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TIME FOR KOCHI

On the sun-kissed coast of Kerala lies Kochi, or Cochin, a historical port city. Known as the “Queen of the Arabian Sea,” Kochi invites travellers to explore its elegant colonial architecture and tranquil waterfront, where heritage and modernity blend in effortless harmony.

Kerala backwaters

Kochi is your entry to Kerala’s iconic backwaters, where elegant houseboats glide through still waters.



— KERALA BACKWATERS —



Chinese fishing nets

Chinese fishing nets

Marvel at these graceful living relics of Kochi’s trading past – an unmissable sight at sunset.

Forte Kochi Heritage Hotel

Relax in a hotel steps away from Fort Kochi’s colonial-era streets, where heritage is preserved and celebrated.

Cherai Beach

Dip your feet in the gentle waves along golden shores stretching 15km long.



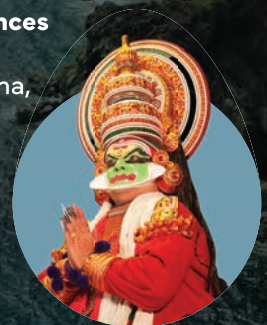
Forte Kochi Heritage Hotel



Cherai Beach

Kathakali performances

Don't miss Kerala's classical dance-drama, known for its vivid masks, ornate costumes, and mythic storytelling.



TIME FOR TRIVANDRUM

Trivandrum — officially Thiruvananthapuram — is Kerala's capital, where coastal beauty, cultural richness, and wellness come together. There, sunlit beaches like Kovalam and Varkala create a haven for both rest and exploration.

Munroe Island

The island offers a glimpse into Kerala's rural culture, with coir weaving, relaxing canal cruises, and welcoming hospitality.

Cliff by the Leela

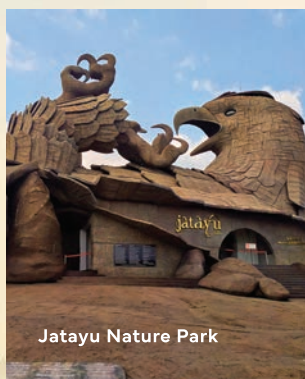
A beacon of refined elegance on Kovalam's shores, the luxury resort offers guests breathtaking sea views and sophisticated accommodation.



Munroe Island



Cliff by the Leela



Jatayu Nature Park

Jatayu Nature Park

Perfect for all ages, the park features the world's largest bird sculpture, nature trails, and exciting activities for everyone.

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— AYURVEDIC SPA —



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*The Honourable Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim
Prime Minister of Malaysia*

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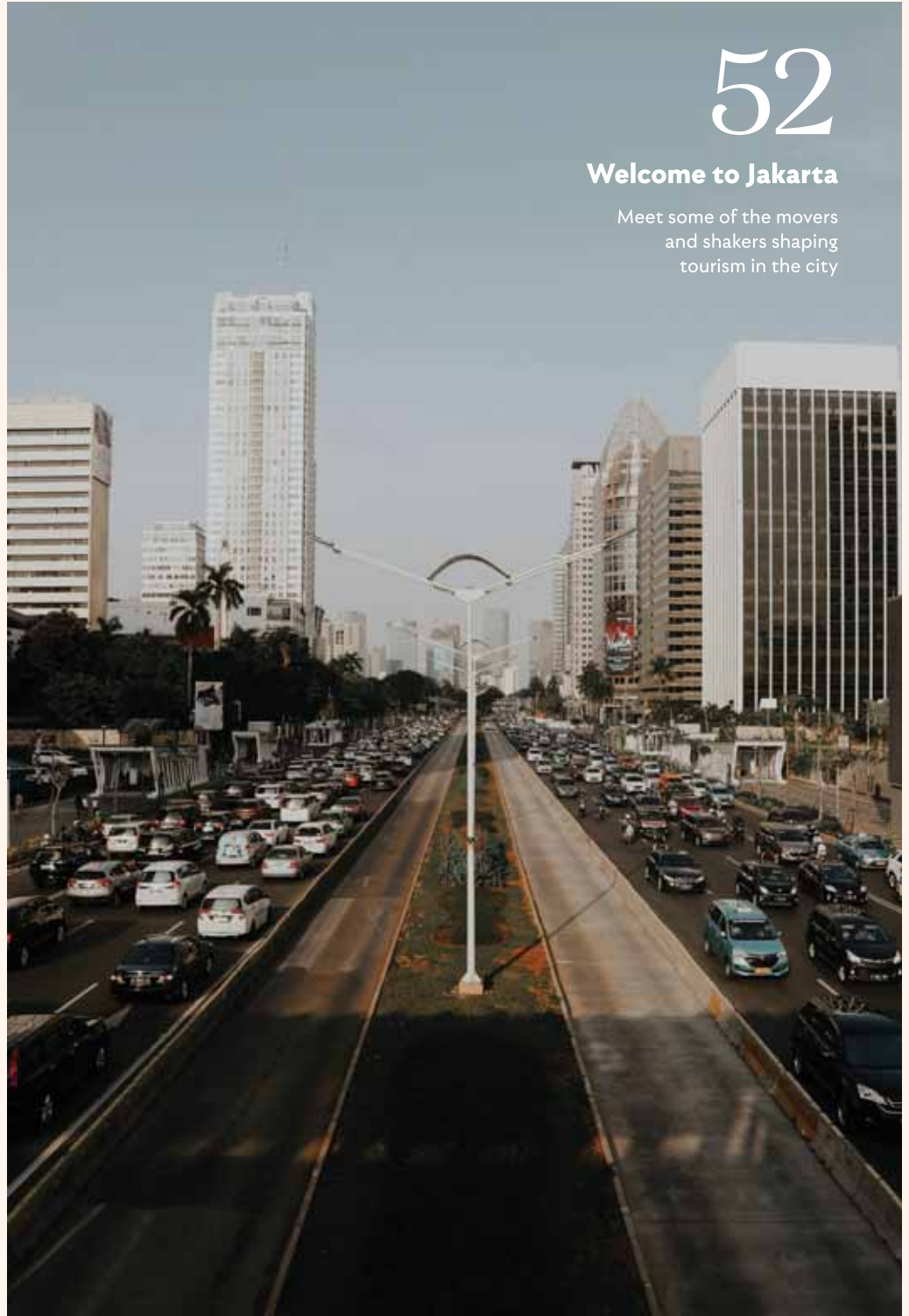
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About the cover

A sunny day along Kovalam's Lighthouse Beach in Trivandrum
Photo courtesy of Malaysia Aviation Group

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Ink Publishing Pte Ltd 48 Craig Road, Singapore 089686.
Tel: +65 3165 4100, +60 3 2728 1334
www.ink-global.com

MDDI (P) 039/05/2025

Printed by: United Mission Press Sdn. Bhd.
Business Registration Number: 755329x

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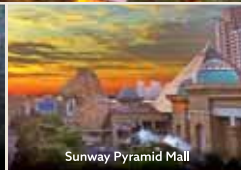
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Whether you're visiting for business or leisure, this integrated destination offers an amazing array of amenities tailored to your every need. Take comfort in Sunway Resort Hotel's reimagined new rooms while you discover the city's most sought-after 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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Dear guests,

As we enter the second half of 2025, I would like to take a moment to express our heartfelt gratitude to you – our valued passengers – for your continued trust and loyalty in Malaysia Aviation Group. Your ongoing support inspires our entire team to go above and beyond in delivering journeys that are not only safe and comfortable, but truly memorable.

Our journey to this point has been one of transformation and resilience, where every challenge has been embraced as an opportunity to build a stronger future. Several years ago, Malaysia Airlines set out with a bold ambition: to strengthen its position as a premier airline of choice, guided by excellence, resilience and the very essence of what sets us apart – our Malaysian Hospitality. Today, that ambition is taking flight. From modernising our fleet to enhancing your travel experience, we're proud of how far we've come. The road hasn't been without its challenges, but every decision has been made with the long-term strength and sustainability of the organisation in mind. These challenges have only strengthened our resolve and reinforced our commitment to serving you better.

Our progress is a direct reflection of the dedication and

spirit of our people, united by a shared mission: to serve our nation by ensuring vital connectivity, supporting economic growth, and doing so in a sustainable and responsible manner. This same commitment extends to the global communities we connect with, reinforcing our role as both a national enabler and an international ambassador.

Our brand continues to gain strong momentum. Malaysia Airlines was recently recognised by Brand Finance, the world's leading independent brand valuation authority, as the world's fastest-growing airline brand, with our brand value soaring by 209%. This milestone is a testament to the relentless efforts of our team to elevate our service standards, enhance competitiveness and build a brand that proudly reflects the spirit and hospitality of Malaysia.

Strategic partnerships remain central to our long-term vision and our role as the national carrier. We are proud to support key local institutions such as the Malaysian Armed Forces to ensure the seamless mobilisation of troops across the country, further strengthening our commitment to serving the nation. At the international level, our role as the Official Commercial Airline Partner for Manchester United allows us to connect fans across Asia and beyond with one of the world's most iconic football clubs. As part of this partnership, we introduced a special livery on our A330-300 – an embodiment of passion, pride and the power of connection through sport.

As the national carrier, our role extends beyond commercial objectives. We are proud to serve as a vital facilitator of connectivity and tourism, supporting Malaysia's economic growth and global reputation. Together, with your continued support, we will soar even higher.

We look forward to welcoming you onboard again soon, with the warmth and care that define Malaysian Hospitality.

Izham Ismail

Group Managing Director
Malaysia Aviation Group



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These days, travel feels a little different. It's no longer just about ticking off landmarks or escaping the daily grind – it's about why we go. More of us are looking for trips that offer purpose, whether it's taking part in one of the big seven marathons (Tokyo, Boston, London, Berlin, Chicago, Sydney, New York City) or setting off on a journey towards healing – be it for medical reasons, wellness or simply to feel more like ourselves again.

That's why wellness travel is having a real moment. According to the Global Wellness Institute, the sector is on track to hit over US\$8.5 trillion by 2027 – and it makes sense. After everything we've all been through, who doesn't want to come back from a trip feeling better than when they left?

Which brings us to India, for a tale of two Keralan cities (page 44): the capital city of Trivandrum, where ancient Ayurvedic wellness retreats have been practising ancient healing long before it was trendy, and Kochi, with its fascinating blend of colonial-era architecture, delicious food and backwater experience. It's the kind of trip that fills your cup, in every sense.

From there, it's off to Henley-on-Thames (page 26), a charming riverside town outside London that comes alive this month with the Royal Regatta. Think rowing rivalries, champagne by the water and the occasional royal-spotting. If you're in the area, it's well worth a visit.

Then there's Jakarta, where we meet some of the city's most inspiring voices in hospitality – a world barista champ, a passionate walking tour guide and a next-gen hotelier, each showing us how travel is evolving into something far more personal (page 52).

Wherever you go next, I hope you find something that stays with you. That means something. That leaves you better, calmer, more curious. That's the kind of journey worth taking.

Go forth and wander!



Elizabeth Soong
Editor



This issue's contributors



Zinara Rathnayake
Writer, "Bounty and bliss", p44

Zinara is a travel, food and culture writer covering Asia, from India's root bridges to Laos' coffee culture, who also loves mountain towns.



William KC Kee
Writer, "Reasons to love Malaysia", p11

William is a freelance writer specialising in lifestyle, travel and fashion. A former features editor at *The Star*, *Focus* and *Malay Mail*, his dream is to recreate *Mamma Mia!* moments in the Greek islands.



Rahulnath
Photographer, "Bounty and bliss", p44

Rahul, a travel photographer and photo editor from Kerala, combines a liberal arts background with self-taught photography to capture intimate, slice-of-life moments through his work.

Jakarta

NICE FOR MICE





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13

REASONS TO LOVE MALAYSIA

Bold flavours, inspiring people and unforgettable places

1

Penang

Best of Japan

Say konnichiwa to one of Penang's most vibrant cultural celebrations. On 19 July, the **Penang Bon Odori Festival** is bringing the best of Japan right to our shores. Soak in the festivity with a lively mix of traditional Bon Odori dances, Japanese music and a mouth-

watering spread of authentic eats, from piping-hot takoyaki to fresh sushi. More than just a fun day out, this annual celebration is a nod to the long-standing friendship between Malaysia and Japan. Come for the culture, stay for the vibes! mypenang.gov.my



2

Pahang

30 years of hits

On 5 and 6 July, Dato' Sri **Siti Nurhaliza** is set to light up the Arena of Stars, Genting Highlands with her much-anticipated Violet Skies concert, a dazzling celebration of 30 years in the spotlight. Get ready for goosebumps, waves of nostalgia and pure vocal magic as Malaysia's beloved icon takes fans on an unforgettable journey through her greatest hits.

rwgenting.com



3

Kuala Lumpur

Art in the city

The Urban Museum – or UR-MU for short – is redefining what a city museum can be. Located on Jalan Bedara, one of Bukit Bintang's last residential enclaves, this hidden gem opened in May 2022, and is the brainchild of an award-winning architect and a lifelong art enthusiast.

UR-MU is housed in a restored 1950s modernist walk-up which was once a block of eight two-bedroom apartments. While the soul of its original

layout remains, sleek updates like a minimalist lobby, rooftop garden and modern amenities breathe new life into the space.

Inside, over 100 curated works showcase bold artistic voices from Malaysia and the region. Wander through immersive zones like Sens-Asia, Power Play, *Raksasa* (Monsters), Framing Modernity, Superheroes and Made's Garden.

Planning a visit? It's open Tuesday to Sunday, 11am to 7pm. Pre-booking is recommended. ur-mu.com



4

Kuala Lumpur

Two French-inspired high teas

Where textures unfold

Banyan Tree Kuala Lumpur has teamed up with dessert maestro Texture Pâtisserie to present a multi-sensory tasting experience like no other. Ditch the dainty tiers; inspired by the art of unfolding, this decadent feast that's plated à la minute invites you to savour each bite at your own pace. The set is available daily from 3pm to 5pm at Horizon Grill, Level 58 until 31 July. banyantree.com

Garden allure

Over at **Crowne Plaza Kuala Lumpur City Centre**, afternoon tea blooms into a dreamy affair at Le Midi on Level 32, the hotel's award-winning French brasserie. The Garden Allure tea set is as pretty as it is delicious, featuring 11 petite creations, from finger sandwiches to dreamy desserts, served in an Insta-worthy verrine glass jar. Available Tuesday to Sunday, from 3pm to 6pm. ihg.com



5

Twice a month at Casa Lim in Bukit Damansara, creative consultant Joanne Lim hosts **A Table For Ten**: an intimate dining experience for just 2 to 10 guests. Embark on a soulful journey through Melaka Peranakan cuisine, lovingly preserved by Lim's great-grandmother, and savour classics like achar, assam prawns, emperor chicken, Nyonya Hokkien noodles and a surprise dessert.

