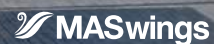


Going Places

MARCH 2024

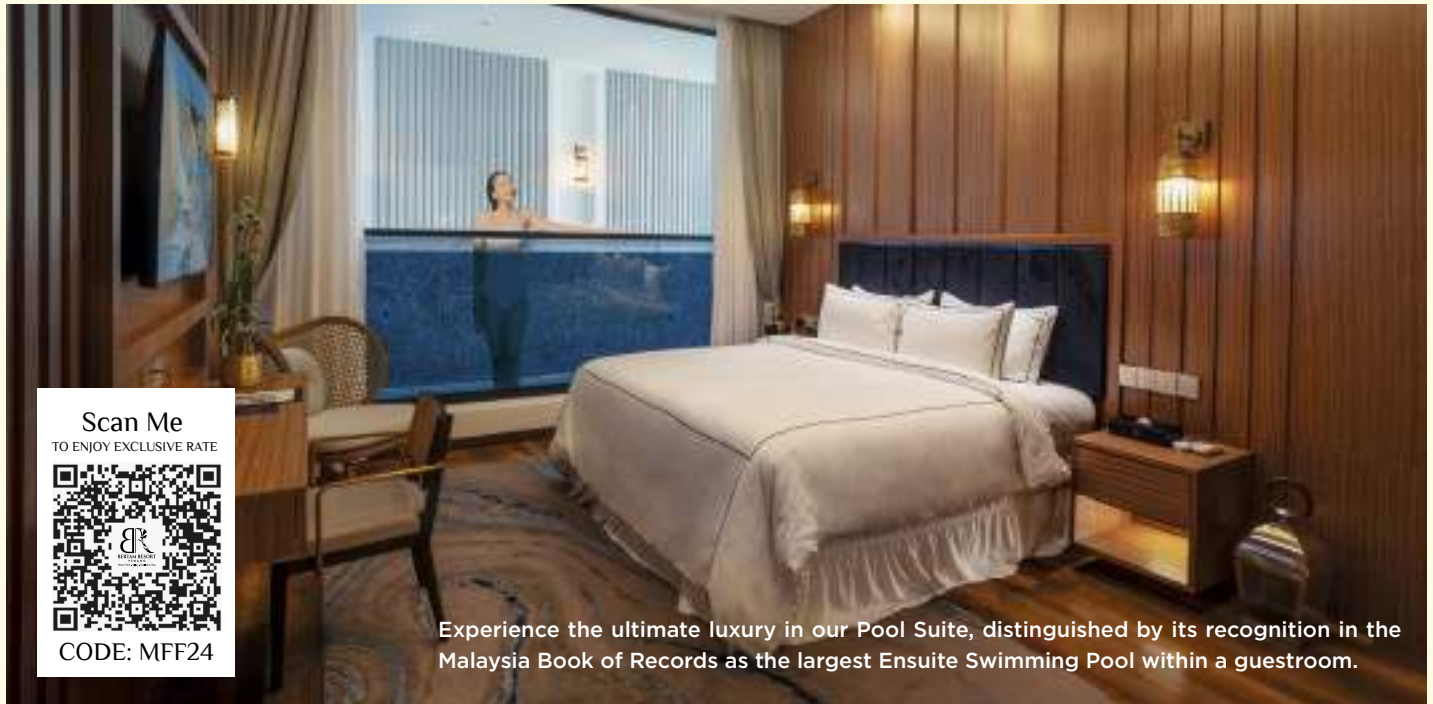


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London's
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MARCH 2024

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Heritage homes receive a new lease of life as unique-stay hotels



IMAGE: ANDREA FERNANDEZ

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About the cover
The famous Shard building on a sunny day, in front of the London Station. Photo by Cristian M. Balate / Shutterstock

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As a testament to our efforts in ensuring the comfort and convenience for our valued guests, we are delighted to introduce our Private Terminal Transfer Service which is exclusively available for Enrich Platinum, Business Suite and Business Class passengers departing from KLIA Terminal 1. With this 24-hour service, guests can enjoy being chauffeured in premium comfort in the all-electric BMW i7, transporting them from the Main Terminal Building to the Satellite Building – providing a heightened level of luxury exclusively for guests travelling onboard Malaysia Airlines.

During this initial phase, a fleet of BMW i7 vehicles will be deployed to serve departing passengers, with the pick-up point located at Gate G1 of the Main Terminal Building. We will also be extending this service to our arriving passengers once the arrival lounge at the airport's Satellite Building is completed. Whether you are travelling solo, or with a family of four, we hope this service will be an enjoyable and fuss-free experience for you, so be sure to try it when you next depart from KLIA Terminal 1.

As a member airline of the **oneworld** Alliance, we also recently unveiled the first-ever branded **oneworld** lounge at Incheon International Airport (ICN). The lounge is open to eligible **oneworld** Emerald and Sapphire members departing from Seoul on **oneworld** flights, as well as Business Class customers travelling with member airlines, including Malaysia Airlines. So, the next time you are flying from ICN, don't forget to stop by the bright and spacious lounge to recharge, relax and dine before your flight.

In addition to enhancing your journey within the airport, we also want to ensure you enjoy the comfort of our cabin. With the induction of our first A330neo aircraft arriving in Q3 2024, we are excited to elevate the cabin experience like never before. The newly-designed Collins Aerospace Elevation Business Class seats in the A330neo will be a first for us, featuring an all-suite cabin with individual privacy doors which prioritises cabin comfort and practicality. With an all-aisle access layout, the seats ensure a comfortable and fully flat experience, incorporating luxury design influences and optimal styling flexibility. This will set a benchmark as we align our product and offerings to not only meet premium standards but exceed them, underpinned by our inimitable Malaysian Hospitality. These are just some of the many initiatives that we have in store for you as we strengthen our offerings with your convenience in mind. We hope you are just as excited as we continue to embark on this journey of transformative change.

Thank you for your continuous support and we look forward to seeing you again soon.

Izhah Ismail

Group Managing Director
Malaysia Aviation Group



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As always, we're delighted to take you to some of Malaysia Aviation Group's entrancing destinations. Whether you're seeking a spot for hiking in Seoul (p23) this month or spending 24 hours in Tawau (p35), we've got recommendations for you.

In London, our March destination, we're witnessing a change in bakery culture: a preference for deliciously creative pastries from artisan bakeries over ones from chain establishments. Savour lovingly-made crème brûlée cookies, saffron teacakes and sticky cinnamon buns from some of the most exciting new bakeries (p40). Plus, it's no coincidence that all the establishments are run by women – a nod to International Women's Day, celebrated on 8 March.

Venturing a field, we uncover the allure of heritage homes repurposed into traveller hotels in Southeast Asia (p49). These charming accommodations blend hospitality with a touch of history, offering a unique lens through which to experience the cultural richness of the region. Join us as we explore these architectural treasures, where a creaking floorboard tells a story, and every corner has borne witness to history.

So, buckle up and let the pages of this month's issue be your trusted MAG travel destination guide.



Happy travels,

Shermian Lim

Shermian Lim
Editor

This issue's contributors



Dr Anna Sulan Masing
Writer, "Rising to the occasion", p40

Masing is an academic, writer and editor. She is co-founder of SOURCED, a public research platform that explores our global food and drink systems; she is also co-founder and editor-in-chief of Cheese magazine.



Jonathan Evans
Writer, "New light through old windows", p49

Jonathan has lived in London for 13 years, honing his craft primarily at BBC Magazines, before venturing east in 2007. He writes about Asian cities and culture for regional magazines and websites.



Andrea Fernandez
Photographer, "Rising to the occasion", p40

Originally from Buenos Aires, Andrea is now based in Bristol, England after an 8-year stint in Canada. She creates evocative imagery across the genres of travel, fashion and portraiture.



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13 REASONS TO LOVE MALAYSIA

Bold flavours, inspiring people and unforgettable places

1

Perak Into the shire

If you love Tolkien, experience the magic of Middle-earth in Malaysia at Hobbitoon Village, a loving homage to the original Hobbiton in Waikato, New Zealand that was used in the filming of both *Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit* trilogies. Hobbitoon Village, which opened to visitors at the beginning of the year, is situated in Simpang Pulai just 30 minutes from Cameron Highlands. Find lush pastoral steps and wildflowers of the hills that are perfectly suited to the colourful Hobbit Holes tucked inside. Stroll past the carefully recreated stone paths, road signs, barrel carts and a water mill of the Shire to reach the Hobbitoon Café at the top of the hill. Enjoy sipping on LOTR-themed drinks that capture the whimsy of Middle-earth below. [instagram.com/hobbitoon_village](https://www.instagram.com/hobbitoon_village)





2

Malaysia

Keeping culture alive

Food is one way to preserve an endangered culture, making *Melaka Chetti Kitchen: Culinary Journey of 500 Years* essential reading. The book, published by the Melaka Chetti Heritage Association of Malaysia (MCHAM) in collaboration with researcher David Neo and food writer Julie Wong, records 150 recipes that have been passed down by the Melaka Chetti community, like *lauk pindang hiris* (fish in coconut gravy), *pachedi halia cili muda* (chilli and ginger chutney), *kuih ginggang* (layered rice cake) and *sesagun* (coconut confetti). melakachetti.com



3

Selangor

Green thumbs

After making its name selling plants and running terrarium workshops in Bangsar, the charming Taman Hati – and its resident shop cats, Biggie, Seven, Mocha and Jenny – moved to Petaling Jaya in 2022. It is now a full plant studio and café, serving coffee, croffles and beef pies as well as hosting many diverse events like plant swaps, weekend markets, game nights, music events and even dance classes. tamanhati.my.canva.site



Penang

Wicked humour this way comes

The HandleBards have become a fixture in Penang with their stagings of *Hamlet*, *As You Like It* and more. The cycling Shakespeare troupe will bring their trademark irreverence to *Macbeth* with an all-female cast. Catch them as they take the stage on 9 March at the E&O Hotel and 10 March at Cheong Fatt Tze, The Blue Mansion. handlebards.com



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1

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4. Royal Propolis Foundation
5. Collagen Serum Foundation Alfa Alfa
6. Alfa Alfa Face Brush Set



2

For a Flawless Complexion

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2. Royal Propolis Powder Foundation

3

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2. Pressed Powder Palette
3. Alfa Alfa Eye Brush

4

Find Your Perfect Lip Shade

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REASONS TO LOVE



Kuala Lumpur

Flavours of resilience

"It was my most desperate moment," says chef Mui Kai Quan. He had moved to Kuala Lumpur from his native Johor to start over and join the team at Chocha Foodstore, just six months before the pandemic hit. "I was in disbelief, I was lost," Mui adds, "but my business partners (Shin Chang, Penny Ng and Li Youn Chang) gave me the right direction." That direction was opening the modern izakaya Shhhbuuleee at the crown of the refurbished REXKL, almost immediately after the end of the lockdown, the boldness of the name matching the daring move.

Mui, veteran of three-Michelin star Maaemo in

Oslo, two-Michelin star The Ledbury in London and Esquina in Singapore, is glad to be home. Being here affords him the luxury of being connected to the food sources that make up the small plates of Shhhbuuleee. "I can visit farms, get closer to the farmers, get closer to the fishermen," he says.

This closeness informs his view on sustainability. "The way Asians eat every part of the animal, that is sustainability," Mui says. Using local produce and "underrated" cuts of an animal – like the offal in the stuffed quail with glutinous rice, or fish maw

with snapper – reveals Mui's sense of playfulness and experimentation, which informs every part of Shhhbuuleee, from the interior design to the cocktails and DJ sessions.

To Mui, standing out is sustainable; making the dining scene in Malaysia as diverse as possible will continue enriching and sustaining the F&B industry. "Every restaurant has to have its own purpose," he says. "We are in a big community. We can't have everyone doing the same thing, or diners will get bored." With Mui's commitment to unrestrained creativity, there's lots to be excited by at Shhhbuuleee. [instagram.com/shhhbuuleee](https://www.instagram.com/shhhbuuleee)

6

Kuala Lumpur

March into MATTA madness

Every year, the hugely popular travel expo MATTA Fair takes the country by storm. The 2024's first national edition features 300 travel agencies, tour operators and airlines, along with state and national tourism organisations, filling up 1,700 booths at MITEC from 22 to 24 March. [mattafair.org.my](https://www.mattafair.org.my)

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At the heart of Raia Hotel's allure lies a commitment to deliver an unparalleled dining experience. Our culinary journey transcends boundaries, offering a meticulously crafted menu inspired by the culinary traditions of Kedah, Terengganu, Pulau Pinang, Sarawak, and Sabah. Whether you're an adventurous foodie or someone seeking the comfort of familiar flavours, our buffets and promotions reflect Raia Hotel's steadfast commitment to providing an affordable and diverse dining experience.

