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**About the cover**  
Lighthouse Beach, located in the vibrant town of Kovalam in Trivandrum  
Photo: Shutterstock

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## Dear guests,

As we welcome a new month, the spirit of togetherness celebrated during Eid al-Fitr, known as Hari Raya Aidilfitri in Malaysia, reflects Malaysia Aviation Group's commitment to connecting you with your loved ones and destinations around the world. Malaysia Airlines and Firefly are pleased to add over 200 extra flights during the Ramadan and Hari Raya Aidilfitri peak travel period. This initiative ensures that more families can reunite with ease, reinforcing our promise to keep you connected when it matters most.

Beyond festive travel, our commitment to meaningful journeys extends to our partnership with Lembaga Tabung Haji, the country's pilgrimage fund that provides comprehensive and systematic facilities for Malaysian pilgrims. Under a newly renewed five-year agreement, AMAL by Malaysia Airlines will continue providing dedicated charter flights for Hajj pilgrims during the 2025–2029 Hajj seasons. By ensuring a seamless and comfortable journey, we enable pilgrims to focus entirely on their spiritual experience with peace of mind.

This same commitment to enriching travel experiences is also reflected in our ongoing collaboration with the Singapore Tourism Board. Now in its second year, this partnership promotes travel from Malaysia to Singapore through joint marketing efforts and curated experiences. Featuring Malaysia Airlines and Firefly crew exploring iconic attractions like Gardens by the Bay and Universal Studios Singapore, the campaign introduces enhanced travel benefits, including

boarding pass privileges aligned with peak seasons to maximise accessibility and value for our passengers.

On the fleet front, we are excited to have inducted our second Airbus A330neo aircraft in February and three Boeing 737-8s, making this the 11th out of the 25 we are expected to receive. In addition to Melbourne, the A330neo has also commenced services to Auckland and Bali on 13 and 16 March respectively, allowing more passengers to experience the premium comfort offered onboard. As part of our continued fleet modernisation plan, we have also recently placed a firm order for 30 narrow-body aircraft – comprising 18 Boeing 737-8 and 12 Boeing 737-10 models – powered by CFM LEAP-1B engines. These investments reinforce our commitment to a modern and sustainable fleet while supporting our growth ambitions. By enhancing operational efficiency and elevating the passenger experience, this fleet expansion aligns with our broader strategy for long-term success.

With these exciting milestones ahead, I hope you'll be inspired to plan your future travels with us. Thank you for your continued trust and support – it fuels our commitment to delivering excellence.

I want to take this opportunity to extend my heartfelt wishes to my fellow Muslims for a joyous and blessed Eid al-Fitr. Whether you are on your way to balik kampung or setting off on a quick holiday, we sincerely thank you for choosing to fly with us and we hope you enjoy our signature Malaysian Hospitality.

Wishing you a smooth and pleasant journey, and we look forward to welcoming you onboard again soon. Stay safe and take care.

### **Izham Ismail**

Group Managing Director  
Malaysia Aviation Group





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W

riting my first editor's note feels a bit surreal, but more than anything, I'm thrilled to go on this journey with you. A magazine isn't just about putting stories together – it's about sharing experiences, sparking curiosity and, hopefully, inspiring you to see the world in new ways.

For this issue, we begin in Trivandrum, the capital of Kerala, India, where the ancient wisdom of Ayurveda continues to shape everyday life. From time-honoured healing treatments to a deep-rooted philosophy of balance, Kerala's approach to holistic wellbeing is a reminder of how closely our health is tied to nature. There's something profound about this mindful way of living, and we take a closer look at how it continues to guide daily rituals and wellness practices to gain a deeper sense of harmony.

Next, we head closer to home to the pristine beaches of Terengganu and its surrounding islands. Malaysians have long known the beauty of these shores, but now they're stepping into the spotlight as one of Southeast Asia's most stunning yet under-the-radar beach destinations. What makes Terengganu truly special is the passion of its conservationists. From dedicated individuals like Professor James Tan of Universiti Malaysia Terengganu to sustainable efforts by resorts like Tanjong Jara, their commitment to protecting marine life ensures that it will be preserved for generations to come.

For those who find inspiration in the arts, Yogyakarta – or Jogja as the locals call it – is the place to be. If you've got a weekend to spare, art aficionado Norhizam Kadir has crafted the perfect itinerary, leading you through the city's cultural gems and the best spots for authentic local flavours.

As we bring you these stories, a common thread emerges – the importance of nourishing different aspects of ourselves. Whether it's taking time to recharge in nature, discovering new perspectives through art or embracing traditions that remind us to slow down and be present, balance is key, and I hope this issue inspires you to explore what truly feeds your mind, body and soul.

Go forth and wander!

*Elizabeth Soong*

**Elizabeth Soong**  
Editor



## This issue's contributors



**Anandhi Gopinath**  
Writer, "The coast is clear", p46

Anandhi covers the luxury lifestyle scene with a nuanced take on what discerning audiences look for when it comes to the good life. She writes primarily on watches, wheels and whiskies, but this journalist at heart will never say no to a good story.



**Cheryl Marella**  
Writer, "A perfect weekend in Yogyakarta", p33

Cheryl is a journalist who has done it all – radio, TV and magazines. Based in Bali, her work has appeared on CNA and CNN Indonesia, and she now runs her own digital publication.



**Zinara Rathnayake**  
Writer, "Healing hands in Kerala", p38

Zinara is a travel, food and culture writer who loves café-hopping and quiet mountain towns. She covers Asia, from Northeast India's root bridges to coffee culture in Laos.



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# 15

# REASONS TO LOVE MALAYSIA

Bold flavours, inspiring people and unforgettable places



1

Penang

## Be at the centre of it all

Amid a sea of boutique hotels, **The Edison George Town** stands out, blending heritage charm with modern luxury. Originally a grand 1906 mansion designed by architect David Nathaniel for tycoon Yeo Wee Gark, it later became a hotel and is now a conservation icon.

Staying here means waking up in the heart of George Town's UNESCO World Heritage zone, perfectly placed to explore the island's vibrant culture, stunning architecture and legendary street food.

With only 35 rooms, personalised service is a given. A 24-hour complimentary snack lounge – stocked with nostalgic Malaysian childhood treats and fresh fruits – adds a thoughtful touch that keeps guests coming back. [theedisonhotels.com](http://theedisonhotels.com)



## 2 Kuala Lumpur Rhythm and blues

Get ready for a night of soulful melodies as the **Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra (MPO)** sets the stage in honour of International Jazz Day. On 26 April, the MPO presents a musical journey that blends timeless classics with a modern Asian twist.

Under Gerard Salonga's masterful baton, the night brings together Kuala

Lumpur's vintage pop trio, The Shang Sisters – featuring Janet Lee, Winnie Ho and Mian Tan – who infuse nostalgic favourites with fresh reinterpretations.

Joining this stellar lineup is WVC, one of the region's top contemporary ensembles, ensuring an unforgettable performance filled with pure rhythmic magic. [mpo.com.my](http://mpo.com.my)

### Jazz clubs around the city

Can't make it to the MPO? Here's where you can get your jazz fix all year round



#### Suzie Wong

Nestled discreetly in Wisma Lim Foo Yong, Suzie Wong captivates with energetic live performances and an East-meets-West vibe. To keep the magic alive, dress the part. After all, if Suzie Wong turns heads, why shouldn't you? [suziewong.asia](http://suziewong.asia)



#### BoboKL

This intimate jazz and comedy club has hosted Malaysia's finest talents, including Ning Baizura, Dasha Logan, Elvira Arul and The Shang Sisters. With its warm ambience, stellar live music and cosy setting, it's the city's go-to spot for an unforgettable night out. [bobokl.com](http://bobokl.com)







3

Kuala Lumpur

## Less is more-ish

Tucked behind an unassuming façade along Jalan Kemuja in Bukit Bangsar, **Studio** offers a dining experience you won't forget. At the helm are Christian Rekomio and Jenifer Kuah, who blend warm hospitality with bold, flavour-forward cooking, all set against a backdrop of moody greys and soft lighting.

The menu reflects chef Christian's Scottish roots and global adventures, with an emphasis on the sea, comforting flavours and creative reinterpretations.

A standout dish? Crispy local potatoes with whipped rosemary mascarpone, rosemary oil and sticky jus gras, served with warm crème fraîche rolls and cultured butter – simple yet remarkable.

The restaurant was one of the first to champion natural wines in Malaysia, offering pairings that bring out the best in every bite. Thoughtfully crafted yet refreshingly unpretentious, Studio proves that when it comes to great dining, less really is more.

[studiorestaurant.co](http://studiorestaurant.co)



4

Kuala Lumpur

## Your luxe beauty destination

In just two years, **Trove** has made its mark in luxury beauty, curating niche fragrances and premium skincare. Think avant-garde scents from Lesquendieu and The House of Oud, plus powerhouse brands like Niance, Cellcosmet and Espa.

With boutiques at The Starhill, Pavilion Damansara Heights and The Exchange TRX, it is the go-to for beauty lovers – whether for a rare perfume or transformative skincare. [trovemy.com](http://trovemy.com)





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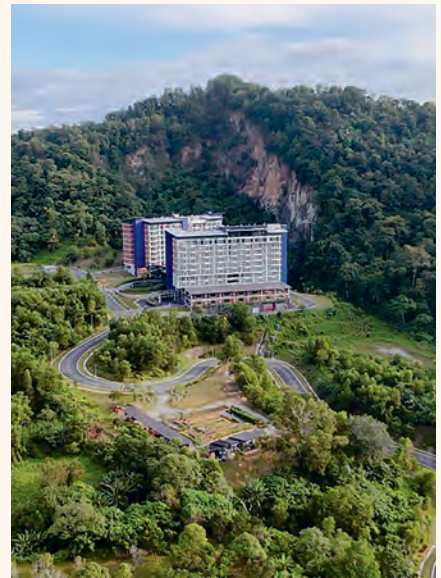
Malaysia

## Set sail for adventure



Sailing through some of Asia's most exciting destinations – including Penang, Port Klang, Singapore, Thailand, Japan and South Korea – the **Costa Serena** offers world-class dining, sparkling pools, a luxurious spa and a grand theatre, creating the perfect blend of relaxation and adventure.

Part of Costa Crociere's Italian cruise fleet, the Costa Serena starred in *Cruise Ship Diaries* and witnessed Hwajing Travel & Tours make Malaysia a cruise homeport. [costacruises.com](http://costacruises.com)



6

Negeri Sembilan

## Golden years shine bright

Forget everything you think you know about retirement – **Millennia Village** is redefining senior living with style, community and purpose. As Malaysia's first purpose-built senior living resort, this lush 32-acre sanctuary in Seremban just an hour from Kuala Lumpur is where golden years shine even brighter.

Each resident's room is thoughtfully designed with warm hues, expansive windows for natural light and private balconies overlooking stunning landscapes. The resort is equipped with facilities including a gym, swimming pool, a multipurpose studio, a library, games room, theatre and event spaces for up to 200 guests. Daily activities like tai chi, line dancing, senior yoga, aqua aerobics, arts and crafts and even a community kitchen offer endless opportunities to learn, move and connect.

Dining is an experience in itself at Saffron, the resort's all-day restaurant, while The Rooftop provides a more laid-back setting with drinks and panoramic views – the perfect spot to toast to the good life. [millenniaivillage.com](http://millenniaivillage.com)

IMAGE: SHUTTERSTOCK (COSTA SERENA)



# 7

Perak

## Hometown inspiration



Malaysian contemporary art is making waves, and **Zulkefli Jais** is at the forefront. He recently represented the country at the prestigious Gwangju Biennale in South Korea, where he showcased "Project Temporary Marking" – a deeply personal yet globally resonant installation rooted in his hometown, Teluk Intan in Perak.

His birthplace continues to inspire his work, resulting in his latest, "Project: Found Fossil". A permanent public sculpture at Kapallorek Art Space, he envisions it as a time capsule bridging the past and future through a retro-futuristic lens – one fossilised artifact at a time.

Visiting Perak? Let Zulkefli's artistic journey be your guide to the state's thriving creative scene, from indie galleries to hidden cultural gems.