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

Kuala Lumpur

Down memory lane



6

Sarawak

A day to remember



Sarawak Day, celebrated on 22 July, commemorates the state's move towards self-governance in 1963. And this year, all eyes are on Miri as it plays host to the festivities. Get ready for an electrifying line-up of cultural showcases and performances by homegrown talents.

miricouncil.gov.my

7

Kuala Lumpur

A taste of Paris

In the buzzing heart of Chow Kit, **Restaurant Dominic** transports you to the charm of a Parisian arrondissement. With vibrant Bleu de France hues, alfresco corners and striking contemporary art, it captures the essence of a stylish French bistro.

Helmed by head chef Phillip Dominic, this Michelin-listed space is a love letter to his Marseille roots. Expect timeless French dishes with personal touches, down to hand-sewn tablecloths lovingly crafted by his mother.

After honing his craft across Europe, from Verona to Salzburg, Dominic adds modern twists to French classic fare, using only the finest European ingredients. Highlights include foie gras terrine, Burgundy snails, wagyu steak tartare, duck confit and seafood ravioli. Be sure to save room for show-stopping desserts like pistachio soufflé and chocolate mousse. [instagram.com/restaurantdominic](https://www.instagram.com/restaurantdominic)



8

Malaysia

Off to the races

Love that runner's high? You're in luck – this month's race calendar is packed! Lace up and check out these upcoming marathons hitting the streets (and trails) near you.

Kar Ultra @ Kadamaian Ultra

Happening on 26 and 27 July, this ultra-marathon in Kadamaian, Sabah, unfolds with Mount Kinabalu as its stunning backdrop. karultrax.com.my

Score Marathon by AIA Vitality

One of Malaysia's biggest running events, this inclusive marathon takes place in Putrajaya on 13 July and offers race distances for all levels. scoremarathon.com

Kuching Half Marathon 2025

On 27 July, explore Kuching's charm on foot as the scenic half marathon winds through the city's iconic landmarks. v2.checkpointspot.asia

9

Kuala Lumpur

Prepare for battle

Get ready for the ultimate escape room thrill. **Bomb Battle** at Berjaya Times Square takes adrenaline to the next level. Suit up in hazmat gear and get ready for 75 minutes of non-stop action: dodging lasers, cracking cryptic codes and racing against the clock to defuse paint bombs in this high-stakes immersive experience.

thebombbattle.com



10

Kuala Lumpur

Lights, camera, action!

Siti Saleha, one of Malaysia's brightest cinema stars, shines as an ambassador for the eighth Malaysia International Film Festival (MIFFest), joining fellow ambassadors Bront Palarae and Daiyan Trisha. Running from 19–27 July, the festival kicks off with an opening ceremony at MyTown Shopping Centre. Siti Saleha chats with us about her role in the festival and the state of Malaysian cinema today.

Why join MIFFest?

I've always admired how MIFFest provides a global platform for Malaysian cinema. Joining Bront and Daiyan feels like the perfect opportunity to support its mission of celebrating storytelling and championing Southeast Asian voices.

What does this role mean to you?

Honestly, it's such an honour. As someone who grew up in this industry, I'm proud to represent a platform that uplifts storytellers from all walks of life. It's my way of giving back; this role lets me engage with filmmakers and audiences, and hopefully inspire more young creatives to believe in the magic of film.

How has Malaysian cinema evolved?

It has grown both in quality and depth, boldly exploring complex themes, diverse genres and cross-cultural collaborations. We're not just following global trends; we're starting to set them.

What's next for you?

I'm working on my directorial debut, a new series and exploring business ventures. It's an exciting chapter, and I'll share more soon! miffest.com.my



Pahang

The perfect weekend escape

Just a two-and-a-half-hour drive from Kuala Lumpur or 20 minutes from Kuantan Airport lies a dreamy eco-retreat that's redefining luxury in the wild: **Mangala Estate Boutique Resort**, the ultimate weekend hideaway that feels worlds away.

Once a barren expanse, the 70-acre sanctuary now flourishes with swaying palms, serene lakes and vibrant flora.

Mangala lives up to its name (Sanskrit for "auspicious"), thriving through its respect for the land with its zero deforestation policies, solar power and smart water irrigation systems. Suffice to say, it truly walks the talk when it comes to eco-conscious living.



Choose from 67 villas that seamlessly blend contemporary design with nature's raw beauty. Overlooking scenic wetlands, the Sara Villas are perfect for nature lovers while the Jala Villas offer elegant, stilted stays by the lake. Vana Villas come with private pools for a secluded dip and Amani Villas, set among fruit orchards, feature plunge pools and patios for laid-back vibes. Families can opt for spacious two-bedroom Jala or Vana Pool Villas while the crown jewel – a sustainably built, two-storey, six-bedroom Bungalow – is ideal for group getaways.

The resort has you covered with the perfect balance of chill and thrill – from birdwatching and nature walks to kayaking, volleyball, pétanque and even friendly matches of table tennis or classic board games like congkak. Unwind at the Mangala Spa with a blissful menu of massages, facials, detox baths and body wraps. **frankyhotels.com**



12

Kuala Lumpur

Return of the king



After an eight-year hiatus, **G-Dragon** returns with his solo world tour, *Ü bermensch*, which kicked off in March. He's now set to take over Axiata Arena on 19 and 20 July.

Dubbed the “King of K-pop”, the BigBang frontman helped shape the global wave with his bold style and genre-defying sound. Whether you're a longtime fan or new to the hype, this is one show you won't want to miss.

g-dragontour.com



Retro bars around the city

Here's where you can get your nostalgic fix all-year-round

Groove The Disco

Featuring music from the 70s, 80s and 90s, this Desa Sri Hartamas hotspot features DJs who keep the dance floor alive. [instagram.com/groovehartamas](https://www.instagram.com/groovehartamas)

The Retro Club KL

True to its name, this club is dedicated to groovy music lovers with themed nights featuring reggae, rap and retro beats. [facebook.com/theretroclubkl](https://www.facebook.com/theretroclubkl)

13

Kuala Lumpur

Get ready to boogie

On 18 July, **Marini's on 57** is throwing it back with a night dedicated to hits from the 70s and 80s; think pure nostalgia and boogie-worthy vibes. This popular Studio 57-themed party happens once a month, with the Petronas Twin Towers as a sparkly backdrop. [instagram.com/marinison57](https://www.instagram.com/marinison57)

Betelnut

Located in Petaling Jaya, this neighbourhood bar spins old-school remixes that whisk you straight back to the 80s and 90s era. [instagram.com/betelnutpj](https://www.instagram.com/betelnutpj)



Malaysian's global gem

Rich, creamy and boldly aromatic, the durian is winning fans worldwide with FAMA's support

Few fruits stir the senses or spark such strong opinions like the durian. Revered by enthusiasts and curiosity-seekers alike, durian is often called the “King of Fruits” for good reason. With its distinctive aroma, custard-like texture and bold flavour, Malaysia's durian is more than a delicacy, it's a national icon ready to take on the world.

FAMA's role in export empowerment

The Federal Agricultural Marketing Authority (FAMA), under the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, is leading efforts to position the Malaysian durian as a premium export.

Through its 2025 campaign, “Malaysia's Best: Authentic Malaysia, the Best Quality”, FAMA is branding local food products for global markets, with durians at the forefront.

FAMA supports growers through training, technical guidance and export readiness. From orchard to shipment, every step is backed by quality control and compliance with international standards. FAMA ensures Malaysian durians – especially sought-after varieties like Musang King and Black Thorn – meet the expectations of discerning consumers worldwide.

From Malaysia to the world

With rising demand across China,

the Middle East, ASEAN and beyond, Malaysian durian is now recognised as a luxury fruit. FAMA's global trade initiatives are creating new opportunities for farmers, exporters and international buyers.

For investors, durian is a growing opportunity backed by strong demand and government support, with room to grow in processing and logistics. FAMA also connects tourists to orchards and markets, while Malaysians abroad can now enjoy a taste of home anywhere in the world.

Whether enjoyed fresh, frozen or in desserts, Malaysian durians continue to leave an impression around the world, with FAMA ensuring its journey is one of quality and excellence.

Follow @fama.malaysia on social media or visit fama.gov.my to explore Malaysia's premium durians, trade opportunities and FAMA's agro-tourism initiatives.

Malaysian Fruit, Global Market



Connecting Global
Buyers with
Malaysia's Best Products



Bridging continents

From diplomacy to development, Malaysia takes the lead in shaping a new era of cross-regional collaboration

This past May, Kuala Lumpur took centre stage as it hosted the 2nd ASEAN-GCC-China Economic Summit, honouring the theme “Synergising Economic Opportunities Towards Shared Prosperity”.

What made this gathering remarkable was its unprecedented scope – leaders from Southeast Asia, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and China came together for the first time in a trilateral setting. Representing over 40 percent of the world’s population, the summit addressed some of the most pressing issues of our time – from trade and energy to sustainability and food security.

At a time when the world is still navigating post-pandemic recovery, climate change and shifting geopolitical tides, the summit offered more than just handshakes and headlines. It sparked real conversations around partnership, progress and practical solutions.

Green growth and sustainability

Discussions focused on accelerating clean energy efforts such as hydrogen and renewables, while championing sustainable agriculture and greater collaboration within carbon markets and ESG frameworks.

Food security and the halal economy

With an eye on climate resilience and inclusivity, the summit explored ways to strengthen halal certification, boost agricultural innovation and improve regional food logistics. Leaders also called for stronger partnerships to build secure and sustainable food systems.

Digital innovation

The summit advanced 5G, cybersecurity, and digital IDs – all to help micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and start-ups grow, compete and thrive in a connected economy.

Malaysia at the centre

As ASEAN Chair for 2025, Malaysia played a key role not just as a host, but as a facilitator of meaningful dialogue. With a firm yet inclusive voice on the world stage, Malaysia helped bring together diverse partners in pursuit of shared prosperity.

Guided by Prime Minister Dato’ Seri Anwar Ibrahim’s MADANI vision, the summit highlighted Malaysia’s position as a trusted bridge between regions. More than a milestone, the summit signalled a new model of cooperation, one that is grounded in shared goals and mutual respect.

For Malaysia, it was a proud moment on the global stage. For travellers, it’s another reason to see Kuala Lumpur not just as a destination, but as a dynamic player in shaping tomorrow’s world.

Read the full joint statement from the ASEAN-GCC-China Summit at myasean2025.my

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A flourishing market

Southeast Asia's offshore gas market is booming. Investment is expected to hit US\$30 billion between 2024 and 2025, with projections soaring to US\$100 billion by 2028.

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OGA 2025 serves as a hub for industry leaders to explore developments in carbon capture and storage (CCS), deepwater exploration and next-generation energy solutions.

A front-row seat to invaluable insights

At Speak OGA, the event's vibrant knowledge exchange platform, over

ELEVATE

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



HOTELS

R&R on repeat

Soak up the sun, sea and good vibes at the tropical oasis that is Club Med **Phuket**

BY ELIZABETH SOONG

Phuket, Thailand's largest island, has long drawn sunseekers with its picturesque landscapes and vibrant culture. Nicknamed the Pearl of the Andaman Sea, it has starred in films like *Mother of the Bride* and *Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason*. This time, I'm heading to Kata Beach in the

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE





southwest, just under 90 minutes from the airport, where **Club Med Phuket** sits on 16 hectares of lush greenery. With the beach and local shops just steps away, you might be tempted to explore, but we suspect you'll be too busy enjoying the resort's top-notch amenities to wander far.

For nearly 40 years, the all-inclusive Club Med Phuket has been a familiar fixture on this beloved stretch of beach. Its easygoing vibe and all-inclusive packages have made it a go-to for holidaymakers looking to unplug. A recent renovation refreshed the dining areas, pool, lounges and half the rooms, with the final phase set to wrap up by year's end.

In April this year, the resort launched the new **Lai Thai Family Oasis**, a dedicated zone designed for families. Encompassing 1,117m², the area features 32 rooms, all built around a Splash Park fitted with thrilling slides, splash buckets and water cannons, plus a Snack Bar serving quick bites and

drinks. The rooms, whether it's a Family Superior or a Family-themed Room, follow a muted theme, featuring calming décor and nature-inspired Lai Thai motifs. All are spacious enough for two adults, two children (and a baby) and include a terrace or balcony with a great view of the Splash Park.

Parents can take advantage of Club Med's Kids Club and leave their little ones in the care of trained professionals, a concept the brand pioneered in 1967. More than babysitting, the club offers a safe environment for kids to hang out with other kids and engage in activities – from arts and crafts to indoor rock climbing – while parents enjoy some well-earned downtime.

Adults get to play and chill out too. Thanks to a handy Club Med app, it's easy to see what's on offer for the day, whether it's a Muay Thai boxing lesson at 10am or a Thai cooking class at 11.30. On especially active days, enjoy lunch at The Mamuang, featuring

an international buffet of dishes that rotate daily. In the afternoon, try your hand at trapeze and archery, or book a blissful massage at the Harnn Spa. End the day with dinner at The Chu-da for an intimate, three-course dining experience, followed by the evening's entertainment at the main hall, ranging from circus acts and adorable kids' performances to a dazzling fire show on the beach.

Days here are deceptively slow, but time does fly when you're having fun. Suddenly it's been four full days, not nearly enough to experience everything on offer. As I pack my bags, one thing is certain: I'm already planning my next trip back. clubmed.com

“

In April, Club Med launched the new Lai Thai Family Oasis, featuring a Splash Park, a Snack Bar and rooms with nature-inspired motifs”



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As **Malaysia's first permanent purpose-built** media art gallery, immersify KL delivers an authentic and awakening immersive experience that seamlessly fuses art, technology, and Malaysia's rich cultural tapestry. Whether you are exploring with loved ones or adventuring on your own, this **30,000 sq. ft. space** features eleven uniquely crafted zones that are designed not only to entertain but to inspire wonder, creativity, and discovery for people from all walks of life.



Zone 11 - Art Gallery



Zone 9 - Prism Shine

Bask in a glimmering garden, explore a lush neon Malaysian rainforest, and watch your creativity come to life on a vast marine canvas — evoke a myriad of emotions all in one magical space. From the embrace of the great artists Vincent Van Gogh, Claude Monet, and Gustav Klimt to SEA's first **360° two-storey immersive zone**, the gallery invites locals and tourists alike to embark on a multi-sensorial journey where you are part of the art, where you are the story.