Unveiling Culinary Artistry

Unveiling Culinary Artistry Behind the scenes, Raia Hotel takes pride in its culinary artisans. Our chefs in Raia Kuching and Raia Alor Setar are not just masters of their craft; they are distinguished award-winners, adorned with medals from prestigious culinary challenges. Moreover, we are thrilled to highlight that all our staff are dedicated locals. Our outlets are proudly manned by individuals deeply rooted in the local culture, adding an authentic touch to your dining experience. Whether you're a business traveller seeking efficiency, a family on a leisurely getaway, or a connoisseur of fine dining, Raia Hotel welcomes you to a realm where hospitality transcends boundaries.

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In the spirit of inclusivity and celebration, we are thrilled to present our exclusive Iftar buffet offered across all Raia Hotel locations. Immerse yourself in the joyous atmosphere of Ramadan and Eid festivities, elevated by our culinary offerings that seamlessly blend cultural richness with unparalleled hospitality. Throughout the month of March, relish delectable dishes and cultural delights that promise to elevate your stay to a truly immersive and unforgettable experience.

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7

Malacca

Nyonya hideaway

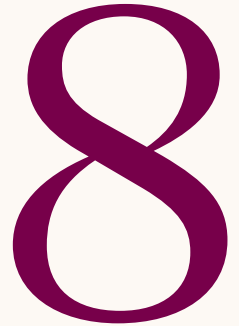
The Old Station Cafe, located right at the heart of old Malacca, sees a mixture of Nyonya and modern European cuisine. It opened in November 2023 and acts as the perfect oasis from the scorching sun. Fragrant coffee and chocolatey tiramisu served in bright-coloured Nyonya ceramic cups are their specialty, in addition to hearty helpings of traditional dishes like laksa and curry chicken.

[instagram.com/the_oldstationcafe](https://www.instagram.com/the_oldstationcafe)

Kuala Lumpur

Stirring stories

Dining at Restaurant Shu KL will delight more than just your taste buds. It will bring you on a delectable and story-filled journey through the Malaysian Chinese diaspora with finely crafted dishes such as Smashed Celtuce and Teochew Braised Duck. This book-to-serve dinner outfit was opened in October 2023 and is headed by executive chef Chin Wong, a seasoned culinary expert who has grown his career across Singapore and Thailand. [restaurantshu.com](https://www.restaurantshu.com)





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Kuala Lumpur

Art of curation

KLoé Hotel, which turns four this month, has stood as a testament to artistic creation, from the handcrafted furniture, objets d’art and original artworks in its 85 stylised rooms, the Lucky Coffee Bar and American-style diner Monroe, to its five artist lofts – meticulously curated by artist Joee Cheong, chef Sarah Benjamin, terrarium artists Ohsum Mossum, DJ Rudy La Faber, and bookshop Tintabudi. kloehotel.com

10

Kuala Lumpur

With a view

At 99 floors up in Ascott Star KLCC, Alva KL serves a feast for your eyes as you take in the iconic city skyline while you savour exquisite fusion fare like seared scallops, grilled Atlantic miso cod nestled in lotus leaf, and an indulgent starfruit mille-feuille with berry cream mascarpone. Wash it down with handcrafted cocktails and enjoy a view like no other. [instagram.com/alvaki](https://www.instagram.com/alvaki)



11

Malaysia

Pursuit of happiness

Eleven years ago, the United Nations designated 20 March as the International Day of Happiness, centred on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to achieve an “inclusive, equitable and balanced approach to economic growth that promotes the happiness and well-being of all peoples.” Here are two ways you can mark the day in your own home, office or community.

Build positivity with a happiness event

What encourages positivity more than a good meal? Plan an impromptu gathering at one of Malaysia’s Michelin-starred restaurants with your family, friends or colleagues to remind yourself of the important things in life. guide.michelin.com/my/en

Getting back to nature

There is no better way to relieve stress and beat the blues by spending time in nature, perhaps with a hike on one of Ampang’s many trails or through the historic KL Forest Eco Park, one of the country’s oldest gazetted forest reserves. visitselangor.com/kl-forest-eco-park



12

Kuala Lumpur

Green with envy

Going green on your plate cannot be better when dining at Savor Restaurant, a master of plant-based meals. Opened in October 2023 at Desa Sri Hartamas, this will be their first foray into a physical dining space after four years of running a food delivery service. Popular dishes like the Sarawak Laksa, Sambal Tempeh Pokebowl and Javanese Meatball Bakso will leave you wondering how vegetables can taste so good. meals.savoroflife.com

13 Flourishing success

Malaysia

Malaysian writer Aishah Zainal’s debut novel *Hades* has been longlisted for the Dublin Literary Award 2024. *Hades* is about Ipoh teenagers Maryam and Kei, who, despite debilitating poverty, develop a hopeful bond. dublinliteraryaward.ie/the-library/books/hades

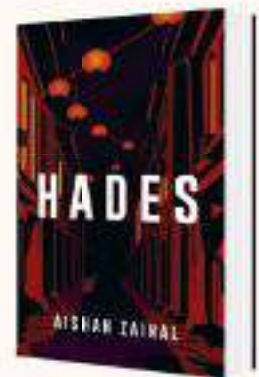


IMAGE: SHUTTERSTOCK (FOREST PARK)



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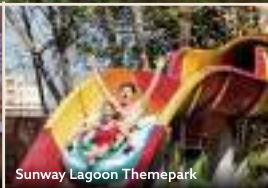
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ELEVATE

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OUTDOORS

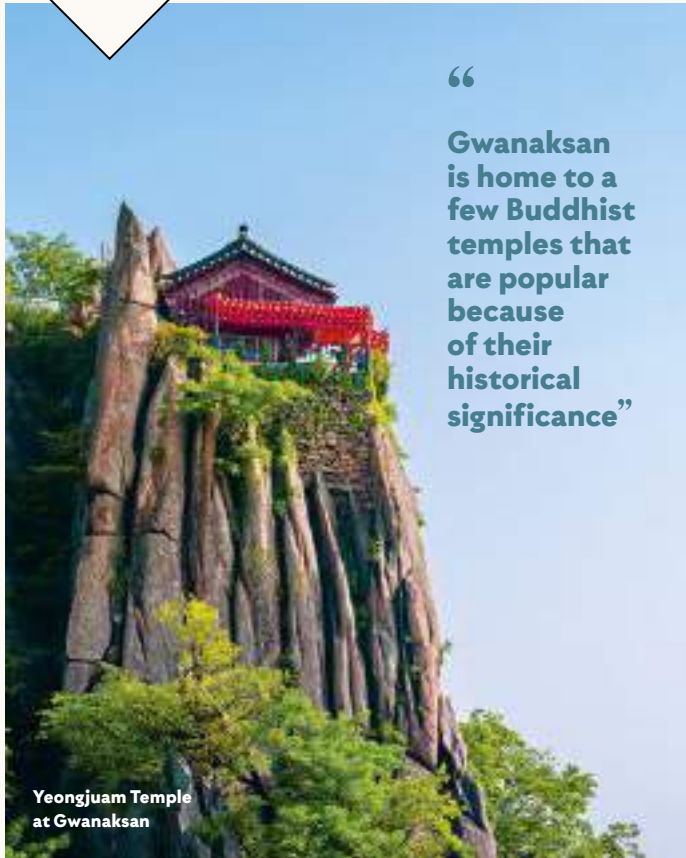
Peak performance

Want to get active on your **Seoul** holiday? Climb a mountain, or three

BY MAE YOUNG

South Korea's capital is surrounded by 44 mountains, so it's little surprise that hiking is one of the most popular pastimes among Seoulites. It's the perfect way to enjoy nature, it's easy (no training required), and most trails are free and accessible by public transport. Spring, or March through to May, is great hiking weather in Seoul, so pack a pair of comfortable shoes and a tube of sunblock. To squeeze some hiking time into your Seoul trip, we recommend three peaks you can ascend in a maximum of half a day.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE 



Yeongjuam Temple at Gwanaksan

“Gwanaksan is home to a few Buddhist temples that are popular because of their historical significance”

Achasan

Level: Easy
Height: 287m
About 60 minutes to summit

There are two trails to Achasan’s summit, easily one of the most popular hiking spots near the city. Take the one that’s part of the Seoul Trail, a 157km trail that wends its way around the city. Despite its low altitude, the easy trek offers a beautiful view of Han River and Lotte Tower. About 20 minutes in, you’ll arrive at the Goguryejeong, a pavilion that stands on large, flat rocks, making it a good background for the photograph of your hike. From here, you can decide whether to continue to the summit or call it a day.

Get there: Take subway line 5 and hop off either at the Achasan Station or the Gwangnaru Station, and walk 10 minutes to where the trail begins.

Inwangsan

Level: Moderate
Height: 339m
About 75 minutes to summit

Inwangsan is located across the Jongno-gu and Seodaemun-gu districts, two areas of Seoul packed with popular tourist sites. A leisurely pace will get you to the top between 60 and 75 minutes, where you’ll have the best views of Gyeongbuk Palace, the first and the largest palace built during the Joseon dynasty, and the Blue House, the president’s residence until 2022. Depending on the trail you take, you’ll come across strange rock formations with equally fun names: Gichabawi (Train Rock), Ippalbawi (Teeth Rock), and Chimabawi (Skirt Rock).

Get there: Take subway line 3 to Gyeongbokgung Station. Use exit 3, then take village bus 9 for Suseongdong Valley. Inwangsan is closed for hiking on Mondays.



A leafy trail at Achasan



Seoul from Inwangsan

Gwanaksan

Level: Challenging
Height: 632m
About 120 minutes to summit

This rocky mountain offers challenging but ultimately rewarding hikes. It’s home to a few Buddhist temples that are popular because of their historical significance. At Yeonjuam Temple, for instance, Prince Yangnyeong and Prince Hyoryeong lived after they conceded their rights to the throne to their younger brother, King Sejong, the great ruler who introduced the Korean alphabet called Hangul.

Gwanaksan is also known for its twin summits, north and south. Of the three main trails, the Sadang trail – hello rough terrain, large rocks and steep ascents – is the most difficult, but the views are worth it. At the north summit, you’ll find a radar station and a big granite slab below it. This is a great spot for pictures, so make sure to take one for proof of your efforts.

Get there: Take subway line 2 and alight at the Seoul National University Station. Use exit 3 and get on bus 5513. Get off at Seoul National University and walk for 20 minutes to the entrance of Gwanaksan.



Get smart and gear up

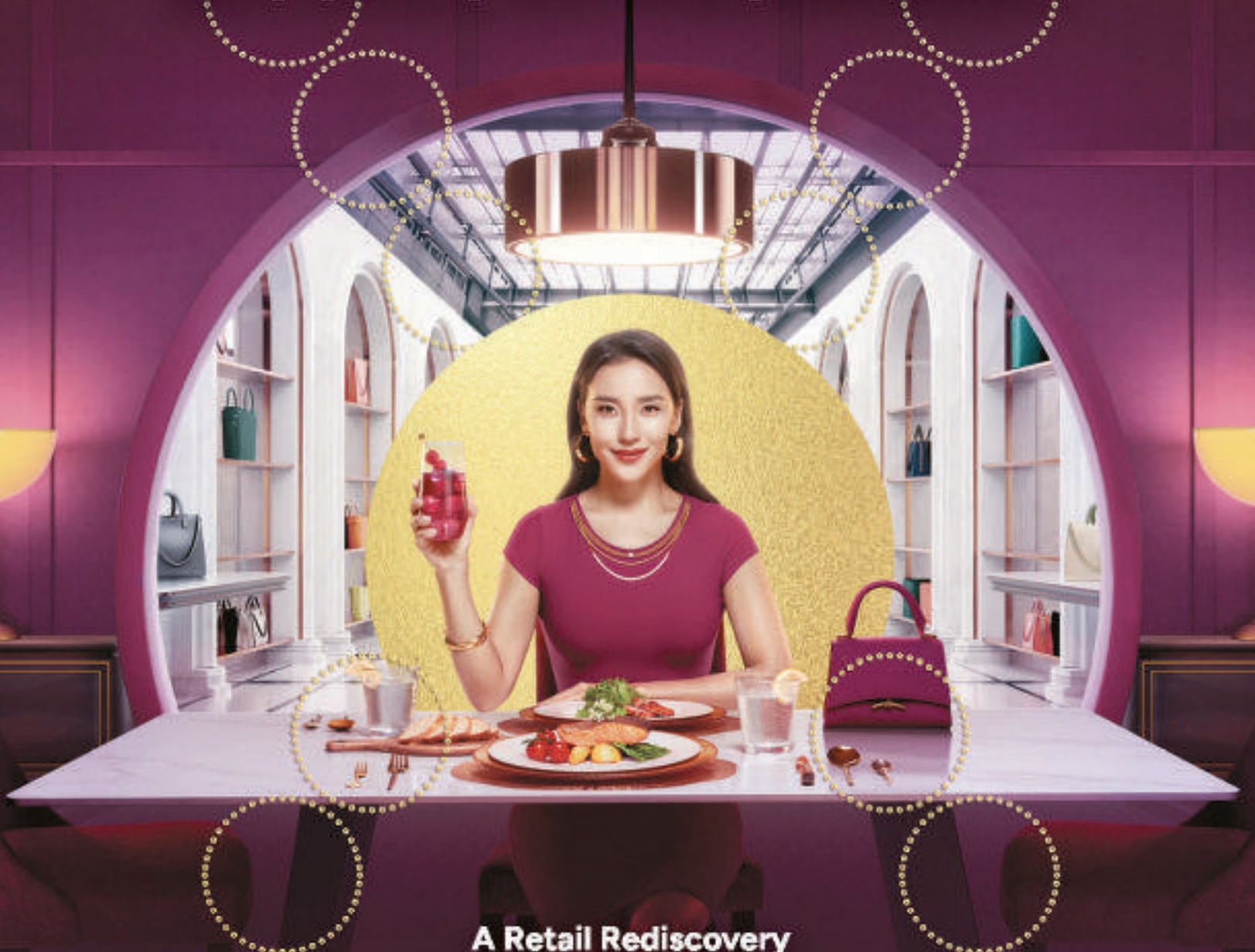
Serious hikers keen on exploring more challenging trails, Seoul Tourism Organisation’s Hiking Tourism Centre offers all you need to know about hiking in and around the capital. There’s information on everything from courses and guides to rental gear (which is available only to foreign visitors) and facilities such as locker rooms, showers and rest lounges. seoulhiking.or.kr