### Kapallorek Art Space

Founded in 2014 by artist Fadly Sabran, this independent, non-profit space in Seri Iskandar is a hub for emerging new media artists. Beyond exhibitions, it hosts workshops, performances and dialogues, fostering local talent while facilitating connections between creative minds across borders. [kapallorek.com](http://kapallorek.com)

### PORT

People of Remarkable Talents (PORT) is more than a name – it's a movement. Backed by the Perak state government, this cultural powerhouse has been shaping the arts scene since 2011. Through festivals, exhibitions and bold programming, PORT champions both local and international talent, making it a hub for creative expression and exchange. [portipoh.com](http://portipoh.com)

### LAKAR

Laman Karya Lumut (LAKAR) is Lumut's creative heartbeat, where artists, musicians and creatives gather. With a recording studio, video production setup and weekly concerts, the place is always buzzing. Beyond the arts, you'll find thrift stores, galleries, hip cafés and even a hostel – perfect for backpackers eager to soak in the scene. [instagram.com/lamankaryalumut](https://www.instagram.com/lamankaryalumut)







8

Johor

## A coastal retreat that feels like home

Wake up to the sound of waves and step onto your private deck, where soft sand and endless sea stretch before you. Nestled in Johor's sought-after coastal town, **Anantara Desaru Coast Residences** blends luxury with beachfront living, offering a serene retreat that's also a smart investment.

Choose between a single-storey beachfront villa or a grand duplex villa, both featuring four elegant bedrooms, open-plan living spaces and floor-to-ceiling windows that flood the interiors with natural light. Designed for families and entertaining, the duplex villa includes an extended pool deck, private bar, mini theatre and a sun lounge with panoramic ocean views.

Residents enjoy full access to the adjacent Anantara Desaru Coast Resort & Villa's five-star amenities, from indulgent spa treatments and world-class dining to dedicated clubs for kids and teens. A resort-managed rental programme adds extra convenience.

Easily accessible via the Senai-Desaru Expressway or a direct ferry from Singapore, the residences are minutes from Adventure Waterpark, the renowned Els Club golf course and pristine beaches – offering endless ways to unwind.

[anantaradesaru-residences.com](http://anantaradesaru-residences.com)







9

Selangor

## No ordinary bookstore

Located in Damansara Kim, Petaling Jaya, **Sunda Shelves** is more than a bookstore – it's a love letter to nature. Founded by conservationists Surin Sukswan and Dylan Jefri Ong, this literary haven invites travellers

and book lovers to explore stories of biodiversity, adventure and our connection to the planet.

Adding to its charm is a cosy café, the perfect spot to unwind with a good book and enjoy its signature Maleepap curry puff.

For those looking for a lighter read, Sunda Shelves offers a thoughtfully curated selection of fiction for children and adults, inspiring readers to explore, imagine and see the world through a different lens.

[instagram.com/sunda.shelves](https://www.instagram.com/sunda.shelves)

10

Kuala Lumpur

## Inspired living

**Poltrona Frau** unveils its gorgeous new Bangsar showroom in partnership with Stanzo Italia, offering a haven for design lovers. Spanning two levels, it invites visitors to explore a seamless fusion of heritage and contemporary elegance. The showroom also welcomes Ceccotti Collezioni, introducing Malaysia to its exquisite Tuscan craftsmanship. [stanzoitalia.my](http://stanzoitalia.my)





Penang

## Seas the day

The all-new **M Social Resort** is turning heads in Tanjung Bungah, a prime beachfront escape just minutes from Batu Ferringhi. This chic retreat offers 318 stylish rooms and suites across two contemporary towers, plus a stunning outdoor pool for all-day fun.

The Azure Wing is perfect for families, with spacious rooms designed for parents and little ones to relax in comfort. Looking for breathtaking ocean views? The Sunset Bay Wing delivers panoramic vistas of Penang's northern coast.

Dine at Beast & Butterflies for Peranakan-meets-global flavours, sip handcrafted drinks at The Social Hub or enjoy poolside snacks from Breezy Bites. [msocial.com](http://msocial.com)



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Malaysia

## Designed to travel far

For 50 years, **Tumi** has been a trusted companion for travellers, professionals and adventurers alike. The brand celebrates this milestone with "Made for You Since 1975", a campaign that spotlights the diverse lifestyles of its customers, featuring timeless collections like Alpha, Voyageur and 19 Degree.

Some pieces have become icons. The Alpha International Dual Access Carry-On is

a go-to for frequent flyers, designed for effortless organisation and quick accessibility. Meanwhile, the Voyageur Celina Backpack offers a stylish yet practical way to stay organised, whether you're navigating daily life or heading off on your next adventure.

But the journey is far from over. With exciting new launches on the horizon, you might just discover your next perfect travel companion.

[tumi.com](http://tumi.com)



13

Selangor

## Out-of-town nostalgia



**Ninja Private Kitchen** is a hidden gem in Sekinchan, 1.5 hours from Kuala Lumpur. The brainchild of celebrity photographer Zung Heng and his family, this reservation-only spot offers Teochew home cooking with fresh seafood and nostalgic charm. Dine amid batik-draped tables, vintage keepsakes and teepees beneath an open sky. Nearby, haystacks, a retro bicycle and a bamboo tub complete the dreamy setting. [instagram.com/ninjaprivatekitchen](https://www.instagram.com/ninjaprivatekitchen)



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Kuala Lumpur

## A warm embrace for the soul

For some, coffee is a ritual, a comfort or a moment of indulgence. Since 1995, **Dôme Café** has been shaping Malaysia's café culture, now with 20 outlets nationwide.

Its latest chapter unfolds at The Gardens Mall, where a newly relocated space on the first floor introduces a bakery-style concept, serving fresh pastries and artisanal bread. Signature treats include the Nutella Cruffin, Chocolate Tartlet, Lemon Curd Cruffin and Crème Brûlée Tartlet – each a delightful bite.

Start your day right with Dôme Café's RM16+ Morning Coffee & Croissant combo, available daily at all their outlets until 12pm. [domecafe.com.my](https://www.domecafe.com.my)

15

Malaysia

## Cosmic timing

**Bell & Ross** charts a new course with the BR-03 Astro, a limited edition of 999 pieces that reimagines timekeeping through celestial movement. At its core, a satellite completes its orbit

around the Earth in 60 seconds, the Moon tracks the minutes and Mars displays the passing hours.

The aventurine quartzite dial mirrors the night sky, creating an illusion of endless exploration. Encased in 41mm black ceramic, it features an anti-reflective crystal hollowed at the centre in the shape of a spherical cap, amplifying the depth of Earth's image.

A true collector's piece, the BR-03 Astro is crafted for visionaries who measure time in light-years. [bellross.com](https://www.bellross.com)





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Sunway City Kuala Lumpur is Asia's leading fully-integrated premier hospitality and entertainment destination. Sprawling 800 acres, the destination comprises award-winning facilities including world-class hotels – Sunway Resort Hotel, Sunway Pyramid Hotel and Sunway Lagoon Hotel, Sunway Pyramid shopping mall and Sunway Lagoon theme park.

Whether you're visiting for business or leisure, this integrated destination offers an amazing array of amenities tailored to your every need. Take comfort in Sunway Resort Hotel's reimagined new rooms while you discover the city's most sought-after dining experiences at Gordon Ramsay Bar & Grill and Black Tap Craft Burgers & Shakes. Indulge in retail therapy or enjoy an adrenaline rush at the theme park, and with more than 360,000 square metres of world-class spaces and vibrant venues, it's no wonder some of Asia's most outstanding events are created in this multi-award-winning destination.



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# Firewood Penang is a real flame-changer

**With Ker Yang Hao as chef, this steakhouse in George Town is *the* place for quality steaks and chargrilled goodness**

The heart of Penang's culinary identity may lie in its traditional street food scene, but the city's new crop of restaurants offers another compelling reason to visit Malaysia's Pearl of the Orient. One such spot which has been earning praise is Firewood Penang, tucked away in Unesco-listed George Town and led by 31-year-old chef Ker Yang Hao.

Ker honed his craft in Singapore's prestigious kitchens, including at The St Regis and Gordon Ramsay's Bread Street Kitchen at Marina Bay Sands,



before returning home to Malaysia. He owes his inspiration to Ramsay, "It's not about his culinary skill. It's about how he managed 70 restaurants all at once and managed to do it so successfully," Ker says.

Housed in a nearly decade-old building, Ker's 2025 Michelin Selected Restaurant elevates the art of cooking over open flames, creating meaningful connections between people through food and fire, and paying homage to Penang's heritage.

"Before we opened, there were a lot of different cafés and fine dining establishments so not many people were running casual dining restaurants with good food. Over at Firewood Penang, you'll see people bringing their kids but also suit-wearing corporates who just want to relax, savour quality food and bond over wine. It's a good environment," Ker says. "It's rare to find but casual dining is picking up and positioning is very important, so when you think of Firewood Penang, you think steaks."

Firewood Penang's menu is extensive, spotlighting steaks, heartwarming dishes and chef specialities. Even the appetisers embrace the flame, from the smoky Charcoal Burnt Caesar to delicately charred dishes like Miso Eggplant, Garlic Shrimp with Charred Cabbage, Firewood Truffle Mushroom Soup, Crabmeat Tagliatelle Pasta, a selection of Certified Australian Angus and not forgetting the Japan A5 Miyazaki Wagyu Ribeye.

While Ker prioritises quality and cooking methods, when asked about his all-time favourite ingredient to use in his cooking, Ker says he keeps it as simple as possible.

"I'm a steak-lover; I only use salt and pepper for steak as it brings out a really good flavour. We also use fresh ingredients for the other dishes on the menu."

**Firewood Penang is at 15 Jalan Masjid Kapitan Keling, George Town, Penang. To check the menu and make a reservation, go to [firegroup.my](https://firegroup.my) or call +60 17-9899246.**



# ELEVATE

A global guide to uplifting updates for work, rest and play



## ATTRACTIONS

### Flower power

Soak up the beauty of **Beijing** in bloom

BY STEPHEN O'CONNELL

**After the long, cold winter,** China's capital comes alive with colour as cherry, peach and plum trees begin to bloom in spring. Among this month's highlights are the enchanting crabapple blossoms, symbols of happiness, beauty, marriage and fertility. Catch these blush-hued flowers as they drift onto the bank of the newly renovated canal by Wangjing South Station, a spot that has quickly become a favourite among Beijingers eager to capture

the romantic charm of these spring blossoms. On a sunny, breezy spring day, the effect is particularly magical.

To visit, take Beijing Metro Line 14 to Wangjing South Station and head towards Wangjing's unmissable cyberpunk panda statue. From there, head down paths beside the canal – all peppered with pink and white flowers – and take pictures from the jetties, designed to recreate the feeling of being on a boat floating gently on the water.



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# ATTRACTIONS

# Back to the future

Expo 2025 in **Osaka** offers a peek at what's to come

BY TARA FT SERING



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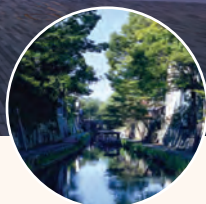
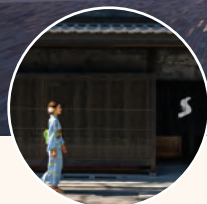
## We have six months to catch

Japan doing what it does best: imagining the future. From 13 April to 13 October, **Expo 2025** will be on show at Yumeshima, a 390ha artificial island in Osaka Bay. Prepare to be awestruck by everything at the Expo's Future Society Showcase, a leapfrog into a dream future, neatly organised into exhibition categories. The Smart Mobility Expo, for instance, presents technology that will hopefully lead to a carbon-neutral society. Think passenger drones and driverless, electric buses with a power supply that recharges while in motion. The Future Life Village, on the other hand, provides visitors with a more immersive and evocative experience of urban life in the not-too-distant 2030.

Other attractions include the Osaka Healthcare Pavilion (shown in this rendering) where, if you

dare, you can meet a version of yourself from the year 2050, created based on your personal health record.