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Zone 4 - Starlight Garden

“



*"Magnetic, poetic, inspiring,
but also educational"*

- Google Review



*"My child was absolutely
thrilled, but honestly - I was
just as amazed"*

- Google Review

”



Henley-on-Thames



DAY TRIPS

Cruise mode

The riverside town of Henley-on-Thames, a quick train ride from **London**, offers a quintessentially English experience

BY JONATHAN EVANS

In David Fincher's Oscar-winning drama *The Social Network*, a Harvard crew narrowly fails to win a rowing race, darkening the mood of the Winklevoss twins who vow to sue Mark Zuckerberg. It's a tension-filled cinematic moment set at the Henley Royal Regatta, one of Britain's most famous sporting fixtures and, for some, a highlight in the summertime social calendar.

Every July since 1839, the rowing event has lured pan-global athletes and cosmopolitan visitors – including British royalty – to **Henley-on-Thames**, an exceptionally beautiful town sprawled regally around its eponymous river for centuries, less than an hour by train from central London (via the Great Western Railway from Paddington or an Elizabeth Line train from Tottenham Court Road, with a change at Twyford).



Temple Island on the Thames

Over several days of the splashy summer regatta, there are clashes between men's and women's crews representing college students from Oxford and Cambridge universities (whose legendary rowing rivalry dates back to the early 1800s), as well as between schools, clubs and

IMAGES: SHUTTERSTOCK (ANGEL ON THE BRIDGE, TEMPLE ISLAND ON THE THAMES, HENLEY-ON-THAMES); BENEDICT TUFNELL (HENLEY ROYAL REGATTA)



Henley Royal Regatta



Spectators at the regatta



Angel on the Bridge



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Chapman – to swish eateries along one of Britain's most romantic riversides, complete with swans and mallards.

Yet much of this ageless utopia, suffused with a pervasive nostalgia, remains just as I've always known it. A day's visit usually begins with a pub lunch at a sun-drenched spot at either The Angel on the Bridge (1728) or The Old Bell (1325), both housed in Grade II-listed buildings (protected structures of special architectural and historic significance). The meal is often followed by a stroll along stone-paved streets and alleys, with detours into The Bell Bookshop or Bagatelle Toys along Bell Street. Perhaps an arthouse film at the delightful Art Deco-styled neighbourhood cinema, the Regal Picturehouse, or a peek inside The Kenton Theatre, one of the country's oldest performance venues, housed in a brick-clad Georgian building.

But for something truly unhurried, nothing beats a chartered boat cruise (book at Hobbs of Henley along Station Road), drifting past some of England's loveliest country homes. hrr.co.uk

even Olympic-level competitors. This quintessentially English summertime staple sees strawberries and fruity Pimm's plucked from wicker hampers, smartly clad guests and music at the Henley Festival.

A 12th-century settlement that blossomed into a prosperous trading post in the 1800s, Henley is a picturesque spot in Oxfordshire, flush with Tudor architecture and mews houses. But the timeworn yet polished town is also a modern haven for gourmets, shoppers and aesthetes – one that's worth a visit any time of the year. No wonder pop legends George Harrison and Dusty Springfield – who's buried in the churchyard of the 800-year-old St Mary the Virgin – chose to make it their home.

That same sensation of discovering new light through old windows follows visitors throughout this eminently walkable town. On my first post-Covid visit, I found familiar buildings inhabited by new occupants, from The Red Lion pub – now housing the boutique hotel The Relais Henley, home to the acclaimed Restaurant Dominic

Henley highlights

Giggling Squid

Authentic Thai cuisine served up amid beautiful, pastel-hued décor.

40 Hart St; gigglingssquid.com

Côte

Fine French fare in the middle of town (mussels in white wine and a decadent cheese cart). **2–4 Bell St; cote.co.uk**

Luscombes

Stellar European and Asiatic cuisine among lively, cosy interiors.

8 Bell St; luscombes.co.uk

Restaurant Dominic Chapman

Farm-to-table cooking alongside the Thames. **Thameside; restaurantdominicchapman.co.uk**

Bistro at the Boathouse

Family-run diner dishing up comforting recipes in style. **Station Rd; bistroattheboathouse.co.uk**

The Ferret

An Aladdin's cave of jewellery, first-edition classics and vintage garments.

4 Friday St

Jonkers Rare Books

Treasure trove for bibliophiles seeking literary obscurities. **27 Hart St; jonkers.co.uk**

Gabriel Machin

Outstanding boucherie that's been a fixture since 1910. **7 Market Place; gabrielmachin.co.uk**

The Lemongrove Gallery

Diverse works by contemporary European artists. **10 Dukes St; thelemongrovegallery.co.uk**

River & Rowing Museum

Three galleries tell the story of the Thames and its favourite sport. **Mill Meadows; rrm.co.uk**



WILDLIFE

Earn your stripes

Head out of **Delhi** and into Ranthambore for a tiger-spotting adventure **BY KHURSHED DINSHAW**

Three Gypsy vehicles grind to a halt on the mud path in **Ranthambore Tiger Reserve**, the biggest and most renowned tiger reserve in the Indian state of Rajasthan, located in Sawai Madhopur. This scene is what we had all travelled for and you could hear a pin drop in the silence. The tiger, majestic in its orange-and-black stripes, stares back with disinterest. We scramble to take pictures, clicking away in a fevered rush. Twenty minutes later, the tiger yawns, flicks its tail and walks away to become one with the forest.

The guide tells us that we'd just had a celebrity encounter – the tiger



belongs to the family of Machli's, aka T-16, considered the world's most photographed tigress, a powerful and dominating Royal Bengal who once won a fight with a 14ft-long crocodile. Machli was the park's most famous resident before she passed away in 2016, generating a whopping USD\$100 million in revenue for the reserve in the span of 11 years. Her lineage continues with her granddaughter T-84 or Arrow-Head (named for the arrow-shaped mark on her forehead) and great-granddaughter T-124 or Riddhi. Out of the world's dwindling tiger population, over 70% live in India, with 78 in Ranthambore, including Machli's descendants.

As with all bucket list adventures, planning is key. The cooler winter months from October onwards are an ideal time to visit when the animals are more active. It's a train ride from Delhi to the city of Sawai Madhopur; from there, a 30-minute drive to Ranthambore. Apart from the magnificent native flora, see if you can spot the resident fauna: a tigress and her cubs on a walk or chasing prey, leopards stalking the area, deer feeding on the grass and sloth bears perched in the trees. ranthamborenationalpark.com



Malaysia Airlines flies between Kuala Lumpur and Delhi 10x weekly.

The check list



BOOK.

A reputable and ethical safari outfitter, **Bookmark Resorts Jogi Mahal** offers luxury accommodations (with plunge pools) and organises safaris. They are excellent at identifying which zones of the reserve offer the best chances of spotting these majestic animals. bookmarkresorts.com

DO.

Visit the hilltop **Ranthambore Fort**, a Unesco World Heritage Site, famous for its Rajput architecture, from temples and palaces to reservoirs and cenotaphs.

EAT.

Enjoy a meal of Rajasthani *thali* – a traditional food platter of dried lentils, beans, buttermilk along with spices and red meat.

See life clearly at every age

Live well with regular eye check-ups

As people age, it's common to attribute fading vision to the natural course of growing older. This is why it is recommended that individuals aged 60 and above, or those caring for elderly family members, should make routine eye screenings a health priority.

Even in the absence of visible issues, annual check-ups can uncover underlying problems and help maintain long-term eye health.

For family members, ensuring elderly loved ones receive proper eye care offers them reassurance and supports their quality of life.

Treatable and preventable

Many age-related eye conditions are both treatable and preventable with early detection and care.

This includes cataracts, which cloud the eye's natural lens and are a leading cause of blindness in Malaysia.

Often developing gradually, they can interfere with everyday activities like reading, driving and walking safely at night. Left untreated, cataracts may result in significant vision loss and reduced independence.

Fortunately, modern cataract surgery is safe, effective and can restore clarity to one's vision with minimal downtime.

Early intervention is key

In addition to cataracts, older adults face higher risks of developing glaucoma, macular degeneration and diabetic retinopathy.

These conditions frequently progress without noticeable symptoms, making



regular eye examinations essential for early intervention.

Trusted care at KMI Kuantan

KMI Kuantan Medical Centre provides expert, compassionate eye care through a dedicated team of ophthalmologists.

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“

A full eye exam every two years, especially after age 40, is recommended”

– Dr Aliff Bin Irwan Cheong,
Resident Ophthalmologist at
KMI Kuantan Medical Centre



INSIDER TIPS

A Malaysian in... Hong Kong

Genting Group scion **Loui Lim** reflects on the energy, elegance and evolution of Hong Kong – the city that shaped his design sensibility and continues to inspire the way he lives, works and plays

BY ANANDHI GOPINATH



Hong Kong will always hold a profound place in both my personal and professional journey. To live here is to be immersed in a city where East meets West and tradition intertwines with modernity. It's a place of contrasts: neon-lit streets behind ancient temples and quiet rituals inside a fast-moving metropolis. It's a balance between tradition and innovation.

It was also where I first experienced hospitality at its highest standard. In Hong Kong, luxury is defined not just by opulence, but by consistency, anticipation and discretion. The city is home to some of the world's most respected hospitality brands – from Peninsula to Rosewood – and their influence has shaped my understanding of excellence.

At Genting, I wear multiple hats as director of Dream Cruises and vice president

of leisure and hospitality for Genting Malaysia's terrestrial resorts – and Hong Kong has been a constant source of inspiration. Its compact elegance, diverse guests and global outlook push me to design with intention. Space matters here, not just how something looks, but how it feels. In Hong Kong, design isn't just visual; it shapes how people move, feel and remember their experiences.

In hospitality, people want more than luxury; they want experiences rooted in place. Our Dream Cruises and StarCruises brands are proud to be homeported in Hong Kong. With over 40 restaurants and bars onboard, plus nightly performing arts, we aim to craft unforgettable vacations that celebrate Hong Kong's past, present and future.

Living the city

A typical day when I am here begins with a workout at **Grand Hyatt**, business meetings around **Ocean Centre** and dim sum lunch at **Hexa**, which sits along the harbour overlooking the incredible Hong Kong skyline. For something low-key, **Yat Lok** has the best roasted goose.



Main hall of M+



Duddell's

Grand Majestic
SichuanIMAGES: SHUTTERSTOCK (PMQ, THE HENDERSON), KEVIN MAK (M+),
LOUI LIM (YAYOI KUSAMA)



If time permits, I'll explore the city and browse independent retailers at **PMQ**. Evenings are for sensuous dinners at **Grand Majestic Sichuan** or cosy vibes at **Blue Supreme**, which specialises in American comfort food and craft beers. For a nightcap, it's **DarkSide** or **Salisterra**; think jazz, cocktails and a city view.

Where to eat, work and unwind

When I work remotely, I look for places with garden terraces or airy spaces to help me feel grounded. **Tai Kwun** is one of my go-tos, whether it's grabbing a coffee at **Between** or taking a meeting at **Old Bailey**.

Duddell's is another, for its exquisite food and a hidden garden terrace. **Louise** at **PMQ** feels like a private residence, ideal for work and quiet catchups.

If you travel as much as I do, you learn how to balance the personal with the professional. For a quick reset in between meetings, a foot massage at **Ten Feet Tall** is a must; it's one of those places only locals would know. For deeper relaxation, the **Asaya** wellness retreat at Rosewood is next level. Meanwhile, **Dragon's Back** is my escape. It's a ridge trail with ocean views and total serenity.

Hong Kong is also a shopping haven. **Lane Crawford** at IFC and **Pacific Place** offer a beautifully curated lifestyle experience. For tailored menswear, I go to **The Armoury**. For vintage, **American Vintage Shop** in Causeway Bay has an incredible selection and I love wandering **Star Street** in Wan Chai for its boutique finds.

How I host in Hong Kong

When I want to impress out-of-town guests, I take them to **The China Club**, a colonial-era gem with old Shanghai glam and incredible Cantonese cuisine. Owned by my good friends, it

has hosted everyone from Kate Moss to Madonna. Dim sum by day, duck and Chinese opera by night; it's not just a meal, it's a Hong Kong story.

For architecture lovers, start at Central where colonial-era gems like **St John's Cathedral** sit beside icons such as the **HSBC Building** by Norman Foster. My favourite new icon is **The Henderson** by Zaha Hadid; it is bold, curved and futuristic.

M+ always sparks ideas. Yayoi Kusama's retrospective there – with its infinity rooms and installations – is a full-body, heart-stirring experience.

If I only have one weekend in Hong Kong, I'd do dim sum at **City Hall**, hop on the **Star Ferry**, cocktails at **Hutong**, and for something unexpected, a dai pai dong dinner under neon lights in **Sham Shui Po**.



Raise your voice

Mezzo-soprano Samantha Chong brings her global experience home, mentoring Malaysia's next generation of opera stars

Samantha Chong may be based in Hong Kong but her heart beats for home. The internationally acclaimed mezzo-soprano is on a mission to give back – one masterclass at a time.

Originally from Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Chong launched her career after winning the first ASEAN Vocal Competition in 2016. A soloist with the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra and a graduate of The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts, she remains deeply connected to Malaysia and passionate about nurturing budding opera talent.

“It has always been my desire to contribute to my home country,” she says. “Civic duties aside, cultural exchange and knowledge sharing with the younger generation are cornerstones of the artistic craft movement.”

Through her collaboration with TalentCorp via the MyHeart platform – for Malaysians abroad to stay connected to home – Chong has made several trips back to Malaysia to lead vocal masterclasses. In 2023, she mentored students at Universiti Malaysia Sabah and Kuala Lumpur City Opera, sharing practical guidance and personal insights.

“I was impressed by the students’ enthusiasm,” she recalls. “It was heartening to see them absorbing knowledge and willing to try different techniques. Malaysia is definitely a place to watch for up-and-coming talent. Sabah truly feels homey and cosy, and even though we don’t have as many classical music performances, these students are the ones I would pass the baton to.”

For Chong, mentoring is not a one-way street. “The students’ ingenuity made me reflect on my own journey. Sometimes, all it takes is a small push and a little affirmation for creativity to flourish.”

One lesson she always shares with young singers:



Samantha Chong

“Trust your instinct, work really, really hard and never give up.”

Working with diverse students has deepened Chong’s appreciation for music’s power to unite people. She’s found that language barriers fade away, leaving only a shared connection through art.