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ARCHITECTURE

Design for good

A new exhibit in **Colombo** spotlights the little-known but groundbreaking project and the genius behind it, pioneering Sri Lankan architect Minette De Silva

BY SHAMILEE VELLU

You might know Colombo

for its rich, multilayered history influenced by the Portuguese, Dutch and British, its myriad sacred sites, pristine beaches and delicious food – everything from *kothu rotti* (chopped roti with curry and chilies) and crisp-edged hoppers to the ultra-fresh seafood pulled daily from its waters.

Now a new exhibition gives visitors yet another good reason to visit Sri Lanka's vibrant coastal capital – **88 Acres: The Watapuluwa Housing Scheme by Minnette De Silva**, on display at Colombo's Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art Sri Lanka, sheds light on an extraordinary but little-known chapter of Sri Lankan history.

At the heart of the exhibit is the Watapuluwa Housing Scheme, launched in Kandy, the country's second-largest city, in 1958. The scheme was a pioneering moment in global social housing and a

prime example of human-centred design: the hillside development of affordable homes for Sri Lankan public servants was designed with plenty of input from its intended end-users.

The innovative scheme was designed by Minette De Silva, an acclaimed architect and trailblazer in Sri Lankan modernism. De Silva, the daughter of influential reformists advocating for the poor and women's rights, became the first Asian woman to attain associate status at London's Royal Institute of British Architects.

Despite her demure appearance in colourful silk saris, De Silva cut a bold figure, challenging norms (she once remarked that husbands were only good for carrying bags) and holding her own in rarefied circles that included giants like Le Corbusier,

Pablo Picasso and Laurence Olivier. She established her own practice in Kandy and played a pivotal role in Sri Lanka's post-independence urbanisation. Recognising the pressing housing shortage for middle- and working-class families, she collaborated extensively with public servants for whom the Watapuluwa project was intended. Then she designed diverse housing types to accommodate their various budgets, family requirements and social needs. So attuned was the housing scheme to its residents' needs that it helped foster harmony among diverse ethnicities and religions with Sinhala, Muslim, Malay, Tamil and Burgher families living together seamlessly, a fascinating and timely case study especially in today's divisive climate.

The exhibit, which runs until 7 July and delves into De Silva's influences and design challenges, is complemented by a specially commissioned artists' film by Irushi Tennekoon, Sumedha Kelegama and Sumudu Athukorala. britishcouncil.lk

“
De Silva played a pivotal role in Sri Lanka's post-independence urbanisation”

Where **PASSION** Meets **PRECISION**



Dr. Noor Aniah Azmi is a whirlwind of energy and kindness whose days are a captivating blend of laser-sharp focus and heart-warming purpose. By day, she's a renowned consultant refractive and cataract surgeon at IKONIK, wielding lasers with precision and transforming thousands of lives with every procedure. But her passion goes beyond surgical expertise. Her gentle, soft-spoken nature creates a unique "surgery with pleasure" experience for her patients, easing their anxieties and fostering calm. Her world extends far beyond the operating room. She skillfully navigates a daily symphony of responsibilities – clinic practice, whipping up delicious meals, and managing a loving household. All these she does with effortless grace, fueled by a passion for exercise, healthy habits, and an unwavering belief in kindness. Curious how she does it? Dive into her story, and discover the power within yourself to illuminate your own path with equal brightness and joy.

How do you balance your responsibilities as a mother of four and a full-time consultant ophthalmologist?

• **Crystal-clear vision:**

I do it with a laser focus on my goals! Having a clear vision of what I want to achieve keeps me focused and motivated, even when things get challenging. I also focus on maintaining a healthy lifestyle to keep the energy going.

• **Calendar magic:**

Life's a juggling act, and my calendar keeps my life as an eye surgeon and mum harmonised! I plan ahead weekly including meal prep, and family time to make every minute count. It's not just about efficiency, it's about creating memories and moments that shine brighter.

• **Finding my center:**

Balancing it all can be tough, but my faith is my anchor. Connecting with Allah keeps me grounded and grateful, especially when my days feel a bit gray. It reminds me why I do what I do, and fills me with the strength to keep pushing forward.

How do you maintain a healthy lifestyle while juggling your busy schedule?

• **Fueling Energy and Vitality for Life:**

I power through my day with healthy eats, sweat sessions with Pilates and weight training that leave me energised, not exhausted, and enough sleep to keep my eyes sparkling! Like having a built-in superpower to tackle whatever life throws my way.

• **No Excuses:**

I kickstart my day with a 7am sweat session, no excuses. Even when I drag myself out of bed, that burst of endorphins is my magic potion. Trust me, a little discipline beats the regret of skipping it later. Plus, who needs coffee when you have a natural energy boost?

• **Meal Prep for Busy Day:**

Packing my lunch is like packing my armor for a busy day. I fuel my body with healthy meals I prepped at home, even when having a whirlwind week. There was a moment when I had no domestic help at home and batch cooking on Sundays became my saving grace. Now, it's just a healthy habit I love!

Growth is a family value, not just a person alone. My husband and I set goals together, big and small, and celebrate each other's wins. When the urge to escape hits, I dig deep, recognising it's usually fear in disguise. Thanks to NLP, I've learned to understand my triggers and conquer those fears. Knowing myself has been key to unlocking my potential and becoming a mom who achieves and inspires, one mindful moment at a time.

"It is about teamwork, not solo achievements"

- Dr. Noor Aniah



What advice would you give to other women who are trying to balance their careers and family life?

Fellow superwomen, remember this: finding balance isn't just about squeezing more hours into the day, it's about embracing the whole journey! Dive into personal growth, find your unique productivity groove (trust me, planning is key!), and most importantly, savour the process. When you're with your family, be fully present and soak in those giggles and cuddles. And when work calls, dive in with full attention, tackling tasks with fierce determination. Remember, we're not juggling, we're thriving, and doing it with a smile. Now go out there and conquer your world, one mindful moment at a time!

It is about connection, not the Clock!



Time flies when you're a working mom! Harmonising career and family often feels like a 24-hour marathon. My secret weapon against the clock? Planning! Quality time doesn't have to mean grand gestures. I'm all about quality time. Even a 15-minute gas station run with one of my kids becomes a bonding adventure. My kids are my biggest cheerleaders, and I want them to see me chase my dreams and win! I light up when I perform surgery or help patients regain their sight – that passion shines through, and it's the best example I can set.



CULTURE

Creative corners

New openings and re-openings are making hopping around the cultural hotspots of **Beijing** more exciting

BY STEPHEN O'CONNELL



1



2

Whatever mood you're in, China's capital city has just the right creative space for it. Here's a sampling of three that shouldn't be missed.

1 For a glimpse of the future

What to do with ageing shopping malls that have fallen out of fashion? Why not convert them into trending pop-culture retail hotspots that attract Beijing youth keen to share their latest experiences online? That's exactly what has happened at **The Box**, which opened last year. Taking inspiration from (Hungarian sculptor/architect Erno) Rubik's Cube, some of the floors of the original building have been removed, while a dynamic graphic grid system has been applied both within and outside this dazzling, experiential urban hub. Expect art exhibitions, up-and-coming brands, and even a skate park. **12 Chaoyangmenwai Dajie, Chaoyang District**

One for the books

Designed by Oslo-based architectural firm Snøhetta, and located in Beijing's Tongzhou District, the Beijing City Library features the world's largest reading space and a ginkgo tree-like canopy roof that will truly impress. Tourists and locals alike are encouraged to come and enjoy the spectacular "Forest Book Garden" that runs from the first to the third floors. **North side of the Urban Green Heart Forest Park, Tongzhou District (Beiyuan Station Exit A)**



3

2 For cool, contemporary art

Beijing's **X Museum**, founded by art collector and social media influencer Michael Xufu Huang, has re-opened at its new location – a former textile factory in Chaoyang, just 2km from 798 Art District, Beijing's main creative hub. Following the museum's initial opening in 2020 during tough pandemic restrictions, the more convenient location and increased floor space of X Museum 2.0 have breathed life into the museum. Discover newly emerging Chinese and global contemporary artists. **Langyuan Station, E1 (Building 10), 53 Banjie Tower Road, Chaoyang District**

3 For a classical immersion

Cao Xueqin, the 18th-century author of literary masterpiece *Dream of the Red Chamber*, once lived in this courtyard residence. Now, it's become the **Memorial Hall of Cao Xueqin's Former Residence**, is filled with Qing Dynasty relics and open to the public. The site has been developed over 22 years and transformed into an immersive experience with DIY handicraft workshops, showcasing the traditional Chinese craftsmanship of Old Beijing. **123 Guangqumennei Dajie, Dongcheng District**

IMAGES: COURTESY OF ATELIER D'YML (THE BOX); COURTESY OF BEIJING URBAN CONSTRUCTION YATAI GROUP CO.LTD (MEMORIAL HALL); ZHU YUMENG, COURTESY OF SNØHETTA (FOREST BOOK GARDEN)



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ECO-TOURISM

The riches of nature

Soak up the glorious great outdoors close to **Trivandrum**

BY MEENAKSHI J

For years, Kerala's coastal state capital of Thiruvananthapuram, also known as Trivandrum, served mainly as a stop for pilgrims visiting the gilded **Padmanabhaswamy Temple**. Considered the world's most valuable Hindu temple, the temple was worth \$18 billion in 2011 on the discovery of precious metals in hidden cellars; now it's a focal point for tourists who rarely spend time in the city before heading out to the state's more scenic further reaches. Kerala is, after all, widely known for eco-tourism initiatives in its rural backwaters, lush, forest-draped mountains and wildlife sanctuaries.



Hariharapuram



Padmanabhaswamy Temple

Scenic hotels for responsible travellers



Hyatt Regency Trivandrum, in the CBD, has eco-minded features like a 300 KW solar power plant that can power the hotel for up to three days; an EV-charging station; and the city's first automated water bottling plant. hyatt.com



The 7ha **Taj Green Cove Resort & Spa** offers lavish, Balinese-styled private villas and suites with stunning vistas of the Arabian Sea. The resort uses solar power, harvests rainwater and sources ingredients locally for its dining outlets. tajhotels.com

But you don't need to venture too far from Trivandrum to experience Kerala's considerable natural gifts. **Kovalam**, just 12km south of the city, was once a serene fishing village that's now a popular destination for its palm-fringed, crescent-shaped beaches. Some 40km north of the city, the cliff-girded coast of **Varkala** is a favourite destination among surfers, who come for the waves and the rustic charm of **Hariharapuram**, a hamlet on the banks of the Edava Nadayara Lake which is famous for making coir, or rope from coconut fibres.

