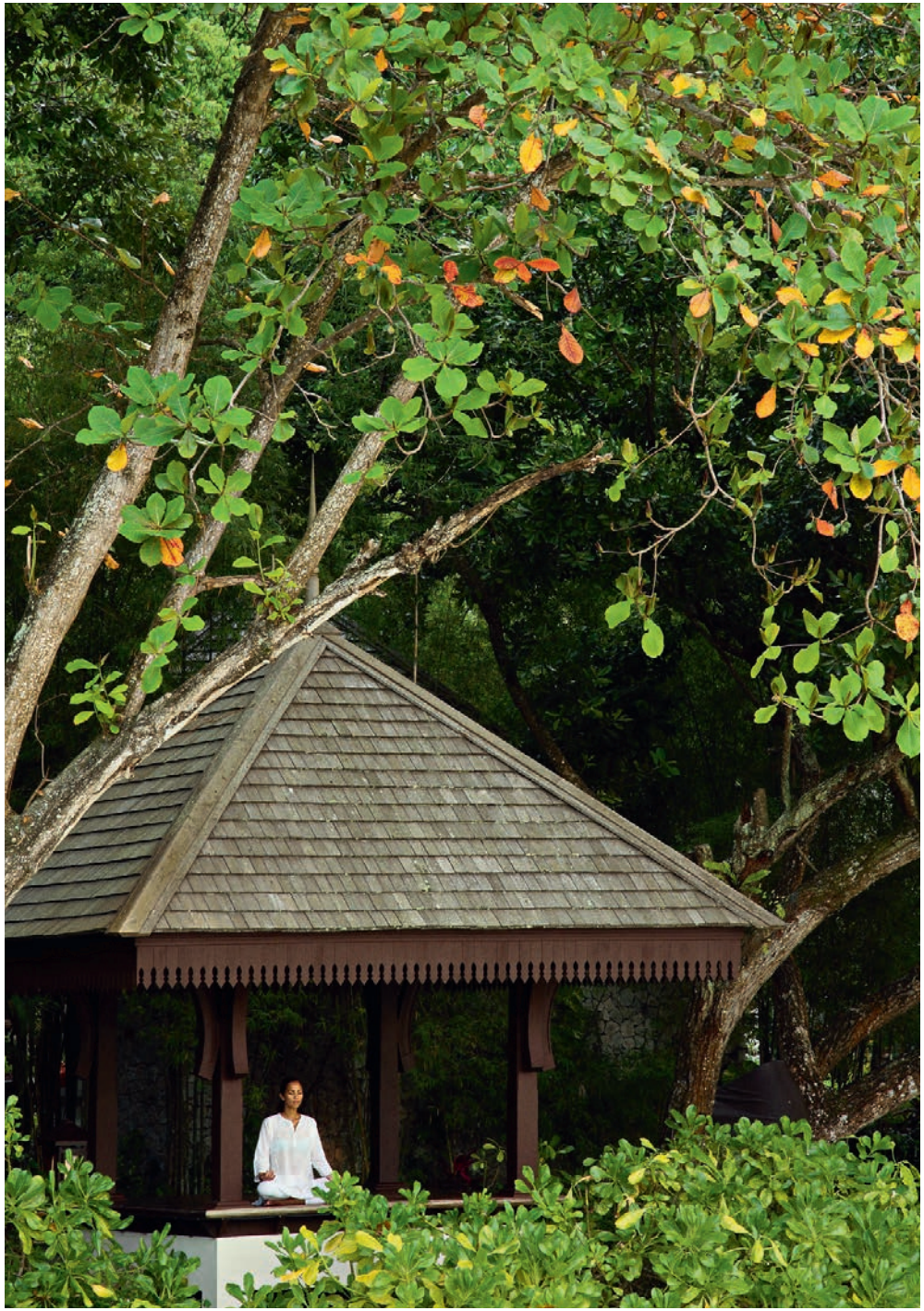


However, it is not all trails and treks during a Wildlife Wonders stay. All of these adventures can make one hungry, and the resort does not disappoint with its choice and range of dining experiences, whether it is the buffet-style offerings at the Feast Village, lounging at the Pool Bar, or fine dining at the Japanese Omakase.

For that extra special occasion, you can enjoy your own private al fresco seafood experience of the Gayan Bouillabaisse while gazing at the night skies, or learn more about local indigenous culture through music, dance, and beachside dining. All of this is served with the resort's signature of love and pride in local produce, comfort, and eco-luxury.

Nature is not just a backdrop but also central to Gaya Island Resorts's Wildlife Wonders experience. Returning there meant new experiences to discover and explore. Yet, there was a familiar thrill – feeling the ocean breeze, the sway of the jungle surrounds, and hearing the island's soundtrack of birdsong. Constant too were the warm smiles and kindness greeting us at every turn, the laughter shared over meals with new friends, and nature's beauty, which was not just something to be seen from afar but, rather, being in it and with it, in every moment. This was unchanged and unforgettable. If you are looking for birds, Gaya Island Resort is the perfect island getaway, but be ready to see and discover more.

Cheryl Miller-Yell, along with Charmain Ang and Ng Siew Han, were the contributing photographers for Wild Wonders at Gaya Island: A guide to its featured friends and indigenous fauna. *Tan Beng Hui worked with Justin Juhun to author the book. For more information, visit www.gayaislandresort.com*



CULTURAL, REGIONAL, GENERATIONAL

A SESSION AT SPA VILLAGE PANGKOR LAUT IS MORE THAN JUST PAMPERING. IT'S A WINDOW TO GENERATIONAL WELLNESS SECRETS AND A CONNECTING THREAD TO CULTURE AND HERITAGE.

Words KARMUN NG

Wide-eyed and innocent, the young concubine sits daintily on the high wooden chair while her handmaids stir up a warm bath in a copper basin by her feet. Once the bath is at the right temperature, her tiny feet are slipped into the water and deft hands massage the stress of a long journey out of her soles and toes. As she loosens up, her feet are patted dry then covered with a red shroud of silk. A pair of brass mallets are brandished before her and she watches as they are rhythmically tapped along the length of her feet – circulating blood flow, loosening muscles, and gently drumming her to relaxation.

This pivotal scene in Zhang Yimou's 1991 romantic drama, *Raise the Red Lantern*, through which the young concubine Songlian is introduced into the conspirative web of her new household, awaits to be experienced in all its majesty at Spa Village Pangkor Laut. As part of the spa's welcome ceremony, this Chinese-inspired Foot Pounding Ritual, which dates back to feudal China, marks the start of a series of bathing traditions that are included in a complimentary 45-minute Bath House Ritual before every therapy.

The Bath House Ritual at Spa Village Pangkor Laut draws from bathing traditions that are widespread and deep-seated in the world of the far Orient. They are also carefully sequenced to epitomise the multi-cultural ethos of the spa, with each ritual meticulously chosen to prepare the mind and body to maximise the spa treatment that follows. Every step is intentional in delivering benefits and every subsequent process follows up to encapsulate the wellness of the entire body. Moreover, the complete five steps are administered in a specially designed series of secluded pools and pavilions that meander through a lush garden setting.

Pampering of the feet is followed by a massage of the body, when guests slip into a traditional Malay sarong and enter a circulating Malay bath, where powerful water jets reenact the pounding effect of standing beneath a waterfall. In many parts of Southeast Asia, Malaysia included, waterfalls are sacred sources of clarity and renewal. Wash away anything and everything that weighs you down, and be prepared to look inward.

Breathing is attended to next with an inhalation therapy, prescribed through four steam boxes laced with the healing properties of different herbs wrapped in pandan leaves.

Breathwork has long been the starting point for regulating mental wellbeing as it directly impacts the body's stress responses and emotional regulation. Borrowing from the knowledge of local tribal communities, the medley of herbs is selected, blended, and steamed to calm, uplift, detoxify and de-stress, notably improving asthma, mild respiratory troubles, and simple coughs.

The next sojourn takes place in a stylish Japanese bath house, where, behind traditional *shoji* screens and slate tiles, the body is cleansed with a *goshi-goshi* cloth and signature duneberry soap, and then soaked in a natural *rotenburo* rock pool. Where the Japanese sip *sake* to warm the body and get the blood flowing, Spa Village Pangkor Laut prefers the medicinal properties of local ginger tea to aid digestion and comfort the stomach.

Finally, the ritual comes to an end with a unique Shanghai scrub, where a therapist gently exfoliates the body as the guest lies on a marble bed in a private scrub house. Once reserved for men only in patriarchal China, this procedure is now made inclusive for both sexes in this modern age, opening a connecting window of past and present of ancient Asian healing methods.

What follows is your choice of six traditional spa experiences, each three hours long, encapsulating the therapies and treatments of the respective ethnic healing traditions. The Ayurvedic Day draws from the ancient Indian wisdom of the Vedas for a holistic approach to health. The Chinese Day looks to the secret knowledge of traditional Chinese medicine in treatments such as Tui Na Massage and Chinese Herbal Facial. The Malay Day reaps the benefits of the local lands for Malay Herbal Wrap and Signature Body Treatment. Specially for the ladies, the Royal Secrets of Puteri Lindungan Bulan is a complete women's pampering session underscored by a Malay traditional massage and methods. The men have a treat that's all their own, with the Bukit Gantang Warrior Treatment including bolder and spicier bath and massage treatments.

Whichever you choose, they are an excellent introduction to the various therapeutic arts that extol the healing cultures of the region. Just as diverse as Malaysia is with its people, culture, and abundance of natural resources, Spa Village Pangkor Laut seeks to bring together all of these health rituals that are among the oldest in the world. Combining physical and spiritual health, wellbeing, beautiful natural setting, and the abundance of Malay, Chinese, and Indian practices, it has proudly become home to the ideal setting for complete rejuvenation.







This and facing pages: the treatments offered in Spa Village Pangkor Laut abound with generational wellness methodologies and culturally rich traditions.





ARCHITECTURE, ANCESTORS, AND MARITIME SOULS

DISCOVERING KUALA TERENGGANU'S ENDURING CHINESE HERITAGE WITH THE NEWLY LAUNCHED CHINESE HERITAGE TOUR AT TANJONG JARA RESORT.