To this passionate mentor and performer, opera isn’t something old-fashioned or out of reach. “Instead of viewing it as archaic, we can all learn to appreciate it as an outlet for emotion and beauty,” she says. “Music connects us – it’s a mosaic of human experience.”



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Success has taken many Malaysians to new heights around the world – whether leading innovation in London, shaping policy in Washington or launching ventures in Singapore. But for many, the connection to home remains strong.

That's where Malaysia At Heart (MyHeart) by TalentCorp comes in. This purpose-driven platform was created for Malaysians living abroad as a way to stay meaningfully connected to the country they still call home. Built for professionals, entrepreneurs, business owners, freelancers and students alike, MyHeart fosters a global network united by shared roots and a common desire to give back.

Connect, collaborate and contribute

MyHeart is more than a platform. It is a space for meaningful engagement. Members can connect with like-minded individuals across borders, collaborate on mentorship programmes, research projects and cultural initiatives, and contribute to Malaysia's development

through knowledge-sharing and community-building efforts. Wherever they are in the world, Malaysians abroad can remain part of the national conversation.

Returning home with ease

For those considering a return to Malaysia, MyHeart also provides facilitation via the Returning Expert Programme (REP). The programme offers practical incentives including a flat 15% income tax rate for five years, duty exemptions on a locally assembled vehicle, and permanent residency support for foreign spouses and children. With MyHeart, the transition home is not only smoother but also filled with new possibilities.

Stay connected to something bigger

At its core, MyHeart is about turning distance into opportunity. It is a growing movement of globally minded Malaysians with their hearts anchored at home, where connection, collaboration and contribution come together.



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JUNGCEYLON
SHOPPING DESTINATION
PATONG • PHUKET

A photograph of two women walking along a gravel path under a large, dense archway of purple wisteria flowers. The woman on the left is wearing a light blue jacket and a long orange skirt, while the woman on the right is wearing a light blue jacket and light-colored pants. They are both smiling and looking towards each other. The path is covered with fallen purple petals. A black metal bench is visible on the right side of the path.

A PERFECT WEEKEND IN Adelaide

Words **Smriti Daniel**

From farmers' markets and leafy parklands
to bustling laneways and live music,
here's how to make the most of three days in the city



South Australia's capital city is proof that good things come in small packages.

Adelaide feels intimate yet big enough to hold its own, offering plenty of art, food options and natural beauty. While the nearby wine regions like the Barossa, Clare Valley and McLaren Vale are world-famous, the city itself is worth exploring. From sweeping hills all the way down to the ocean, Adelaide feels like a microcosm of everything that makes Australia so wonderful, and a weekend here can be both indulgent and refreshingly uncomplicated.

FRIDAY

Morning. Pop into **Central Market**, the city's culinary heart, which opens at 7am and where you can easily spend several hours. With over 70 traders under one roof, this vibrant indoor market is a feast for the senses. First order of business? A power breakfast of egg tarts.

Queue up at **Saudade Portuguese Custard Tarts**, a heritage shop along Grote Street devoted to baking the perfect *pastel de nata*; take a bite and you'll see why one tart is never enough. Spend the better part of the morning filling your basket with weekend picnic supplies: crusty bread and Basque cheesecake from **Dough Bakery** (stall 45) and a selection of cheeses from **Smelly Cheese Co** next door. For brunch, locals swear by the steaming bowls of laksa at **Asian Gourmet**, while the **Market Plaza Food Court** offers plenty of options, from dumplings to sizzling plates of black bean beef.

Afternoon. For a dose of art and history, walk a few blocks north of the market to Adelaide's stately cultural precinct on North Terrace. Begin at the **Art Gallery of South Australia**. Housed inside a grand sandstone building beside the leafy forecourt of the University of Adelaide, it's one of the city's most iconic institutions. Inside, you'll find an eclectic collection, from Indigenous carvings and colonial-era paintings to edgy contemporary installations like Chiharu Shiota's *Absence Embodied*, a haunting 200km web of red wool, and *Evening shadows, backwater of the Murray, South Australia* (1880) by HJ Johnstone, the gallery's first acquisition.

Nearby, you'll find the State Library's **Mortlock Wing**, often counted among the most beautiful libraries in the world. Even if you're not a bibliophile, the atmosphere (think Hogwarts meets the Downton Abbey estate) is pure magic.



Previous page:
Adelaide Botanic Garden

Clockwise from top:
Portuguese egg tarts at Adelaide Central Market; Gallery of South Australia; St Peter's Cathedral; fresh blooms at Adelaide Central Market; the State Library's gorgeous Mortlock Wing



IMAGES: SHUTTERSTOCK (ST PETER'S CATHEDRAL, MORTLOCK WING), SOUTH AUSTRALIAN TOURISM COMMISSION (ART GALLERY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA), ADELAIDE CENTRAL MARKET (SAUDADE, FLORAL STAND)



Take a moment to admire some of Adelaide's historic churches all around you. There's **St Peter's Cathedral**, with its Gothic Revival architecture, and **St Francis Xavier's Cathedral**, known for its sandstone façade and serene interiors – a nod to Adelaide's past as the "City of Churches".

Evening. As dusk settles, Adelaide's East End comes alive. Rundle Street is aglow with twinkling fairy lights and the warm spill of laughter from curbside tables. Start at one of the small wine bars tucked along Rundle and Vardon Avenue, perhaps **Mother Vine** or **East End Cellars**, where candlelight dances on exposed brick walls and bartenders pour South Australian Shiraz by the glass. Before the night ends, toast the city from **2KW Bar**, with sweeping views of the illuminated Adelaide Oval and distant hills. With a glass of wine or mocktail in hand, it's the perfect end to your first day.

SATURDAY

Morning. Make the most of your morning with a visit to the **Mount Lofty Summit**, just 20 minutes by car from central Adelaide. Drive east to the trailhead at **Waterfall Gully** and prepare for a hike that feels like stepping into another world. The trail winds through lush fern gullies and towering eucalyptus trees, with the scent of damp earth lingering in the air. As you climb steadily upwards, pause to notice the birds flitting through the canopy and to catch glimpses of the city unfurling below. The 4km return hike is steep but rewarding; at the summit, panoramic views stretch from Adelaide's suburban patchwork all the way to Gulf St Vincent shimmering in the distance. Don't want to work up a sweat? The summit is accessible by car.



Book a lounge pass with Journify and relax before your flight.

Where to stay

Adabco Boutique Hotel Adelaide

A Venetian Gothic-style heritage hotel blending old-world charm with modern comfort, perfect for travellers seeking elegance and value in the heart of the city. adabcohotel.com.au

Adina Apartment Hotel Adelaide Treasury

Ideally situated near the city's food and wine hubs, including Central Market and local wine bars. Cultural hotspots like the Art Gallery, Festival Theatre and Rhino Room are just a short stroll away. adinahotels.com

The Playford Adelaide

A luxurious five-star boutique hotel on North Terrace, blending classical style with modern luxury. Its Art Nouveau design is reflected in 182 beautifully appointed guestrooms, studio spa suites and New York-style loft suites. theplayford.com.au



Clockwise from top left:
Hindley Street Music Hall;
a walking trail at Cleland
Wildlife Park; Bread &
Bone café; Glenelg Beach;
JamFactory



IMAGES: SHUTTERSTOCK (GLENELG BEACH),
TOURISM AUSTRALIA (CLELAND),
SAIGE PRIME (HINDLEY STREET MUSIC HALL)

The gorgeous **Summit Café** awaits at the top, a perfect spot for lunch.

Afternoon. Just a short drive from Mount Lofty lies **Cleland Wildlife Park**, where you can get closer to Australia's iconic animals than almost anywhere else. Wander through 35 hectares of open bushland and hand-feed kangaroos, wallabies and emus as they roam freely around you. The park is also home to koalas, wombats and rare species like the Tasmanian devil. Hot tip: for an unforgettable experience, book a Koala Close-Up session.

Evening. Explore the city's West End, starting out at Peel Street, for its hidden bars and stylish eateries. Stay for a drink at **Maybe Mae**, a subterranean cocktail bar with Art Deco glamour; think plush green booths, dim lighting and an expertly curated drinks list. Or opt for light bites at **Bread & Bone**, a loft-style eatery above Peel Street that serves wood-grilled burgers and bar snacks in an industrial-chic space, to

Where to shop

Adelaide Arcade

A beautiful 19th-century shopping haven filled with independent boutiques and craftspeople. adelaidearcade.com.au

JamFactory

For beautifully crafted South Australian ceramics, glassware and textiles. Perfect for finding unique, artist-designed souvenirs. jamfactory.com.au

Haigh's Chocolates

Visit the iconic chocolate factory on Greenhill Road for a taste of South Australia's finest confectionery. Join a guided tour to learn about the chocolate-making process, sample freshly made treats and pick up beautifully packaged gifts to take home. haighschocolates.com.au





set the evening mood. From there, head to **Jive**, an indie venue with retro décor and a cheerful bar, or **The Gov**, Adelaide's premier live music pub where blues, rock and folk spill out onto the street, drawing crowds well into the night. For a bigger sound, **Hindley Street Music Hall** brings global touring acts and local legends to its gritty, no-fuss stage. This is Adelaide at its most vibrant: music, laughter and a city with rhythm.

SUNDAY

Morning. Sundays in the city are made for slow starts. Head to the **Adelaide Farmers' Market**, a lively open-air market held every Sunday morning at the Adelaide Showground. It's where local producers showcase the region's finest, from fresh berries and organic vegetables to handmade pastries. Pick up something sweet from **Jamface**, a bustling market stall where MasterChef judge Poh Ling Yeow serves up her signature creations: buttery tarts, glossy cakes and indulgent bakes that disappear fast. Don't miss her mille-feuille, which is many-layered, decadent and as delicious as it looks on TV.

Afternoon. Depending on the weather, you might want to head down to the picturesque, café-lined streets around **Glenelg Beach**, about 40 minutes by tram from the central business district. If you'd rather keep it local, take your picnic supplies to the more central

Adelaide Botanic Garden. Unfurl a blanket under the towering Moreton Bay figs, watch as vivid lorikeets and rosellas flit through the branches and enjoy the calm of the **Palm House** and **Amazon Waterlily Pavilion**. The garden is one of the city's green lungs, a lush and peaceful spot ideal for relaxing as the weekend winds down.

Evening. For your final night in Adelaide, treat yourself to the bold, vibrant flavours of **Africola**, a South African-inspired gem on East Terrace. Helmed by chef Duncan Welgemoed, the restaurant's eclectic interiors and dynamic menu have drawn global attention, with dishes that are as playful as they are delicious. Alternatively, savour the authentic tastes of **Soi 38** on Pirie Street, where regional Thai cuisine is crafted with sustainably sourced ingredients. Think betel leaf with blue swimmer crab or a fragrant jackfruit and eggplant green curry. Both Africola and Soi 38 are much-loved local favourites, so reservations are recommended to secure your spot.



Malaysia Airlines flies between Kuala Lumpur and Adelaide 5x weekly.

The guide

adelaidecentralmarket.com.au

saudade.com.au

[instagram.com/doughbakery45](https://www.instagram.com/doughbakery45)

smellycheese.co

agsa.sa.gov.au

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stpeters-cathedral.org.au

mothervine.com.au

2kwbar.com.au

eastendcellars.com.au

parks.sa.gov.au

clelandwildlifepark.sa.gov.au

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jivevenue.com

thegov.com.au

hindleymusichall.com.au

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

botanicgardens.sa.gov.au

africola.com.au

soi38.com.au



The ultimate weekend: Ombak Festival 2025

Coastal magic meets music and more at Desaru Coast

There are weekends, and there are weekends that stay with you. From 12–14 September, Ombak Festival 2025 promises one such experience. True to its name, “Ombak” which means wave in Malay, the festival unites sound, art and play in a rhythmic celebration at Desaru Coast.

Ombak Festival enters its second year, bigger than ever. “We are bolder in vision, broader in scope and bursting with Southeast Asian soul,” says Karina Ridzuan, director of Ombak Festival. The play this year is to unite global icons with regional talents, offering an unparalleled experience of live music, food and art.

A global festival with a Malaysian soul

The festival’s star-studded line-up, from **Simply Red**’s exclusive Southeast Asian show and **George Clinton**’s iconic funk, to **Joss Stone**’s soulful vocals and **Flight Facilities**’ Malaysian debut. Regional favourites like Phum Viphurit, Diskoria,



Tanayu, Joe Flizzow, SonaOne, Ismail Izzani, and Vanthan complete a soundscape that’s both global and local.

Playtime reimagined

With Ombak Kids, youngsters can look forward to garden games, kite-making, as well as the Funfair of Forgotten Futures, LEGOLAND Speed Building Challenge and the return of giant puppets Meera & Fiz.





A taste of the region

Culinary craft takes centre stage with celebrated chefs from across the region. Sazón Tapas & Grill by Andrew Walsh will bring Spain to the festival, while Carbon KL brings Smoke & Fire, transforming grilling into a performance. Closer to home, Flavours of Johor pays tribute to the state's finest fare.

A destination like no other

Desaru Coast is more than a stage – it's a stunning 4,000-acre coastal escape with luxury stays at **Anantara Desaru Coast Resort & Villas**, **The Westin**



Desaru Coast Resort and Hard Rock Hotel Desaru Coast. Play a round at **The Els Club Desaru Coast** or cool off at the award-winning **Adventure Waterpark**.

Come for the music, stay for the coast

Desaru Coast transforms your festival getaway into a full retreat, with new adventures from sunrise to starlight. As momentum builds for Visit Johor and Visit Malaysia Year 2026, Ombak Festival welcomes the world while staying true to its Johorean and Malaysian roots.

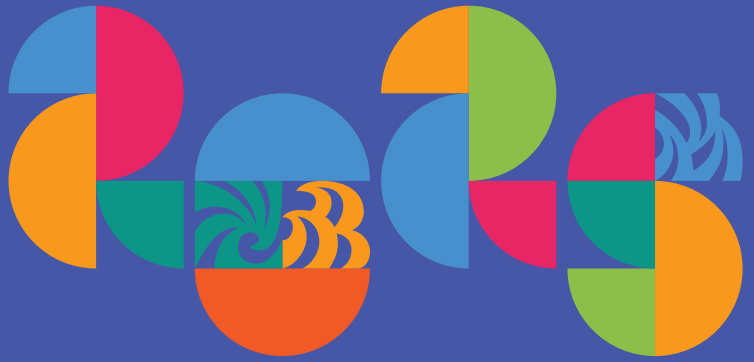
This way to paradise

Desaru Coast is easily accessible by road, air or sea. The **Desaru Coast Ferry Terminal** offers direct connections from Singapore, and **Senai International Airport** is just under an hour's drive away.