This isn't Osaka's first rodeo; the city hosted the World Expo in 1970, which showcased the first-ever IMAX film, early mobile phones, magnetic levitation technology and a moon rock, a souvenir from the previous year's Apollo moon landing. This year's event is a global gathering of over 160 countries and international agencies showcasing innovations designed to help the world meet the UN's 2030 Sustainable Development Goals – a list of 17 goals that includes eradicating poverty worldwide, promoting peace and justice for all and addressing the climate emergency – first set 10 years ago. Book tickets online and plan well in advance. [expo2025.or.jp](https://expo2025.or.jp)



## Rewind and unwind

Not far from the futuristic fair are old-school (and very cool) retreats worth travelling for

### Solo in style

Travelling alone? Tadao Ando-designed **The Shinmonzen**, in Kyoto's Gion district, offers contemporary art on the walls and views of the Shirakawa River. The luxury ryokan also features Ogata, a minimalist jewel-box boutique selling fine Japanese teas, ceramics, glassware, confectionery and fragrances. [theshinmonzen.com](https://theshinmonzen.com)

### Honeymoon hideaway

In the Edo-style castle town of Omi Hachiman, Shiga Prefecture, the gorgeous **Hatago Wakatsu** is perfect for couples. Built in a former tatami shop, with the original structure dating back to 1829, the luxury ryokan offers full old-school immersion, including a wood-themed room with straw mattresses on tatami floors. [wakatsu.jp](https://wakatsu.jp)

### Family fun

Last year, Singapore-based hotel brand **Banyan Tree** opened the 52-room **Banyan Tree Higashiyama Kyoto**, not far from the iconic Kiyomizu Dera. It features spacious ryokan-style rooms, its own bamboo forest and, uniquely, a Kengo Kuma-designed Noh stage as a tribute to Japan's traditional performing art. [banyantree.com](https://banyantree.com)





## SHOPPING

# Master the maze

Explore Chandni Chowk, Delhi's oldest and largest marketplace

BY PUNITA MALHOTRA

### Here's a test for true shopping

lovers: a day at **Chandni Chowk**, the delightfully chaotic and sprawling 17th-century market in the heart of Shahjahanabad or Old Delhi. Although the moonlit freshwater canal that inspired its name (Moonlight Square in English) is long gone – as are the Silk Road-era caravanserais, communal bathhouses and leisure gardens – the ghost of a grand past lingers. You'll see it in the crumbling Mughal-era *havelis* (mansions), where elegant *mushairas* (Urdu poetry gatherings) and lively pigeon-flying once defined everyday life. Here, you can feel history mingling with the hustle, perfect for a day of scouring for treasures.

Start early, before the cacophony of rickshaws and the aroma of sizzling street food takes over the streets. Fuel up with a full meal at one of the legendary breakfast spots that offer an irresistible spread of savoury snacks, biscuits and sweets. Think stuffed *parathas* (fried unleavened bread), samosas and *kachori sabzi* (crisp, savoury pastries served with tangy potato curry). The feast continues with *chole bhature* (spicy chickpea curry served with fluffy, deep-fried bread) and succulent kebabs. For dessert, indulge in



the decadence of the *gulab jamun*, golden *jalebis* or the layered delight of *rabri falooda*. For a soulful twist, visit the **Gurdwara Sis Ganj Sahib** and partake in the *langar*, the Sikh community kitchen that serves meals to all.

As with any shopping expedition, the key to overcoming choice paralysis is knowing what you want. Vibrant silks and shimmering sarees? Find them all at **Katra Neel**, an area of textile wholesalers next to a historical gate. For intricate silver jewellery, head to **Dariba Kalan**, a 17th-century alley once frequented by royalty scouting for precious stones. **Kinari Bazaar** dazzles with wedding finery – from lace and tassels to jewellery boxes and gift bags. If you've come for the spices, make a beeline for **Khari Baoli**, widely recognised as Asia's largest wholesale spice market. Here, mountains of spices and dried fruit create a kaleidoscope of colours and aromas.

As the day winds down, explore the **Kathika Museum** to trace Delhi's architectural and cultural evolution. End your journey at **Haveli Dharampura**, a Unesco-recognised 19th-century gem, and enjoy a decadent tasting course along with a live *Kathak* performance (an Indian classical dance form known for its intricate footwork, graceful movements and storytelling). It's the perfect way to savour the timeless allure of the walled city.



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## Essential pitstops



### Karim's

For the juicy tandoori bites. *Near Jama Masjid*; @karimhoteldelhi6



### Qureshi Kabab Corner

For sumptuous kebab. *Jama Masjid*; qureshikabab.com



### Shyam Sweets

For samosas and sweet snacks. *Chawri Bazaar*; @shyamsweets



Khari Baoli





MUSEUMS

## Stay tuned

In **Colombo**, check out Asia's oldest radio station as it turns 100 **BY KHURSHIED DINSHAW**



SLBC's music library



The SLBC building in Cinnamon Gardens

**Ever wondered how Elvis Presley** – and the rest of rock 'n' roll – made it to living rooms and dance halls in Colombo and across India, halfway across the world? Then head over to Cinnamon Gardens, an affluent neighbourhood of embassies and government buildings in the Sri Lankan capital, and peek into the hallowed halls of the Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation (SLBC), previously called Radio Ceylon.

Entering Asia's oldest radio station, located within Colombo's Independence Square (formerly Torrington Square), is like walking into a time capsule. The spacious corridors are lined with mostly black and white photographs that take visitors through iconic moments in history and the country's socio-political milestones, many from when the station was called Radio Ceylon. Think of the Apollo 11 moon landing broadcast in 1969, and Queen Elizabeth II's address to the public from the radio station in 1954. There are photos of

Professor Maulvi H Salahudeen, who presented a radio programme on Islam for the first time in Sinhalese, and veteran broadcaster Vijaya Corea, a household name in Sri Lanka, who introduced Elvis to this side of the world.

The photo gallery leads to another corridor displaying antiquated equipment like microphones, recording tools, consoles and a disc-cutting lathe. There's even a grandfather clock that harks back to 1925, when the station was established. Take in their five music libraries, including one with hundreds of gramophone records. The station is equipped with enough music for 55,000 hours (over six years) of nonstop airplay. But there's more to the tour than looking at relics from a bygone era. Visitors may also opt to sit inside the studio during broadcast sessions and linger for a chat with the veteran presenters (80-year-old Somasiri Chandrasena, who has worked at the station for 50 years, will have some fantastic stories to share).

SLBC, which turns 100 this year, continues to be a trusted source for news, discussions on current affairs, radio drama, entertainment, women-centric content and programmes that focus on intangible heritage. The guided tour of the station is free, but pre-booking is required. It's open from Monday to Friday, and office hours are from 8.30am to 4.15pm. [slbc.lk](http://slbc.lk)



The station's outdoor gallery

IMAGES: @UDESHNILANGA (TOP RIGHT)



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## DINING

# Local intel

Chef Glenn Erari serves us a taste of his hometown of **Jakarta**

BY RANDY MULYANTO

**Glennaldy Adrian Erari**, executive chef at modern Indonesian restaurant **Semaja**, has embodied Indonesia's culinary diversity all his life – inspired by his father's heritage from Papua in the eastern part of the archipelago and his mother's from the Bangka Regency in the west.

These influences inspired chef Glenn to experiment at Semaja, by major lifestyle and hospitality group Ismaya, where he celebrates flavours from across Indonesia, giving diners a tasting tour of the country, an archipelago of a staggering 17,000 islands. From Papuan-style *papeda kuah kuning* (sago starch with turmeric fish soup) and Makassar-style *iga bakar konro* (grilled beef ribs prepared for four days) to West Sumatran-style beef rendang, West Javan-style chargrilled prawns with sweet and spicy sauce and Medan-style herbs and seafood fried noodles, it's a feast served in Menteng, in the heart of Jakarta. We caught up with the chef for some insider tips.



Chef Glenn Erari



Tongseng

## First of all, what should we eat?

“**Bakmi Acung** in Kedoya, West Jakarta. I grew up in this part of the city, enjoying various Chinese-Indonesian dishes. Since I was a kid, I developed a taste for Chinese food – like Bangka noodles and *pempek* (fishcake served with vinegar sauce). And West Jakarta, wow, that place is a food heaven. There's also **Tongseng** in front of the Great Mosque of Sunda Kelapa, Central Jakarta. I've enjoyed their goat stew since I was in high school. The *tongseng* is still cooked using charcoal. It's top-notch. For beef soup, go to **Soto Betawi Bu Nyai** in Kemayoran, also in Central Jakarta. It comes in a coconut milk-based broth.”

## How do you spend your downtime?

“I like to go island-hopping and diving around **Kepulauan Seribu**



Interior of Semaja

(Thousand Islands) Regency – part of the Jakarta province – and staying there for a night. Take a few boat rides from Muara Angke port to **Pulau Bira**, which is great for camping. The place is quiet, not crowded, great for snorkelling and diving.”

## Best souvenir?

“*Angklung* (a musical instrument consisting of bamboo tubes) keychains from street vendors in front of Café Batavia, part of Jakarta's **Kota Tua** or Old Town. The instrument is originally from Java and is a big part of Indonesia's heritage.”



## What's a must-try in Semaja?

“The 18 different variants of *sambal* (Indonesian-style chilli paste). We thought foreigners couldn't handle the same level of spiciness as Indonesians, but it turns out they all love sambal. And they finish it – even the ones that we Indonesians find spicy.”

IMAGES: SHUTTERSTOCK (TONGSENG, KEPULAUAN SERIBU, ANGKLUNG)



Kepulauan Seribu



ELEVATE



DINING

## By the sea

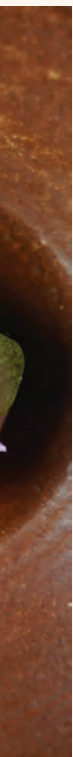
Step out for fine seafood and more in **Phuket**

BY SOPHIE STEINER

**Beyond sandy beaches, beautiful luxury** resorts and street eats, Phuket is also hot on the radar for an abundance of fine dining experiences that bridge international techniques with local flavours. In recent years, the island's culinary landscape has evolved to include even more upscale dining establishments that focus on sustainability, fusion and innovation, not to mention a feast of a view of the Andaman Sea. Here's where to book a table.







### A taste of Japan

Due to popular demand, Japanese restaurant **Zuma** has extended its seasonal residency at Anantara Layan Phuket Resort, tucked away in a serene bay by the Andaman Sea, until April 2026. Since its launch in 2016, Zuma has become a popular island habit, thanks to its izakaya-inspired dining, showcasing high-quality, fresh ingredients coupled with exceptional service and the brand's hallmark lively atmosphere.

The restaurant offers an expansive spread of contemporary Japanese plates and creative cocktails, an experience made more fun by live music performances. This

season's list of exclusive tasting menus includes the signature Daikoku, which features dishes such as crispy fried squid with green chilli and a gasp of lime; thinly sliced sea bass finished with yuzu, truffle aioli and glistening salmon roe; a chef's selection of sushi and sashimi; and spicy beef tenderloin seared with a sweet soy, sesame and red chilli gastrique. On Sundays, the baikingu brunch presents a relaxed dining experience with a variety of Zuma favourites, like fried softshell crab, white shrimp tempura and Chilean sea bass. [zumarestaurant.com](http://zumarestaurant.com)

### Star-studded and eco-friendly

Adjacent to the opulent Trisara resort, **Pru's** culinary philosophy is encapsulated by its eponymous "Plant, Raise, Understand" tagline. Since opening in 2016, Pru has garnered acclaim, earning its first Michelin star in 2018 (the only restaurant on the island that still has one as of press time), making it the gold standard for fine dining in Phuket. Most recently, chef Jimmy Ophorst was awarded

"Best Dutch Chef Abroad 2025" by Gault&Millau for his commitment to using exclusively Thai ingredients coupled with Western techniques.

Under the guidance of Ophorst, Pru showcases an array of locally sourced seafood, plants and artisanal preserves (which use rare ingredients – like katsuobushi-style coconut heart, dahlia flower, black peanut oil, fried red ants and mangrove-sourced crab – from the restaurant's own organic farm and local fishing communities), emphasising its commitment to community engagement. The entirely solar energy-powered kitchen utilises wood and homemade charcoal for grilling, a testament to its eco-friendly practices.

Diners are treated to an immersive experience, with the Japanese Kappo-style counter providing a view into the open kitchen, where intricate dishes are crafted with a focus on the terroir of the Andaman Sea. [prurestaurant.com](http://prurestaurant.com)

### Modern Euro

The modern European menu at **Jampa** restaurant,



Pru's Jimmy Ophorst

“

**Phuket is hot on the radar for an abundance of fine dining experiences that bridge international techniques with local flavours”**

led by chef Rick Dingen, revolves around the philosophies of zero waste and ecological responsibility (Jampa's motto is "Dine good, do good"). The restaurant sources fresh seafood and produce exclusively from artisanal vendors and local farms, and its commitment to sustainability is further highlighted by its latest feat: a Michelin Green Star for 2025, a recognition of its pioneering efforts in sustainable gastronomy. Jampa's farm-to-fork approach is complemented by live-fire cooking, where food is grilled over embers to create a smoky aroma in their open-air kitchen. Dining at Jampa is not just a meal, it's a conscious choice towards sustainable travel. [jamparestaurant.com](http://jamparestaurant.com)



Explore top activities in Phuket with Journify!