Words **MUNA NOOR**
Photography **ANNA RINA**

The morning sun casts long shadows as the journey unfolds along Terengganu's pristine coastline. Coconut groves give way to glimpses of the South China Sea, fishing villages with brightly painted boats dot the river mouths, their daily catch already landed. This scenic drive from Tanjong Jara Resort, a sanctuary of traditional luxury steeped in age-old Malay traditions on Peninsular Malaysia's East Coast, sets the stage for a day of unexpected cultural immersion.

The Malaysian state of Terengganu is known as the "cradle of Malay civilisation" and is celebrated for its deep Malay-Muslim roots. Yet, nestled within Terengganu's capital of Kuala Terengganu lies a delightful anomaly: Kampung Cina (pronounced *kam-pong chee-nah*), or Chinese Village.

HIDDEN HERITAGE

The presence of a strong Chinese culture here may surprise many. According to a 2010 census, the Chinese community comprises only 2.5 per cent of Terengganu's 1.04 million population, with almost half residing in Kuala Terengganu. The state has had long-standing ties with China, with artefacts and ancient Chinese records dating back to the Song Dynasty (960-1279 AD) that refer to "Teng-ngan-yu" as a vital trading port. However, Chinese immigrants, primarily from the Fujian province, began settling en masse here with their families in the mid-17th century. This distinction in their arrival – as families rather than men striking out on their own for economic reward – is crucial to understanding the unique cultural fabric of Kampung Cina.

The Chinese Heritage Tour, newly launched by Tanjong Jara Resort, offers an intimate look into this distinctive community. Departing just late enough for you to enjoy a languid breakfast, the hour-long coastal drive offers a sensory prelude to the day's discoveries.

Upon arrival in Kuala Terengganu, we meet our guide at the elevated arched suspension bridge that connects the famed Pasar Payang market with Pulau Warisan, a small, man-made island where Kampung Cina's waterfront once stood. The former is worth a visit particularly for souvenirs, Lorenz Law tells us. Law is a researcher and resident of Kampung Cina for the past 40 years, so he is certainly in the know for such things.

A JOURNEY THROUGH TIME AND TRADITION

Often referred to as Chinatown, fewer than 300 shophouses remain in Kampung Cina, some between 150 and 200 years old. The architecture is a fascinating blend of Southern Chinese, Neoclassical, and Art Deco styles, with many homes still belonging to families who have settled here for centuries and stretch back up to 12 generations.

One such home is Teck Soon Heritage House, a blue-toned, two-storey building decorated with exquisite tiles, Capricorn ornamentation, and carved wooden doors. It belonged to Toukeh Wee Sin Hee, a prominent Terengganu-born 19th-century merchant, who built a fortune trading areca nut, tobacco, and salt. His descendants still live in Kuala Terengganu and are part of the Terengganu's Peranakan Chinese, a fascinating minority within the greater Chinese minority.

Unlike the Peranakan Chinese communities of Phuket or the Straits Settlements of Singapore, Malacca, and Penang, who were born in their new home countries but whose naturalisation was the result of assimilation and intermarriage with local Malays, the "Cheng Mua Lang", or "sarong-clad people" of Terengganu, intermarried among their own community.

"The Peranakan in Terengganu are very special in the way that they have assimilated into the Malay Terengganu culture," shares Alex Lee Yun Ping, CEO of Ping Anchorage Travel & Tours Sdn Bhd and founder of Terradala museum and café. Lee is himself Peranakan Chinese and grew up in Marang, a seaside town south of Kuala Terengganu.

Fluent in Hokkien, English, and Terengganu Malay's trademark brogue, Cheng Mua Lang eat with their hands, serve hyper-local dishes such as *nasi dagang* (a dish of rice steamed with coconut milk and served with a spicy fish curry and a side of pickled vegetables) and *nasi kunyit* (a golden-coloured sticky rice dish of glutinous rice steamed with coconut milk and turmeric) during important Chinese cultural festivities, and favour the sarong for its casual simplicity, distinct from their fellow Chinese counterparts.







Above: Teck Soon Heritage House is one of Kampung Cina's best examples of Peranakan Chinese architecture and design. Owned by the Teck Soon trading company, which was established by the descendants of Toukeh Wee Sin Hee, the building's decorative flourishes stand testament to the Wee family's wealth and status at the time.

Facing page: Lorong Kenangan Payang, or Payang Memory Lane, is named after Kuala Terengganu's famed market, and is one of seven laneways in Kampung Cina that have been revitalised for the enjoyment of the community and visitors alike.

ARCHITECTURE: A TANGIBLE LEGACY

Moving from lower to upper Chinatown, we cross the 200-year-old bridge that bisects the enclave, its pink lotus motif a nod to Buddhism. As we wander along the five-foot way, ducking beneath arches past jewellers, sundry stores, traditional medicine shops, and eateries, Law points out some of the more prominent buildings and the stories behind them.

Ornate friezes, imported Chinese roof tiles, and strong feng shui elements speak volumes of the wealth and influence of their original owners. This includes The Keen Koon Building, which features auspicious bat motifs, a harbinger of good fortune for its owner Zou Bao Mao and his descendants. The town's maritime influence is manifested in architectural flourishes, such as wave motifs on the columns of Teck Soon Heritage House, while the keen-eyed may just spot the lone plaster cast crab creeping along the relief panel of the building opposite.

This deep connection between Kampung Cina's community and the waters that sustain it is apparent in spiritual practice too. Both the wonderfully ornate Ho Ann Kiong Temple and more austere Tian Hou Gong Temple, located just beyond the perimeter of Kampung Cina near the riverbank, served as a focal point for fishermen who would beseech Ma Chor, the Goddess of the Sea, for protection during their perilous journeys.





This page, from below: Terengganu's state mascot, the turtle, is celebrated at Turtle Lane; the Syed Abek well is constructed from thinly shaped bricks that came from China and stands against a backdrop of Han Dynasty era poems; the entrance to Tian Hou Gong Temple. At its far end, Mazu, the Goddess of the Sea, gazes out across the Terengganu River, and is surrounded by the 12 animals of the Chinese zodiac.



A network of narrow lanes adds depth to the experience. These alleys, originally fire breaks and passages to the Terengganu River, have been revitalised with vibrant murals and offer Instagram-worthy moments for the young at heart. Among them are Lorong Haji Awang Besar, with its traditional Malay life murals; Lorong Toukay Wee Sin Hee, with its nostalgic British colonial-era telephone booth and post box; and Turtle Alley. Spearheaded by renowned Malaysian turtle conservationist, Chan Eng Hin, this charming strip features mosaics of local turtle species and a life-size leatherback turtle replica, a poignant reminder of this now functionally extirpated creature.

THE ENDURING SPIRIT OF KAMPUNG CINA

Kampung Cina, like many historic enclaves, navigates the complexities of the modern world. The relentless creep of development and prohibitive cost of conservation loom large, and the economic drivers that once lured early Chinese immigrants here now draw younger generations towards larger towns and cities, often leaving ancestral homes and businesses vacant. Modern conveniences have also quietly nudged out traditional practices, which are often labour intensive and time consuming. The distinct *baju kebaya 'potong kot'*, for example, a heavily embellished blouson once a hallmark of Terengganu Chinese Peranakan women, is a rare sight. It is on display at Kuala Terengganu's Terradala museum and café, but is no longer made and seldom worn.

Nevertheless, Kampung Cina has proven its remarkable resilience, surviving devastating fires in the 1880s and the epidemic of 1915 that nearly wiped out the population. The practices of Terengganu's Chinese Peranakan is another matter. "It's a fading legacy," laments Terengganu Chinese Peranakan Association President Yap Chuah Bin, pointing to the gradual and inevitable homogenisation of all cultures as an example. Still, he remains undeterred and is a man on a mission. "Through annual events and activities, what we are trying to do is to revive it and create awareness, as it's our role to pass this legacy on," he asserts.

Above, left: Ho Ann Kiong Temple was razed in a fire in 2010, but the community and corporate donors came together to fund its rebuild. To honour its history, this was completed using traditional construction methods and materials from Fujian, China. The temple's original bell, dating back to 1801, hangs inside.

Above, right: Kampung Cina remains a working neighbourhood with commercial operations that cater to the local community, including sundry stores.





A FUSION OF FLAVOURS

With the midday heat and humidity bearing down on us, we welcome a scheduled stop for shelter and sustenance before our tour concludes at the majestic Dragon Archway in Upper Chinatown.

Terengganu cuisine leans heavily on the use of fish and other seafood-based ingredients. Sadly, we miss an opportunity to try the Crab Lor Mee, an inviting dish of noodles bathed in a starchy, slightly tart prawn broth, and topped with steamed prawns and crab flesh; the restaurant is closed. Instead, we settle a few doors down where *keropok lekor,* the East Coast of Peninsular Malaysia's favourite deep-fried snack of wolf herring fish sausages, is served steamed for a Chinese twist, and satisfy a craving for Terengganu's version of laksa, which comes with a thick, sweet and red fish-based sauce.

Terengganu's rich, multifaceted past, its vibrant culture, and ongoing preservation efforts combine to create a compelling destination for those seeking authentic cultural experiences.

The Chinese Heritage Tour complements Tanjong Jara Resort's Kuala Terengganu City Tour, and offers guests insight into a less-explored facet of Malaysia's diverse heritage.

For more information, visit www.tanjongjararesort.com

DISCOVERING *KACHOU FUUGETSU*

LIFE FEATURE

AT HIGASHIYAMA NISEKO VILLAGE, A RITZ-CARLTON RESERVE, NATURE BECOMES A MIRROR, INVITING YOU TO PAUSE, RECONNECT, AND REDISCOVER YOURSELF THROUGH THE BEAUTY OF CHANGING SEASONS AND THOUGHTFUL DESIGN.

Words LILLY WEE
Photography CHRISTOPHER CYPERT



The landscape begins to change. Winter slowly gives way to spring, and the mountain ridges, blanketed in a sheen of white snow, transform into fields of wildflowers. In time, they reveal a gentle shade of green.