Follow @ombakfestivalmy on social media or visit ombakfestival.com and desarucoast.com for tickets and more information.



The Ultimate
Weekend
OMBAK
FESTIVAL



MUSIC

**Simply Red • George Clinton & Parliament
Funkadelic
Joss Stone • Flight Facilities**

Friday DJ Set

**Phum Viphurit • Joe Flizzow, SonaOne and Ismail Izzani
Diskoria • Don West • Gerhana Skacinta • The Pinholes**

**Blackout Agency feat. Miss Lil, Sivanesh, Zig Zach, Ouissam, JonnyVicious
Disco Santan • Golden Mammoth • Keyana • Kyoto Protocol • LZZY
Masia One & The Jah Jah Army • NADA • Tanayu • The Filters • Vanthan**

ARTS & PLAY

**All Tiled Up • Pasar Seloka
Segaris Art Center**

TASTE & TOAST

**Sazón Tapas & Grill by Andrew Walsh
Carbon KL brings Smoke & Fire
Flavours of Johor**

OMBAK KIDS

**Funfair of Forgotten Futures
Go Fly Kites • LEGOLAND Speed
Building Challenge • Meera & Fiz by
Nice Monster • Mereka Games**

**MORE TO BE
ANNOUNCED**

**12-14 September
Desaru Coast,
Johor, Malaysia**



Get your tickets at www.ombakfestival.com

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Steaks worth flying for

Why this flame-forward Penang steakhouse is gaining national attention and fans beyond Malaysia

Some come to Penang for the street food. Others, for the history. But for a growing number of travellers, there's another reason to book a table, and maybe even a flight: steak.

Not just any steak, but one grilled over open flame, kissed with mangrove smoke and served in a setting that's as relaxed as it is refined. At Firewood Penang, flame-grilling isn't just a cooking method; it's a philosophy. And it has earned the restaurant a place on the World's 101 Best Steak Restaurants, the first and only Malaysian entry to make the list. It's also Michelin Selected, cementing its reputation as a dining destination worth seeking out.

Tucked away in Unesco-listed George Town, Firewood's rise is fuelled by an honest, ingredient-led approach. At the helm is chef Ker Yang Hao, who favours simplicity over spectacle. "With fire, you can't fake it," he says. "It teaches you patience and instinct." That reverence for process runs through every dish – from steaks aged and

grilled in-house to sides inspired by Malaysian flavours, like the umami spices and rendang butter.

The steak selection is compact but compelling, with signatures like the Stone Axe Australian Wagyu Striploin, the Firewood Sirloin and a dry-aged Wagyu Tomahawk & Prime Rib. Each showcases depth, texture and a distinct kiss of smoke.



While steak is the star, there's plenty beyond the grill like local shellfish, ember-roasted vegetables and comforting sides like truffle mashed potatoes or chargrilled okra with pink peppercorn. Pair these thoughtful dishes with wine curated to complement the fire-forward flavours.

But beyond the fire, it's the people who fuel Firewood. Chef Ker's team includes young chefs encouraged to grow creatively and front-of-house staff known for their genuine warmth.

There's no formality here. Just a belief that food, when made with care and cooked over an open flame, leaves a lasting impression. For travellers chasing memorable meals, Firewood Penang isn't just a stop; it's a destination worth flying for.

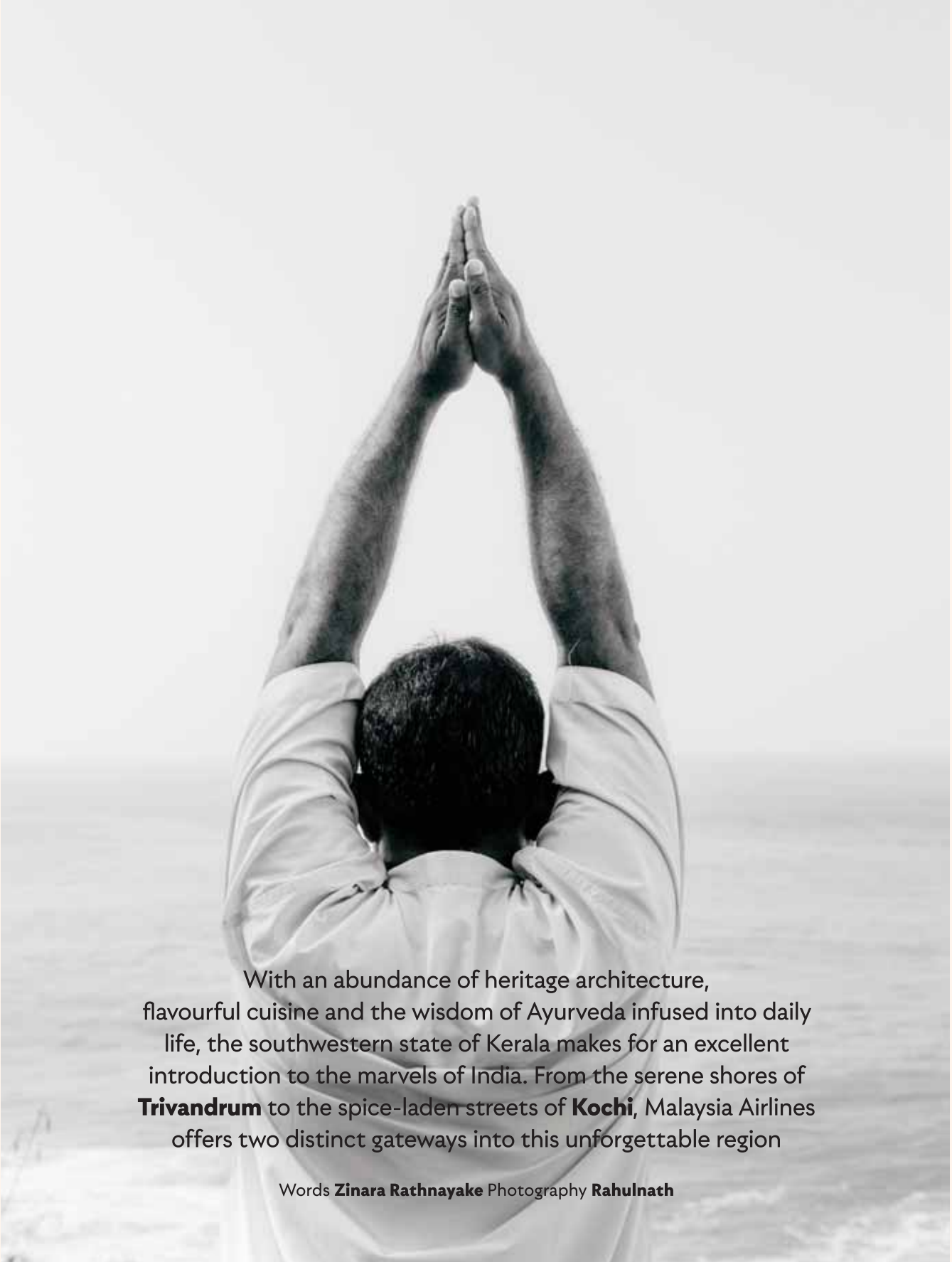
Firewood Penang is at 15 Jalan Masjid Kapitan Keling, George Town, Penang. To explore the menu or make a reservation, visit firegroup.my or call +60 17-989 9246.



A top-down view of a traditional South Indian thali meal. The food is served on a large brass platter lined with fresh green banana leaves. In the bottom left, a large brass bowl is filled with white, fluffy rice. To its right, on the banana leaf, are several golden-brown fried items: a round fritter, a small cluster of red chutney, a row of five fried fish or vegetable patties, and a stack of five fried banana slices. Surrounding the central items are several small brass bowls containing different curries and chutneys: a yellow curry with a red chili drizzle at the top left; a brownish-red curry at the top center; a vibrant red chutney with green leaves at the top right; a dark red chutney with green leaves at the middle right; a yellow and orange vegetable medley with green leaves at the bottom right; and a dark, textured dish with green leaves at the very bottom right. The lighting is warm, highlighting the textures of the food and the metallic sheen of the brass.

Bounty

and bliss



With an abundance of heritage architecture, flavourful cuisine and the wisdom of Ayurveda infused into daily life, the southwestern state of Kerala makes for an excellent introduction to the marvels of India. From the serene shores of **Trivandrum** to the spice-laden streets of **Kochi**, Malaysia Airlines offers two distinct gateways into this unforgettable region

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

Whenever first-time travellers to India ask me where they should go, the easy answer is Kerala,



and the state's 590km-long coastline along the Arabian Sea, meandering backwaters, forested interiors and mountains wrapped in tea, pepper and cardamom are just some of the reasons why.

I tell them to start in the middle, in Kochi, a city defined by thousands of years of trade and commerce. Greek, Roman, Jewish, Syrian, Arab and Chinese traders arrived here in search of the prized spices in the ancient world, like cloves, cinnamon, nutmeg and black pepper. The Portuguese established their first settlement in India here in the 15th century, and Kochi later fell into the hands of the Dutch and the British. All these influences have left their mark, from the patinaed colonial-era houses and stone-paved bylanes of the old quarter (Fort Kochi), to the 33ft-high Chinese fishing nets set against the Arabian Sea and the spice boutiques near the Portuguese-built Mattancherry Palace, with its terracotta roofing and central courtyard.

Today, charming heritage boutique hotels such as Le Colonial – an intimate, luxurious hideaway along Vasco de Gama Square in Fort Kochi – set the tone for a richer exploration of history. “My mother and father travelled to India in the 1970s and promptly fell in love with Kochi,” says owner Isabelle Persenda. “Just like them, I’ve also been charmed by Kochi.”

In the early 2000s, her parents bought an old colonial-era home, originally built in 1506 to house Portuguese governors, and transformed it into Le Colonial with the help of architect Ramesh Tharakan, who specialises in heritage restoration. In many ways, this elegant hotel – with its wood-panelled walls, vintage furniture and antiques – stands as a witness to those who have travelled through Fort Kochi and have been similarly enchanted.

I OFTEN COME TO KERALA FOR THE CUISINE, AS MANY others do. Specifically, for the *sadhya*, a feast of 25 to 30 vegetarian dishes and rice served on banana leaves, ubiquitous during the annual harvest festival Onam in August and September. The meal itself is a celebration of the bounty of the land.





Clockwise from left:
A serving of sadhya at Brunton Boatyard; the Portuguese colonial property Le Colonial; history displayed in the hotel; Chinese finishing nets in the Arabian Sea

Previous spread:
The colours of Kerala in Brunton Boatyard's sadhya; morning yoga in Trivandrum





From left:
Serene surroundings
heal the soul; a Spice
Routes houseboat
in Kerala's scenic
backwaters; the boat's
elegant and luxurious
interiors



Ready to go places?

Watch **Time for Kochi** at
[youtube.com/
MalaysiaAirlines](https://youtube.com/MalaysiaAirlines)

From Kerala-born chef Jomon Kuriakose, culinary director at the restaurant chain The Tiffin Box (with branches across the United Kingdom and United Arab Emirates), I've learned that Keralan cuisine reflects everything that surrounds it: the Arabian Sea, the Western Ghats and the monsoon-fed fields. "It's a place where food is deeply seasonal and instinctively local," he says. "What sets Kerala's food apart is clarity and flavour. We don't mask ingredients. We elevate them." Ingredients such as coconut, shallots, curry leaves, tamarind and spices like cardamom, cloves and black pepper are used not just for heat, but for depth, aroma and balance.

For Kuriakose, Kerala's food speaks of trade, migration, faith and celebration. These nuanced influences appear in Syrian Christian fish moilee with coconut milk and green chillies, Portuguese-inspired vindaloo, Moplah Muslim biryani flavoured with dry fruits and ghee, Jewish-style pickled mangoes and temple sadhya rooted in Ayurvedic, plant-based principles. "Few places in India offer such culinary diversity in such a small space," says Kuriakose.

For a taste of this intersection of anthropology and food, dine at The History & Terrace Grill, a lavish restaurant at Brunton Boatyard in Fort Kochi. Set on a former harbourfront shipyard with lofty ceilings, terracotta floors, teak furnishings and vintage art, the hotel is part of CGH Earth, a hospitality brand offering community-led stays across South India. Chefs here have been tending to the culinary legacy of the town's diverse communities, crafting a menu that includes dishes like Portuguese-inspired seafood stews, Anglo-Indian recipes of tender duck in coconut gravy and



chuttulli meen, where the fish marinade follows a Jewish family's handwritten recipe.

NO VISIT TO KOCHI IS COMPLETE WITHOUT A TRIP TO its surrounding backwaters, running parallel to the Arabian Sea. The backwaters consist of a network of waterways that twist and turn, snaking past paddyland, coconut groves and local homes. They include lagoons,



Ready to go places?

Watch **Time for Trivandrum**
at [youtube.com/
MalaysiaAirlines](https://youtube.com/MalaysiaAirlines)



lakes, canals, rivers and deltas, both man-made and natural, shaped by tidal currents that create tiny islands across the coastal landscape. Locals use this vast network for transport, fishing and farming. Now, it's also a place for houseboat cruises, especially in Alleppey, 53km south of Kochi.

To manage the impact of tourism, luxury houseboats like Spice Routes are creating more responsible experiences by anchoring their boats in the quieter village of Chennamkary and welcoming travellers in a two-century-old heritage home that sits on a 7-acre private farm before cruises begin. The houseboats, ranging from one to five bedrooms with ensuite bathrooms, accommodate only one group at a time. Meals are delightfully local, with fish, lobsters and mussels sourced from the fishermen along the canals. Their single-bedroom boats come with a glass-covered lounge, sundeck and a jacuzzi, ideal for gazing at the surrounding landscape.

MAKE YOUR WAY TO THE CAPITAL OF TRIVANDRUM, where you'll find fabulous beach towns, such as the popular Kovalam, as well as many of Kerala's prominent Ayurveda institutions. The southern city is a centre for Ayurveda, a natural, holistic medicinal system that emerged in India over 5,000 years ago. Based on the principles that everything in the body is intertwined, Ayurveda incorporates lifestyle changes and natural remedies to achieve balance and harmony in the body, mind, spirit and the world around us. "A calm

body is required for a calm mind," says Dr Neeraja Radhakrishnan, founder of Nerium Ayurveda and Wellness. In Ayurveda, *doshas* are energies that govern our health. The essence of Ayurveda is primarily to restore the balance of these doshas, and to bring a person back to their *prakriti* (inherent nature), Radhakrishnan says. Therapies like Shirodhara, a healing technique that involves slow-dripping liquid – usually oil or milk – onto the forehead, soothe the hypothalamus, promote deep relaxation and restore balance.