Then there's the hard-to-miss **Jatayu Earth's Centre**, the 26ha eco-friendly adventure park sprawled across four hills. It's hard to miss – the site features the world's largest bird sculpture, a 70ft representation of the divine eagle Jatayu, from the Indian epic *Ramayana*, perched majestically on a hill.

Visitors can reach the top of the sculpture either by hopping on a cable car or by taking the adventurous, more eco-friendly option: climbing the 826 steps of the walkway, which are crafted exclusively from natural materials, 60,000 stones and sand. The park also serves as a cultural hub, hosting traditional Kerala dance performances, music and art exhibitions which showcase the vibrant local heritage.

IMAGES: DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM, GOVERNMENT OF KERALA, PARK VIEW, THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, KERALA, INDIA (HARIHARAPURAM), SHUTTERSTOCK (PADMANABHASWAMY TEMPLE)



SIGHTSEEING

Sakura season

Where to catch cherry blossoms in full bloom around **Tokyo**

BY KISSA CASTAÑEDA

“Cherry blossoms – lights of years past” was how Japanese poet Basho described sakura, the pink flowers that bring joy every spring. Sakura is so revered in Japan that they have a forecast that tracks when the flowers will bloom across the country.

Knowing the peak time helps one plan *hanami*, a springtime practice of enjoying the fleeting beauty of these blooms with the company of friends and family. Here are five under-the-radar sakura spots to enjoy *hanami* like a local.

Inokashira Park

Anyone looking for an authentic yet trendy district to explore should head to Kichijoji, a 30-minute train ride from central Tokyo. Here you'll find Inokashira Park, which looks even lovelier when the cherry trees lining the lake come into full bloom. Do as the locals do and rent a rowboat at Inokashira Pond to get a different perspective.

Yanaka Cemetery

A well-loved neighbourhood near Ueno, Yanaka is home to one of the most unusual sakura viewing spots: Yanaka Cemetery. The path leading up to the cemetery is aptly called Cherry Blossom Avenue, and clued-in revellers come to witness the surreal beauty of sakura in this solemn venue.

Sotobori Park

Spanning 2km, this tiny stretch of greenery is centrally located between Ichigaya and Yotsuya stations. While small in size, it has an impressive lot of 700 cherry blossom trees and offers choice views of Edo Castle ruins.

Komazawa Olympic Park

Hidden in the Tokyo suburbs of Meguro and Setagaya is a former venue of the 1964 Olympics – an open space dotted with 200 mature sakura trees. If you fancy an active way to enjoy the sights, come for a run or cycle under the canopy of these pastel-coloured blossoms.

Koganei Park

Located in west Tokyo, this secluded park is beautiful all year round but truly shines come springtime. The expansive grounds have 1,400 sakura trees drawing all manner of cherry blossom lovers who enjoy picnics under the beautiful trees. Then, visit the nearby Edo-Tokyo Open Air Architectural Museum.

Koganei Park



INSIDER TIPS

A Malaysian in... Phnom Penh

Entrepreneur Samantha Low opened The Weaver's Tale, a boutique specialising in Cambodian artisan-made products, in the capital. It's a tribute to the artistic heritage of her vibrant new home



I was born and raised in

Petaling Jaya, a bustling satellite city that borders the even busier KL. Even when I was a kid, PJ was always a foodie's paradise, and I grew up with *pasar malams* (night markets) and *kopitiam*s (coffee shops serving Malaysian dishes). Later, the city would also come to be known for mega-malls and green parks.

In 2019, my husband unexpectedly announced that his new job would be based in Phnom Penh. An easy transition, we thought. Then Covid-19 hit the world, and everything went haywire – we couldn't really explore our new homeland until almost two years into our repatriation.

During the pandemic, staying at home meant shopping

online. Handicraft has always intrigued me. As I browsed through Facebook, I came across a brand called Fair Weave, and it was love at first sight. I got to know the brand's story better and was slowly introduced to other handicraft brands that were unique but did not have much retail presence.

In early 2022 I opened The Weaver's Tale in Phnom Penh – and last year, in Siem Reap too – to showcase the richness of Cambodian craftsmanship to locals, expats and tourists from across the world. It was a daunting project for me as I had zero knowledge about retail. This was truly a case of passion in the face of adversity. Phnom Penh is where I discovered my entrepreneurial side. Here are some of the other things I love about this fun and fast-changing city.

Food paradise

I love Khmer food and one of my all-time favourites is *nom banh chok*, a coconut-based fish laksa with fresh herbs and edible flowers. I usually have it at an unassuming hawker with a view of **Wat Botum Park**, near the Royal Palace. Otherwise, if I'm feeling fancy, I go to **Sombok Fine Dining Restaurant**,



Independence Monument



The Weaver's Tale

which serves all my favourite Khmer dishes – like *fish amok* (steamed snakehead fish curry), beef salad, *prahok* (fermented fish) dip salad – in gorgeous plating. sombok.asia

Cats and coffee

There are many coffee shops in the city, and I often get my fix at a homegrown chain called **Brown Coffee and Bakery** or at **Enso Cafe** along the shop-lined Street 240. Sometimes, I like my



Apsara at DinArt

away from the city centre, for a stay in a traditional Khmer wooden home. It's a wonderful escape from the city. sofitel-phnompenh-phokeethra.com; rosewoodhotels.com; fb.com/mayavillagephnompenh

If these walls could talk...

Phnom Penh has many beautiful buildings – starting with the **Royal Palace and Silver Pagoda**, with their wonderfully manicured lawns. Although these are ornately gilded structures, there is a humble and graceful presence in the architecture.

For first-timers to the city, I tell them to visit the **Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum**, if they can handle it. It's not for the faint-hearted – you have to walk through the gruesome corridors of a former school to experience shocking visions of how easily people can forget their humanity. But it's also an important reminder of one of the most harrowing episodes in recent world history. tuolsleng.gov.kh

Art life

When I need a good, inspiring dose of art, I head to **DinArt Gallery**, which shows works by Cambodian artist Teang Borin, better known as Din, who's well known for his signature apsara dancers. Every art piece of his is so captivating that I always end up spending more time there than I intend to. **Corner St 19 and St 172**

Take a sunset cruise

We get impressive sunsets over the city and one of the best viewing spots is a boat on the Tonle-Bassac River. For a lovely sunset cruise, I recommend the Kanika boat at **Sisowath Quay** (\$8 for a sundowner cruise without the disco lights). kanika-boat.com



Sombok's Nom Ban Chok

Handmade with love

I love Cambodian crafts (so much so that I created a whole store!). It all started with Fair Weave, a brand known for its intricate and high-quality handwoven throw blankets with unique Khmer designs. They provide a livelihood to more than 50 Cambodian weavers.

While I was setting up the shop, I also got to know numerous other local brands built on weaving and a desire to help communities, such as **Mrs Sophea, Maya Handicrafts, Cambodia Knits, Khmer Ceramics, Manava, Rokhak, Loleibe Beeswax Candles** and so many more. **29, St 240; fb.com/theweavertale**

A great range of hotels

When friends and family come to visit, I recommend the **Sofitel Phnom Penh Phokeethra** for its beautiful, landscaped garden and colonial-era stylish interiors, or **Rosewood Hotel**, for its panoramic view of the city and luxurious experience.

But for friends who want to experience local culture, I point them to **Maya Garden**, just a 10-minute ferry ride

coffee with some feline therapy, so I go to **Catera**, a cat café at Toul Tompoung. It's also a rescue centre that shelters cats while they wait for kind souls to give them a forever home.

I'm an animal lover and every now and then I join a group of like-minded volunteers to feed the strays at some pagodas like **Wat Langka Pagoda** near the Independence Monument. browncoffee.com.kh; enso-cafe.com; fb.com/catera-cambodia



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24 HOURS IN

Tawau

Words **Nova Renata** Photography **Caritoh Ho**

Tawau, the entry point to Sabah's eastern coast, beckons with a myriad of experiences, spanning rainforest escapades, island-hopping and Bornean seaside immersion. Much of Tawau's population can trace its roots to Indonesia, specifically the Buginese, Banjarese and Javanese communities, providing visitors with a taste of "Little Indonesia".

While Tawau's town centre exudes tranquility, it serves as a hub connecting to Sabah's thrilling tourism offerings.

To fully absorb Tawau's vibrant culture, relish its unique Indonesian-infused cuisine and partake in island adventures, a recommended stay of at least three days is ideal. For those with just 24 hours, here are foolproof ways to savour Tawau.



Saturday



🕒 6am Market temptations

Part of Tawau's charm lies in its marketplace – it offers a glimpse into the lives of the Bugis, Banjar and Tidung people and their culture. **Pasar Tanjung Tawau** (Tanjung Market) is one of Malaysia's biggest indoor markets, with more than 6,000 stalls offering wet and dry produce, accessories, clothes and a food court.

While you're here, sample some of Tawau's signature breakfast dishes such as *nasi kuning* (turmeric yellow rice usually served with fried tuna, or chicken drumstick and sambal) or *mee tauhu* (fried noodles served with stuffed tofu in gravy). *Tawau Town*

🕒 8am Peak adventures

If you love being at one with nature, **Tawau Hills Park** is a must-go. Gazetted as a protected water catchment area, this park is home to many deep-water pools, natural hot springs and waterfalls such as the Table Waterfall, a popular picnic site. Should you plan to stay longer, Tawau Hills Park has basic chalets and hostel-type accommodation. There are plenty of nature trails to explore here, as well as two of the highest peaks in Tawau located within its boundaries. *Tawau Hills Park*



Three facts
about
Tawau



Cocoa

Tawau is the third-largest cocoa-producing area in the world and the largest in Malaysia

70%

of the terrain surrounding Tawau comprises high hills or mountainous landscapes

Sipadan Island

A must-have on your diving bucket list, the island is reachable via a 45- to 60-minute boat ride from Semporna



🕒 10am

Choco-lot of history

Did you know that Tawau is one of the biggest cocoa producers in Malaysia and the world? Learn more about Tawau's humble beginnings as a major cocoa producer and witness how your favourite chocolate treats are made at the **Teck Guan Cocoa Village**. This cocoa village also offers a package including a cocoa-infused lunch set. *Quion Hill Miles 15 Balung Apas*

🕒 Noon

Flavours and finds

Situated near the Tawau Tanjung Market, the **Tawau Central Market or Pasar Gantung** is another of Tawau's best-known open markets. This shopping mecca consists of a handicraft market, a fruit and vegetable market and a fish market. You can get plenty of souvenir items here, as well as popular Tawau snacks like the highly addictive *amplang* crackers (a type of fish cracker ubiquitous in Tawau). Amid the bustling market, you will also find stalls selling Tawau satay and ABC desserts (*ais kacang* or shaved ice). *Tawau Town*





INSIDER TIP
 Staying longer? Visit Semporna's beautiful islands by boat. Top diving destinations, Sipadan Island and Mabul Island are just 45- to 60- minutes away by speedboat.