There's something deeply moving about witnessing a shifting landscape. The scent of wet grass after rain. The way warm sunlight peeks from a cloud and lands on your face. The hum of wind accompanied by the vibrant chatter of birds. These are the threads that connect us to the wild and, in the same vein, to something greater than ourselves. And, when you begin to truly observe the world for all its gentle, transient rhythms, you also begin to discover yourself.

This is the essence of *kachou fuugetsu*: a reverence for the fleeting beauty of nature, and the very act of discovering yourself as you witness it. As you watch the seasons change, you recognise your own transformations reflected back at you: you are always becoming, never quite the same as before.

At Higashiyama Niseko Village, a Ritz-Carlton Reserve, this delicate relationship with nature is ever present. Set in the heart of Niseko Village, Hokkaido, and surrounded by pristine wilderness, it is one of only seven Ritz-Carlton Reserves in the world. In its kanji form, *kachou fuugetsu* is made of four characters – flower, bird, wind, and moon – and is an ode to the elements that shape our world. Here, you'll find them honoured thoughtfully and tenderly in every detail.

At Higashiyama Niseko Village, a Ritz-Carlton Reserve, every room invites you to pause. Each space is layered with thoughtful details: dark latticed woods, plush carpets that feel like soft forest moss, and cherry blossom motifs stitched into fabric panels above the hotel bed. Earthy tones of stone and timber, softened by the gentle light of rice paper lamps, glow warm and low like a hearth. Even the smallest objects feel intentional. Tableware, sculpture, and mantle pieces offer a contemplative respite, encouraging you to meander from one thing to another.

However, the one thing that truly etches itself into memory are the windows.

Every window at Higashiyama Niseko Village, a Ritz-Carlton Reserve is a frame to the ever-changing landscape outside. Each glance outwards is an invitation to rediscover the world. Wherever you go within the property, you'll find yourself drawn to the view: Mount Yotei, standing in stoic, breathtaking majesty. In winter, she's cloaked in immaculate white. As seasons change, she transforms into an emerald ridge against the sky.

These floor-to-ceiling windows are everywhere. They stretch across Higashiyama Niseko Village, a Ritz-Carlton Reserve's 50 rooms and suites, through Sushi Nagi, where delicately crafted sushi is made from the freshest local catch. They flood the Ume Lounge, home to an impressive collection of Japanese whiskies and locally-brewed craft beers, its walls lined with curated books for slow afternoons. At Yukibana, the all-day dining space, plates of locally sourced ingredients arrive as small celebrations of the region's bounty. Even in the fitness centre, lifting weights becomes a meditative experience when your gaze is filled with towering pine trees and the silhouette of Mount Yotei beyond.

Kachou fuugetsu also permeates Spa Chasi La Sothys. Massages, treatments, and facials, are infused with black silica – found only in the region, long used by the Ainu for healing – along with natural spring water, birch, and lavender. You begin to remember that rejuvenation is often as simple as connecting to the world around us.

Outside, there's still more to discover. Skiing, hiking, biking through winding trails, horseback riding, or a simple jaunt. The Higashiyama Reservists are there to guide you: a small, handpicked team of locals who know the land deeply. They'll take you on journeys to discover the beauty of Niseko, but at your own pace, as you follow whatever catches your eye. To make your own discoveries as the season unfolds around you.

And when it's finally time to leave, you emerge reacquainted and reconnected with yourself. You step back into the world with a new lens.

Like the first bud on a branch after winter, you, too, begin again.

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

This and facing pages: the majestic natural beauty of Hokkaido abounds all around Higashiyama Niseko Village, a Ritz-Carlton Reserve.





LONDON'S FOUR DAYS OF FIRE AND DOOM

HOW THE GREAT CITY EMERGED LIKE A PHOENIX FROM THE GREAT FIRE OF 1666, AND HOW YOU CAN IMMERSE YOURSELF IN SUCH A HISTORIC EVENT FROM THE THREADNEEDLES HOTEL.

Words JUNE MONG-LOFTIN







This page: The Monument to the Great Fire Of London is just a 10-minute walk away from the Threadneedles Hotel.

Facing page: the Dome Lounge of the Threadneedles Hotel is an amazing space to enjoy some Afternoon Tea.



An errant spark from a baker's oven unleashed four days of a catastrophic inferno that brought 17th-century London to its knees. It also became a story of several 'Greats', both to describe the conflagration's destructive power and the flurry of regenerative activity in its aftermath. The Great Fire of London of 1666 burnt 86 per cent of the city to the ground and rendered 130,000 people homeless. But what followed was the Great Rebuilding of London, which spanned from 1666 to 1716. In fact, miraculously, only five people are known to have died in the Great Fire.

Adjacent to the Threadneedles Hotel, the Merchant Taylors' Hall, one of the Great Twelve Livery Companies of the City, was also damaged by the fire. Only the exterior walls and foundations remained. The Hall was rebuilt and reopened in 1671.

Some of the city's most beautiful architecture was born out of the 50-year rebuilding effort led by Sir Christopher Wren. In total, Wren designed 51 new city churches, as well as the new St Paul's Cathedral and, of course, The Monument (which he co-designed with Dr Robert Hooke). This landmark, with its imposing Doric columns topped by a gilded urn, is great for getting a panoramic view of London's surroundings from the viewing platform. During your stay at the Threadneedles Hotel, ask the concierge to book a guided tour of The Monument. It's a 10-minute walk from the hotel to the landmark tower on the corner of the evocatively named Fish Street Hill and Monument Street.

The Great Fire began just 200ft from the site of The Monument today. The predominantly wooden buildings and the dry summer of 1666 meant the flames spread with pace throughout London. With no fire service to call on at that time, it was left to Londoners and the soldiers of King Charles II to put it out with buckets of water. Strong squally winds meant the fire jumped across gaps and raged on. It was said that the heat from the fire was so great that the lead roof on St Paul's Cathedral melted and flowed down the streets. When the wind dropped on the fourth day, the fire burnt itself out after creating widespread damage across London.

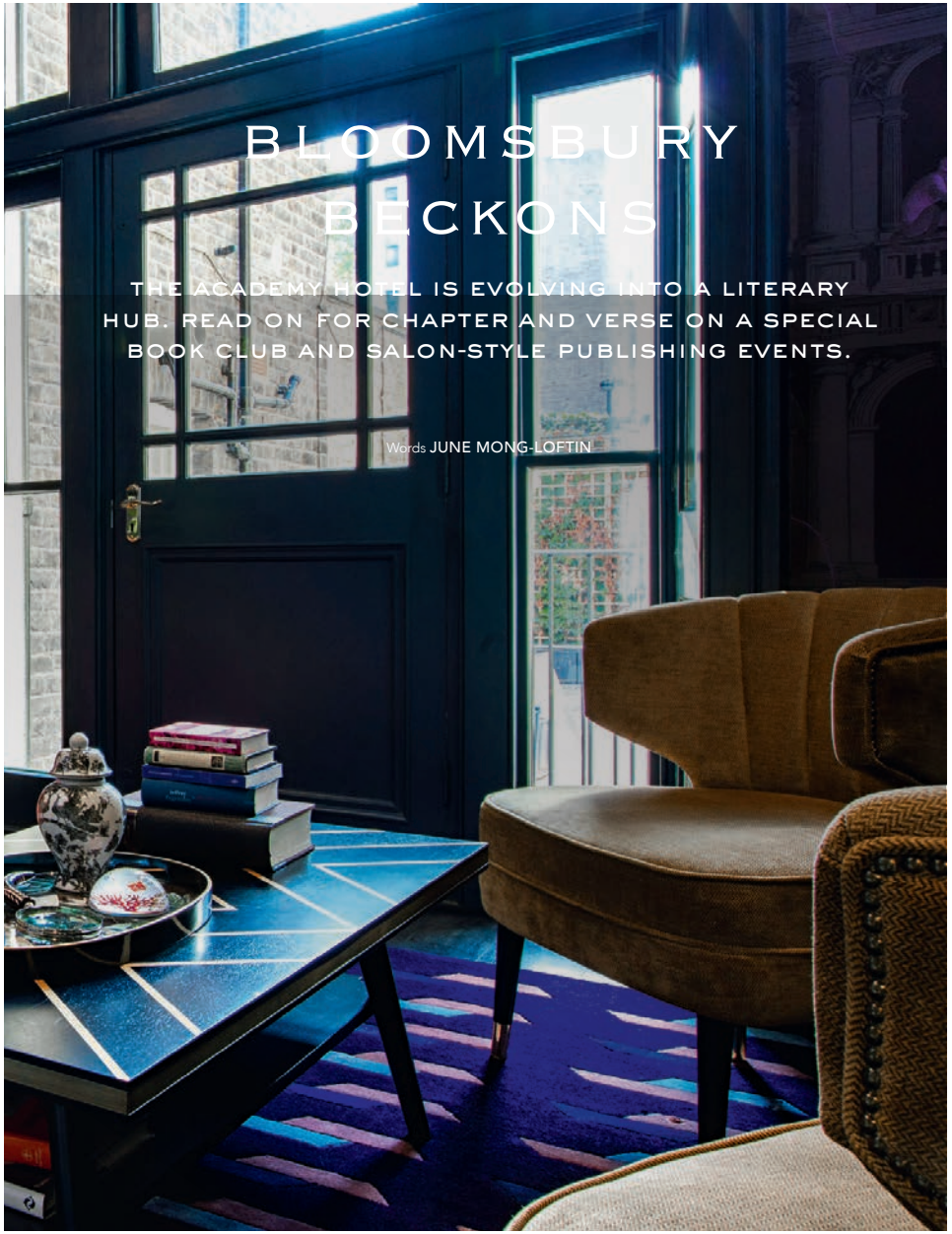
And the slow but determined regeneration of the city began.