INSIDER TIPS

# A Malaysian in... Chiang Mai

Actor, restaurateur and coffee connoisseur  
**Steven Lim** shares his tips for seeing the  
northern Thai city like a local

BY CRAIG SAUERS



I was born in Kuala Lumpur, studied in Singapore and spent 14 years in London before settling in Bangkok in 2013. As an actor, I trained in drama school and worked in film and television. Most will know me from the Singaporean series *Growing Up* or *The Teenage Textbook Movie*. These days, I consider myself semi-retired, taking on the occasional project while focusing on another lifelong passion: coffee. Like many actors in London, I have worked in cafés between gigs. That's how I ended up at Monmouth Coffee, one of the city's most respected names in speciality coffee. I enjoyed it so much that I decided to work full-time for a couple of years and get into coffee properly. When

I moved to Bangkok, the city's budding café culture drew me in, and eventually I co-founded Luka, a café that blends quality coffee with great hospitality. But now when I need a break from Bangkok's energy, I escape to Chiang Mai. It's so creative, the landscapes are stunning and the café scene is thriving. Here are some of my favourite spots.

## Start my day right

There are a few key things that you must do when you go to Chiang Mai. One of them is explore the local coffee scene. The whole region around here grows excellent coffee. Among all the great cafés you can visit is local institution Ristr8to. They have several locations, but I love the **Roast8ry Flagship** on Nimmanhaemin Soi 17. The building is beautiful, too. [instagram.com/roast8ry](https://www.instagram.com/roast8ry)

## Inspire me, please

Chiang Mai has quite a few galleries, including one of my favourites – the **MAIIAM Contemporary Art Museum**, just outside the city centre. But it's not just galleries. A lot of the ceramic tableware you find



Wat Anlayothipyaram



MAIIAM Contemporary Art Museum

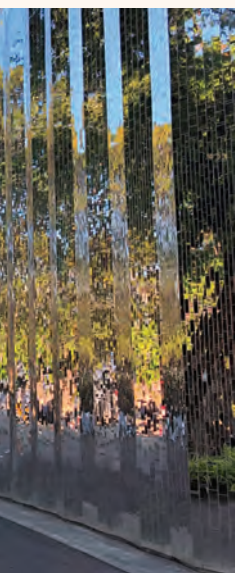
in hotels and restaurants around Thailand is produced here. Near MAIIAM, you'll find all these factories making beautiful plates, cups and décor, some of them glazed in traditional jade-coloured celadon. I love this studio called **Roro**. Ceramics like theirs are great to bring home. [maiiam.com](https://www.maiiam.com); [instagram.com/roro.ceramics](https://www.instagram.com/roro.ceramics)

## Give me something good to eat

Khao soi is a must. It's like chicken curry noodles but with a slightly thicker broth. Even the stall in the

IMAGES: ROROTHAILAND.COM (RORO CERAMICS), SHUTTERSTOCK (WAT ANALAYOTHIPIYARAM, MAIIAM CONTEMPORARY ART MUSEUM, KHAO SOI, MAJOR CINEPLEX CENTRAL FESTIVAL)





Wanlamun Rim Nam

Chiang Mai airport makes a good version. For something low-key but special, go to **Wanlamun Rim Nam** at the Sala Lanna Chiang Mai hotel. The Thai desserts are a must-try. It's also by the river, so it has a nice view. [instagram.com/wanlamun\\_chiangmai](https://www.instagram.com/wanlamun_chiangmai)

## Beat the heat – or the rain

Tourists don't usually think about going to the cinema, because they have cinemas back home. But when my friends travel to Thailand, I tell them, "If you get the chance, do it."



Major Cineplex Central Festival

If you go for the VIP experience, you start in a lounge where you can eat and drink before the film, and then you're ushered to a recliner or a sofa in the cinema. You lie down on these beds and the staff serve you popcorn and drinks. But even the standard movie seats are really comfortable. The price you pay for the experience is incredible.

## Venture off the beaten path

Chiang Mai itself is a major-ish city, but nature is just a short trek away. There are so many coffee plantations you can visit, such as **Pana Coffee's** farms in **Doi Saket** and **Chiang Dao**. If you want to go further, it's easy to rent a motorbike or a car. One of the last times I was in Chiang Mai, I did a big, two-week tour of **Lamphun, Lampang, Nan** and **Phayao**. It's mountainous, so there are places where the temperatures drop quite low, and in others you can stay in glamping tents in the middle of the rice paddies. [pana.coffee](http://pana.coffee)

## Tell me a secret

Northern Thailand has loads of temples. But I absolutely love **Wat Analayothipyaram**



Roro ceramics

(Luang Pu Phaibun) in Phayao, about two and a half hours from Chiang Mai. This traditional wooden temple, deep in the forest, is not as busy or popular as the main religious sites in Chiang Mai, so it's peaceful and very much integrated with nature.

## Sleep in style

Thailand in general is so creative, and there are lots of interesting, independently owned businesses and properties everywhere. I love staying at **Chiang Mai Summer Resort** in the old city. It's like a homestay – affordable but special. For something artsy, stay at the **Chandra Residence**; every building was designed by the owners and is filled with beautiful teak furniture and native plants. For a true escape, there's **Pine Village**, set among the pine trees and fields in the Mae On district, about 50 minutes east of the city centre. For affordable luxury and lots of greenery, you can't go wrong with **Chantra Khiri Chalet** in Ban Pong. [facebook.com/chiangmaissummer](https://www.facebook.com/chiangmaissummer); [chandrarresidence.com](https://www.chandrarresidence.com); [instagram.com/pine\\_villagecnx](https://www.instagram.com/pine_villagecnx);



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# A PERFECT WEEKEND IN Yogyakarta

Words Cheryl Marella

The cultural heart of Java enchants with its ancient traditions and modern creativity, making you want to come back for more





# Yogyakarta, or Jogja as the locals affectionately call it, is where ancient traditions and modern creativity intertwine. Sprawled between

the Indian Ocean and the towering Mount Merapi, this vibrant city in Central Java is often hailed as the cultural heart of Indonesia's most populous island – a place rich in history, art and irresistible cuisine.

For Norhizam Kadir, a 50-year-old IT professional with a deep appreciation for the arts, Jogja was love at first sight. “My first visit was magical,” he recalls. “I didn’t know what to expect, but the city’s charm and spirituality blew me away.” If you’re planning a weekend escape to Jogja, we’ve copped Norhizam’s three-day itinerary that combines the city’s hidden gems and timeless wonders.

## Day 1 A spiritual and cultural introduction

**Morning.** Kick off your trip with a visit to **Prambanan Temple**, a Unesco World Heritage Site and one of the largest Hindu temples in Southeast Asia. Built in the 9th century during the Mataram Kingdom, this stunning complex features towering spires and intricate carvings that depict stories from the *Ramayana* epic. Dedicated to the Trimurti – the three principal Hindu gods: Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva – the temple fell into ruin over time but was restored in the 20th century. Today it’s a symbol of Indonesia’s rich cultural heritage. The temple opens at 6am, making it a great spot to catch a breathtaking sunrise.

But the real magic unfolds in the evening, when the Ramayana ballet takes centre stage. Performed in an



**Previous page:**  
A scene from the  
Ramayana ballet

**Clockwise from top:**  
The Ramayana Ballet;  
Pinus Pengger Pine  
Forest; Malioboro  
Street; Affandi Museum;  
Prambanan Temple

IMAGES: SHUTTERSTOCK





savory jackfruit stew, or *opor ayam*, a creamy chicken curry.

## Day 2

### Nature, art and culinary delights

**Morning.** Start your day with a visit to a *pasar pagi* (morning market) to experience Jogja's vibrant daily life. These bustling markets are a feast for the senses, filled with vendors selling fresh produce, aromatic spices and traditional snacks. Opening as early as 4am, they offer a glimpse into the city's morning rhythm before the streets fully awaken.

Afterwards, swap the urban energy for the tranquil ambience of **Pinus Pengger Pine Forest**, about an hour's drive from Jogja. This peaceful spot is perfect for a morning walk among the towering pine trees, offering a refreshing change of pace. "I particularly enjoyed the owl conservation centre," says Norhizam. "It was such a unique experience. Being surrounded by nature and learning about these birds – and the importance of conserving them – was truly refreshing."

**Afternoon.** Back in Jogja, immerse yourself in its vibrant art scene with a visit to the **Affandi Museum**, once home to Indonesia's most famous painter. Born Affandi Koesoema, his expressive works are a must-see for art lovers. As an avid art collector, Norhizam also recommends exploring local galleries and art villages, such as Kasongan, renowned for its ceramics. "Jogja is full of creativity," he says. "I love collecting pieces from young artists. I have some beautiful ceramics from **Kasongan**, and each piece tells a story of Jogja's artistic heritage. The village is a hub for pottery, and watching the artisans shape clay into intricate designs is mesmerising. Plus, it's only 30 minutes from the museum."

For lunch, stop by **Kedai Rukun**, a cosy eatery serving authentic Javanese flavours. Norhizam highly recommends their *soto*, a fragrant soup, and fermented fish. "The food here is simple but delicious," he says. "It's a great introduction to Jogja's flavours. The *soto* is particularly special – light and refreshing, with a clear broth that differs from the richer, coconut milk-

open-air theatre with the temple as a dramatic backdrop, this traditional dance drama brings the epic tale of Prince Rama to life. The performance combines classical Javanese dance with modern storytelling elements, captivating locals and tourists alike. "Watching the ballet at Prambanan is unforgettable," says Norhizam. "It's a beautiful mix of culture and history."

**Afternoon.** Head north to **Sleman**, a region known for its lush landscapes and traditional crafts. Here, a small tempeh factory also teaches visitors how this fermented soybean cake, an Indonesian staple, is made. "It's a simple but very fascinating process," says Norhizam, and "it plays a big role in Javanese food."

From Sleman, drive 40 minutes to **Mie Ayam Ibu Tumini**, a humble eatery known for its tasty chicken noodles. This is a great spot to refuel before continuing your adventure.

**Evening.** As the sun sets, explore **Malioboro Street**, Jogja's bustling hub of street food, shopping and culture. This lively area is perfect for picking up souvenirs such as batik, a traditional Indonesian fabric. "I couldn't resist buying lots of it at **Beringharjo Market**, a historic market that's been around for centuries," says Norhizam.

End your day with a traditional Javanese dinner at **Sekar Kedhaton**, a restaurant that offers a refined take on local dishes. Try their *gudeg*, a sweet and





based versions found elsewhere. It's infused with spices such as turmeric and lemongrass, allowing the delicate flavours of the tender chicken and fresh herbs to shine through. It's comforting yet light, perfect for Jogja's warm weather."

**Evening.** For dinner, treat yourself to an unforgettable experience at **Amanjiwo**, a luxurious resort with stunning views of Borobudur Temple. The elegant setting and exquisite cuisine provide the perfect finale to your day.

### Day 3 A journey through history and tradition

**Morning.** No trip to Jogja is complete without a visit to **Borobudur Temple**, the world's largest Buddhist monument. Built in the 9th century during the Sailendra Dynasty, this architectural marvel is adorned with intricate carvings and over 500 Buddha statues. Its design reflects Buddhist cosmology, with three levels symbolising the realms of desire, form and formlessness. Arrive early to witness the sunrise over the temple – an unforgettable, almost mystical experience.

After soaking in the beauty of Borobudur, head to **Plataran** for their famous becak breakfast. This unique meal is delivered straight to your table on a traditional tricycle, popularly known as *becaks*. "I highly recommend the becak breakfast, it's an absolute delight," Norhizam says. "Imagine sitting down for a meal, and suddenly, a colourful becak rolls up, carrying a



## Where to stay

### Amanjiwo

A serene sanctuary with breathtaking views of Borobudur, this ultra-luxurious retreat offers elegant suites with private pools and impeccable service, all wrapped in Javanese palace-inspired architecture. **Sawah, Majakdingi, Borobudur, Magelang Regency; aman.com**

### Plataran Borobudur Resort & Spa

Blending Javanese tradition with modern comforts, this refined resort features private pool villas, exquisite dining and a world-class spa, all set against the backdrop of ancient Borobudur. **Jl Dusun Tanjungan, Dusun II, Borobudur, Kec Borobudur, Kabupaten Magelan; plataran.com**

### The Phoenix Hotel Yogyakarta - Handwritten Collection

A colonial-era gem in the heart of Jogja, this heritage hotel charms with its ornate architecture, antique furnishings and a tranquil courtyard pool, offering a stylish retreat near Malioboro. **Jl Jend Sudirman No 9, Cokrodiningratan, Kec Jetis; accor.com**





spread of delicious dishes. It's playful, unexpected and such a fun way to start the day."