🕒 **3pm**
Echoes of history

The **Tawau Bell Tower** is the oldest historic structure in Tawau, constructed during the Japanese occupation to commemorate the signing of the armistice agreement. After that, visit the Confrontation Memorial, another Tawau monument from the country's history. This structure, portraying a defiant-looking figure, pays homage to local soldiers who lost their lives during the Indonesian-Malaysian Confrontation between 1963 and 1966. *Old Post Road, Tawau Town*

🕒 **6pm**
Elevate your evening

Established in 2019, **The Peaks** observation deck is a relatively new attraction in Tawau. It showcases the city's remarkable sunset view and is known mainly to locals. The Peaks allows visitors to enjoy a panoramic view of Tawau at 1,200ft above sea level, surrounded by awe-inspiring nature. This place also offers a camping ground, should you decide to sleep underneath the stars! *605 Tawau TV Station Rd*

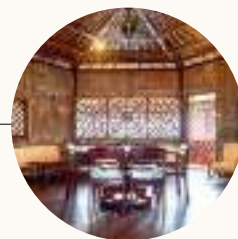


Stays with a natural flair

Balung River Eco Resort
 Set within Balung River Estate, with Tawau Hills Park as the backdrop, this pristine natural hideaway offers a fruit orchard, pond fishing and hiking along the many trails within the resort. *Call 012-802 4771*



Tawau Hills Park
 Tawau Hills Park offers a range of accommodations in nature. Aside from camping grounds, it also offers jungle lodges and chalets for those who want a more luxurious stay. *Call 013-884 1321*



Dragon Inn Floating Resort
 Stay in a chalet built on stilts above the water if you're in Semporna (2 hours from Tawau) overnight. Wooden chalets give it the rustic feel of a water village. *Call 089-781 077*

IMAGE: SHUTTERSTOCK (NASI KUNING, TAWAU CENTRE BAZAAR, TAWAU YACHT CLUB)

🕒 7pm Fin-tastic feast of fresh flavours

Like everywhere else in Sabah, Tawau is well known for its fresh seafood, thanks to its strategic location being surrounded by the Sulu Sea to the east and the Celebes Sea to the south. Popular restaurants in Tawau include **Sri Titingan Seafood Restaurant** and **Kedai Kopi Yum Yum**. Highly recommended dishes include charcoal-grilled squid, *kam heong* (sauce made from a mix of spices) clams and wet butter prawns. *Sri Titingan Seafood Restaurant, Tb 3638 Wisma Jin Ho, St Patrick Rd, Tawau Town; Kedai Kopi Yum Yum, 234 Dunlop Rd, Tawau Town*

🕒 9pm Sip and socialise

Enjoy a relaxing drink surrounded by the breathtaking sea view and calming night sky at the **Tawau Yacht Club**. One of Tawau's oldest social and recreation clubs (founded in 1962), this club doesn't just offer a place for yachting, but also regularly organises themed social events, such as Harvest Festival night and ballroom dancing night. *Tawau Yacht Club, Jalan Tanjung Batu*



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to the

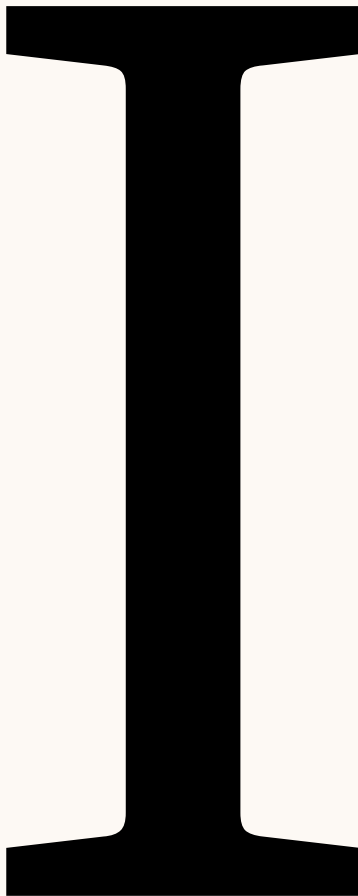
occasion



New neighbourhood bakeries across London bring a sense of rustic warmth to the sprawling and culturally diverse capital. Just in time for International Women's Day, we pop into three women-led establishments where building community is as important as the baked goodies

Words **Anna Sulan Masing**
Photography **Andrea Fernandez**





Previous page: A loaf of sourdough by Hai Lin Leung of Lucky Yu Bakery; Brixton's legendary Electric Avenue. **From left:** Laura Almond's bakery in Walthamstow; the neighbourhood street art; Laura at work; Beaten by a Whisker's ingredient pantry.



T BECAME SOMETHING OF A RITUAL for many Londoners: during the pandemic lockdown, a walk in one of the city's many parks – with a coffee and a pastry – was one of few treats available to most people.

A refreshing run to the neighbourhood bakery quickly became a central, sanity-saving feature of everyday life. It inspired a horde of new openings and increasingly inventive offerings, from vegan treats and Cantonese breads to European classics with a West Indian twist. Social media helped spread the word fast, and soon devoted fans were travelling great distances and happily queuing at their favourite independent bakeries for signature bakes and innovative flavours. For some, the surge in popularity is easy to explain. To begin with, popping into a bakery is an “easier and cheaper way of catching up with friends than going for dinner or even drinks,” says 33-year-old London-based baker Laura Almond.

It's worth noting that, in a traditionally male-dominated trade, many of the new sought-after bakeries are led by women. Laura, who runs the popular vegan bakery Beaten by a Whisker in the Walthamstow neighbourhood, is one of them. Before opening the bakery in 2022, a cosy, sunlit space of earthy tones – unvarnished wood, terracotta and cream – Laura was supplying seven London cafes with baked goods she made in her flat. As a vegan, she enjoyed

the challenge of creating vegan treats, ensuring that the cafés she supplied to found them just as delectable as her non-vegan offerings.

Now she tends to her bakery full time along with a bigger crew of six. She attributes its success to a clear vision: rustic and wholesome, with treats meant to be indulgent but not restrictive in any way. “I use high-end, whole ingredients, often with a lot of nuts to give that rich flavour and texture,” she says. Among Beaten by a Whisker's most beloved items are the cinnamon buns, renowned for their sticky, doughy consistency and delightful aroma. “We use a lot of cinnamon, which I think is different from other bakeries.”

As a neighbourhood bakery, Laura puts as much effort into forging connections with neighbouring businesses as she does into actual baking. All these collaborations, she says, help foster a stronger identity and sense of community. Her nut supplier, for instance, is conveniently located just across the road, and in the summer, Laura crafts soft serve ice cream with their pistachio. The bakery's crockery is from local East London potter e.p.c. studio, whose new work – exquisitely designed cake stands – will feature prominently in the bakery's upcoming spring launch of their afternoon tea. This British tradition will showcase Laura's distinctive vegan touch, local craftsmanship and culinary creativity.





“

To ensure her bakes always meet her standards, [Jackie] only works with suppliers known for high-quality products”



Opposite page: Oven-fresh loaves, croissants and baguettes at Aries Bakery. **From top:** The streets of Brixton; Jackie McKinson chats with a regular customer.

ACROSS TOWN, ALL THE WAY IN BRIXTON, South London, Aries Bakehouse has also become a community focal point. Owned by Jackie McKinson, it opened in 2019 on a site that was once a newsagent owned by her mother. When the pandemic hit, a loyal customer helped them set up an online shop to help manage the demand. It was a good move. “We often had very long queues and would sell out quickly!” says Jackie.

During the pandemic, they got to know their customers better. When some of them were furloughed from work and suddenly had time on their hands, they helped Aries with deliveries and baking. It was a win-win situation: Aries got the help they needed, and the customers learned new skills. Some, like Kate Farr, remained after lockdown. Kate left her teaching job to become a full-time baker. “We now run Aries together,” Jackie says.

Jackie, who is in her early 50s, is a self-taught baker who previously owned a bakery in Northamptonshire. “My style is very European influenced with a generous ‘I must feed everyone!’ vibe,” she says. Jackie’s signature offerings are colourful viennoiseries, such as croissants with cherry, chocolate and pistachios, pain aux raisins with rum-soaked Turkish raisins or raspberry vegan croissants. To ensure her bakes always meet her standards, she only works with suppliers known for high-quality products. Chocolate, for instance, is sourced from independent artisans Xoco and Pump Street Chocolate.

Apart from sweet pastries, Aries is also popular for savoury goods. “I am also well known for creating a jerk chicken sausage roll which has quite a big fan base!” Inspired by the popular West Indian dish, the sausage rolls are made from scratch using free-range chicken from a local butcher, a blend of Jamaican scotch bonnet peppers, spring onions, thyme, onions and garlic as well as dry seasoning and sourdough breadcrumbs. Jackie makes the puff pastry by hand using cultured butter from The Estate Dairy, a leading dairy supplier that works with smallholder farms in Somerset, in the southwest of England. “The combination of pastry and spicy sausage meat is incredible,” says Jackie.



Female-led bakeries on the rise

Quince

Anna Higham was previously head pastry chef of Michelin-starred London restaurants before opening Quince in February 2024. Find seasonal, produce-driven bakes: yeasted buns of weekly changing fruit, handmade pies, Staffordshire oatcakes and tattie scones. quincebakery.co.uk

Bake St

LA-born Chloe-Rose Crabtree started as head baker before becoming co-owner in 2023. She loves to challenge traditional flavours – think spiced corn-infused milk chocolate cream pie, caramelised apple and thyme in puff pastry. Her viral crème brûlée cookies are limited to two per purchase. [IG: @bakestreetldn](https://www.instagram.com/bakestreetldn)

Hearth Bakery

This social enterprise bakery opened in 2022, is founded by Maisie Collins. Its space is designed to welcome anyone who likes watching the goods being prepared. Maisie's bakes are fun, joyful and comforting; they're known for their cinnamon buns and cheddar and in-house kimchi buns. hearthbakery.co.uk

Toad

Rebecca Spaven opened Toad with her partner Oliver in 2022. They are known for their playful savoury pastries, made with local produce. The Everything Bagel is the most popular, but the menu is ever-changing with things like beef rendang steak bake, or wild garlic and asparagus barrel. toadbakery.com

Eric's

Helen Evans opened the bakery in spring 2023 and champions heritage grains, and low-input and organic farming. She works seasonally, meaning you'll get pastries such as fava bean miso and sheep's milk cheese scrolls in autumn and blood orange and chocolate Danish in spring. ericslondon.com



From left: Hai Lin Leung at her micro-bakery's pickup window; preparing the bread bannetons in her home kitchen; a freshly baked sourdough loaf.

“

In the same way it isn't unusual to have a British bakery selling French pastries, [Hai Lin] feels Cantonese buns next to sourdough bread makes a lot of sense”

MEANWHILE, NORTH OF THE THAMES River, baker Hai Lin Leung is stretching the idea of what a bakery can look like with her micro-bakery project Lucky Yu. The 32-year-old doctor works part-time for the National Health Service (NHS) and one day a week as a pastry chef for Michelin-starred St. John Restaurant. Late last year, she launched Lucky Yu, making sourdough bread, focaccia and Cantonese-style buns – such as *bo lo bao* (pineapple bun) and *gai mei bao* (cocktail coconut bun) – in her home and selling them two Saturdays a month out of her kitchen window.

Hai Lin baked her first loaf of bread in her third year of university in 2012: a noteworthy olive, sundried tomato and walnut loaf made with yeast, with a soft, airy texture inside. She made it as a surprise for her partner at the beginning of their relationship. All she wanted was to make a delicious homemade loaf, and to her delight, the experiment turned out exceptionally well.

When she moved away from frontline medicine and into clinical medicine, she began volunteering with a social enterprise called Better Health, which taught her how to bake on a commercial scale. At the end of 2022, Hai Lin took a year off from medicine and gained an advanced diploma in bread

and pastry at the School of Artisan Food in Nottinghamshire.

For Hai Lin, baking is about bringing together her dual cultures. “I am 100% British, but I am also 100% Chinese,” she explains. “Culturally I grew up in a very Chinese home, and outside of that I’ve adopted a lot of British culture.” In the same way it isn’t unusual to have a British bakery selling French pastries, she feels Cantonese buns next to sourdough bread makes a lot of sense. “I’m selling the things I love to eat and make!”

Hai Lin announces the bakery dates on Instagram (@luckyyubakery), where customers fill in an order form, then pick it up the same day. In the runup to her launch, she posted flyers around her neighbourhood and was surprised and pleased that within a few hours people had placed orders. “The community around us has been so supportive and welcoming, willing to take a punt on someone who lives down the road,” Hai Lin says. She’s aware that the flavours and the style of the Cantonese buns might not be familiar to her neighbours – that makes it even more exciting to share them with them. She adds, “I’m meeting neighbours and seeing them chatting with each other in the queue. It’s really nice.” ■

Directory

Beaten by a Whisker

Unit 3 Hops House,
5a Old Brewery Way,
Walthamstow

beatenbyawhisker.com

Aries Bakehouse

99 Arelane, Brixton

aries-bakehouse.square.site

Lucky Yu Bakery

Exact pick-up location is supplied after order confirmation.

IG: @luckyyubakery



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New light



through

Through a community of heritage homeowners and restorers in long-established cities across Asia, you too can call time-honoured residences your home for a day

Words **Jonathan Evans**

old windows

In Penang's multi-faceted Unesco World Heritage capital, the many buildings that make up 23 LoveLane Hotel were constructed at various points from the 1800s, representing five architectural periods.

The 10-room hotel on Muntri Street in the heart of George Town was originally a mansion with servants' quarters and stables owned by a European family. Once the present owner acquired the property in the noughties, everything changed at an address that had fallen into disrepair. Carefully revitalising the disparate buildings as a boutique hotel – a process involving “cocooning” (spraying with protective coating), lime plastering, repurposing bricks and extensively using recycled timber – a team of architects and consultants busily applied themselves to the restoration.

A key turning point in 23 LoveLane's transformation took place when noted heritage conservationist and George Town specialist Dr Gwynn Jenkins from the UK – who was instrumental in the city's successful Unesco World Heritage bid – joined the team. “The project was conservation-led rather than architecture-led from start to finish,” says Doris Chin, general manager of 23 LoveLane's hotel division. “The entire restoration process proceeded seamlessly from initiation to completion.”