By sheer serendipity, the rebuilding contributed to the future of another YTL Hotel property as a leisure destination. During the 17th-century rebuilding of the city, rubble was dumped from London on the diminutive Monkey Island, increasing its size and raising it higher from the water line. This raised land allowed for the creation of a more substantial estate, including the two buildings commissioned by the 3rd Duke of Marlborough in the 18th century, which today make up the Fishing Pavilion and the double-storey Fishing Temple that houses the luxurious Monkey Island Estate accommodation.

And, as always, the front desk of the Threadneedles Hotel will be glad to help guests who would like to learn more about these historically cataclysmic events that took place more than 350 years ago. After all, history is right there at its doorstep.

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





BLOOMSBURY BECKONS

THE ACADEMY HOTEL IS EVOLVING INTO A LITERARY HUB. READ ON FOR CHAPTER AND VERSE ON A SPECIAL BOOK CLUB AND SALON-STYLE PUBLISHING EVENTS.

Words JUNE MONG-LOFTIN

Bloomsbury is the crème de la crème of scholarly neighbourhoods. This leafy quarter is bookmarked by the iconic British Museum, founded way back in 1753, and the University of London, which joined the intellectual party in 1836. Today, Bloomsbury's literary and intellectual heart beats stronger than ever. It's home to a plethora of universities, including the prestigious University College London (UCL), Birkbeck College, and the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS). The area also boasts the British Library, the Charles Dickens Museum, and the John Soanes Museum.

But wait, there's more. Bloomsbury is internationally renowned for its long list of former literary inhabitants, including Virginia Woolf, T.S. Eliot, and Charles Dickens. Many of these luminaries were part of the Bloomsbury Group, a collective of writers, artists, and intellectuals who rocked the early 20th century. We're talking Lytton Strachey, Vanessa Bell, Duncan Grant, Roger Fry, and John Maynard Keynes. Their impact on literature, art, design, and philosophy was nothing short of revolutionary.

This open-mindedness towards creativity and innovation is so infectious that it has positioned The Academy Hotel as an up-and-coming literary hub and a gathering place for young creatives. The hotel, composed of five interlocking Georgian townhouses, is nestled on Gower Street and is known for its educational ties and connections to the women's suffrage movement.

And guess what? The Academy Hotel is also the proud home of the London chapter of an international women's book club called The Gloss, which meets monthly at the hotel. Members discuss the chosen book, virtually meet the author, and share a glass of tipple. The Gloss has chapters in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Europe, and Australia. If you're a member, you get to vote for the book, and everyone in all the global chapters reads the same book for that month.

In August 2025, The Gloss will be diving into *The Book Club for Troublesome Women* by Marie Bostwick, a tale of four women in Virginia in 1963, who start a book club by reading the 'controversial' book, *The Feminine Mystique* by Betty Friedan.

The Gloss doesn't have a favourite spot at The Academy Hotel and moves between The Alchemy Bar, the Library, with its cheeky monkey-inspired wallpaper, and the more spacious Refectory with its gorgeous Aegean-blue wood-panelled walls.

Ground-breaking publishing events at The Academy Hotel have included the Penguin launch of *Turn Yourself On* in May 2025. This debut book by Anna Hushlak and Billie Quinlan is a practical guide that empowers women to transform their relationship to sex, have honest, open conversations, and live happier lives. Hushlak and Quinlan are the founders of the sexual wellbeing app Ferly, which boasts a following of half a million women.

So, if you have a literary society, a book club, or a book launch looking for a literary home, get in touch with the Front Desk of The Academy.

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



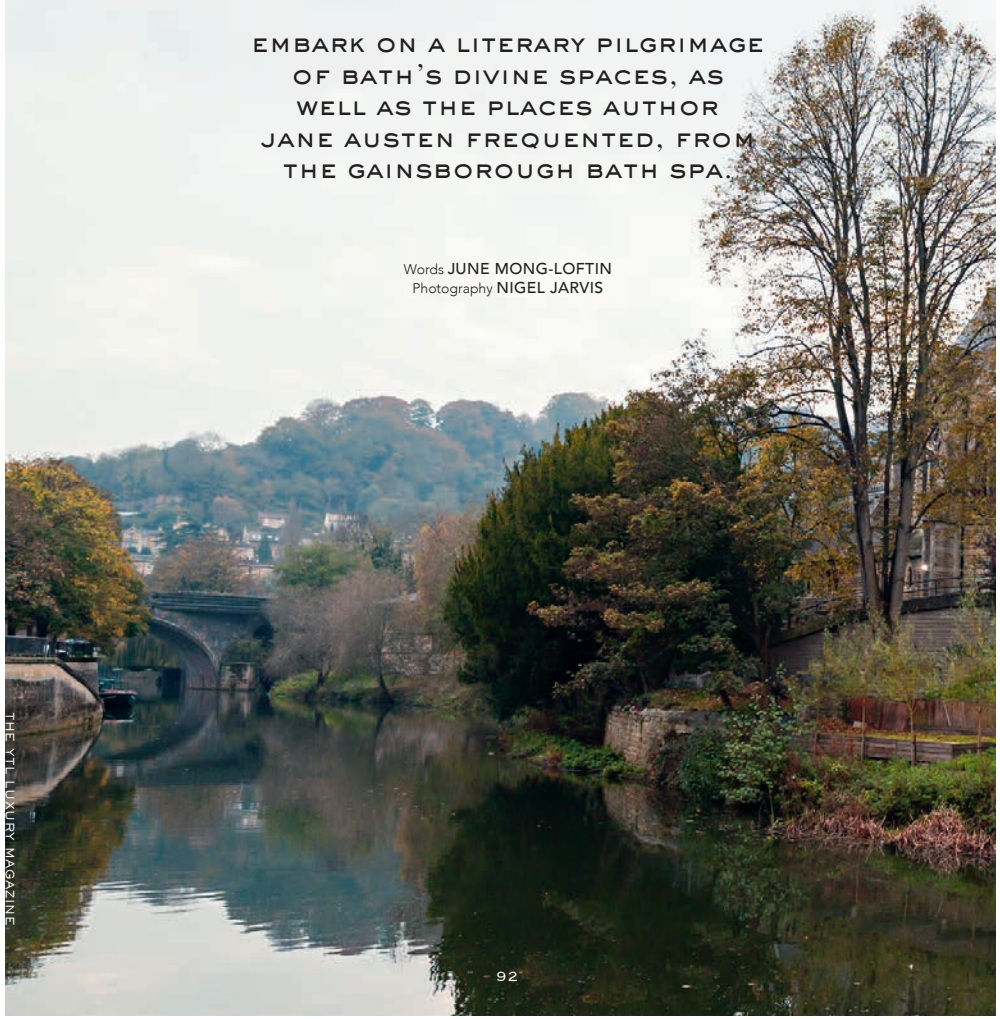


THE YTL LUXURY MAGAZINE

AUSTEN, CHURCHES, AND CHAPELS

EMBARK ON A LITERARY PILGRIMAGE OF BATH'S DIVINE SPACES, AS WELL AS THE PLACES AUTHOR JANE AUSTEN FREQUENTED, FROM THE GAINSBOROUGH BATH SPA.

Words JUNE MONG-LOFTIN
Photography NIGEL JARVIS







The elegant city of Bath is well-known to visitors for its Regency architecture, historic Roman Baths, and its connections to Jane Austen. However, as the savvy concierge team at The Gainsborough Bath Spa hotel well knows, the city's ecclesiastical landmarks are just as unmissable.

Put on Classic FM on the Roberts radio in your Champalimaud-designed luxury room, and plan your day's sightseeing with our insider's tips. You will visit St. John The Evangelist Church, St. Swithin's Walcot Church, and the sites of Queens Parade Chapel, Laura's Chapel, and the Octagon Chapel. Our sightseeing guide also throws in some Strictly Jane Austen literary trivia.

Overlooking the South Parade in the Bath city centre, St. John's Church is often overlooked by visitors because of its busy surroundings, especially during the summer season. However, if you plan a visit as dusk falls, you might get to enjoy the vibrant colours of its stained glass windows in the high-ceilinged tranquility of this Gothic gem. Admire it first externally for its striking spires and intricate stonework, designed by Charles Francis Hansom in 1863. This prominent Victorian architect has balanced the grand with the intimate, the opulent with the devout, with his interpretation of the Gothic Revival style.



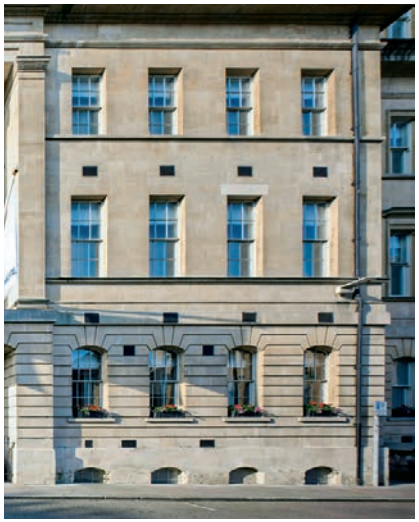
The Jesuit legacy of this church dates back to 1685, when a Benedictine priest was sent by the Jesuit College to establish a mission in Bath. Their resilience in continuing their missionary activities over several hundred years – working out of a lodging house, having a new presbytery turned down by anti-Catholics, and operating from a house on St. James' Parade, which is now the Mission Theatre – culminated in the current magnificent St. John's Church in South Parade.

Although the three other churches and chapels on our touristic pilgrimage are much smaller, they have the notable distinction of being linked to Jane Austen. During the times Austen either visited Bath for an extended time or lived there, she probably worshipped at three different churches and chapels. In her letters, Austen often mentions going to chapel in Bath. As a clergyman's daughter, she certainly knew that "church" and "chapel" were two different things, and used the words correctly. Unlike a church, a chapel is a place of worship without a pastor, priest, or permanent congregation.

Previous spread: St. John The Evangelist Church.

Left: St. Swithin's Walcot Churth.

Below: The Gainsborough Bath Spa.



In 1801, when she was staying with her aunt and uncle, the Leigh-Perrots, at No. 1 The Paragon, she wrote this to her sister Cassandra in a letter: "On Sunday, we went to Church twice, and after evening service walked a little in the Crescent fields, but found it too cold to stay long."