In the heart of the backwaters in Paravur, 56km north of Trivandrum, is the CGH Earth's Kalari Rasayana, an Ayurveda centre located on an 8-acre coconut garden with 22 lakefront rooms. With 11 treatment spaces, Ayurveda programmes here start at 14 days – the minimum time for therapies to take full effect. Treatments are prescribed by doctors and address conditions like stress, insomnia, hormonal imbalance, diabetes and digestive issues, combining detox, massage, yoga, meditation and diet. There's also preventive healthcare, an evolving global trend as more people turn to Ayurveda to curb and prevent illnesses.

"The monsoon season is considered an ideal time for cleansing and taking medicinal porridge to preserve our health," Radhakrishnan says. Traditionally, locals combine cleansing treatments and herbal decoctions with therapies like Shirodhara and Abhyanga, an oil body massage that relieves muscle tension, improves blood flow and calms the mind. Known as *karkidaka chikitsa*, these monsoon rituals are part of Kerala's lifestyle that treat seasonal ailments like cold, cough, indigestion and chronic conditions like arthritis.

The heritage, cuisine, houseboats and Ayurveda aside, the state's rich nature and the warmth and hospitality of its people fit into the narrative of God's Own Country, a tourism slogan first used in the 1980s, now synonymous with Kerala. For Radhakrishnan, it's this atmosphere that fosters a deep sense of well-being across her home state.

And for me, every visit to Kerala feels vibrant and alive. Isabelle Persenda reminds me that Fort Kochi, for instance, is still the sleepy seaside town where time seems to have forgotten its meaning, but events like the Kochi-Muziris Biennale, India's biggest art exhibition, which takes place every two years, transform the town with creativity, colour and cultural expression. "Moments like these," she says, "remind me how special this place truly is."



Clockwise from left: Kovalam, a popular coastal destination in Trivandrum; the local architecture reflects a variety of influences; a Shirodhara treatment



Malaysia Airlines
flies between
Kuala Lumpur and
Kochi 7x weekly.



Malaysia Airlines
flies between
Kuala Lumpur and
Trivandrum 5x weekly.



Book a Business
Class flight +
hotel package to
Trivandrum with
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Welcome
to

Jakarta





IMAGES: SHUTTERSTOCK (STREET FOOD, BUNDARAN HIJ), SETENGAH LIMASORE - UNSPLASH (SCOOTER RIDERS)

How does a city roll out the red carpet for a truly memorable visit?
Some of Indonesia's savvy creatives, bullish business executives
and world-class acts share some open secrets

Words **Sheany**



First, coffee

Indonesia is one of the world's largest coffee producers, growing a variety of robusta and arabica beans, from the full-bodied, chocolate-flavoured Sumatra and Java to Toraja and Kintamani. But the domestic café culture hasn't always been as robust. If recent years have seen Jakarta stake its claim as a coffee capital, it's thanks to a broad movement of homegrown entrepreneurs and connoisseurs, with Mikael Jasin, 2024 World Barista Champion, as one of its key players.

Jasin's career as a barista began 13 years ago in coffee-obsessed Melbourne, where he juggled work and school. Sensing that Indonesia's coffee culture was undergoing a remarkable transformation, he later moved back to Jakarta. Today, he juggles even more: his coffee exporting company, coffee consulting firm and a retail café called Omakafé in the outskirts of Jakarta. There, he focuses on creating an entire experience around coffee for customers, hoping to make it more approachable and less intimidating



Previous spread:
Daily life in Jakarta

This page, left to right:
Mikael Jasin champions Indonesia's coffee culture; the Hutan Kota by Plataran offers a scenic escape from urban hustle; Glodok, Jakarta's Chinatown; Jakarta Good Guide founder Farid Mardhiyanto

for anyone who's trying to know more about this beloved beverage.

He believes that Jakarta's vibrant coffee culture is a key ingredient in making the city a well-rounded dining destination. This includes the product itself, from various interpretations of *es kopi susu* – an espresso drink with chilled milk and coffee grounds that settle at the bottom – championed by different brands, to speciality coffee crafted in different corners of the city.

Then there's the talent behind the brew. Baristas are on the frontlines of tourism, shaping visitors' experiences through both the quality of the interaction and the drink itself. Everyone remembers an expertly made cup, and a great barista is hard to forget. But, as with many hospitality roles in Indonesia, it's not often seen as a lucrative profession.

Jasin begs to differ, saying, "If you're a barista, there's an opportunity for you to do what you love because most baristas are really passionate about coffee. Do what you love, do what you're passionate about and still make a living – a really good living. Not everybody can be a world champion, but there's one every year, right? So there's enough opportunities for a lot of people."

Great guides

Jakarta isn't exactly famous as a walkable city, but that didn't stop Farid Mardhiyanto and friends from creating the Jakarta Good Guide (JGG), a popular walking tour of the city.

Mardhiyanto's career as a tour guide began with a revelation: after exploring different parts of Indonesia for work, he realised he didn't know enough about his own hometown, Jakarta. It was then, in 2012, that he began learning more about the city he grew up in through books and conversations, before eventually earning a guide certification from the local government. Two years later, inspired by a walking tour he'd joined in London, he launched his own version in Jakarta.

"I think Jakarta is a story to be told. If you walk on your own, it's so easy to get lost, and I think Jakarta is often understood simply as a big city with skyscrapers. It is that, yes, but there is more beyond that, and this is a story that the locals must share," says Mardhiyanto.

When JGG first started, its founders hoped it would help create a more wholesome impression of Jakarta aside from just being seen as a transit city. Now, they have bigger ambitions.

"Our hope [is for it to be inclusive, for people to feel welcome] to walk in the city,"

IMAGES: SHUTTERSTOCK, IVANA WIJAYA (PORTRAIT OF FARID MARDHIYANTO)





Clockwise from top: Hadi Ismanto, co-founder of 20/WOL and *Manual Jakarta*; Hotel Tentrem Jakarta owner Karina Pikanto; the hotel's interiors feature extensive Javanese wood carving

Mardhiyanto says. “We’ve found that many people who didn’t use to walk much now use Jakarta Good Guide as a way to start exploring, even if it’s just once a week on the weekend. At least there’s this dedicated time when they can do it.”

Walking, Mardhiyanto says, is what makes exploring Jakarta more meaningful for tourists. Knowing the ins and outs of the city’s neighbourhoods, he takes visitors through hyper-local culinary spots and hidden corners of history even longtime residents might miss. For him, local markets and neighbourhoods are key to discovering the true heart of the city and its people.

“Try going to Glodok. It’s a bit complicated to navigate because of the many small alleys, but it’s in these alleys that you’ll see people interacting in all kinds of ways. Glodok is also a very diverse place; people come from all kinds of ethnic and religious backgrounds, and they all share this space,” he says.

Concepts with soul

If a spot is trending in Jakarta, it’s likely backed by 20/WOL, a development and investment fund focused on lifestyle and creative ventures in Indonesia. Behind many of the city’s buzzworthy establishments, 20/WOL has recently drawn attention on TikTok with clips of people trying artisanal treats from the Donut of Curiosity and the Korean-style patisserie Fragments, raving about the casual fine dining experience at Su Ma Jakarta or obsessing over the tiramisu at Scarlett’s.

What drives the team isn’t just success, but the stories and talents behind each brand. “We let the talent shine, and each talent is different,” says Hadi Ismanto, 20/WOL’s co-founder and managing partner, familiar to locals as the co-founder

and director of the online lifestyle magazine *Manual Jakarta*. “We are creating an ecosystem and platform where everyone can work together, not only in terms of creative expression and creative freedom, but also in terms of practicality,” he adds.

Ismanto attributes his team’s success in capturing the younger market to their focus on the entire customer experience, not just product quality – a notable feat given Jakarta’s complex demographics and shifting tastes. Their success also comes at a time when the shrinking Indonesian middle class has already begun to impact Jakarta’s lifestyle scene as consumers become more thoughtful about where they spend their money.

Ismanto says, “We want every brand we create to have a soul of its own, so you know that a lot of care has been placed into this venue.”

For those on a short visit to Jakarta, Ismanto recommends exploring the city by districts, particularly the areas of Blok M, Senopati and Sudirman Central Business District (SCBD). While relatively close to one another, these districts each have their own signature offerings.

“If you’re looking for something a bit more grassroots, inclusive and lively, go to Blok M,” Ismanto says. “It’s popular for its Japanese ramen, eateries and bars.”

Hotels with personality

Tucked away on the outskirts of the Indonesian capital, Hotel Tentrem Jakarta is a relative newcomer to the city’s hospitality scene, but it stands out for its embodiment of Javanese philosophy and culture.

Behind the establishment is owner Karina Pikanto, who has been intentional about every aspect of the hotel. “Every element, from the architecture and language to the gestures, artworks and culinary offerings, is carefully curated to honour our heritage,” she says. “Each touchpoint is designed to guide guests through a seamless and emotionally resonant journey.”

The hotel brings together Pikanto’s multiple passions – architecture and interior design – along with her insights into travel and hospitality. “I love being able to create environments where every



detail, from the layout to the service, contributes to the guest experience,” she says.

For Pikanto, “luxury” has evolved beyond opulence or excess and is now about crafted experiences. People are more willing to invest in moments of learning and connection, and the hotel meets this need by presenting a strong sense of place, incorporating Indonesian touches, whether it’s through food, art or wellness programmes. The hotel’s breakfast menu, for example, features traditional Indonesian soup – Pikanto’s favourite – from the legendary chain Soto Betawi Haji Mamat. Javanese wood carving is a running theme throughout the property. The goal is to ensure guests experience the country’s rich heritage even without stepping outside the hotel.

“Wherever possible, we prioritise working with local talent and sourcing local products, because we understand the influence we have in shaping who benefits from our success,” says Pikanto.

“

For Pikanto, ‘luxury’ has evolved beyond opulence or excess and is now about crafted experiences. People are more willing to invest in moments of learning and connection”



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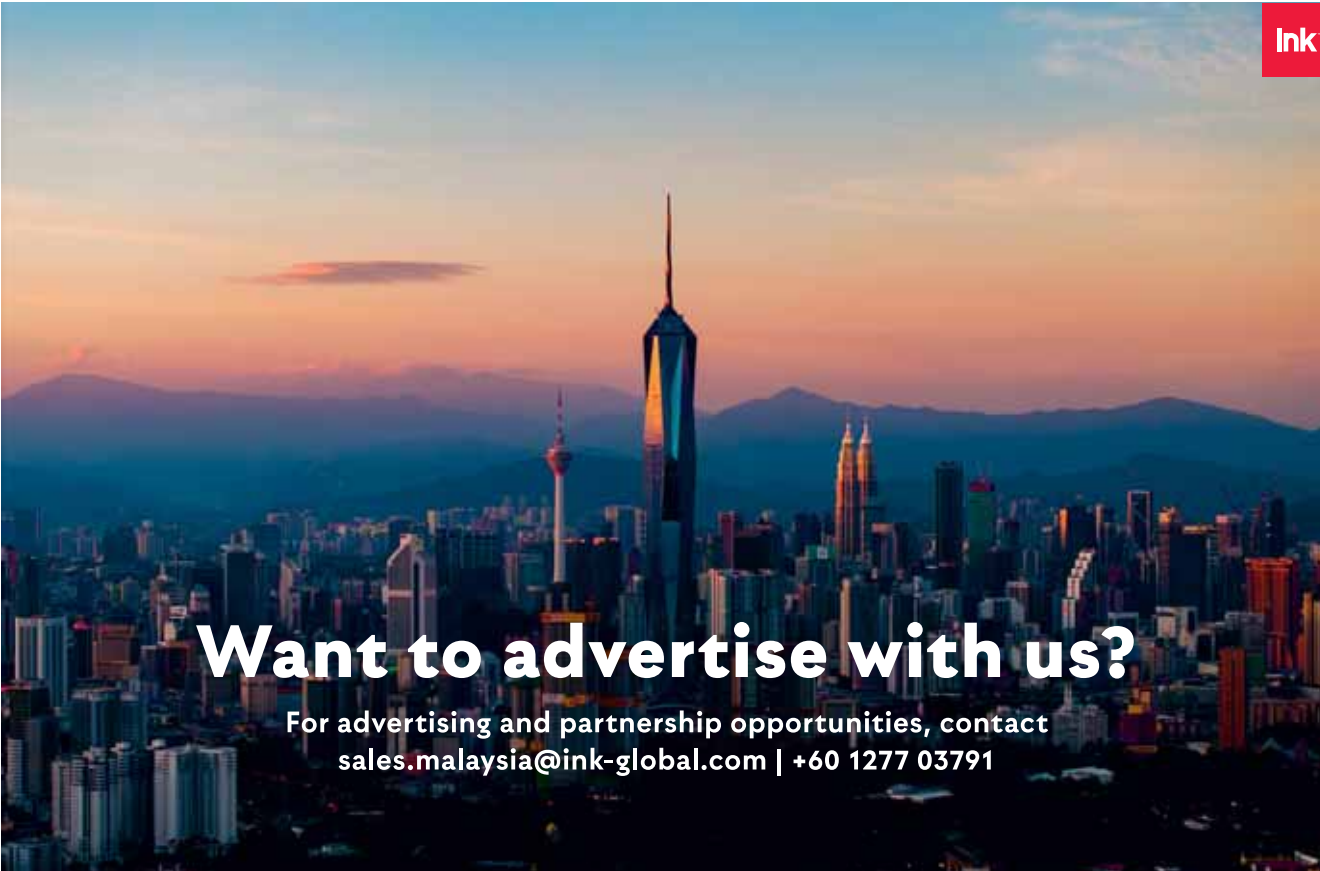
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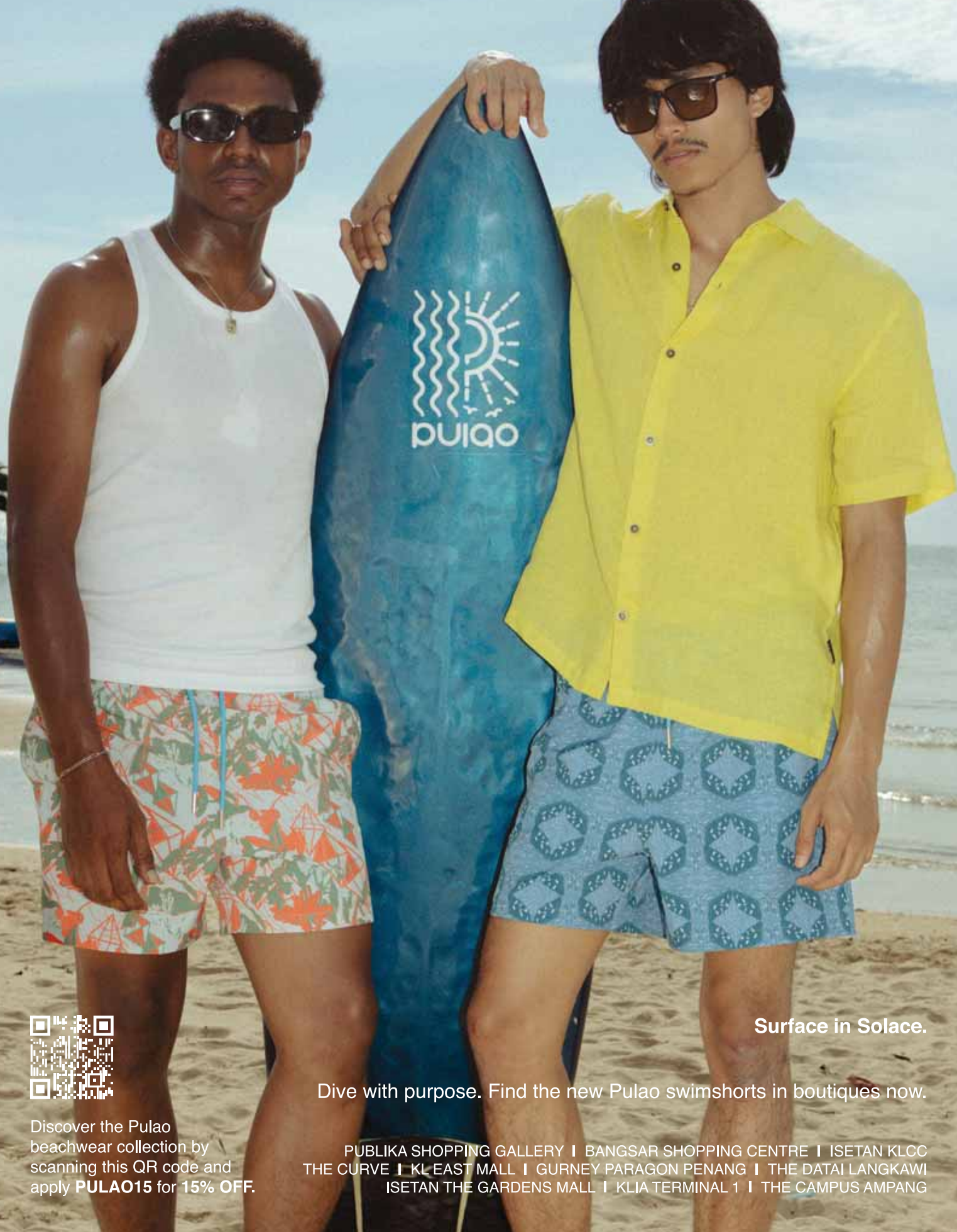