The team brought the buildings back to authentic 19th-century life over a three-year timespan complete with antiques, sculptures and paintings. According to Doris, the restoration was an “open lab” for conservationists, students, heritage bodies and authorities to collaborate. In December 2011, 23 LoveLane Hotel

re-opened for business, winning a PAM (Malaysian Institute of Architects) Gold Award for Conservation two years later. It's one of several gems on Heritage Homes (ourourheritagehomes.com), an online community dedicated to fine examples of adaptive reuse and other storied buildings like 23 LoveLane.

A DECADE AGO, EMILIE RÖELL FIRST arrived in Yangon and, together with locals, set about transforming the city's neglected historic homes, alleyways and parks – everyday community spaces that suffered from neglect. The city's jumble of colonial-era buildings, deficient urban planning and inconsistent public-area maintenance presented an appealing challenge to the Dutch expat, and she founded her placemaking company Doh Eain, Burmese for “our home”, in 2015.

The idea for the firm originated when Emilie helped modernise a cash-strapped family's old building – money they could pay back when a tenant was installed in their upgraded home. It's that same enthusiasm for renovating vintage properties that propels Heritage Homes, an online sister company encouraging people to stay in historical homes, which operates primarily in Myanmar, the Philippines, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

Its distinctive residences – “heritage” is any home older than 50 years – are repaired and fitted with stylish period furniture with the goal of conserving cultural heritage. “Heritage Homes is a digital community for homeowners [to] access information and advice – as well as opportunities to list their properties for stays, rent or sale,” says Emilie.

Heritage Homes aims to incentivise historical-home travel, on the basis that staying in heritage accommodation provides richer experiences making a positive impact on immediate communities. The company believes that a weekend in, say, an 1850s ancestral house facilitates cultural learning and exchange, creates a sense of local pride and identity, and stimulates local economies.

The global heritage-tourism market was valued at US\$557bn even in 2021, during the pandemic, driven by government efforts to promote tangible and intangible culture





Previous page photo:
Vintage Penang at 23
LoveLane

This page from top:
The courtyard scene at
23 LoveLane; La Casita
Mercedes in Manila;
details at 47th Street
Apartments in Yangon

Opposite page:
Charming heritage
buildings at Penang's
George Town





“

... According to the UN World Tourism Organisation, a remarkable 40% of all travel now involves cultural and historical journeys”

in the tourist industry. Travellers were also encouraged to seek out destinations' natural aspects. The global market percentage share of heritage tourism is predicted by Grand View Research – a market research company based across India and in San Francisco – to follow a steady year-on-year uptick of 3.5% until 2030.

Covid-19 of course negatively impacted tourism overall, but one highly positive consequence that's emerged is a fresh emphasis on responsible, mindful tourism such as hyper-local heritage home stays. According to the UN World Tourism Organization, a remarkable 40% of all travel now involves cultural and historical journeys.

PENANG ASIDE, HERITAGE HOMES' online community of vintage-property buffs is also present in urban centres across the Philippines – in the capital city as well as conurbations like Baguio, Vigan, Taal and Iloilo. Despite the widespread destruction Manila endured during World War II, it still retains a few Spanish-era residences. Perhaps the finest example is La Casita Mercedes in Poblacion, a 1939 colonial home belonging to restoration enthusiast Juan “Jon” Ramos, who also owns the art-deco gem The Clipper Hotel down the road.

Juan's two-year project, culminating in 2015, is the stuff of interior designers' fantasies – an immaculate montage of period tiles, antique furnishings and Filipino artworks, filling La Casita with sophisticated detail. Juan sourced additional items from old houses, antiques stores and auctions. The sage-green exterior is bedecked with architectural finery: circular windows, tidy balconies fronting capiz-adorned windows and curlicued front gates, surrounded by lush greenery. It's difficult to imagine a more authentic pre-war accommodation experience. La Casita has eight bedrooms with en-suite bathrooms perfect for family stays, and has even hosted weddings.

“It's vernacular with influences of American and Spanish design,” says Juan. “I'm trying to make people remember what Manila was like. This is my contribution in showcasing our past, our heritage.” Juan named it “Mercedes” because it supposedly represents the 1930s-era Filipina – most famously embodied by Mercedes Matias Santiago, an operatic soprano and music educator who once performed in front of Italian dictator Benito Mussolini.

West of the Philippines, all the way to the far west of Southeast Asia, 47th Street Apartments in Yangon comprises three flats (two down, one upstairs) renovated from 2017 to 2018 on a tree-lined street in downtown Yangon. The owner refused to have the century-old Chinese merchant's home demolished by developers like so many aged residences in the city, instead having it modernised without sacrificing its period aura. “I hope this house will be inherited [from] generation to generation,” says U Thein Aung, who has lived here from birth.

The brick-and-wood house's restoration was financed and executed mainly by Doh Eain, led by its then-chief architect Mark Horton and construction manager Albert Company Olmo. They exposed the brick walls and retained the teak flooring – the elements that make it distinctive – while updating the electrics and lighting. “We tried to keep most things [Thein Aung's family] had, such as the wooden furniture, and used them to re-decorate,” says Albert.

Across the Bay of Bengal, in the Sri Lankan highlands of Kandy, a scenic destination two-and-a-half hours' train ride from Colombo, The Coffee Bungalow remains one of Heritage Homes' more dazzling offerings. Built in 1860, the neo-colonial residence once belonging to a British coffee planter now serves as a singularly picturesque period hotel, retaining original features including veranda pillars, tiles and coffee grinders alongside newer design additions like cast-iron bathtubs by renowned heritage architect Channa Daswatte. The hotel's in-house restaurant, Gilbert's, serves Sri Lankan/British fusion dishes to guests.

Clockwise from top left: The inside story at 23 Lovelane; tropical botanicals theme at La Casita Mercedes; dusk at 23 Lovelane; a sitting room at 47th Street Apartments



Below: A swish bedroom at neo-colonial plantation-style home The Coffee Bungalow in Kandy; the hotel's pool with a view



The Coffee Bungalow was inherited by the owner's son Thusitha Paranagama, who oversaw its restoration over a 30-month period before opening to guests in 2018. A 14m infinity pool sits regally in the garden, affording views of *two* Unesco Heritage Sites: the 16th-century Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic and the Knuckles Mountains' Conservation Forest.

BACK AT 23 LOVELANE, HERITAGE Homes has since added the stunning, pre-war Muntri Suites, a three-room, pre-war shophouse just minutes' walk from the main building; and Stewart Suite, another heritage duplex which even includes a jacuzzi. The beautiful guestrooms reflect George Town's remarkably rich colonial history over the last two centuries. The Anglo-Indian Bungalow is a light-filled colour tapestry; the four-bedroom Straits Eclectic Building, built for physically challenged guests, contrasts with the Tudor façade and Chinese-Indian terrace of the 1920s Jack Roof Annex, which juxtaposes monochrome with vivid colour.

Emilie's long-term goals for her company are to expand in Asia – particularly in countries like Malaysia – and to help boost this worldwide movement towards both safeguarding and financially supporting our historical homes, either those in the process of restoration or those already on the rental market. The company has recently introduced crowd-funding functionality, to help mobilise extra support for heritage-hotel owners in times of adversity.

“Our vision is to tap into eco-conscious travel and living trends, and build a stronger international market for heritage stays and rentals,” summarises Emilie. “[We wish] to nurture that enthusiasm among heritage homeowners in the hope that fewer will neglect, sell or demolish them.” ■



Step by step

Know more about your destination through the eyes of residents with these walking tours

George Town. Numerous operators conduct themed tours through Penang state's eminently walkable capital – the most enlightening of which are WithLocals' treks exploring street food, architecture and street art. withlocals.com

Manila. Old Manila Walks' two-hour tour of the old walled city of Intramuros – where you'll find the Unesco-fêted San Agustin Church, originally built in 1607 – takes you through 450 years of history, from the time of the rajahs to conquistadors. oldmanilawalks.com

Kandy. Wander through this gorgeous hill city on Apple Vacations' day tour, stopping at the Peradeniya Royal Botanical Gardens, the Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic, the high-up but rewarding Kandy View Point, the city's tea estates and rainforests, and Geragama Tea Factory. applevacations.com.co

Yangon. Sampan Travel's three-hour tour of Myanmar's former capital flits through the history-laden city's cultural hotspots, including the Victorian-era Secretariat building, beautiful Bogalay Zay Street, the Armenian Apostolic Church, Sarkies Bar at The Strand Hotel, and highlights of the Indian Quarter and Chinatown. sampantravel.com



Malaysia Airlines flies from KL to Penang 42x weekly, to Yangon 7x weekly, to Manila 10x weekly and to Colombo 7x weekly.

Stellar steaks and lobsters

This halal establishment pulls all the stops with its premium selection of steak and lobster dishes

When it comes to celebratory meals, few dishes are quite as appropriate as a perfectly cooked steak or a fresh lobster prepared your favourite way. At Kay's Steak & Lobster, a homegrown halal establishment with three outlets in Kuala Lumpur, these two lavish dishes take centre stage.

Prime cuts and air-flown lobsters

Kay's Steak & Lobster takes particular care in sourcing premium halal cuts from some of the best beef-producing regions across the globe. Their menu features a selection of prime cuts, including Australian tomahawk, Korean Hanwoo beef and award-winning Kagoshima A5 Wagyu from Japan. In addition to classic steak preparations, you can also enjoy dishes like their signature Beef Wellington that's made with 300g of tenderloin, mushroom duxelles and puff pastry drizzled with blackcurrant jus.

Their seafood offerings are given just as much attention – only live Atlantic lobster is used and air-flown to the restaurant thrice a week. Diners can opt for their lobster prepared in a variety of ways including grilled, steamed and served in a classic lobster roll. A speciality here is the decadent lobster thermidor made with a creamy mix of locally produced mozzarella, cheddar and smoked paprika.

And if you can't decide between steak and lobster, opt for the Surf & Turf which allows you to pair your steak of choice with half a lobster.

Fine-casual dining for the whole family

While each of Kay's three branches features distinct themes, all of their restaurants offer a casual and relaxed ambience with modern aesthetics. Its elegant design paired with thoughtful and attentive service makes Kay's the perfect spot for unforgettable celebrations, business events and even a romantic date night with a special someone.

For more information on Kay's Steak & Lobster, visit kaysteaklobster.com.



Where to savour the flavours

With three outlets across Kuala Lumpur, a sumptuous steak and lobster meal is never out of reach.

The Tropics

Located at Putra Heights, this outlet is the establishment's most spacious restaurant and offers a pair of private rooms for special functions.

The Coastal Bay

Set in Ampang, The Coastal Bay outlet is inspired by the seashore and features cool shades of oceanic blues.

The Valley

Kay's third outlet in Putrajaya is shaped by the region's lush evergreen valleys. The ambience here inspires intimacy, making it the ideal location for date nights.

March

BEST SPOTS IN MALAYSIA

2024

The best hotels and restaurants to stay and dine in across Malaysia this month



For a delicious iftar meal: Lisette's Cafe & Bakery

This Ramadan, gather the gang for a lavish iftar meal at Lisette's. Its new Beautiful Sunset Buffet, a sumptuous spread served four days a week, features a rotating menu of nourishing offerings, with both meat and vegetarian-friendly options paired with local flavours. Tuck into delicious sides like fried spicy broccoli with tzatziki and mouthwatering mains, including a Laksa Johor, *ikan percik* and beef rendang. Join the celebration at Lisette's Empire Subang on Mondays and Wednesdays, and Lisette's Bangsar on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Available from 11th March to 11th April, 6:30PM to 8:30PM, at RM 65++ per person.

Various locations in Kuala Lumpur. IG: @lisettes.my



For authentic French cuisine: Chez Gaston

Chez Gaston is a traditional French bistro located in the heart of Bangsar, just minutes away from Telawi Street and Bangsar LRT. It offers authentic French cuisine at affordable prices, in a relaxed setting for guests to enjoy delicious food and drinks with their loved ones. Chef Florian Nigen, who previously helmed a renowned restaurant in Brittany on the western coast of France, brings his expertise to prepare a wide range of French meat and seafood dishes, as well as delightful desserts. With attentive staff who ensure a delightful dining experience, Chez Gaston brings the flavours of France to Kuala Lumpur.