The church Austen and her relatives most likely attended is Walcot Church, also called St. Swithin's, because it was a straight walk up the hill from The Paragon. Austen also had another association with St. Swithin's Walcot, as her parents were married here in 1764. When her father passed away in 1805, he was buried in the grounds of St. Swithin's Walcot.

After Austen's father died, they continued to live in Bath but rented cheaper lodgings in Green Park Buildings, Gay Street, and Trim Street. From those houses they would most likely have worshipped at the Queen Square Chapel, which was nearby. It was demolished around 1870 to convert Chapel Row into a better approach to a railway station.

As you sip espresso from your Nespresso machine in your room at The Gainsborough Bath Spa, settle down with a copy of Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey* – a novel that itself mentions the nearby St. Swithin's Walcot church. In this novel, when John Thorpe comes sweeping into Bath, he boasts that his horse "had not turned a hair till we came to Walcot Church".

Catherine Morland and Isabella Thorpe, two characters in *Northanger Abbey*, are described as having worshipped at Laura's Chapel in Bath. When the Austens lived in Sydney Place in 1801, they most likely worshipped here as it was the closest chapel to them. Opened in 1796, it was a very large chapel, expensive, and profitable, seating 1,000 people and having fireplaces to keep it warm. The building of Laura's Chapel was demolished in 1900, but two original entryways still remain and can be seen on Laura Place.

The last stop on our literary tour is the site of the Octagon Chapel. The Thorpes, the main characters in *Northanger Abbey*, were described as staying in Edgar's Buildings, so the nearest chapel to them would be the Octagon Chapel in Milsom Street, where Catherine and Isabella also went shopping. Unlike most of the Bath chapels, the Octagon's hall still remains, albeit in various different permutations. It has been an antique shop, a World War II food office, a photographic exhibition hall, and a restaurant.

If you are interested in experiencing Georgian life as Austen and her colourful characters did, we recommend booking the six-day Strictly Jane Austen experience from 13 to 18 October 2025. The Bath-based travel specialist ECT Travel, in partnership with The Gainsborough Bath Spa, has curated a very special itinerary of immersive experiences, guided tours, and themed-activities to celebrate the 250th anniversary of Austen's birth.

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



BABY QUEEN

A TOUR OF THE ROYAL RETREATS OF MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS, CROWNED BEFORE THE AGE OF ONE.

Words JUNE MONG-LOFTIN
Photography HEARTLAND ARTS, KONSTANTIN2017

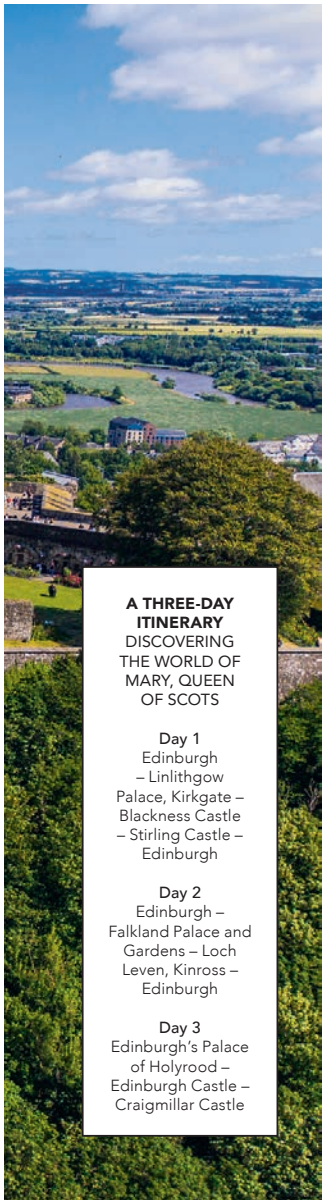
There are few more romantically tragic queens in European history than Mary, Queen of Scots. She was crowned at nine months' old, betrothed to Francis, the Dauphin of France, when she was five years old, married to him at 16, and widowed at 18. She was also the grand-niece of Henry VIII and had a claim to the English throne. Her second husband, Lord Darnley, murdered her private secretary in cold blood, and the Protestant Earl of Bothwell forced her into a third marriage. History also remembers her as a controversial figure. She was a suspect in the murder of her husband Lord Darnley. And she was accused of plotting to assassinate her cousin Elizabeth I to claim the English throne.

During Mary's brief reign from 1561 to 1565, she found comfort in a number of Scottish castles and palaces. The Glasshouse Hotel Edinburgh, whose rooms and suites all have floor-to-ceiling windows, is the perfect base to do driving tours of residences that mark turning points in her tumultuous life. The knowledgeable tartan-clad concierge team at The Glasshouse Hotel recommends you do this over two leisurely days before spending the third exploring Mary's Edinburgh residences (see sidebar for the recommended itinerary).

The ruins of Linlithgow Palace (pictured on facing page) was where Mary Stuart was born to her French mother, Marie de Guise. Her father, James V, died when she was only six days old, so she became queen while still an infant. Blackness Castle







A THREE-DAY ITINERARY
DISCOVERING THE WORLD OF MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS

Day 1
Edinburgh – Linlithgow Palace, Kirkgate – Blackness Castle – Stirling Castle – Edinburgh

Day 2
Edinburgh – Falkland Palace and Gardens – Loch Leven, Kinross – Edinburgh

Day 3
Edinburgh's Palace of Holyrood – Edinburgh Castle – Craigmillar Castle



Above: The Glasshouse Hotel Edinburgh.

Facing page: Stirling Castle, the site where Mary was crowned queen of Scotland when she was just nine months old.

is where Mary's courtiers wanted to move her during the war, known as the Rough Wooing, with the English. Although this plan was never carried out, the Blackness fortress remained loyal to her in the civil war against the Protestant nobles of Scotland. In the 2018 film, *Mary, Queen of Scots*, which stars Margot Robbie and Saoirse Ronan, Blackness Castle was used as the Palace of Holyroodhouse.

Stirling Castle is where Mary was crowned when she was nine months' old, and where she and her mother lived peacefully until she was betrothed, at the age of five, to the Dauphin of France, whom she married at the age of 16. Falkland Palace and Garden was the residence where Mary often escaped to immerse herself in nature away from court politics. She indulged herself in outdoor pursuits such as falconry, hunting, and playing tennis in men's breeches.

Widowed at the age of 18, she claimed her rightful place on the Scottish throne in 1561 and chose the Palace of Holyrood as her royal residence. This is where her jealous husband, Lord Darnley, murdered her Italian secretary Rizzio before her eyes. In the months after Rizzio's murder, Mary chose the fortified Edinburgh Castle as her residence as she awaited the birth of her first-born child, James VI. On his arrival, the city celebrated by setting alight 500 bonfires.

Finally, Craigmillar Castle, where Mary stayed to avoid her third husband Henry Darnley, was a happy retreat for her. It was here that Scottish lords signed a pact, the Craigmillar Bond, to murder Darnley.

At the end of your sightseeing, why not toast to Mary, Queen of Scots with a dram or two of Scotland's national drink at The Glasshouse Snug located within The Glasshouse Hotel Edinburgh? With an enviable selection of almost 200 Scotch whiskies, you can enjoy a warming dram by the fireplace or a bespoke cocktail on the roof garden. For the whisky novice, the experienced team at The Glasshouse can take you on a journey through Scotland's world-famous whisky regions. Book your 'royal residence' with your own outdoor-seating-with-a-view by choosing one of the hotel's Calton Hill or New Town Suites, each named after a whisky distillery.

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

SECRET SYDNEY

AN INSIDER'S GUIDE TO SPRING'S QUIET CHARMS IN THE CAPITAL OF NEW SOUTH WALES.

Words MUNA NOOR
Photography TOURISM AUSTRALIA, SHUTTERSTOCK, KATHERINE GRIFFITHS





Above: Sydney Observatory was built in the mid-1800s and boasts spectacular vistas of Sydney Harbour

Below: go on an adventure to find Wendy Whiteley's Secret Garden in Lavender Bay Parklands, which is part of Sydney Harbour.



In Spring, Sydney is a city shaking off winter in favour of longer days and brighter moods. But beyond the Sydney Opera House and Bondi Beach, lies a softer, lesser-seen Sydney. It's in these quieter corners that Sydney reveals its soul – through hidden gardens, secret swimming spots, and stories etched deep into the land. This isn't a list of attractions. It's a nudge to look sideways and follow the scent of coffee down an unexplored path, just like a Sydneysider would.

1. A SECRET GARDEN

Tucked into a slope above Lavender Bay, Wendy Whiteley's Secret Garden isn't really a secret – but it feels like one. Born from grief for her departed artist husband, Brett Whiteley, and a gardener's stubborn love, this reclaimed patch of part public, part private land is layered with winding paths, hidden sculptures, and the best view of the Harbour Bridge you'll find without a tour group in sight.

2. SUNSET AND STARS

A short walk from Circular Quay, Observatory Hill is where Sydneysiders go when they need to breathe. It's not as busy as Mrs Macquarie's Chair, and the view is arguably better – especially at golden hour. Atop the hill, the heritage-listed Sydney Observatory runs intimate night tours, when you can use its old telescopes and get a close-up look at the heavens. Moon Festival takes place from 30 September to 2 October, when the hill comes alive with lanterns, lion dances, and Vietnamese food.





3. SUNKEN TREASURE
At first glance, you might miss it – a hole in the ground behind Paddington's busy Oxford Street. This former reservoir once held the city's water supply until it became obsolete and languished. Since reinvented, the neglected space has been converted into a public garden with much of the original brick arches and rusted ironwork framework retained. Come in September or October, when nearby streets are a purple haze of jacaranda petals.

4. BEACHSIDE BATHING
Bondi gets the headlines, but Bronte is where locals go for laps. Built into the rocks, Bronte bathers have been catching the sunrise at this ocean pool since 1887. Open to the public year-round, early mornings here are a ritual: the sound of waves, the slap of swimmers cutting through saltwater, and the occasional sea spray. Afterwards, reward yourself with a walk along the Bronte to Bondi coastal trail and a healthy Aussie brekkie from one of the cafés perched above the cliffs.