**Afternoon.** After breakfast, visit **Kraton Yogyakarta**, the Sultan's Palace. This living museum offers a glimpse into Javanese royalty and traditions. Just a short distance away, explore **Taman Sari Water Castle**, a former royal garden with serene pools and hidden tunnels.

For lunch, indulge in gudeg at **Gudeg Yu Djum**, a local favourite known for its rich, slow-cooked jackfruit stew. Norhizam also recommends *garang asem*, a tangy and refreshing dish made with chicken and tamarind.

**Evening.** End your weekend with a stroll through **Alun-Alun Kidul**, the city's southern square. Take part in the local tradition of walking blindfolded between two banyan trees – legend has it that those who succeed will be blessed with good luck. For your final meal, head to **Warung Brongkos Handayani**, a beloved institution serving traditional Javanese food since 1975. Their signature dish, *nasi brongkos*,

“

**Yogyakarta, a vibrant city in Central Java, is often hailed as the cultural heart of Indonesia's most populous island – a place rich in history, art and irresistible cuisine ”**

is a rich and savoury combination of rice, *kacang tolo* (black-eyed peas) and *kluwek* (a traditional spice). It's typically served with sides like *tahu telur* (tofu and egg) and *koyor* (slow-cooked cow skin). Pair your meal with *wedang uwuh*, a traditional herbal drink to round up the experience.

Jogja is a place that stays with you long after you leave. As Norhizam puts it, “There are so many magical corners to explore. Every visit feels like a new adventure.” Whether you come for its temples, art or cuisine, Jogja will leave you enchanted.

**Clockwise from far left:** Dinner at Amanjiwo; Kraton Yogyakarta; Taman Sari Water Castle; Borobudur Temple; a view of Mount Merapi from Amanjiwo



Malaysia Airlines flies between Kuala Lumpur to Yogyakarta 2x weekly.



# Healing

# hands in

# Kerala







As wellness tourism continues to grow, the world's gaze turns to Trivandrum, state capital of Kerala, renowned for the ancient healing art of Ayurveda. Here, luxury resorts and holistic retreats welcome guests looking to rest, reset and feel rejuvenated

Words **Zinara Rathnayake** Photography **Rahulnath**



# Monsoon rains soak the dense forests where tigers and elephants roam.

Waterfalls roar and tea gardens blanket the rolling hills. Coconut palms line the creeks, canals and rivers that form the serpentine backwaters. These lush landscapes ultimately give way to the coast, and to wellness resorts on crescent-shaped beaches in Kovalam, a town in India's southwestern state of Kerala.

Located in the far south on the Malabar Coast, Kerala makes up about 3% of India's 1.4 billion population. Yet, it consistently ranks at the top of the country's human development index with the highest literacy rate and life expectancy, a topic of pride for most Keralites. It's also abuzz with activity during the high season – from September to April – as tourists from all over the globe retreat to its beaches, homestays and wellness resorts, mostly in search of Ayurveda, India's own holistic wellness practice.

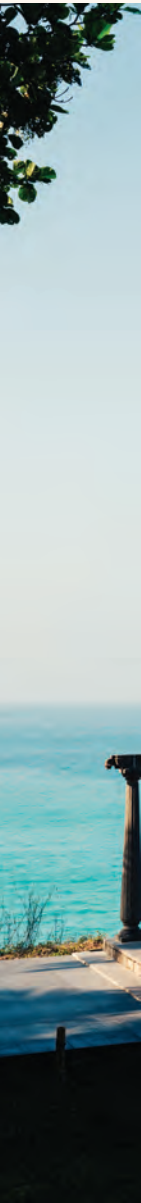
Ayurveda – which means “knowledge of life” in Sanskrit – is one of the world's oldest medicinal systems. More than 5,000 years ago, Ayurveda was first practised and shared through oral tradition in Northern India before it was documented some 2,000 years later. Ayurveda embodies the balance between mind, body, spirit and environment, and prioritises disease prevention and management. It is rooted in the principle that everything in the universe, dead and alive, is linked

with one another. Every person is made of five elements – space, air, fire, water and earth – that form three *doshas*, which are forces that control the human body. The goal of Ayurveda is to harmonise these three energies.

Although these ancient healing treatments are present throughout India, Kerala is now widely regarded as India's Ayurveda capital. Travelling across the state last year, I was struck by the ubiquity of

Ayurveda centres, retreats, hospitals and resorts dotting the cities, towns and villages. According to many practitioners, knowledge of Ayurveda is passed down from one generation to the next and has now become an integral part of Kerala life. Here, growing medicinal plants and herbs and knowing the health benefits of each one is as natural as breathing.

My introduction to Ayurveda was through a *shirodhara* treatment, where warm herbal oil was slowly poured onto my forehead. Unlike any other therapy I had experienced before, I instantly felt what the treatment promised; my body instantly relaxed and I could feel my stress melting away. Its calming effect is also said to treat insomnia. During a body massage, my therapist also used *navara kizhi* – a warm cloth bundle tightly packed with medicated rice – designed to ease body aches.







**Previous spread:**  
The view of the Arabian Sea from The Leela; an alfresco foot soak at The Taj

**This spread (clockwise from left):** The beach at Kovalam; at Niraamaya, a wall of bougainvillea; a treatment tray with blossoms; a shirodhara pot that gently drips oil onto one's forehead; yoga by the sea







#### THE STATE CAPITAL TRIVANDRUM, OFFICIALLY CALLED

Thiruvananthapuram, provides an ideal getaway to Kerala's Ayurveda and other wellness experiences, particularly in the beach town of Kovalam, only 20km south of the city. For visitors, a popular way to experience wellness is a stay at a luxury retreat like the Niraamaya Surya Samudra, a short, 30-minute drive from the airport.

Poised on a cliff edge by a tranquil, secluded beach and the Arabian Sea, the resort is a popular choice among those who prioritise holistic wellness and spirituality. Guests stay at the terracotta-roofed heritage houses shaded by swaying coconut palms, with banyan tree suites and traditional stone-built houses fitted with open-air baths, rain showers and rattan-woven seating nooks offering sea views. The resort's 10 Ayurveda rooms are the highlight, with treatments like *panchakarma* (five actions). At the resort, this is a multi-day holistic programme that includes a series of cleansing and detoxifying practices; joint care using intensive oil therapies and medicated baths; massages, yoga, meditation, *pranayama* (yogic breathwork) and diet. The Essence of Wellness programme – lasting from five to 21 nights – tops the list of healing experiences as it combines Ayurveda with both oriental and Western medicinal practices to revive mind and body.

According to Niraamaya Surya Samudra's general manager Ameya Mandke, many people realised the importance of strong immunity and overall well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic. "Ayurveda's holistic approach to health and disease prevention has gained global recognition now as it can promote long-term wellness," he says. At the resort, the experience begins with Ayurvedic consultations so guests can better understand their physical and mental well-being, followed by a customised treatment plan, including *abhyanga snana* (oil massage) to relax and detoxify.

The idyllic landscapes play a part in the healing atmosphere, too. Here visitors can practise yoga along the coastline at sunrise and sunset, take nature walks and meditate in the green spaces. Mandke explains that although the future of wellness tourism is evolving, he's quick to point out that most guests are increasingly



**This spread from left:**  
A healthy salad at Taj Green Cove; the cool, palm-shaded grounds at The Leela Kovalam; the resort's elegant interiors

## Take home a slice of Kerala

#### Welgate Lifestyle

This one-stop organic store serves excellent local food, spices and pickles. Also on the shelves: cutlery and crockery handmade from coconut shells and clay, and organic skin and hair care. **Pattom-Kowdiar Rd, Kuravankonam**

#### Kovalam Spices

A boutique in Kovalam manned by a friendly owner with whole spices, Ayurveda oils, balms, fragrances and snacks such as banana chips fried in coconut oil. **Beach Rd, Kovalam**

#### Ayur Shanti

Although primarily a wellness centre offering Ayurveda therapies near the beach in Kovalam, Ayur Shanti also stocks medicinal oils and herbal remedies. **Light House, Beach Rd, Kovalam**



“

**What you experience in Kerala is more than a temporary sense of wellness – it’s a fresh perspective on the healing powers of ancient wisdom”**



focusing on unique experiences and perceive wellness as a lifestyle. “Travellers are no longer drawn solely to grandeur, but are looking for authenticity, sustainability and experiences that resonate with them emotionally,” he says.

Sustainability also remains a key focus at luxury beach resort The Leela Kovalam, a part of the Raviz Hotels and Resorts, a group of wellness-focused accommodations with properties throughout Kerala. The five-star resort designed by the renowned Indian architect Charles Correa sits on a 67-acre piece of land that also includes the former summer palace of the royal family of Travancore Kingdom in South India. Some of the palace’s suites – such as the Sri Swati, named

**This spread from left:**  
Preparing treatment oil at The Leela Kovalam;  
Taj Green Cove’s peaceful setting;  
healing oils at The Leela Kovalam



after the former king of Travancore, with its Italian mantellassi furniture and glass chandeliers – are also open to guests. Excursions at the resort include Hindu temple visits, treks to waterfalls and mangrove tours.

General manager Ayyappan Nallaperumal says that the hotel designed its Kerala Ayurvedic Centre surrounded by tropical gardens to sit atop a cliff that overlooks the sea, so guests can “feel the flow of nature” in Kerala. For visitors, pre-consultation sessions with highly qualified Ayurveda doctors are just the beginning; the resort also embraces a farm-to-table philosophy and grows organic vegetables in the five-acre garden Aaramam. Ingredients for treatments are sourced from the herb garden with over 400 varieties of microgreens.

Nallaperumal says that the state’s stunning tropical nature, clean air and beaches provide the ideal setting for wellness tourism. “And we have organic food that doesn’t compromise on taste but encourages sustainability and slow living,” he says, adding that Kerala also excels in its hospitality.

Also on the luxury wellness spectrum is the Taj Green Cove Resort & Spa, part of India’s prestigious Taj Hotels, with its hillside cottages and suites seamlessly merging with the surrounding garden and the ocean. According to the hotel’s wellness manager Hergin Charles, the wisdom of Ayurveda is now “redefining luxury wellness” across the globe as it offers an “immersive





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journey into natural health and self-discovery”. The resort’s wellness therapies, mindfulness sessions and restorative experiences revolve around the J Wellness Circle – think relaxing aromatherapy massages, after-sun aloe vera body wraps, head massages using oils made of curry leaves and *amla* (Indian gooseberry) and *dinacharya*, a daily health routine. At the resort, this includes addressing all five sense organs – eyes, ears, tongue, nose, skin – using herbal oils.

These wellness offerings are complimented by the resort’s other unique experiences. Lagoon boat rides wind up at the shore for a chef’s grilled seafood dinner; fine dining venue Curries serves local dishes cooked with coconut milk; and cruises drift over the canals and streams of Poovar backwaters, an estuary surrounded by the palm-fringed golden sand beaches at the southern tip of Trivandrum. As Charles explains, “a commitment to well-being, mindful ways of living and deeper connection with nature” remains the ultimate goal.

And you’ll see that wherever you go in Kerala; in its marshy lakes teeming with migratory birds, narrow waterways weaving through rice paddies and mist-enveloped mountains concealing icy-cold pools within their deep forests. All that coupled with Ayurveda, yoga and organic eating, what you experience in Kerala is more than a temporary sense of wellness – it’s a fresh perspective on the healing powers of ancient wisdom.



## Directory

**Niraamaya Retreats**  
**Surya Samudra**  
Pulinkudi Rd, Vizhinjam,  
Mullur, Kazhivoor,  
Trivandrum;  
[niraamaya.com](http://niraamaya.com)

**The Leela Kovalam,**  
**A Raviz Hotel**  
Beach Rd, Kovalam,  
Trivandrum;  
[theleela.com](http://theleela.com)

**Taj Green Cove**  
**Resort & Spa**  
GV Raja Rd, Kovalam,  
Trivandrum;  
[tajhotels.com](http://tajhotels.com)





The coast



An aerial photograph of a pristine tropical beach. The left side of the frame is dominated by a thick, lush green forest that stretches down to the shoreline. A wide, sandy beach curves along the coast, with several small, dark, thatched-roof huts or umbrellas scattered near the tree line. The ocean on the right is a vibrant turquoise color, with white foam from gentle waves washing onto the shore. The sky is a clear, pale blue.