12G, Jalan Bangsar Utama 9, Bangsar, Kuala Lumpur | facebook.com/chezgastonkl



For a luxurious beach getaway: Angsana Teluk Bahang

Angsana Teluk Bahang is a contemporary gem along Penang's coastline, ideal for couples and families seeking refined relaxation. Featuring 231 sea-view rooms and suites with Peranakan-inspired décor, this vibrant beach resort offers a blend of sophistication and comfort. Guests can savour sunset views over the Andaman Sea, dine at sumptuous restaurants and unwind at the Angsana Spa. Enhance your stay with the Suite Memories package where exclusive privileges await, including the daily Executive Breakfast for two at the charming No.11.

angsana.com/malaysia/penang | +60 4-817 0888



For a chic stay in Kota Kinabalu: Signal Poshtel

Set in the heart of Kota Kinabalu, Signal Poshtel is a splendid base from which to explore this lively city. Jalan Gaya and its surrounding neighbourhood is home to a wide array of street food vendors and bustling weekend markets. After wandering the city, retreat to the hotel's modern rooms inspired by a chic Parisian aesthetic. Perfect for both solo and group travel, enjoy your stay at this rare gem of northern Borneo. Looking for a budget-friendly alternative? Check into Signal Hostel at Sinsuran.

Level 1 to 4, Lot 120, Jalan Gaya, Kota Kinabalu |
IG: @signalposhtel | +60 88-221 168 | +60 11 5877 2391

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THIS IS MH

(MALAYSIAN HOSPITALITY)



Welcome aboard Malaysia Aviation Group's (MAG) airlines! This month, see what we have on offer to ensure that you have a safe, seamless and fuss-free journey with us.

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Inside our airlines

News and updates from MAG Airlines

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Discover our network

See where MAG Airlines can take you, around the country and around the world

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Onboard entertainment

Keep yourself entertained with our latest releases of Hollywood movies, TV shows and music



oneworld unveils first-ever dedicated lounge experience in Seoul

Breaking new ground in premium benefits and luxury air travel, the oneworld alliance unveiled its first-ever branded airport lounge in Seoul. Situated in Terminal 1 of Incheon International Airport (ICN), the spacious new oneworld lounge stretches across 555sqm and features stylish seating in a contemporary new setting for up to 148 customers. The bright new lounge is no more than a 10-minute walk from the furthest oneworld

airlines' departure gate and provides travellers with a vibrant and calming space to recharge, relax and dine before their flight. The new lounge is open daily between 7:30am and 11:45pm (apart from Mondays and Saturdays when it opens earlier at 4:30am), for eligible oneworld Emerald and Sapphire customers departing from Seoul on oneworld flights, as well as Malaysia Airlines' Business Suite and Business Class passengers.

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Malaysia Aviation Group unveils modernised ground uniform

Malaysia Aviation Group (MAG) unveiled the new ground uniform for frontliners of its ground-handling arm, AeroDarat Services (ADS), symbolising a significant step as it embraces modernity in its design, while maintaining tributes to Malaysia's cultural roots. The new uniforms were unveiled at a launch event held at KLIA Terminal 1 which was graced by Her Royal Highness Tengku Permaisuri Selangor, Tengku Permaisuri Hajah Norashikin. The uniform collection encompasses a tailored three-piece suit with skirt or trouser options for women, made with breathable and easy-care fabric, prioritising comfort and convenience. This flexibility ensures that the frontliners can carry out their duties with confidence, pride and warm hospitality, shaping the experience of our guests at the airport. The bold, classic navy-blue colour scheme aligns with MAG's brand essence, with the blazer featuring an intricate *songket* design which harmoniously blends the country's rich cultural heritage with the uniform's contemporary flair.



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Malaysia Airlines introduces exclusive and luxurious private terminal transfer service with BMW Group Malaysia and Ingress Auto

Malaysia Airlines has introduced an exclusive, private terminal transfer service for its passengers to travel in luxurious comfort between the Main Terminal Building and the Satellite Building of KLIA Terminal 1, in collaboration with BMW Group Malaysia through their dealer partner, Ingress Auto Sdn. Bhd. Starting last month, Enrich Platinum, Business Suite and Business Class passengers flying with Malaysia Airlines got to experience a heightened level of luxury as they were chauffeured in style with the all-electric BMW i7. The 24-hour service

offers a sustainable and premium travel option exclusively for Malaysia Airlines' passengers, in addition to the Premium Bus transfer currently provided by the airport operator following the temporary suspension of the aerotrain service. Passengers can enjoy the assurance that the premium service is intricately tailored to ensure individualised experiences, eliminating any concerns about sharing rides. This exclusive service guarantees dedicated transportation, with vehicles allocated for solo travellers, couples and families up to four passengers per car.



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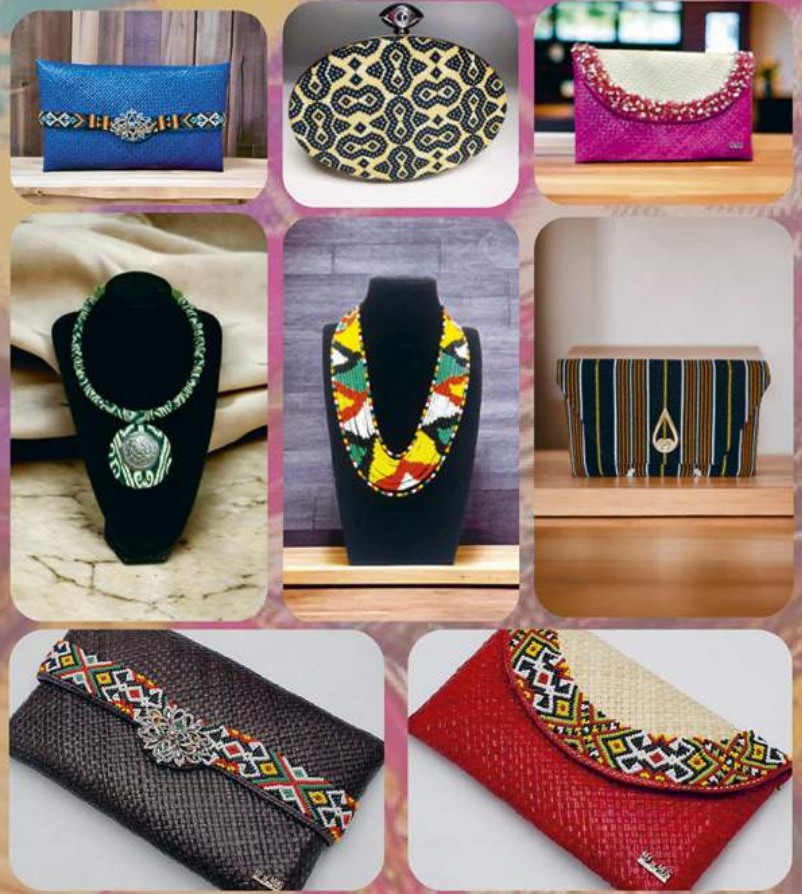


MJbyMUS - A Passion for Fashion with Purpose



Mary Jim (Left) and Ursula Sharon Alfred-U (Right)

Fueled by a shared passion to promote Sabah's fashion and craft, Mary Jim and Ursula Sharon Alfred-U have sparked a local movement in Sabah through MJbyMUS – a community-driven initiative that empowers lives and leaves a significant impact on the local fashion scene.



MJbyMUS - A Tale of Transformation

Born from the vibrant tapestry of Sabah's culture, the brand refines and enhances creations by a team of designers and crafters who create colourful and whimsical pieces made from natural resources, fabric, and also upcycle material. These grassroots artisans, deeply connected to their heritage, are core to the unique products from MJbyMUS.

A beacon of inspiration, showcasing the profound impact of entrepreneurship, community engagement, and the celebration of culture, MJbyMUS has grown beyond a local sensation to gaining international acclaim. The vision is clear – to place Borneo Fashion at the global stage by showcasing the beauty and uniqueness of Sabah's culture, hence contributing towards promoting and preserving its heritage. For more information, visit www.mjbymus.com.



**THE GRASSROOT COMMUNITY
COMPLETED FASHION DESIGN,
REFINED BY MJBYMUS;**

Borneo's handcrafted pieces are now a part of daily life, telling a story of cultural pride, economic empowerment, and tradition in the grassroots communities. MJbyMUS plays a vital role in supporting and uplifting this narrative. Happy reading!





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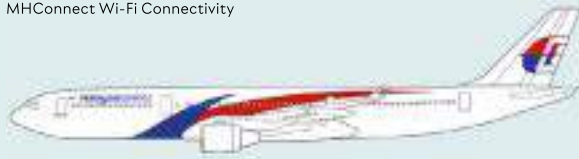


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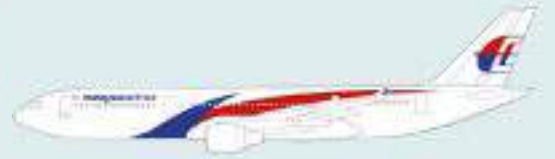
A350-900 MHconnect

No. of Aircraft **7** | Passenger Seating **286**
Length **66.80m** | Wingspan **64.75m** | Height **17.05m**
Max. Cruising Speed **944km/h**
MHConnect Wi-Fi Connectivity



A330-300 MHconnect

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A330-200 MHconnect

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Length **58.82m** | Wingspan **60.30m** | Height **17.39m**
Max. Cruising Speed **880km/h**
MHConnect Wi-Fi Connectivity on selected aircraft



B737-800NG

No. of Aircraft **42** | Passenger Seating **160, 166, 174**
Length **39.5m** | Wingspan **38.5m** | Height **12.50m**
Max. Cruising Speed **857km/h**



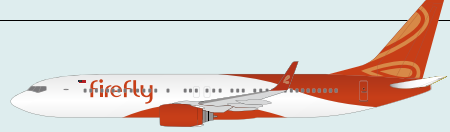
B737-8

No. of Aircraft **2** | Passenger Seating **174**
Length **39.52m** | Wingspan **35.90m** | Height **12.30m**
| Max. Cruising Speed **976km/h**



ATR 72-500

No. of Aircraft **9** | Passenger Seating **72**
Length **27.05m** | Wingspan **27.17m** | Height **7.65m**
Max. Cruising Speed **510km/h**



B737-800NG

No. of Aircraft **5** | Passenger Seating **189**
Length **39.5m** | Wingspan **38.50m** | Height **12.50m**
Max. Cruising Speed **857km/h**



A330-200F

No. of Aircraft **3** | Maximum Cargo Capacity **65 (70) tonnes**
Length **58.82m** | Wingspan **60.30m** | Height **16.88m**
Max. Cruising Speed **1,021km/h**



ATR 72-500

No. of Aircraft **8** | Passenger Seating **68**
Length **27.05m** | Wingspan **27.17m** | Height **7.65m**
Max. Cruising Speed **510km/h**



Viking DHC-6 Twin Otter Series 400

No. of Aircraft **6** | Passenger Seating **19**
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ILLUSTRATIONS BY ELEN WINATA

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- ◆ Firefly
- MASwings
- Amal
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Step 3

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Step 4

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Step 5

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Step 6

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page.



Step 7

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NOW SHOWING

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Wonka

Check out our Ramadhan Special on page 82!



Ramadan,
Tunggu Aku Datang



Dapur Vaganza



Everything
Everywhere All at Once



The Father

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Wonka

Timothée Chalamet stars in a 2023 musical fantasy film directed by Paul King that explores Willy Wonka's early life as a chocolatier.

Wonka, a musical fantasy film released in 2023, is directed by Paul King, who co-wrote the screenplay with Simon Farnaby, drawing inspiration from a story by King. The movie narrates the early life of Willy Wonka, the iconic character from Roald Dahl's 1964 novel, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, shedding light on his formative years as a chocolatier.

Timothée Chalamet takes on the titular role, leading a stellar ensemble cast that includes Calah Lane, Keegan-Michael Key, Paterson Joseph, Matt Lucas, Mathew Baynton, Sally Hawkins, Rowan Atkinson, Jim Carter, Natasha Rothwell, Olivia Colman and Hugh Grant.

This cinematic venture marks the third live-action adaptation of Dahl's beloved novel, following the predecessors *Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory* (1971) and *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* (2005).

Wonka promises to immerse audiences in the whimsical world of chocolate-making, exploring the character's origins and contributing a fresh perspective to the classic tale. With Paul King at the helm and a stellar cast, the film aims to captivate both fans of the original story and new audiences alike, delivering a visually stunning and enchanting cinematic experience.

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MOVIES

Hollywood Latest



The End We Start From, a British survival film released in 2023 and directed by Mahalia Belo, features Jodie Comer in the lead role, supported by Benedict Cumberbatch, Katherine Waterston and Mark Strong. Alice Birch adapted the screenplay from Megan Hunter's novel of the same title. It premiered at the 2023 Toronto International Film Festival.



Ferrari, a 2023 American biographical sports drama directed by Michael Mann and penned by Troy Kennedy Martin, draws inspiration from Brock Yates' 1991 biography, *Enzo Ferrari: The Man, the Cars, the Races, the Machine*. The film stars Adam Driver and focuses on the challenges faced by Enzo Ferrari, the founder of Ferrari S.p.A., in the summer of 1957.