5. DREAMTIME WANDERINGS
Think you know Sydney? Join a walking tour of the city's iconic foreshore led by Dreamtime Southern X to uncover the sacred Aboriginal sites hidden within plain sight. Founded by Dunghutti-Jerrinjah elder Margret Campbell, these 90-minute experiences offer stories of creation, resistance, and resilience that you won't find in guidebooks. You'll never see the city the same way again, as Sydney is magically revealed as a living landscape with tens of thousands of years of culture underfoot.

6. MARKET DAYS
A weekend tradition for many Sydneysiders, Glebe Market is part treasure hunt, part time capsule, part retail therapy. Every Saturday, the grounds of Glebe Public School fill with racks of vintage denim, hand-stitched dresses, secondhand books, and handmade crafts. There's food, music, and the faint hope of finding the perfect leather jacket for thirty bucks or less. Come late and you might just score a deal as stallholders begin to pack up.

7. STRETCH OF THE IMAGINATION
It doesn't get more 'Sydney' than sun salutations under the Harbour Bridge. 'Yoga Under The Bridge' runs free Sunday classes at Bradfield Park for morning serenity with urban sensibilities. Just bring your own mat. Want to commune with the elements? Try SUP yoga in Manly Cove with Flow mOcean (yes, that's yoga on a stand-up paddleboard) for a morning of water, wind, and fire in those muscles. Alternatively, opt for a 'Yoga by the Sea'. Sessions take place at multiple locations, but we recommend Bondi or Bronte Beach for sunrise







Facing page, from top: Paddington Reservoir Gardens; Bronte Beach.

This page, clockwise from top right: Glebe Market; 'Yoga Under The Bridge'; a walking tour led by Dreamtime Southern X.





This page, clockwise from below: Picnic Train; Sydney Masonic Centre; Casa Rosa, a rooftop cocktail bar.

Facing page: book your stay at the Sydney Harbour Marriott at Circular Quay and wake up to stunning views in the Sydney Opera House View Suite.



stretching and pounding surf.

8. CLUB CULTURE

Sydney is as thrilling at night, when the city's lights flicker on, as it is in the day. The legendary Abercrombie, a once-forgotten pub on Broadway, has been reborn as a 24-hour party palace, complete with rooftop space Casa Rosa for dancing until dawn. On Oxford Street, Oxford Art Factory channels Andy Warhol's Factory days with live gigs and art installations until late and pop-up markets on the weekend in an edgy warehouse venue. It's a vibe.

9. ICE CREAM DREAMS

You don't need to wait for summer to enjoy Sydney's obsession with cold confections. At Cow and Moon in Enmore, a family-run spot that once beat Italy at its own game, the flavours are classic with a twist. If it's refreshing Italian *sorbetto* you're after, Gelato Franco in Dulwich Hill feels like stepping into a 1970s Sicilian parlour. And, for something different, try Kreamu in Marckville, a Vietnamese-inspired ice cream shop where the flavours – such as Vietnamese iced coffee and yoghurt, and sugarcane and calamansi – are playful, coconut-milk based, and entirely unexpected. Just the treat for vegans and the lactose-intolerant.

10. LIT CONCERTS

Across Sydney, intimate venues such as St. Stephen's Uniting Church and the Sydney Masonic Centre play host to some of the most romantically gothic nights imaginable. Featuring classical and modern tribute concerts to beloved composers such as Vivaldi, and artists such as Amy Winehouse and Queen, live musical ensembles perform familiar pieces and tunes amidst a sea of glowing candlelight, transforming an evening of music into a wonderfully evocative experience.

11. DO THE LOCOMOTION

If slow travel and nostalgia fuels your wanderlust, then jump on board a train. During Australia's cooler months, the Picnic Train departs from Sydney's iconic Central Station for the Southern Highlands. Pack a moveable feast or plump for a lavish high tea spread in the dining car as this classic steam-powered locomotive chugs through scenic countryside. You can alight at the charming towns of Bowral or Moss Vale to have lunch in a country café and pick up a few antiques before returning to ride the rails. Check the Picnic Train website for the announcement of Spring dates.

12. A CENTRAL RETREAT

When the city's done showing off, retreat to the Sydney Harbour Marriott at Circular Quay. The rooms are spacious, the views across the harbour are breathtaking, and the location, in downtown Sydney, puts you within strolling distance of the Sydney Opera House and The Rocks. Built in 1826, Custom's House Bar is the hotel's in-house watering hole. The attached beer garden, which extends into Macquarie Place Park, will make the most of the fresh spring weather, but be sure to sidle up to the bar when you order: the original, 160-year-old marble bar counter is heritage listed.



AD ASTRA

WITH COOL NIGHTS, DARK SKIES, AND RARE CELESTIAL EVENTS, A TRIP TO PERTH IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA THIS SPRINGTIME COULD BE WRITTEN IN THE STARS.

Words MUNA NOOR
Photography CHAD GERBER, VIRAT SHAH, JARRAD SENG

Throughout time, humans have looked towards the heavens for meaning. It's underpinned faiths, inspired legends, and continues to be used for navigation and to mark time. Without the sun, moon, and stars as our guide, early travel and agricultural advancement would have been impossible, but it's also been a source of wonder.

Thanks to the efforts of groups such as Astrotourism WA, who are committed to reducing light pollution, Western Australia boasts some of the clearest night skies. With celestial occurrences – such as a Geminids meteor shower in mid-December – to look forward to, Perth makes the perfect launchpad for stargazers and romantics, offering astronomical experiences wrapped in culture, science, and unforgettable scenery.

STARS AND STONE TOWERS

A few hours north of Perth, the otherworldly limestone formations of the Pinnacles Desert take on a new life after dark. Set inside Nambung National Park, these ancient stone pillars rise from the golden sand like sentinels under the vast black sky. Several operators offer guided night tours in search of planets and shooting stars from this appropriately desolate lunar-like vantage point.







Facing page: the Pinnacles Desert in Nambung National Park.

This page, from top: the Gravity Discover Centre; Wave Rock in Hyden; the Westin Perth is located right in the city centre.

STORIES IN THE SKY

Less than an hour from Perth, guides from the Gravity Discovery Centre in Gingin share a deeply moving experience that blends heritage, science, and storytelling. Led by respected Elder Dr Noel Nannup, visitors are introduced to Aboriginal constellations and Dreamtime creation stories, learning to read the sky through the lens of one of the world's oldest continuous cultures.

COSMIC PERTH

Kings Park and Botanic Garden in Perth is one of the few inner-city parks in the world with minimal light interference. Here, a curiosity for the cosmos and urban convenience collide. Recent activities have included stargazing with live music, transforming this urban green space into a pop-up observatory with a cultural twist. Be sure to check local listings for the latest events.

SAND, SUNSET AND CELESTIAL BODIES

In Rockingham, 25 minutes outside of Perth, Hidden deTours' coastal sunset excursion serves up sightseeing, stargazing, and wildlife spotting with a side of snacks. Pack a picnic, spread out your beach blanket, and watch the celestial show unfold. Whatever your observations – Saturn or seals, Pluto or pelicans – it's the perfect pre-bedtime quest for curious kids and grown-ups looking for an undemanding adventure.

ROCK THE RARE SKIES

Wave Rock in Hyden is a popular day trip. Once the sun dips below the horizon, geology and astronomy collude as this towering 15m tall granite wave and surrounding wide, open landscape become the backdrop to phenomena from dwarf galaxies to glowing Magellanic Clouds. Bring your camera and a sense of awe.

WHERE TO STAY

The Westin Perth, located in Perth's buzzing East End, is the perfect place to rest and recharge. With contemporary design, impeccable service, and its signature Heavenly Bed, the hotel is a sanctuary for tired eyes and travel-weary limbs after a night of looking up.

For more information, visit *www.westinperth.com*

SPRINGTIME SPLENDOUR

AS WINTER'S CHILL FADES DOWN UNDER, MELBOURNE AND ITS SURROUNDS BURST INTO A SPECTACLE OF VIBRANT BLOOMS.

Words MUNA NOOR
Photography TOURISM AUSTRALIA, GEOFF LUNG, NEISHA BREEN









Clockwise from above: the Melbourne Marriott Hotel is located right in the heart of town; the CheryHill Blossom Festival; the Aboriginal Heritage Walk in the Royal Botanic Gardens.

Facing page: the Tesselaar Tulip Festival in the Dandenong Ranges.

As the Southern Hemisphere ushers in a season of lengthening days and warmer weather, spring's sunshine and mood-lifting shift transforms Melbourne's parks and gardens into living canvases. If fresh foliage gives you the feels, here are five suggestions of where to go to thrill in dazzling horticultural displays.

ROOTED IN HERITAGE
For a rich exploration of enduring botanical wisdom, the Royal Botanic Gardens' Aboriginal Heritage Walk is an insightful journey into the First Peoples' deep connection with indigenous plants. Delve into its traditional uses for food, medicine, and tools with the help of knowledgeable aboriginal guides. Alternatively, explore the sculptures amidst the native wild garden crafted by Melbourne horticulturist Ian Shears. Located on the serene Herring Island in the Yarra River, this secluded spot is accessible only by boat.

FLORAL FESTIVITIES
State-run gardens and privately owned orchards are some of the best places to be in when spring's jubilant mood takes grip. During CherryHill Blossom Festival, the eponymous commercial farm throws its gates open to the public. Reservations are recommended if you plan to revel under the heavenly white florescence, particularly at night, when the cherry trees are illuminated. If it's romance you're after, it's hard to compete with 5,000 blooming roses. Victoria State Rose Garden's annual show takes place in November but roses bloom until April. Elsewhere, the Dandenong Ranges draws eager crowds for the Tesselaar Tulip Festival that runs from mid-September to mid-October. It fetes these magnificent flowers, as well as Dutch and Turkish cultures.