# is clear

How Terengganu, home to  
Malaysia's under-the-radar seaside  
gems – crystalline waters, soft sands  
and zero crowds – preserves  
its natural charms

Words **Anandhi Gopinath**



# There's a moment, just as the boat slows by the jetty in Redang and the hum of the engine fades

**Previous spread:**  
The beach at  
Tanjong Jara Resort

**This page (left to right):** Professor James Tan in his element; hatchlings in Tanjong Jara Resort's hatchery programme race to shore; the lush grounds and luxury villas at Tanjong Jara Resort



when Terengganu's beauty fully reveals itself. The waters here are an impossible shade of turquoise, so luminous that the sand rippling beneath shimmers. They are the kind of blue that makes you forget about everything else.

Stepping onto the shore, the soft powdery white sand yields slightly underfoot. The only sounds are the gentle lap of the waves and the occasional rustle of palm leaves stirred by a salt-laced breeze. The air is thick and warm, but the sand remains cool beneath my toes – another marvel of these pristine beaches. It's paradise, far from being an overdeveloped tourist trap. No towering resorts, no crowded boardwalks.

For years, Terengganu has been a quiet contender in Southeast Asia's beach scene, overshadowed by the likes of Phuket and Bali. But those who have been here know better. They've watched, from an empty stretch of sand, as the sunrise painted the horizon gold; snorkelled in waters so clear that every coral and fish seemed to glow; and stood in the shallows as tiny fish lapped lazily around their ankles. This is what Terengganu offers: an experience that feels rare in today's world of crowded coastlines and overtourism.

**TERENGGANU'S BREATHTAKING COASTLINE IS THE RESULT OF A** delicate combination of geography, conservation and a low-impact tourism model that has kept its waters pristine. Unlike Malaysia's west coast, which faces the busy Straits of Malacca, Terengganu's beaches – and the islands scattered off the coast, all accessible by well-organised ferries from the mainland – benefit from their location along the South China Sea, where ocean currents constantly refresh the waters, keeping them astonishingly clear.

Professor James Tan, a conservation educator from Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT), explains how science plays a key role in maintaining this clarity. "Terengganu is home to some of Malaysia's most beautiful coral reefs, particularly around Pulau Redang, The Perhentians, Kapas and Tenggol. To ensure that tourism remains sustainable, we've established coral restoration projects that accelerate reef recovery, creating healthier habitats for marine life," he says.

These efforts, combined with Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and Total No-Take Zones, allow coral ecosystems to regenerate naturally, ensuring a thriving underwater world.

The sand here is another marvel. Unlike the darker, volcanic sands found in other beach destinations, Terengganu's beaches are composed of finely broken-down coral and shell deposits, giving them their distinctive powdery texture. "The light composition of our sand enhances the turquoise effect of the water while keeping it cool underfoot, even on the hottest days," adds Tan. But this delicate ecosystem relies on every grain – removing shells or corals as souvenirs may seem harmless, but over time, it disrupts the natural cycle that keeps these beaches so pristine.









#### **AS TERENGGANU'S REPUTATION GROWS, SO DOES THE RESPONSIBILITY**

of the hospitality industry to preserve what makes it special. One of the most striking beachfront resorts on the mainland is Tanjong Jara Resort, a sanctuary where heritage, luxury and environmental responsibility intertwine seamlessly. “Terengganu’s allure lies in its sense of exclusivity and tranquillity,” explains Wayne Lee, YTL Hotels’ vice president of operations for resorts. “Unlike more commercialised beach destinations, this region offers a chance to truly disconnect and experience nature in its purest form.”

Built in the style of a 17th-century Malay palace, the resort pays homage to the region’s heritage in every detail, from its hand-carved wooden panels to the scent of lemongrass drifting through open-air walkways. Guests can wake up to the rhythmic sound of waves, sip on freshly brewed teh tarik beneath the shade of coconut trees or spend the afternoon indulging in traditional Malay healing treatments at the award-winning spa. Every experience, from the cuisine to the hospitality, is a reflection of the region’s rich traditions.

Yet, even in luxury, conservation is key. “Our turtle hatchery is one of our most meaningful initiatives,” Lee says. “By protecting nesting sites, running hatch-and-release programmes and educating guests about marine biodiversity, we play an active role in ensuring that future generations can experience the magic of these beaches just as we do today.”

The resort also practises responsible waste management, water conservation and sustainable dining, sourcing ingredients from local fishermen and farmers to support the surrounding community. With the rise of experiential travel, guests aren’t just looking for a place to stay – they want to be part of a story.

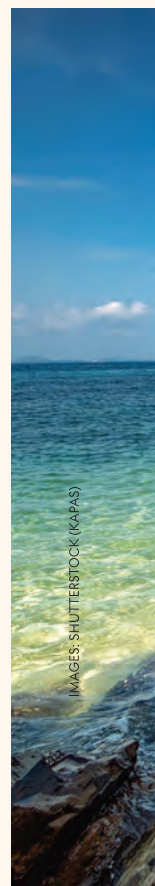
#### **AS MORE TRAVELLERS SEEK SUSTAINABLE, LESS COMMERCIALISED**

beach destinations, Terengganu is emerging as a leader in eco-conscious tourism. “Expanding coral restoration projects and fostering more eco-certification programmes for resorts and tour



#### **Clockwise from left:**

Shades of blue at the recently opened Perhentian Marriott Resort and Spa in Perhentian Kecil; an aerial view of the sprawling luxury resort; the underwater sights off Lang Tengah island; snorkelling off Kapas



IMAGES: SHUTTERSTOCK (KAPAS)





“

**Terengganu’s breathtaking coastline is the result of a delicate combination of geography, conservation and a low-impact tourism model that has kept its waters pristine”**









**From left:** Idyllic Perhentian island; a quiet poolside moment at the Marriott



operators will ensure that tourism growth does not come at the expense of the environment,” says Tan. He believes that stricter marine conservation laws, combined with educational programmes and corporate sponsorships of reef restoration initiatives, will be key to ensuring long-term sustainability.

For Wayne and the team at Tanjong Jara Resort, the goal is clear. According to Lee, “Travellers today want destinations that allow them to experience nature in an authentic and responsible way. Terengganu offers exactly that – a place where conservation and hospitality go hand in hand.”

Those who have been to Terengganu’s beaches and islands also feel a responsibility to preserve the magic of a place where the breeze is laced with salt, the horizon stretches endlessly, and every sunset is a jaw-dropping spectacle. Here, I’ve woken up to the sound of the sea, with nothing but the ocean ahead of me and the day stretching wide open. I’ve stood at the water’s edge, toes sinking into the sand, watching the sky turn from gold to indigo as the waves rolled in. I’ve waded in the shallows, mesmerised as coral fish darted between my feet. And I’ve held my breath as a sea turtle glided past in water so clear it was almost invisible.

## Island guide

Whether you’re after barefoot luxury, a diver’s paradise or a simple island hideaway, you’ll find an island that’s just right in Terengganu



**Redang.** Terengganu’s most upscale island is known for white-sand beaches and shallow turquoise waters. The Luxe Taaras Beach & Spa Resort offers private beach villas and world-class snorkelling in a protected marine park.



**The Perhentians.** Split between Perhentian Kecil (lively and budget-friendly) and Perhentian Besar (quieter and boutique-focused), Alunan Resort on Besar offers eco-luxury, while Perhentian Marriott Resort & Spa provides a high-end beachfront retreat with modern comforts.



**Tenggol.** With steep drop-offs, thriving coral gardens and seasonal whale shark sightings, this island is for serious divers. Tenggol Coral Beach Resort caters to those looking for an intimate, nature-focused stay.



**Lang Tengah.** Tucked between Redang and Perhentian, Lang Tengah offers quiet seclusion and bioluminescent waters at night. Summer Bay Resort provides a boutique-style retreat, perfect for those seeking privacy and calm.



**Kapas.** For a true digital detox, Kapas is the ultimate rustic escape. With no big hotels, it’s all about simple beachfront stays like Kapas Turtle Valley, where nature takes centre stage.



**Mainland.** For a blend of rich cultural experiences and island-hopping convenience, Tanjong Jara Resort is perfect for travellers who appreciate both heritage and nature while enjoying the ease and security of a mainland stay.



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# THIS IS MALAYSIAN HOSPITALITY



Welcome aboard Malaysia Aviation Group's (MAG) airlines. This month, see what we have on offer to ensure safe, seamless and fuss-free journeys.

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## MAB Academy takes flight with prestigious IATA certification

MAB Academy is soaring to new heights. The training arm of MAG has been certified by the International Air Transport Association (IATA), the global authority on air transport, as a Competency-Based Training and Assessment (CBTA) provider for Dangerous Goods Regulations (DGR) courses. This recognition cements it as a leader in aviation training, ensuring professionals are equipped to handle

dangerous goods safely and in compliance with international standards. Taking learning to the next level, MAB Academy is integrating extended reality (XR) into its courses, making training more immersive and interactive. With its name now listed in IATA's global registry and future DGR manuals, the academy is set to become ASEAN's go-to hub for aviation and hospitality training – where innovation meets excellence.



An advertisement for Singapore Firefly. The background is orange. At the top left is the Singapore logo with the text "Passion Made Possible". To its right is the Firefly logo. Below the Singapore logo, the text "Feel the roar of adventure in Singapore" is written in white. Further down, "All-in one-way from MYR" is written in white, followed by a large white "179". In the foreground, a woman in an orange Firefly uniform is smiling. In the background, the Universal Studios Singapore logo is visible, featuring a globe and the text "UNIVERSAL STUDIOS SINGAPORE".

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## Beyond the cabin: where dreams take flight

Crew members Farah Azlli and Mohd Yazid bin Yusof share what inspired them to join Malaysia Airlines and give us a glimpse into a day in their life in the skies

### "I've always dreamed of flying with Malaysia Airlines"

Farah Azlli

Being a Malaysia Airlines cabin crew member was a dream I never thought would come true. Today, I am not just a stewardess but a leading stewardess at Malaysia Airlines – something beyond my wildest dreams. Sometimes, I have to remind myself that this is exactly what I've always dreamed about.

I remember being a little girl, travelling with Malaysia Airlines, mesmerised every time I saw a stewardess onboard. Fast forward to today, I proudly don the iconic Malaysia Airlines kebaya. And every now and then, when I see a little girl looking at me the same way I once did, it humbles me.

Festive holidays are my favourite time to work because I get to see families in high spirits, travelling back to their hometowns to celebrate



with loved ones. Knowing that I've provided the best of Malaysian Hospitality to our guests is an incredibly rewarding feeling, making me feel fulfilled when I return home to my own family.





## "The sky is our home"

Mohd Yazid bin Yusof

I grew up watching airplanes fly across the sky, imagining what it would be like to be up there myself. Becoming a cabin crew member was always a dream, and today, I am living it to the fullest.

My name is Mohd Yazid bin Yusof, your leading steward, and on 16 April, I will proudly celebrate 29 incredible years with Malaysia Airlines. Please remain seated as I take you on a trip into a day in the life of a cabin crew member.

A career in the sky is often seen as glamorous and filled with free travel but trust me – it's so much more than that. It's not just about serving meals and sharing smiles. Jetlag, irregular hours



and climate changes are our nemeses, but they never change who we are – the frontliners of every flight. From pre-flight briefings to ensuring a smooth landing, the safety and comfort of every passenger remains our top priority, because Malaysian Hospitality begins with us.

Being a cabin crew member is a demanding yet fulfilling career. It requires professionalism, meticulousness and an unwavering dedication to safety. But for those who love travelling, meeting new people and experiencing different cultures, it is one of the most exciting and rewarding jobs in the world.

For most, the sky is the limit – but for us, the sky is home.