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Flavours *of* Singapore

FOR MORE THAN 60 YEARS, Singapore's street food culture has been more than just a way to eat – it's how generations have connected, created and celebrated. From humble pushcarts to bustling food centres and speciality restaurants, the Singapore dishes we love carry stories of migration, innovation and identity. This eight-page special spotlights some of Singapore's most iconic bites – from chilli crab to Hainanese chicken rice – tracing their roots, flavours and cultural significance. Whether you're rediscovering old favourites or tasting them for the first time, these dishes are a reminder that in Singapore, food is never just food; it's history, heritage and home.



Hainanese chicken rice

Ask any Singaporean what dish best represents their nation, and chances are you'll hear this: the Hainanese chicken rice. Poached or roasted chicken, fragrant rice cooked in stock and that perfect trio of chilli, garlic and dark soy sauce – simple, comforting and deeply satisfying.

Brought by Hainanese immigrants and refined over decades, the Hainanese chicken rice is a study in technique. The chicken must be tender but not mushy. The rice, never greasy, must carry the aroma of ginger and pandan. And the sauces? Balanced, bold and optional – but you'll want all three.

STREET FOOD THROUGH THE DECADES

BEFORE 1965 Roots of a foodie nation

Pushcarts sell cheap, regional dishes on crowded streets. Migrant communities shape Singapore's earliest food identity – informal, flavourful and essential to daily life despite poor hygiene and lack of regulation.

1965–1979 Founding flavours

Street hawkers move into government-built food courts, led by Newton Food Centre in 1971. Sanitation improves, dishes become standardised. Chicken rice, mee rebus and satay emerge as everyday staples in a modernising city.



Le Cheng Kampong Hainanese Chicken Rice

Free-range kampong chicken is gently poached and chilled before it is served with fragrant rice, house-made chilli and ginger sauce. At Le Cheng, expect a deeply flavoured, perfectly textured take on Singapore's most iconic dish. **Open daily, 10AM–12AM; 389 Changi Road**
 @ lechengsg



Boon Tong Kee

Returning to its roots in Chinatown where it started in 1979, Boon Tong Kee's Smith Street outlet serves nostalgic Cantonese fare. Signature sweet and sour meat joins its famed chicken rice in a sleek, modern setting. **Open Thu–Tue, 11:30AM–10:45PM; 11 Smith Street**
 @ boontongkee_sg

1980s–1990s Hawker nation

Hawker centres become community hubs. Generational stalls refine recipes like laksa and popiah. Affordable and inclusive, they reflect Singapore's growing pride in its shared culinary identity.

2000s–2010s Global bites, local legends

Michelin recognition boosts hawker prestige. Media attention grows. Younger Singaporeans hesitate to take over stalls, prompting support schemes. The world celebrates hawker food, but continuity becomes a growing concern.

2020s Heritage on the boil

Unesco recognition affirms hawker culture. COVID-19 forces innovation. Delivery, digital menus and hawkerpreneurs bring new energy. Sustainability, design and fusion flavours signal a refreshed chapter in Singapore's culinary legacy.

Nasi lemak

Long considered Malaysia's national dish, *nasi lemak* also speaks to Singapore's Malay roots. Served wrapped in banana leaf or on a plate, it comprises coconut milk-infused rice, sambal, fried anchovies, peanuts, boiled egg and cucumber. Some also add fried chicken, *otak-otak* (grilled fish cake) or even rendang.

Nasi lemak is known for its balance of flavours. The rice is creamy and aromatic, while sambal is spicy, sweet and smoky. Pile on an interplay of textures such as crunchy *ikan bilis* (anchovies) and runny egg yolk, no wonder this is considered the breakfast of champions, or for supper.



WHERE TO GET NASI LEMAK IN SINGAPORE



Penang Culture

This halal-certified nasi lemak features fluffy coconut milk-infused rice, crispy chicken and sweet-spicy sambal. A comforting, balanced dish served all day across outlets – from Sengkang to Changi. **Visit Instagram for outlet locations and operating hours.** @penangculturesg



97 Nasi Lemak

Born at Old Airport Road, 97 Nasi Lemak serves heritage-rich plates with fragrant rice, crispy wings and bold sambal. Side dishes like rendang and sambal brinjal round out the spread. **Open Tue–Sun, 7AM–2:30PM; #01-96/97 Old Airport Road Food Centre @ 97nasilemak**



Wild Coco

Wild Coco's nasi lemak features fresh, MSG-free ingredients – including 24-hour marinated fried chicken, small-batch sambal and rice steamed with freshly squeezed *santan* (coconut milk). Every plate is rich, fragrant and cooked with care. **Various outlets.** @wildcoco.sg



Chilli crab



Ming Yen BBQ Seafood's chilli crab

Messy, bold and worth every wet tissue – chilli crab is Singapore's most theatrical dish.

Mud crab is stir-fried in a thick, spicy-sweet gravy made from tomato paste, egg and sambal, best mopped up with golden mantou buns.

Though it sounds fiery, it's more tangy than spicy – a dish built on contrasts. The shell-on experience is part of the charm, cracking claws and licking sauce-drenched fingers.

First popularised in the 1950s, chilli crab now defines Singapore seafood dining, the kind you save for special nights and visiting friends. It's not just a dish – it's a ritual, best eaten with hands.

WHERE TO GET CHILLI CRAB IN SINGAPORE



Hong Kong Street BBQ Live Seafood

Part of the Hong Kong Street Old Chun Kee group, this lively Lau Pa Sat stall serves charcoal-grilled seafood, smoky satay and classic *zi char* (stir-fry) till late. Their chilli crab is rich, eggy and bold. **Open daily, 5PM–1AM; #51–53 Lau Pa Sat, 18 Raffles Quay @ [hkstreet_old_chun_kee](#)**



Mellben Signature

Served with homemade sambal and silky egg whites, Mellben's chilli crab balances sweet heat and luscious texture. Trusted since 1988, crabs are cooked to order. **Open daily, 11:30AM–2PM, 5PM–11PM; #01-105, 7 Tanjong Pagar Plaza @ [mellbensignaturesg](#)**



Ming Yen BBQ Seafood

A crowd favourite for over 30 years, Ming Yen's chilli crab hits the sweet spot between value, flavour and nostalgia. Not too spicy or mild, every bite leaves you wanting more. Best enjoyed with crispy mantou. **Open daily, 5PM–1:30AM; #67–68 Lau Pa Sat, 18 Raffles Quay**

Laksa

A beloved staple across Singapore, laksa is the ultimate bowl of comfort – rich, spicy and slurp-worthy. At its heart: rice noodles swimming in a creamy coconut milk broth flavoured with sambal, dried shrimp and herbs. Topped with prawns, fishcake, cockles and a halved egg, laksa is a satisfying blend of texture and taste. Whether it's the Katong-style with thick vermicelli or the Penang-inspired version with tamarind, every bowl tells a story of cultural fusion and local pride. It's a dish that comforts the homesick, delights the curious and always hits the spot – rain or shine.



WHERE TO GET LAKSA IN SINGAPORE



Coffee Hive / Kopi Korner

Creamy, fragrant and generously topped, this coconut-based laksa is comfort in every spoonful. Served in a cosy café setting, it's a go-to for classic flavours with a fuss-free, contemporary twist. **Various operating hours and branches islandwide**
📍 [coffeehiveofficial](#) 📱 [CoffeeHive](#)
📍 [kopikornersg](#) 📱 [KopiKorner](#)



Hup Hup Mee Siam

Using a grandmother's recipe and fresh coconut milk squeezed daily, Hup Hup's laksa is simmered for hours and has a rich, deep flavour. It has also been consistently ranked as one of the Little Red Dot's best. Regulars say it tastes just like the old days. The broth is creamy yet light, with a nostalgic aroma that lingers. **Open Wed–Sun, 6AM–2:30PM, 80 Circuit Road, #02-14** 📍 [huphup.co](#)



KANTIN at Jewel Changi

Nominated as one of Asia's Best New Restaurants, this Bornean eatery is the go-to spot for Sarawak Laksa – a Sarawakian classic famously known as the "Breakfast of the Gods". Rich prawn broth, simmered with over 30 spices, is ladled over delicate vermicelli and topped with prawns, shredded chicken and egg. **Open daily, 11AM–10PM; Jewel Changi #05-206/207** 📍 [kantinjewel](#)



Roti prata

Crispy on the outside, soft and stretchy on the inside – roti prata is both a breakfast staple and a late-night comfort. Often paired with a bowl of curry or a dusting of sugar, it's a dish that can be sweet or savoury, depending on your mood. Brought over by Indian immigrants, prata is made by flipping and stretching dough until it is paper-thin, then folding and frying it on a hot griddle. Watching a prata master at work is half the experience. Whether plain, filled with egg or stuffed with cheese, mushroom or even chocolate, prata remains a deeply satisfying staple of Singapore's food scene.

WHERE TO GET ROTI PRATA IN SINGAPORE



Al-Tasneem

Since 2005, Al-Tasneem has served crisp hand-flipped prata, aromatic dum briyani and hearty, golden murtabak. Bold spices, slow-cooked methods and homestyle flavours make this a Kampong Glam icon a go-to for comfort and tradition suitable for all palates. **Open 24/7; 709 North Bridge Road @ [altasneemrestaurant.sg](https://www.altasneemrestaurant.sg)**



Casuarina Curry Restaurant

Crisp outside, fluffy inside – Casuarina's plain prata is the gold standard. Made daily by long-time chefs, it's "Singapore's answer to the croissant" and comes in over 100 variations. **Open Sun-Thu 7AM-11PM, Fri & Sat 7AM-11:30PM; 136-138 Casuarina Road @ [casuarinacurry](https://www.casuarinacurry.com)**



Chindamani Indian Restaurant

Hot, golden and crisp, Chindamani's plain prata is based on a recipe from the owner's hometown of Kollangudi in Madurai. Made fresh to order and best paired with fish curry, it delivers a satisfying crunch around the clock. **Open 24/7; #01-1263, Blk 108 Hougang Ave 1 @ [chindamani.sg](https://www.chindamani.sg)**



PRATA ALLEY

Voted in 2023 as Singapore's No. 1 Prata by Class95, PRATA ALLEY serves freshly made prata cooked with olive oil. Balancing authenticity, nutrition and flavour, it is rooted in family tradition. **Open daily, 8AM-10:30PM; 321 Alexandra Road, Alexandra Central #01-07 @ [prataalley](https://www.prataalley.com)**

Desserts



Tian Wang

Known for its rich, comforting bubur cha cha, this Keong Saik spot blends tradition with a modern touch. Creamy coconut, soft taro, sweet potato and chewy tapioca deliver texture, nostalgia and just the right sweetness. **Open Mon–Fri, 5PM–2AM, Sat 3PM–2AM, Sun 3PM–1AM; 50 Keong Saik Road, Chinatown Point @ [tianwang.sg](https://www.tianwang.sg)**



Marie's Lapis Café

Marie's Lapis Café serves heritage Peranakan kuehs (traditional cakes or desserts) made with fresh coconut milk and care. Crowd favourites include the best kueh salat, kueh kosui and their signature lapis – known as the "Four Heavenly Kuehs". **Open Tue–Sun, 10AM–9:30PM; 537 Bedok North Street 3, #01-575, with branches islandwide @ [marieslapis](https://www.marieslapis.com)**

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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our airlines**

News and updates
from MAG Airlines

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**Discover our
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See where
MAG Airlines can
take you, around
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**Onboard
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Manchester United takes off with Malaysian Hospitality

Manchester United's First Team touched down in Kuala Lumpur in style, arriving on a special chartered Malaysia Airlines flight from Manchester to kick off their 2025 Asia Tour. The team was greeted with warm Malaysian hospitality before heading to Hong Kong for their post-season match.