GARDEN VARIETY
Victoria's bucolic countryside explodes with colour in spring. Visit the Garden of St Erth, where daffodils carpet the ground in September, the suburb of Altona for its cheery pigface flowers in October, and Red Hill Peony Estate for – what else? – pretty peonies. All are located less than an hour from central Melbourne. Should that send anthophiles into sensory overload, the fragrant, family-run Warratina Lavender Farm is aromatherapy unbottled; just remember to breathe.

WILD AT HEART
For those who enjoy long scenic drives, untamed spots such as the Anglesea heathlands along the dramatic Great Ocean Road come alive with a diverse array of wildflowers, including banksias, riotous parrot peas, and delicate native orchids. Closer to the city, the Pines Flora and Fauna Reserve coastal heathlands are renowned for rare native orchids, such as the Rabbit Ears, Dwarf Greenhood, and Spider orchids, and provide scenic trails for a jog or a leisurely walk amidst the thriving dunes.

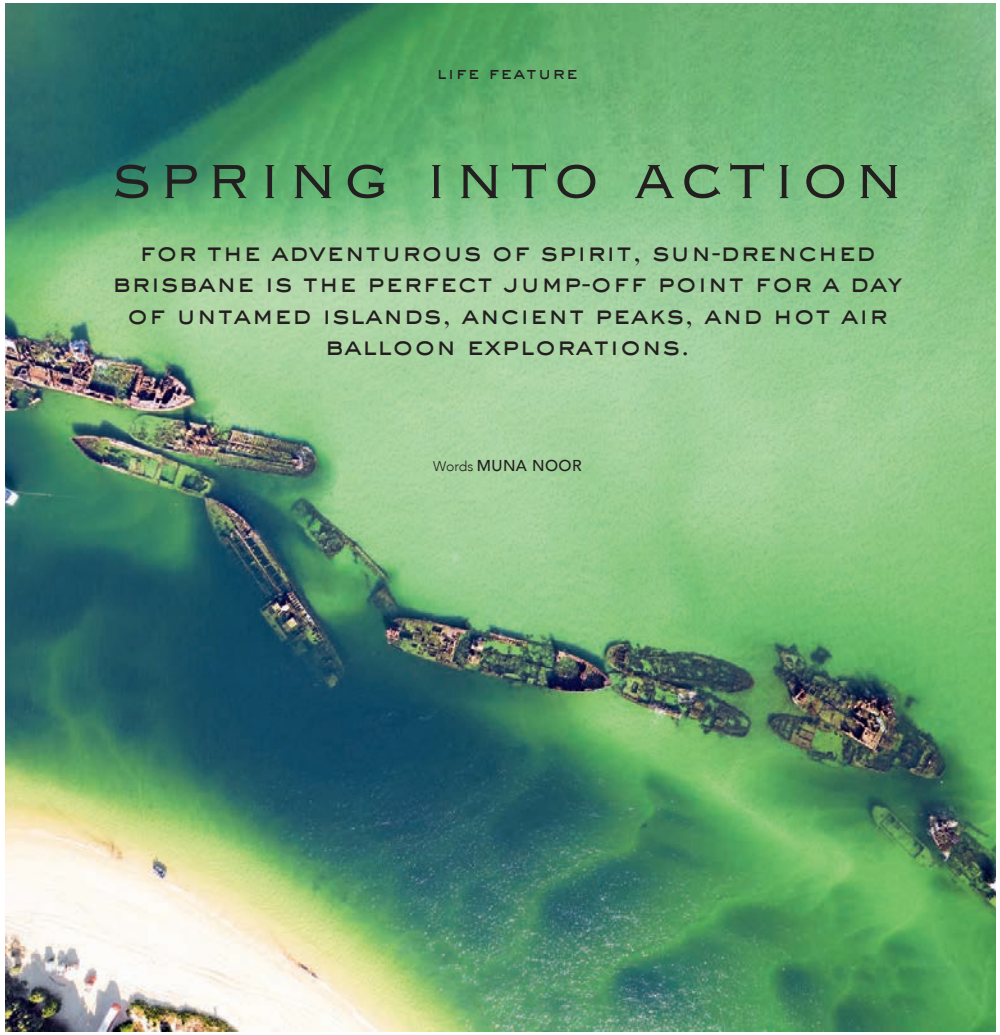
WHERE TO STAY
A luxurious retreat awaits at the Melbourne Marriott Hotel. Situated downtown in Melbourne's CBD, it offers effortless access to the city's parks and gardens, as well as convenient transport links to further flung spring spectacles. Here, you'll find spacious, inviting rooms. Indulge your palate at Essence restaurant; it's where modern Australian cuisine celebrates the best of the region's seasonal harvest.

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

SPRING INTO ACTION

FOR THE ADVENTUROUS OF SPIRIT, SUN-DRENCHED BRISBANE IS THE PERFECT JUMP-OFF POINT FOR A DAY OF UNTAMED ISLANDS, ANCIENT PEAKS, AND HOT AIR BALLOON EXPLORATIONS.

Words **MUNA NOOR**



Above: the Tangalooma Wrecks at Moreton Island.

Facing page, from top: Glass House Mountains; North Stradbroke Island; the Scenic Rim; the Presidential Suite of the Brisbane Marriott Hotel.

Queensland's capital of Brisbane thrives on its sub-tropical setting. Beyond its modern metropolitan appeal, it's a place that takes full advantage of its year-round warm weather, offering endless green spaces, riverside strolls, and forest trails to fill your days. Beyond the buzz of its central business district (CBD), the city is perfectly positioned for remarkable day trips: from pristine islands to World Heritage-listed national parks, each promises an exhilarating, action-packed, all-day escape into nature.

MORETON ISLAND
A mere 75-minute ferry ride from Brisbane finds you on Moreton Island. Indigenous Ngugi call it Mulgumpin, meaning 'Place of the Sandhills'; but just offshore are the Tangalooma Wrecks. It's an underwater playground of 15 sunken ships adorned with coral where you can snorkel, dive, or paddle alongside turtles, wobbegong sharks, and schools of neon fish. Be sure not to miss the Champagne Pools. Crashing waves at these coastal rock pools create an effervescent effect that looks like a bubble bath and feels like a jacuzzi.

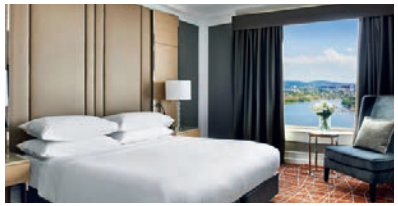
GLASS HOUSE MOUNTAINS
An hour north of Brisbane, the Glass House Mountains rise dramatically from the Queensland hinterland. According to Dreamtime lore, these 25-million-year-old volcanic plugs immortalise a petrified family of siblings. Climb up to a lookout point or hike Mount Ngungun, one of the 11 peaks. The 2.8km summit trail is a rewarding two-hour journey through ancient ferns and eucalyptus forest that culminates in a breath-taking 360° panorama.

NORTH STRADBROKE ISLAND
"Straddie", as the locals call it, is a laidback haven oozing retro charm. Just a ferry ride away from Toondah Harbour, the unwritten rule once you arrive is not to move faster than the Eastern grey kangaroo. The other is to see off the sunset with an ice cold beer from the local brewery, Straddie Brewing Co.. Other wildlife species you could encounter are dolphins and migrating humpback whales, so keep your binoculars close.









THE SCENIC RIM
In 2022, *Lonely Planet* rated the Scenic Rim as one of the Top 10 Regions of the World; it's easy to appreciate why. Just one and a half hours south-west of Brisbane, this Green Cauldron of rugged mountains, lush World Heritage-listed rainforests, and fertile farmland offer gourmands a fabulous mix of walking, waterfalls, cafes, and watering holes. Take to the skies in a hot air balloon for a bird's-eye view of idyllic towns and the rolling countryside. Then, alight to sample the artisanal produce; the award-winning Towri Sheep Cheeses are a must-try.

WHERE TO STAY
The Brisbane Marriott Hotel offers effortless access to the city's key attractions, while providing a front-row seat to the Queensland capital's iconic skyline and Brisbane river. Unwind by the heated outdoor pool, gaze at the iconic Story Bridge, or indulge at the hotel's in-house spa. The Brisbane Marriott stands as a luxurious and convenient base, ensuring your adventures conclude with unparalleled comfort.

For more information, visit brisbanemarriott.com

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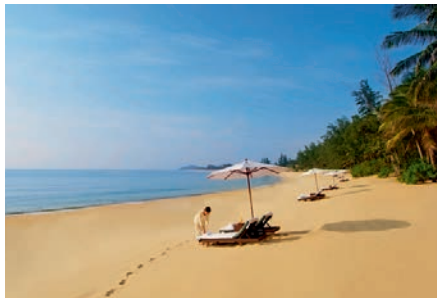
UNMISTAKABLY MALAY





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

CAMERON HIGHLANDS RESORT

TRAILS, TALES AND TRADITIONS





EVOKING THE SPLENDOUR, ROMANCE, AND 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





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

THE RITZ-CARLTON
KUALA LUMPUR

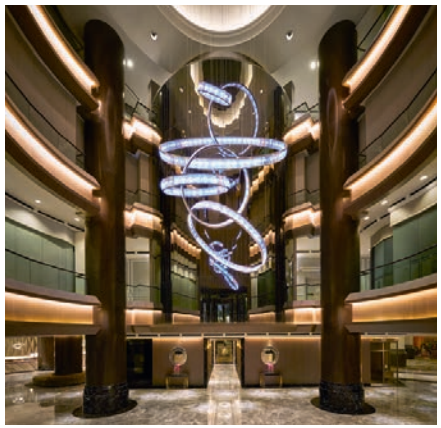




LOCATED IN KUALA LUMPUR'S GOLDEN TRIANGLE BUSINESS DISTRICT, THIS STYLISH LUXURY HOTEL IS CONVENIENTLY POSITIONED FOR UPSCALE SHOPPING, DINING, AND ENTERTAINMENT. IT IS HOME TO AN AWARD-WINNING SPA, AND GOURMANDS WILL BE DELIGHTED BY THE INDULGENT AFTERNOON TEA EXPERIENCE AS WELL AS LI YEN'S STELLAR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

RITZCARLTON.COM/KUALALUMPUR

JW MARRIOTT
KUALA LUMPUR





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.