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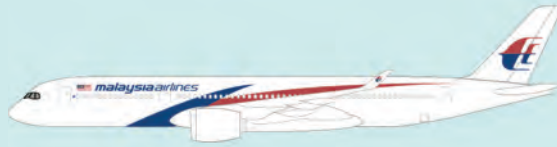


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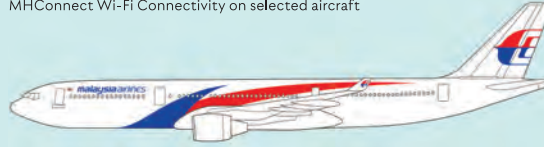
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No. of Aircraft **7** | Passenger Seating **286**  
Length **66.80m** | Wingspan **64.75m** | Height **17.05m**  
Max. Cruising Speed **944km/h**  
MHConnect Wi-Fi Connectivity on selected aircraft



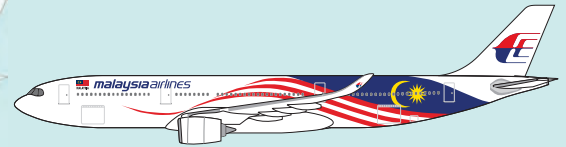
#### A330-300

No. of Aircraft **15** | Passenger Seating **290**  
Length **63.66m** | Wingspan **60.30m** | Height **16.79m**  
Max. Cruising Speed **980km/h**  
MHConnect Wi-Fi Connectivity on selected aircraft



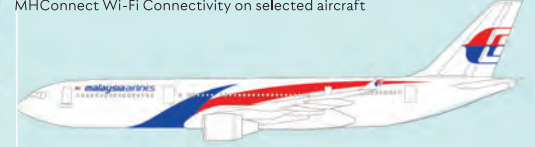
#### B737-800 NG

No. of Aircraft **42** | Passenger Seating **160, 166, 174**  
Length **39.5m** | Wingspan **35.8m** | Height **12.50m**  
Max. Cruising Speed **857km/h**



#### A330-900

No. of Aircraft **2** | Passenger Seating **297**  
Length **63.689m** | Wingspan **64m** | Height **16.788m**  
Max. Cruising Speed **980km/h**  
MHConnect Wi-Fi Connectivity on selected aircraft



#### A330-200

No. of Aircraft **5** | Passenger Seating **287**  
Length **58.82m** | Wingspan **60.30m** | Height **17.39m**  
Max. Cruising Speed **880km/h**  
MHConnect Wi-Fi Connectivity on selected aircraft



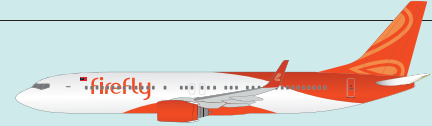
#### B737-8

No. of Aircraft **11** | 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**



#### B737-800 NG

No. of Aircraft **5** | Passenger Seating **189**  
Length **39.5m** | Wingspan **35.8m** | 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**  
Length **15.77m** | Wingspan **19.80m** | Height **5.94m**  
Max. Cruising Speed **337km/h**





#### ON-TIME PERFORMANCE

Our check-in counters close 60 minutes before departure. Please allow at least 45 minutes for immigration and security clearance. Boarding gates will close 30 minutes prior to departure.



#### CABIN LUGGAGE HANDLING

Passenger and crew safety on board our flights are our highest priority. In compliance with the airline's policy and in observing Occupational Safety and Health Regulation requirements, cabin crew are no longer required to stow passengers' hand luggage in the overhead stowage compartments. This is to minimise occupational hazards and ergonomic risks faced by cabin crew in the aircraft. Cabin crew on duty will, however, assist passengers travelling with infants, young passengers travelling alone, the elderly and passengers with reduced mobility. Passengers who are fit and in good health must carry, stow and secure their hand luggage on board. Hand luggage exceeding the 7kg weight limit must be checked in before boarding.



#### PORTABLE ELECTRONIC DEVICES (PEDs)

For safety reasons, in line with the Civil Aviation Authority of Malaysia guidelines, mobile phones and small PEDs can be used throughout your journey in "Flight Mode". Large devices with screen size above 12 inches are not allowed to be used during takeoff and landing. Whilst cruising, all devices can be used in "Flight Mode". Devices transmitting cellular signals to satellites must remain switched off throughout the flight, until disembarkation. The Captain may prohibit the use of devices if there is any interference with the aircraft's system.



#### LITHIUM BATTERIES

Lithium metal or lithium ion cells or batteries for portable electronic devices (PEDs), including medical devices, must not exceed 2g for lithium metal batteries and 100Wh for lithium ion batteries. All spare batteries, including lithium metal or lithium ion cells or batteries for PEDs, must be carried in passengers' carry-on baggage only. These batteries must be individually protected to prevent short circuits. PEDs containing non-spillable batteries must be 12V or less or 100Wh or less. Passengers are allowed to carry a maximum of two spare batteries onboard. These batteries must be individually protected to prevent short circuits.



#### NO-SMOKING & VAPING POLICY

Smoking, including the use of electronic cigarettes, is prohibited on all flights. Electronic cigarettes must be carried in carry-on baggage only. Recharging of the device inflight is not permitted.



#### COMFORT & CARE

Personal care, baby paraphernalia and first-aid treatment are available upon request.



#### BAGGAGE FOR TRANSIT PASSENGERS

Transit passengers in KLIA are encouraged to reconfirm their final baggage destination at the Transfer Desk to ensure that their checked luggage is identified and loaded accordingly. Just present your baggage identification tag at the desk.



#### ZERO TOLERANCE OF ABUSE

We value courteousness. Any form of threat, verbal abuse or violence towards our staff will be taken seriously. We are committed to supporting anyone who has been the victim of an assault.



#### IN-FLIGHT ENTERTAINMENT

Movies, TV and Music On-Demand are available on selected flights either on seatback inflight

entertainment systems or streaming via personal electronic devices. Unlimited complimentary Wi-Fi internet service is available on selected aircraft regardless of cabin class or loyalty tier.



#### ONBOARD CHARGING

Laptop power points are fitted on Business Suite, Business, Premium Economy and selected Economy Class seats. USB charging is available on selected aircraft.



#### FOOD & BEVERAGE

All food served onboard is halal. Special dietary meals can be prepared with 24-hour notice through "Manage My Booking" on [malaysiaairlines.com](http://malaysiaairlines.com). Business Suite, Business and Economy Class passengers may use the Chef-on-Call service to pre-book their meals 24 hours prior to departure on selected flights. Alcoholic drinks are available on flights above three hours for passengers above the age of 21. Our cabin crew reserves the right to decline serving and selling alcohol to any passenger who appears intoxicated. Consumption of personal alcoholic drinks is prohibited.



#### FRESH & FROZEN SEAFOOD

Fresh and frozen seafood is strictly not permitted in check-in baggage. It may be accepted in cabin baggage, subject to the destination's

quarantine regulations. It must be properly packed and should meet the cabin baggage weight and size requirements. If dry ice is used, a maximum of 2.5kg per passenger is allowed. We reserve the right to refuse carriage if the items are not properly packed.



#### PEANUT & NUT ALLERGIES

Meals containing nuts may be served throughout the aircraft. We cannot accommodate requests for peanut/nut-free zones in the aircraft and strongly encourage those with allergies to take the necessary medical precautions before flying, including travelling with medications in their hand luggage.



#### WHEELCHAIR ASSISTANCE

Wheelchair requests must be made through the Global Customer Contact Centre, the Ticket Office and/or Malaysia Airlines appointed travel agents at least 48 hours prior to departure. Contact the call centre at 1-300-88-3000 for more information.



#### UNACCOMPANIED MINOR (UMNR)

We provide assistance to children aged 5 to 15 years old travelling alone, with a 24-hour advance request.

**+ For more information, visit [malaysiaairlines.com](http://malaysiaairlines.com)**

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**WEB**  
Check in online at [malaysiaairlines.com](http://malaysiaairlines.com) and self-print your boarding pass.



**WEB-TO-MOBILE**  
Check in online. Your boarding pass will be sent to your mobile phone. Mobile boarding passes can be scanned at airport security and at the boarding gate.



**MALAYSIA AIRLINES APP**  
Visit [malaysiaairlines.com](http://malaysiaairlines.com) to download the Malaysia Airlines App to perform mobile check-in.



**FAST-CHECK SELF-SERVICE KIOSK**  
Check in online at [malaysiaairlines.com](http://malaysiaairlines.com) and self-print your boarding pass.



**CITY CENTRE COUNTER CHECK-IN**  
Available at KL Sentral in Kuala Lumpur.



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Despite its size, Hong Kong is one of the world's most densely populated places, packed with experiences to fill your itinerary. With efficient public transport, getting around is effortless.

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Victoria Harbour—featured in countless films and home to celebrations like the Dragon Boat Festival and Lunar New Year fireworks—is perfect for cruises and yacht rides.

Beyond the central district, Kowloon offers a glimpse into local life with bustling markets, street food stalls, and historic temples—ideal for those seeking the city's heritage.



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home to top attractions like Hong Kong Disneyland, Tian Tan Buddha, and the Ngong Ping 360 cable car. Or unwind on Lamma Island with indie shops, fishing villages, seafood restaurants, and scenic coastal hikes.

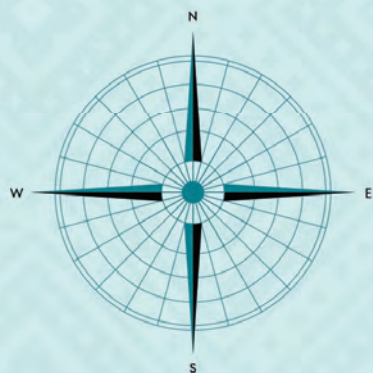
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ILLUSTRATIONS BY ELEN WINATA

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OCEAN

Malaysia Airlines,  
Firefly and MASwings  
have an average of  
244 daily flights to 70  
destinations around the  
world from their hubs in  
**Kuala Lumpur, Penang  
and Kota Kinabalu**



- Malaysia Airlines
- ◆ Firefly
- MASwings
- Amal
- ▲ MASKargo

\*THE ROUTE MAP IS FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY AND IS NOT DRAWN TO SCALE  
IMAGES: SHUTTERSTOCK (KOTA KINABALU, BINTULU)





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IMAGE: SHUTTERSTOCK (PARIS)









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## Stay connected in 5 easy steps:



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Switch to  
"Flight Mode"



### Step 2

Connect to **MHconnect**  
**iOS:** You will be directed to the home page\*\*  
**Android:** Enter the URL  
**[mhconnect.malaysiaairlines.com](http://mhconnect.malaysiaairlines.com)**  
to be directed to the home page



### Step 3

Click on the "**Go Online**" tab  
(not applicable for A330-900)



### Step 4

Click on the  
"**Connect**" tab



### Step 5

Enter your email address and click the  
"**Continue**" tab (not applicable for A330-900)



### You are connected

You can now surf the  
web with **MHconnect**

\*MHconnect Wi-Fi service is available on selected A350 and A330 aircraft operated by Malaysia Airlines.

\*\*If iOS is not automatically redirected, enter URL [mhconnect.malaysiaairlines.com](http://mhconnect.malaysiaairlines.com) to be directed to the homepage. Other T&Cs apply.



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**Flight Mode**



### Step 2

Connect to  
**MHstudio**



### Step 3

Scan the QR code or enter the URL (as per decal)  
**<http://mhstudio.malaysiaairlines.com>** or  
**<http://mhstudio.streamonboard.com>**

\*Wi-Fi service (with internet connectivity) is available on B737-8 aircraft operated by Malaysia Airlines.

\*The availability of in-flight entertainment (IFE) programmes will vary depending on the aircraft model, flight routes, and current availability. Please note that these offerings are subject to change without prior notice.





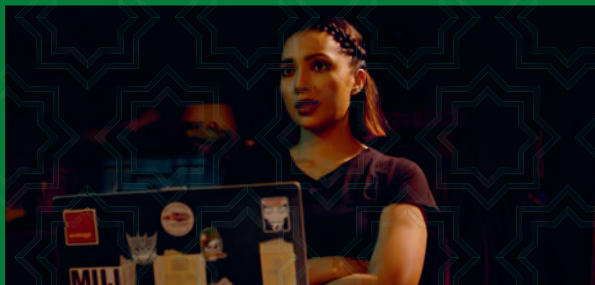
# NOW SHOWING

 MOVIES **p74**  TELEVISION **p85**  AUDIO **p86**



## Kraven the Hunter

Check out our **Hari Raya Aidilfitri Special** on page 81!



Heist Dilitri



Raya Kali Ini

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## Kraven the Hunter

Aaron Taylor-Johnson stars in the newest instalment of Sony's Spider-Man Universe

With blood on his hands and vengeance in his heart, Kraven is ready to hunt – or be hunted. Step into the ruthless world of *Kraven the Hunter*, where survival is the only law. Hollywood chameleon Aaron Taylor-Johnson steps into the shoes of the ruthless Sergei Kravinoff, a man forged by the wild and driven by a thirst to prove himself as the ultimate predator. Packed with visceral action, primal instincts and a gripping origin story directed by JC Chandor, this 2024 Spider-Man Universe entry brings one of Marvel's most formidable anti-heroes to life.



HOLLYWOOD  
LATEST

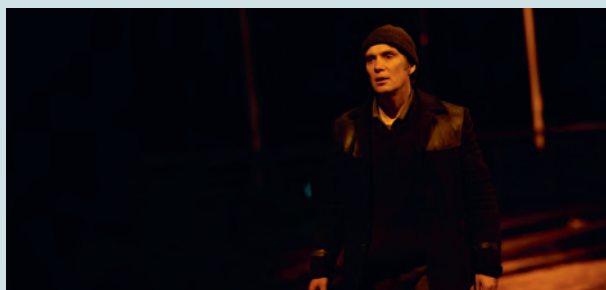
**The Lord of the Rings: The War of the Rohirrim** follows King Helm Hammerhand as he makes a final stand defending Horburg – destined to be known as Helm’s Deep.