Vivian Kerr's 2022 film **Scrap** explores intricate human relationships, familial facades and the struggle for humanity. The story follows Beth hiding her homelessness from her brother Ben (Anthony Rapp) and her dynamic with him is authentically portrayed. Kerr's debut, shot by Markus Mentzer, skillfully balances tension and hopefulness.



Among the Willows. Despite their differences, two old friends reunite against a common enemy with a determined spirit. Time is ticking, and as the past resurfaces, it becomes an opportunity to mend their friendship. Directed by Tyler Smith, the movie, featuring Caryn Richman, David Novak and Jeffrey Smith, is a highly enjoyable watch.



The Canterville Ghost



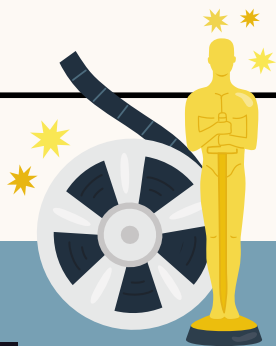
The Dirty South



The Inseparables

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Oscar Special



Everything Everywhere All at Once is a groundbreaking US comedy-drama by Daniel Kwan and Daniel Scheinert. Michelle Yeoh stars as Evelyn, an immigrant facing an IRS audit who discovers a multiverse threat. The 2022 film made Oscar history as one of the most-awarded films, with 266 wins out of 405 nominations.



Released in 2021, *King Richard* is an American biographical sports drama directed by Reinaldo Marcus Green. Starring Will Smith as Richard Williams, father and coach to tennis legends Venus and Serena Williams, the film received acclaim, earning six nominations at the 94th Academy Awards.



Immersive and heart-wrenching, *The Father* (2020) depicts Anthony Hopkins as a man navigating dementia, with Olivia Colman as his daughter. Director Florian Zeller's adaptation of his play offers a poignant portrayal of mental decline. Anthony Hopkins won an Oscar for Best Actor for his role in this film.



International Women's Day Special



Erin Brockovich (2000) portrays Julia Roberts' character's resilience against a corrupt energy corporation, exemplifying International Women's Day themes of women's strength and capacity to effect change. *Whina* (2022), a New Zealand biographical film, depicts Whina Cooper's leadership and struggles, serving as a tribute to her resilience and the 1975 Māori Land March.



Emily (2022) explores the fictionalised romance of Emily Brontë, emphasising themes of love, loss, and creative passion.

Together, these films celebrate women's indomitable spirit and highlight diverse stories to inspire and enthrall.



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Ramadhan Special



Raya Sebagai Isteri, a 2023 Malay comedy-drama directed by Michael Ang, featuring Hawa Rizwana, Zizan Razak and Nina Juren, follows the story of Soraya and Haidar reuniting for Ramadan at Soraya's mother's insistence. Despite their mismatched hearts, their forced closeness during the festival strains Soraya's relationship with her mother, creating a humorous yet poignant narrative about family dynamics during Ramadan.



Ramadan, Tunggu Aku Datang (2023) directed by Eyra Rahman, starring Naqiu Mohd, Nurin Afiqah and Muna Shahirah, is a Malay comedy-drama. As Ramadan, a food delivery rider, faces life's challenges and meets two girls during deliveries, the film transforms him into a more insightful young man. In the spirit of Ramadan, it mirrors personal growth and positive change, aligning with the festival's themes of reflection and self-improvement.



In the 2023 Malay lifestyle show **Dapur Vaganza**, celebrities from *Gegar Vaganza* come together to cook, entertain and prepare for Ramadan. Hosted by Kak Lina and Tok Ram, the show not only showcases culinary delights but also emphasises the festive spirit, making it a perfect companion for those gearing up to celebrate the Ramadan festival.



Ada Apa Dengan Dosa



Langit Tak Mendengar



Penumpang



Baby Blues

Hindi



Uunchai, a 2022 Hindi adventure drama directed by Sooraj Barjatya, tells the story of three elderly friends – Amit, Om and Javed – embarking on a trek to Everest Base Camp to fulfill their late friend Bhupen's final wish. Amitabh Bachchan stars.



Babli Bouncer (2022), directed by Madhur Bhandarkar and starring Tamannaah Bhatia, portrays the empowering journey of Babli, a street-smart woman who defies societal expectations to become a nightclub bouncer. Tamannaah Bhatia shines in this film.



Korean



In the visionary cinematic creation **Concrete Utopia** (2023), maestro Tae-hwa Eom orchestrates a seismic tale featuring luminaries Park Seo-joon, Lee Byung-hun, and Park Bo-young. Following a colossal quake, Seoul's sole survivor, Hwang Gung Apartments, becomes a magnet for outsiders.

Tamil



In the mysterious realm of Chittha, a captivating 2023 Tamil thriller, a man's existence is shattered when the innocence of daily life is disrupted by the sudden disappearance of his niece. Crafted by director S.U. Arun Kumar.

Chinese



Japanese



Insomniacs After School



In the captivating 2023 Japanese film **Winnie**, helmed by director Yusaku Matsumoto and featuring Masahiro Higashide, Takahiro Miura and Hidetaka Yoshioka, the narrative unfolds around programmer Isamu Kaneko and his eventual arrest as the mastermind behind Winnie, a revolutionary software.

Malayalam

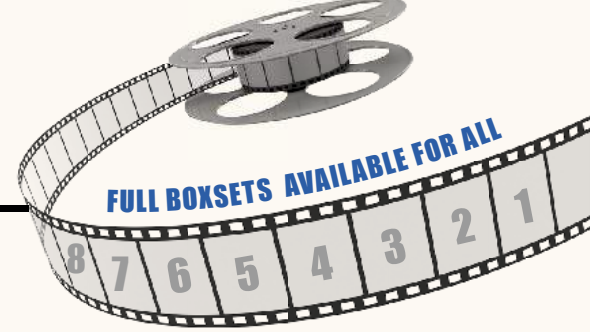


Telugu



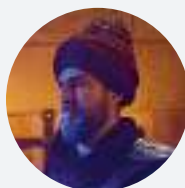
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TELEVISION



Turkish Series

Embark on a riveting journey with Malaysia Airlines as we introduce the acclaimed Turkish series **Ertugrul** for the first time on board. Immerse yourself in the epic tale of valour, honour and resilience that has captivated audiences worldwide. With its widespread popularity and numerous awards, *Ertugrul* promises an unforgettable in-flight entertainment experience. Join us in celebrating the rich storytelling and cultural significance of this series, exclusively available for Malaysia Airlines passengers. Elevate your travel experience with the captivating saga of Ertugrul and his heroic legacy. **Now available in drama section.**



Enjoy a blend of humour and heart with **The Kominsky Method** Season 1, a Netflix gem starring Michael Douglas. **Trial & Error** Season 1 offers legal chaos and quirky characters. Elevate your journey with **Superman & Lois**, blending superhero action with family drama. Indulge in supernatural allure with **The Vampire Diaries** Season 1. Embark on Sheldon's precocious adventures in **Young Sheldon** Season 3. Buckle up for an unforgettable in-flight entertainment.

Wellness

Caravan is the number one global leader in high-quality wellness video content. Caravan envisions a world where everyone can access all the best health, fitness and wellness practices, techniques and rituals. Boost your wellbeing with practices for relaxation, restful sleep and therapeutic tension relief. Discover a curated collection of short and impactful videos designed to promote relaxation no matter where your travels take you. Experience the benefits of science-backed wellness, allowing you to fully embrace the joys of air travel while prioritising your wellbeing!



Sports



Delve into an expansive prelude, offering comprehensive insights into the imminent spectacle in Paris. Anticipate all facets of the forthcoming Olympiad – events, athletes, nations and key developments. Embrace the spirit of **Bonjour 2024** as we introduce the iconic Kylian Mbappé and celebrate the enchanting city of Paris, the proud host of the 33rd Olympiad's grand sporting extravaganza.

Chinese



Rock Sugar Summer, helmed by director Jason So, features Zhu Rong Jun and Zhu Min Xin in pivotal roles. The narrative orbits around Lai Dui Dui, an aspiring artist with a disdain for subjects like Maths and English, jeopardising her academic standing. Encountering Jiang Zuo, a brilliant student from her past, she agrees to pose as his girlfriend to ward off an ex-lover. However, buried emotions resurface, tangled in a web of love triangles and academic trials.

Kids



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The Hits

Alchemical: Volume 1 by Dove Cameron delivers a mesmerising blend of genres, showcasing musical mastery. **Think Later** by Tate McRae breaks boundaries with its innovative sound, inviting listeners to embrace the unexpected. **So Fresh: The Hits Of Summer 2024** compiles chart-toppers, offering a vibrant playlist capturing the essence of the season. Each album stands as a testament to musical evolution, promising an unforgettable auditory journey.

Memories



R&B

Club



Japanese



Korean



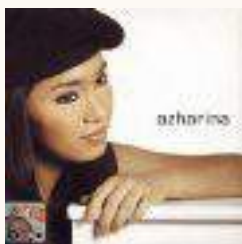
Hindi



Tamil



Malay



Indonesian



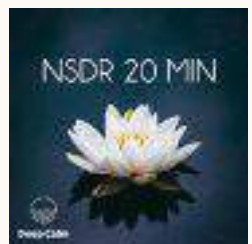
Cantonese



Mandarin



Relax



MHinsure

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From another planet

With its Mars-like landscape of orange and reddish soil, rocks and outcropping, the startling “lost in space” sight of Mars Hill in Sepang is an unexpected vision on an outdoor walk. Located half an hour from Kuala Lumpur International Airport’s Terminal 1, the yet-to-be-officially-named hiking trail is alternatively dubbed the Sepang South Africa Trail, but the Mars Hill moniker is more commonly used due to the terrain’s similarity to what we know about a Martian landscape.

Enclosed by forests and palm oil plantations, the Mars Hill trek takes 30 minutes to an hour and is beginner-friendly. The walk is perfect for photography enthusiasts and those seeking panoramic views of aeroplane landings and take-offs.

Set out at around 5pm if you’d like to catch the landscape at sunset, but ensure that you depart by 6.30pm to avoid navigating the return journey in darkness. The location does involve private property – so before embarking on this otherworldly trail, do your research on finding parking and access points. *Google Map: Sepang South Africa Hiking Trail/Jalan Kg Baru Seri Sepang, 43950 Sungai Pelek*





MPOGCF

Malaysian Palm Oil Green Conservation Foundation (MPOGCF)

Reforestation



Sabah Forestry Department

1 Million Forest Tree Planting - Rehabilitation of Orangutan Habitat



Jabatan Perhutanan Semenanjung Malaysia

Restoration of Ecological Linkages of the Central Forest Spine (CFS)

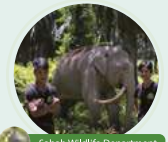


Wildlife



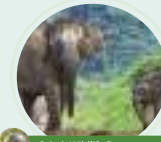
Jabatan Perlindungan Hidupan Liar dan Taman Negara (PERILITAN)

Malayan Tiger Conservation Programme



Sabah Wildlife Department

Wildlife Rescue Unit



Sabah Wildlife Department

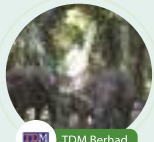
Borneo Elephant Sanctuary (BES)



Zoo Negara Malaysia

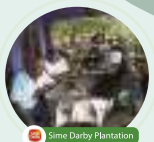
Sponsorship of Bornean Orangutan Showcase Area in Zoo Negara

Sustainability Practices



TDM Berhad

Living together with Elephants



Sime Darby Plantation

Support on High Conservation Value (HCV) & Biodiversity Training for Smallholders



Sime Darby Plantation

Development of Peat Rehabilitation Model for Sarawak Region



Universiti Putra Malaysia

Guideline for Biodiversity Friendly Plantation

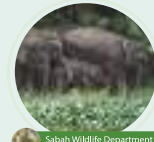


Malaysian Palm Oil Board

Earthworm Foundation

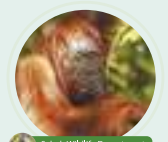
Achieving Co-Existence with Elephants

Research & Study



Sabah Wildlife Department

Bornean Elephant Population Survey



Sabah Wildlife Department

Bornean Orangutan Population Survey



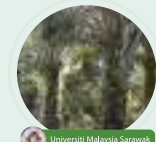
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

Oil Palm Plantation Landscapes as Wildlife Refuge: A way Forward for Wildlife Friendly Plantation



Barn Owl & Rodent Research Group

Barn Owl for Oil Palm Smallholders Initiative (BOSI)



Universiti Malaysia Sarawak

Managing Biodiversity of Conservation Concern in Oil Palm Plantation Landscapes

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