JWMARRIOTTKUALALUMPUR.COM

HOTEL
STRIPES
KUALA LUMPUR
AUTOGRAPH COLLECTION®
HOTELS





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.

STRIPESKL.COM

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

THE
STARHILL
DINING









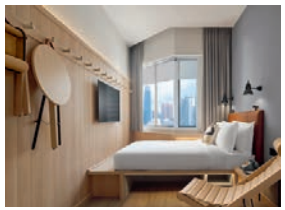
THE STARHILL DINING CELEBRATES CULINARY SOPHISTICATION, BRINGING TO DINERS FRESH, SEASONAL, AND GLOBALLY INSPIRED DINING EXPERIENCES WITH A DIVERSE SPREAD OF GASTRONOMIC CREATIONS SERVED BY THE TASTEMAKERS, EACH WITH A UNIQUE FOOD PROGRAMMING. THE STARHILL DINING'S COLLECTION OF CAPTIVATING DINING AND ENTERTAINMENT CONCEPTS INCLUDES SHOOK!, KUALA LUMPUR'S CHOICE RESTAURANT THAT CONTINUES TO FUEL THE IMAGINATION; LUK YU TEA HOUSE, WHICH 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

KUALA LUMPUR
CHINATOWN

moxy









NESTLED IN THE EPICENTRE OF KUALA LUMPUR'S CHINATOWN, MOXY KUALA LUMPUR CHINATOWN IS A CONTEMPORARY HOTEL WHERE GUESTS CAN CHECK IN WITH A WELCOME DRINK IN THE VIBRANT ZONE IN SOCIAL HUB — SURROUNDED BY BUZZING SPACES AND WHIMSICAL ART — BEFORE STEPPING OUT JUST MOMENTS AWAY TO DISCOVER A DELIGHTFUL MIX OF SHOPPING, STREET FOOD, AND CULTURAL EXPERIENCES. START YOUR DAY WITH AN ENERGISING BREAKFAST AT ZONE OUT, THEN SETTLE INTO A QUIET SPOT TO CATCH UP OR CHILL, OR HEAD UPSTAIRS TO BAR MOXY, WHICH EVOLVES THROUGHOUT THE DAY, FROM POOLSIDE LOUNGING TO GOLDEN-HOUR COCKTAILS SET AGAINST THE CITY'S PULSE. AND IF YOU NEED SOMEWHERE TO WORK OR THROW A PARTY, THE HOTEL'S DREAM LABS EVENT SPACES OFFER THE PERFECT VENUE, ENSURING YOU'LL FEEL COOL, COMFORTABLE, AND CREATIVE THROUGHOUT YOUR STAY THANKS TO CLEVER, STYLISH INTERIORS, AND AN ENERGETIC TEAM.

WWW.MARRIOTT.COM/EN-US/HOTELS/KULOK-MOXY-KUALA-LUMPUR-CHINATOWN/OVERVIEW/

THE MAJESTIC
MALACCA

HOTEL MAJESTIC
KUALA LUMPUR
AUTOGRAPH COLLECTION HOTELS









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.

MAJESTICMALACCA.COM

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

MAJESTICKL.COM

Niseko Village
Always in Season



HINODE HILLS NISEKO VILLAGE

THE GREEN 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







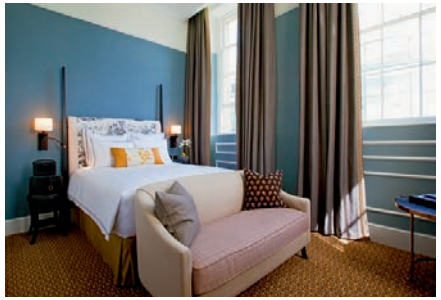


HIGASHIYAMA NISEKO VILLAGE, A RITZ-CARLTON RESERVE, SETS A COMMUNION WITH NATURE WITH EVERY ELEMENT OF THE EXPERIENCE. HOKKAIDO'S SEASONS TRANSFORM THE UNIQUE LANDSCAPE, SETTING THE SCENE FOR UNFORGETTABLE ADVENTURES INTO THE SOUL OF NISEKO. THE FIRST RITZ-CARLTON RESERVE TO GRACE JAPAN, HIGASHIYAMA 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.

RITZCARLTON.COM/HIGASHIYAMANISEKOVILLAGE

THE
GAINSBOROUGH
BATH SPA





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

THREADNEEDLES
LONDON





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 THE SQUARE MILE.

HOTELTHREADNEEDLES.CO.UK

THE ACADEMY
LONDON





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 WITH A CONTEMPORARY TAKE ON TOWNHOUSE LIVING.

THEACADEMYHOTEL.CO.UK

MONKEY ISLAND ESTATE
BRAY-ON-THAMES





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.

MONKEYISLANDESTATE.CO.UK

THE GLASSHOUSE
EDINBURGH





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

THE WESTIN
PERTH





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

THE SURIN
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 IDYLLIC TROPICAL CHARM WITH THE WARMTH OF THAI HOSPITALITY.

THESURINPHUKET.COM

VILLA TASSANA
PHUKET





VILLA TASSANA IS SET ON PHUKET'S IDYLLIC NAI THON BEACH, SET AMID A TROPICAL FOREST AND OVERLOOKING THE EMERALD ANDAMAN SEA. IT OFFERS 2,800 SQ M 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, ARE WITHIN EASY REACH.

TRAVELCENTRE@YTLHOTELS.COM.MY

MARRIOTT MELBOURNE





THE MARRIOTT MELBOURNE 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

MARRIOTT SYDNEY HARBOUR





THE 563-ROOM MARRIOTT SYDNEY HARBOUR 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

MARRIOTT BRISBANE





THE MARRIOTT BRISBANE, 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

MARRIOTT THE HAGUE





CENTRALLY LOCATED NEAR THE HAGUE CITY CENTRE AND THE NORTH SEA COAST, MARRIOTT THE HAGUE 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



AC Hotels by Marriott, Ipoh.



AC Hotel Kuala Lumpur.



AC Hotel Kuantan.



AC Hotel Penang.

LOCATED IN KUALA LUMPUR, PENANG, IPOH, AND KUANTAN, MALAYSIA'S AC HOTELS FEATURE A MODERN HARMONIOUS DESIGN, WHERE GUEST ROOMS AND FLEXIBLE, OPEN SPACES ARE OPTIMISED FOR A COMFORTABLE AND EFFORTLESS STAY. WITH A CONTEMPORARY APPROACH TO BUSINESS AND LEISURE, FACILITIES INCLUDE THE AC LOUNGE, WHICH IS IDEAL FOR CREATIVE MEETINGS, AND WHERE DRINKS AND TAPAS SELECTIONS INSPIRED BY LOCAL FLAVOURS ARE SERVED THROUGHOUT THE DAY.

AC-HOTELS.COM









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.

PANGKOR LAUT I TANJONG JARA I GAYA ISLAND I CAMERON HIGHLANDS
MALACCA I KUALA LUMPUR I KOH SAMUI I BATH

SPAVILLAGE.COM

Q&A: MELISSA METTLER

SPA DIRECTOR MELISSA METTLER SHARES HOW EVERY YTL HOTEL SPA VILLAGE CHANNELS THE SAME BRAND OF HEALTH AND WELLBEING BY DRAWING FROM THE STORIES OF ITS LOCALITY, AND HONOURING LOCAL HEALING CULTURE AND HERITAGE.

Words KARMUN NG Photography MATIJA DJANJESIC

You have 14 years of experience designing and conceptualising spas for YTL Hotels. What is the unique touch that guests will experience at a Spa Village?
We have three taglines that, to this day, just really resonate. Honouring the healing culture; from the heart through the hands; high touch, low tech. It's applicable anywhere, and it's beautiful because we helped to resurrect the stories and rituals, the flora, the fauna, the little quirky things of a place, and turned them into treatments. We have found a way to really weave those golden threads of culture, history, music, and ingredients into a story fabric of wellness. I recognised very quickly that Spa Village was the pioneer in resurrecting a sense of place and doing indigenous healing in a respectful way.

Tell us a little about the Floating Spa at Monkey Island Estate and what makes it so iconic.
Monkey Island Estate, on where it sits on the River Thames, has boat traffic flowing on both sides. So, in the UK, there's a huge canal system run by what they call narrow boats. They're about four to six feet wide and are long and skinny because they go through these canals. We decided to build a doubly wide, traditional Thames narrow boat that's about 12ft wide and 70ft long, designed specifically to be a spa. The inspiration really came from the spirit of the River Thames and how important it was back in the day as a fishing island for Augustinian monks.

Unlike the typical spa, treatments here start with shots of herbal liqueurs, such as Benedictine DOM, Chartreuse, and Frangelico, because these were the monk's brews. Before your treatment, we'll tell you tales of the monks, reveal how Monkey Island earned its name, describe the herbal apothecaries on the boat, and recount the history of the 1800s barge – all woven into a single rich story.

How do you ensure that Spa Village's offerings stand out from the rest of the market?
We're five-star spas – we're luxurious, modern spots, but our brands serve us. We don't serve the brand. Everything and everyone that we partner with, we work with them to create



our treatments rather than them telling us that this is our protocol, this is our treatment. It'd be so easy to have a spa brand or partner with the same cosmetic company, like many do. But we will find brands that really highlight our concept, use ingredients that are exclusive to the region, and go to the extent of finding local practitioners for the specific treatments.

What can we look forward to in the future of Spa Village?
I think the more that the spa and wellness industry grows, the more relevant the simplicity of the Spa Village ethos will really shine. We observe the trends at Spa Village, but we're never trendy. There's really a difference between a movement and a trend. We really pay attention to what is the driving force behind a wave. We study what are the collective needs from people who are interested in wellness. That's the driving force.



TONDA *PF*
GMT RATTRAPANTE



A WORLD PREMIERE
FEATURING A SPLIT GMT FUNCTION

PARMIGIANI
FLEURIER