**Bonhoeffer** is a 2024 historical drama that portrays the life of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a German theologian involved in a plot to assassinate Hitler during World War II.



**The Fire Inside** chronicles the early boxing career of Claressa “T-Rex” Shields, highlighting her journey from Flint, Michigan, to becoming a two-time Olympic gold medalist.



Set in 1985 Ireland, **Small Things Like These** follows a coal merchant who uncovers dark secrets at a local convent, forcing him to face a moral dilemma that tests his faith.



Ralph Fiennes and Juliette Binoche star in **The Return**, a reimagining of *The Odyssey* by Homer. After 20 years fighting in the Trojan War, Odysseus returns to reclaim his kingdom.



Set in a post-apocalyptic world, **Elevation** is a gripping survival story of a father and two women who risk everything to save a boy from monstrous creatures.



In **Get Away**, a family’s dream vacation turns into a fight for survival when they’re hunted by a relentless serial killer on a remote island. A must-watch for horror and thriller fans alike.



# MOVIES

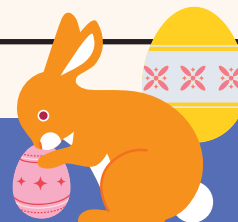
## Autism Awareness Day



Rain Man



## Easter Special



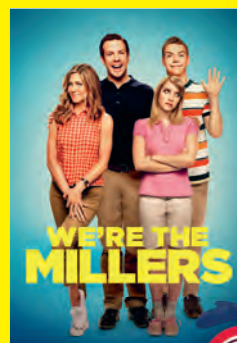
Wonka



## Comedy Special April Fool's Day



Game Night





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Now Showing

# MOVIES

## Hollywood Favourites & Kids



### National Pet Day



My Dog Skip



Cats & Dogs



Dog Days



Scooby-Doo





📍 Eiffel Tower, Paris

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# MOVIES

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## Malay



This Raya, enjoy a blend of action, comedy and family drama! **Heist Diftiri** follows Ibrahim, a hardened robber who longs for a family celebration. **Debunk Beraya** brings supernatural chaos when ghost-hunting duo Sofi and Mizan accidentally invite a lonely spirit home for Raya. **Raya Kali Ini** explores sibling rivalry as wealth and arrogance threaten to divide three sisters.



## Hindi



A tribute to a legend! **Sam Bahadur** explores the inspiring journey of Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw, India's military icon. From battlefield triumphs to shaping history, his story is one of bravery, wit and leadership.



## Tamil



Love, rivalry and cricket collide in sports drama **Lubber Pandhu**. Tamizharasan Pachamuthu's directorial debut follows fierce gully cricket rivals Gethu and Anbu. When Anbu falls for Gethu's daughter, the stakes rise – both on and off the pitch.

## Indonesian



**High School Serenade**

## Malayalam



**Abraham Ozler**

## Telugu



**Maa Nanna Superhero**

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The Ink logo consists of the word "Ink" in white, lowercase letters inside a red square.The MAG3 logo features the text "mag3" in a stylized blue font, with "malaysia aviation group" in smaller text below it.

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## Japanese



### The Ohara Family Rhapsody

After 50 years of marriage, Chikako rediscovers her passion for singing while her husband battles dementia. As she pursues her dream, unexpected challenges arise. This heartwarming tale of resilience, music and family bonds inspires courage to start anew.



### A Girl Named Ann

A story of survival and second chances, **A Girl Named Ann** follows a young woman escaping a life of abuse and exploitation. With the help of an unlikely ally, she rebuilds her future – until a scandal and a global crisis test her resilience.

## Korean



### Amazon Bullseye

Once an archery champion, Jin-bong faces corporate downsizing and a desperate mission to the Amazon. There, he finds three legendary archers and brings them to Korea for one final shot at redemption. Enjoy this thrilling, comedic adventure starring Jin Seon-kyu and Ryu Seung-ryong.



### Life is Beautiful

Se-Yeon embarks on a journey to find her first love – her final wish. With her reluctant husband by her side, nostalgia, love, and life's most precious moments take centre stage in this heartfelt drama.

## Chinese



### Crisis Negotiators

When expert negotiator Cheuk Man Wai (Sean Lau) becomes the prime suspect in a murder, he takes a police station hostage, demanding a showdown with former negotiator Tse Ka Chun (Francis Ng). As their intense battle of wits unfolds, shifting mindsets blur the line between hunter and hunted in this gripping psychological thriller.





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Your Gateway to  
Asia & Beyond





## TELEVISION

## Comedy



**The Middle** is a delightful take on modern family life, following Frankie (Patricia Heaton), Mike (Neil Flynn) and their three children in Orson, Indiana.

## Drama



**Queen** follows the Bordelon siblings as they fight to revive their Louisiana sugarcane farm, tackling family bonds and social issues in this visually stunning drama.

## Sports



## Malay



## Chinese



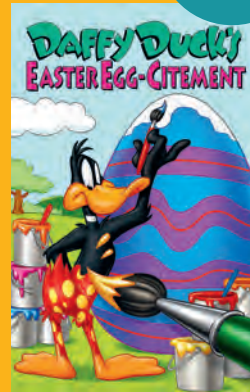
## Japanese



## Korean



## Hindi



Easter gets a hilarious twist with these animated specials. **Daffy Duck's Easter Show** sees the zany duck causing holiday havoc while Bugs Bunny tries to keep things on track. Meanwhile, in **Yogi the Easter Bear**, Yogi and Boo Boo race against time to save Jellystone's Easter celebration from disaster. Fun, mischief and classic cartoon charm await!



Life lessons and heartwarming moments shine in these family-friendly stories. **Carl the Collector** follows a lovable character who learns that collecting too much can lead to trouble. In **My Perfect Family**, an ordinary household navigates relatable ups and downs, proving that perfection isn't about having it all – it's about love, laughter and sticking together.

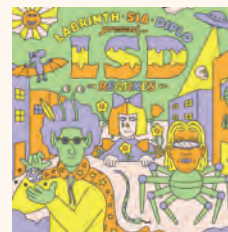




### French

French rapper Savage Toddy delivers a raw and introspective journey in ***Personne n'est spécial***. Blending hard-hitting beats with reflective lyrics, the album explores identity, struggle and self-worth. With a blend of poetic storytelling and gritty realism, Salvage Toddy challenges the notion of individuality, creating a deeply personal yet universally relatable sound.

### Club



### Japanese



### The Hits



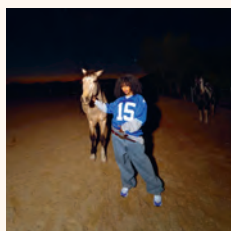
### Memories



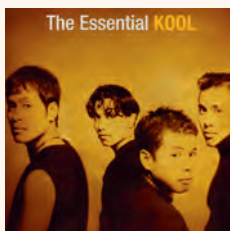
### Korean



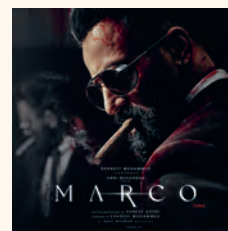
### R&B



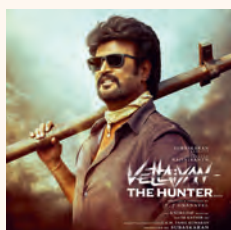
### Malay



### Tamil



### Hindi



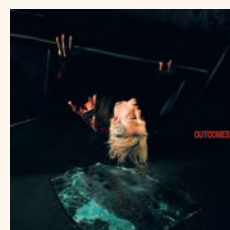
### Indonesian



### Cantonese



### Mandarin



### Kids







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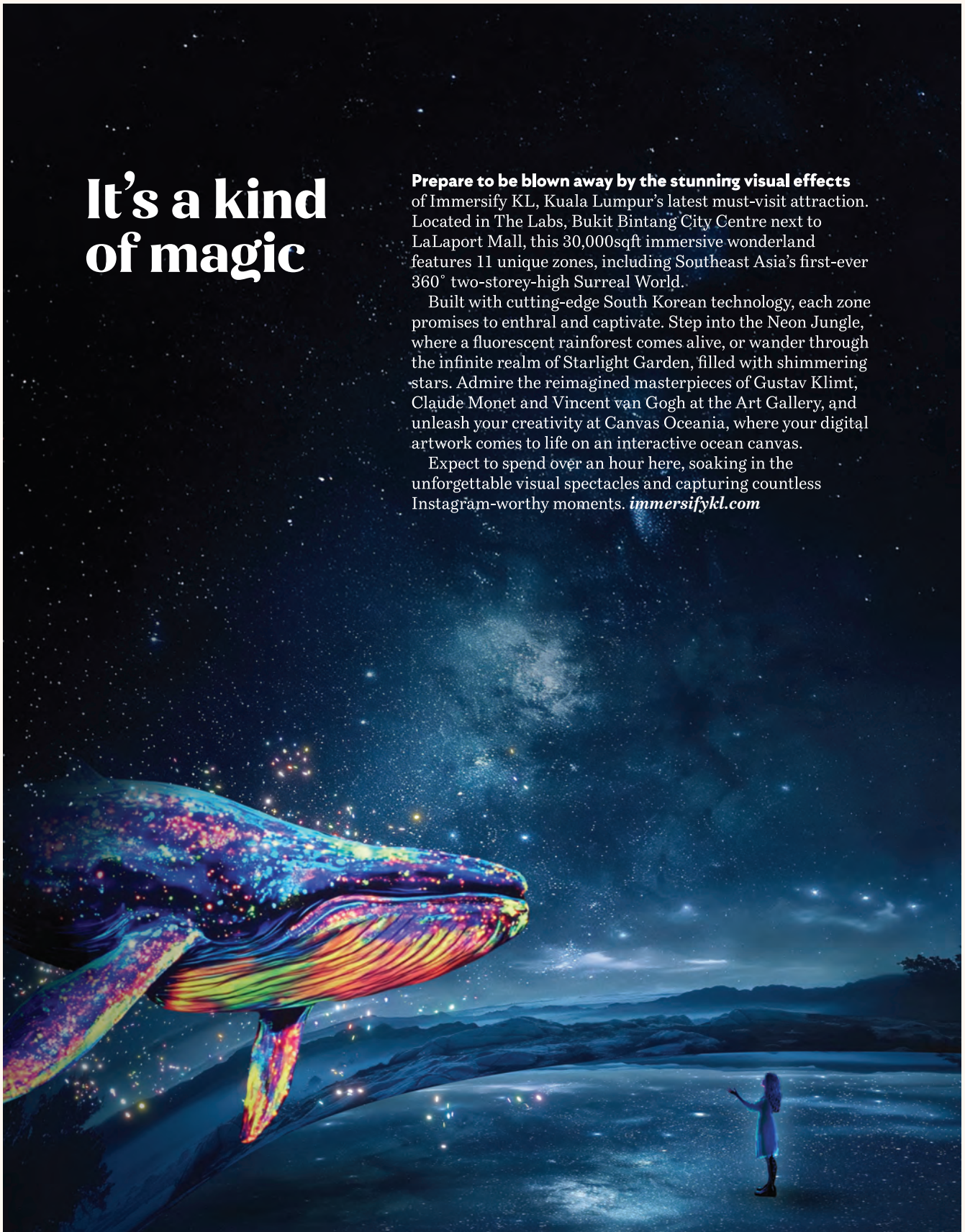


# It's a kind of magic

**Prepare to be blown away by the stunning visual effects** of Immersify KL, Kuala Lumpur's latest must-visit attraction. Located in The Labs, Bukit Bintang City Centre next to LaLaport Mall, this 30,000sqft immersive wonderland features 11 unique zones, including Southeast Asia's first-ever 360° two-storey-high Surreal World.

Built with cutting-edge South Korean technology, each zone promises to enthrall and captivate. Step into the Neon Jungle, where a fluorescent rainforest comes alive, or wander through the infinite realm of Starlight Garden, filled with shimmering stars. Admire the reimagined masterpieces of Gustav Klimt, Claude Monet and Vincent van Gogh at the Art Gallery, and unleash your creativity at Canvas Oceania, where your digital artwork comes to life on an interactive ocean canvas.

Expect to spend over an hour here, soaking in the unforgettable visual spectacles and capturing countless Instagram-worthy moments. [immersifykl.com](https://immersifykl.com)





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