They flew aboard a specially designed A330-300 featuring a bold Manchester United-themed livery – blending the airline's iconic national colours with

United's signature red. The design wasn't just eye-catching; it symbolised a shared spirit of pride, passion and global connection.

The collaboration signifies the connection between sports and travel and highlights the airline's commitment to world-class service and seamless connectivity across the region.

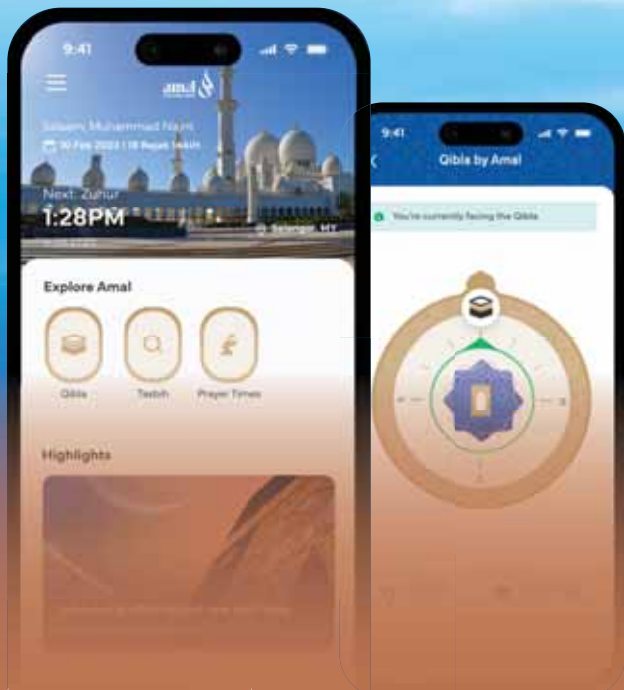
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Enjoy a seamless Umrah journey with Amal by Malaysia Airlines

Planning your Umrah just got easier, safer and more meaningful. Amal by Malaysia Airlines has teamed up with 13 trusted Umrah agencies across Malaysia for the 1447H season, reaffirming its promise to deliver a smooth, secure and heartfelt pilgrimage experience.

These exclusive partnerships mean appointed agencies now enjoy guaranteed flight allocations on Amal-operated services – giving pilgrims peace of mind with reliable travel options, while still keeping flexibility open through authorised agents and direct bookings made easily online via iflyamal.com.

This initiative is part of a national push to regulate the Umrah sector and protect pilgrims from unauthorised packages. For travellers, that means confidence in every step of the journey.

To make the experience even more effortless, Amal has launched a brand-new mobile app designed with pilgrims in mind. With flight and hotel bundles, Enrich rewards integration, spiritual tools and access to curated pilgrimage must-haves through the Amal Mall, it's your one-stop companion for a spiritually enriching and well-supported Umrah – powered by the signature warmth of Malaysian Hospitality.

MAB Academy wins global innovation award for its VR training module

Training for the skies just got a high-tech upgrade. MAB Academy, the learning arm of Malaysia Aviation Group, has clinched the 2025 IATA CBTA Centre Innovation Award for its groundbreaking use of virtual reality in dangerous goods handling training.

A regional first, this immersive VR module was developed with the University of Malaya and brings

real-world warehouse scenarios to life in a risk-free, virtual setting. The result? Safer, smarter and more confident aviation professionals.

This global recognition by IATA shines a spotlight on MAB Academy's forward-thinking approach to aviation training, combining safety, innovation and future-ready skills in one seamless experience.



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Special menu highlight: Nasi tumpeng from Indonesia



A taste of tradition

Malaysia Airlines is bringing a beloved taste of Indonesia onboard this July and August with nasi tumpeng as part of its Best of Asia dining series.

Often served at birthdays, inaugurations and harvest festivals, nasi tumpeng is a beloved Indonesian staple that tells a story with every bite. It is shaped to resemble a sacred mountain, which the Javanese believe to be considered the dwelling places of ancestors, and the rice is coloured golden with turmeric to symbolise prosperity and good fortune.

And now, passengers can savour this cultural favourite in the sky, thoughtfully adapted for both Business and Economy Class.

In Business Suite and Business Class, the dish is elevated with *udang balado* (prawns in spicy chilli sauce), *perkedel kentang* (crispy potato patties) and *urap sayur*, a fragrant medley of *tempeh* (fermented soybean), long beans, kangkung, carrots and grated coconut. Economy Class guests will enjoy a hearty serving of nasi tumpeng with *ayam bakar balado* (grilled chicken in chilli sauce) and the same delightful urap sayur on the side – simple, satisfying and full of soul.

Available on flights from Kuala Lumpur to Sabah, Sarawak, regional destinations, the Middle East, Australia, New Zealand and Europe, this special menu offers a window into Indonesia's rich culinary heritage.

As you travel across continents, let the warm, familiar flavours of nasi tumpeng bring you a little closer to the heart of Southeast Asia. At Malaysia Airlines, every dish is a celebration of culture, comfort and connection.

Selamat menjamu selera and happy travels!



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Sometimes, the most memorable part isn't the trip itself, but the tiny, unexpected moments of happiness that spark a desire for even more adventures.

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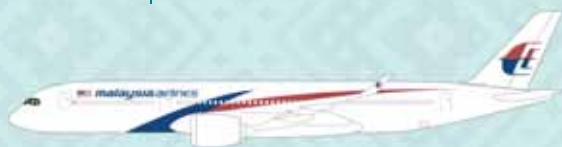
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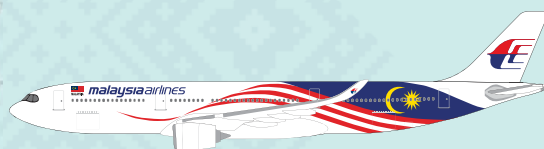
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Max. Cruising Speed **980km/h**
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A330-300

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Max. Cruising Speed **980km/h**
MHConnect Wi-Fi Connectivity on selected aircraft



A330-200

No. of Aircraft **4** | Passenger Seating **287**
Length **58.82m** | Wingspan **60.30m** | Height **17.39m**
Max. Cruising Speed **880km/h**
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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**



B737-8

No. of Aircraft **12** | 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**
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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.



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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.



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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. 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.



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

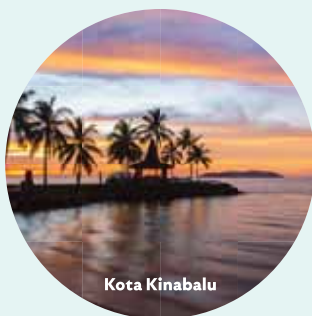


OUR NETWORK

ILLUSTRATIONS BY ELEN WINATA

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- MASwings
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IMAGE: SHUTTERSTOCK (MANILA)



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Step 4

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<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 **p86**  TELEVISION **p95**  AUDIO **p98**



Mickey 17

Check out our **International Movie Collection** on page 93!



**Creation of the Gods II:
Demon Force**



**Detective Conan: The
Million-dollar Pentagonagram**



11 Rebels



Adagio

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Mickey 17

From Oscar-winning director Bong Joon-ho comes this cerebral and visually striking sci-fi odyssey. Robert Pattinson plays Mickey, a “Disposable” human worker sent on suicide missions to help colonise a hostile planet. Each time he dies, his memories are transferred into a new clone – until one day, Mickey returns to find his next version has already been activated. Based on Edward Ashton’s novel, the film ponders on identity, purpose and what makes us truly human. With sharp satire and dark humour, *Mickey 17* questions the value of life in a world built on disposability.

150+

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HOLLYWOOD
LATEST



Novocaine

When his dream girl is kidnapped, Nate (Jack Quaid), who can't feel pain, turns his condition into an advantage and launches a full-throttle rescue mission.



At Her Feet

Set in Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park, archaeology students and their guide race to save ancient artefacts from an erupting volcano in this high-stakes adventure.



The Actor

Set in 1950s Ohio, a New York actor wakes up with amnesia in a small town. André Holland and Gemma Chan star in this noir-inspired mystery directed by Duke Johnson.



The Alto Knights

Robert De Niro plays Frank Costello and Vito Genovese in this gripping crime drama, where a mafia friendship unravels into deadly rivalry in mid-century New York.



G20

When terrorists seize the G20 summit, US President Danielle Sutton (Viola Davis) must use her military skills to protect her family and world leaders. This action-packed thriller showcases Davis in a commanding role, blending political intrigue with high-stakes action.



Cleaner

In this thrilling action film directed by Martin Campbell (*Casino Royale*), a window cleaner (Daisy Ridley) finds herself suspended outside a London skyscraper during a hostile takeover by eco-activists. When the group's mission spirals into chaos, the former soldier must use her military skills to save 300 hostages trapped inside.

MOVIES

THE MATRIX MARATHON

Step into a world where reality is an illusion and freedom comes at a cost. The *Matrix* series redefined sci-fi cinema with groundbreaking visuals, mind-bending concepts and unforgettable action. Follow Neo, a hacker turned chosen one, as he uncovers the truth behind the simulated world he lives in – and the war between humanity and machines controlling it. Spanning four epic films, the saga blends philosophy, cyberpunk style and thrilling storytelling into a genre-defying cinematic ride.



Classics



Two FBI agents go deep undercover as wealthy socialites in this outrageous comedy. Caught in a swirl of fashion, fame and farce, their mission turns into a hilarious identity crisis. **White Chicks** is a wild, quotable ride packed with slapstick and satire.

Kids



Teen detective **Nancy Drew** trades small-town life for Los Angeles, stumbling into a long-unresolved Hollywood mystery while juggling high school drama. A clever, family-friendly mystery packed with clues, suspense and classic detective flair.



Anger Management



The Whole Nine Yards



Inspector Sun and the Curse of the Black Widow



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Malay



After a strange hospital visit, a man slips between dreams and reality in *Imaginur* – a mind-bending sci-fi romance film that took home top awards at the 2024 Malaysian Film Festival for Best Film, Best Director (Nik Amir Mustapha) and Best Actor (Beto Kusyairy).

Hindi



Bajirao Singham (Ajay Devgn) returns with a vengeance in this high-octane action saga inspired by the *Ramayana*. As he sets out to rescue his kidnapped wife, expect explosive battles, emotional stakes and a mythic showdown in *Singham Again*.

Malay



Lion Girl

Indonesian



Keluarga Cemara 2

Hindi



Bad Newz



Tikdam



Mrs.

Tamil



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Chinese

**Creation of the Gods II: Demon Force**

Immortals and mortals unite against dark forces threatening their land. Jiang Ziya and Ji Fa must battle the Shang Dynasty's demonic army to protect the "List of Gods" and their homeland in a mythic clash of titans.



Japanese

**Living in Two Worlds****Detective Conan: The Million-dollar Pentagon****11 Rebels**

Korean

**Adagio****The Land of Morning Calm****One Win**



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Malay



Takdir Itu Milik Aku

Dian's arranged marriage turns cruel, testing her strength as she faces betrayal, pregnancy and heartbreak. Emma Maembong, Liza Abdullah and Shaheizy Sam star in this Malaysian drama series.

Tamil



Padikathavan

When a carefree college dropout becomes an unlikely professor, chaos follows. A fun-filled Tamil series where irreverent humour and unexpected wisdom blend in a quirky engineering college setting.

Hindi



Khichdi (Season 3)

The beloved Parekh family returns with more madness, mischief and memorable one-liners. From Praful's hilarious misunderstandings to Hansa's quirky logic, it's the same crazy fun with even more heart.

Hindi



The Kapil Sharma Show (Season 2)

Tamil



Fun Pandrom

Chinese



The Ravages of Time (Season 1)



Axian Restaurant Trails

Japanese



Ninja Hattori (Season 1-6)

Korean



Dancing Queens on the Road

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TELEVISION

Comedy



Medical Police

Drama



You

Kids

Beware the
Batman

Science & Technology

The National
Museum of
Nuclear Science

Travel

Britain's Scenic
Railways

Sports

FISU Winter
Games –
Alpine Skiing

Get to know Sheldon Cooper before *The Big Bang Theory*. Growing up as a child prodigy in Texas, the socially inept Sheldon (Iain Armitage) navigates school, family and his extraordinary mind in this charming coming-of-age comedy.



Set on the beaches of O'ahu, this action-packed drama follows elite lifeguards tackling life-and-death rescues. From rough seas to emotional tides, the series looks deep into heroism, teamwork and the human stories behind the surf.



Curious, playful and always full of joy, *Pocoyo* is an animated favourite that encourages kids to explore, learn and laugh. With simple storytelling and lovable characters, it's perfect for preschoolers and the young at heart.



Soar with North America's most majestic birds in this breathtaking wildlife documentary. *Wings Over Water* showcases the awe-inspiring journeys of ducks, sandhill cranes and shorebirds as they migrate across stunning landscapes in a tribute to nature's delicate balance.



Japanese

Japanese pop-rock band Ryokuushoku Shikai turns up the charm with **Channel U**, an album full of vibrant melodies, smooth vocals and infectious energy. Blending J-pop with funk, rock and soul, the album explores love, youth and self-expression with signature warmth and polish. A refreshing listen that's upbeat yet emotionally rich.



Hindi

Get ready to feel the rhythm with **Bollywood Bass Boosted** by Dikshyant – a bold reimagining of classic and contemporary Bollywood tracks. Packed with high-octane beats and bass-heavy drops, this electrifying collection is made for dance floors, workouts or just turning up the volume. A sonic fusion where South Asia meets EDM.

Club



French



The Hits



Memories



Korean



R&B



Malay



Tamil



Indonesian



Cantonese



Mandarin



Kids





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Lost in Belum

Tucked away in Perak, less than a 5-hour drive from Kuala Lumpur, Royal Belum State Park is Malaysia's best-kept secret for nature lovers. Older than the Amazon at over 130 million years, it's one of the world's oldest rainforests and is teeming with rare wildlife. Spot all 10 species of Malaysian hornbills in flight, catch a glimpse of the elusive Malayan tiger or marvel at the Rafflesia, the world's largest flower. Lake Temenggor's calm waters are perfect for island-hopping, and don't miss Pulau Tujuh Waterfall and the Talikail Lookout Tower for amazing scenic views. Unplug from the everyday with curated stays at lakeside resorts like Belum Rainforest Resort and Belum Eco Resort, offering jungle treks, bamboo rafting and sunset houseboat cruises: perfect for a refreshing weekend escape! belumrainforestresort.com; belumecoresort.com





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