

TTG ASIA

[LUXURY]

for buyers of premium travel and luxury meetings

ASIA TO
OUTPACE
EUROPE



SPECIAL REPORT

ASEAN's 50 shades of luxury

DESTINATIONS

*Masterminding repeat
success in Lang Co*

GASP!

*Adrian Zecha's
latest venture*

AUTHENTIC TRAVEL CHANGES US.

It is when we travel farthest from home that we learn the most about ourselves. On the edge of our personal comfort zones is where we discover new things, grow, share, and connect with others.

Uncover the world's most memorable travel experiences at

P R E F E R R E D H O T E L S . C O M

#ThePreferredLife



*Preferred*SM
HOTELS & RESORTS

© 2016 Preferred Hotels & Resorts 16_472



THE SIAM

THE LEELA PALACE NEW DELHI

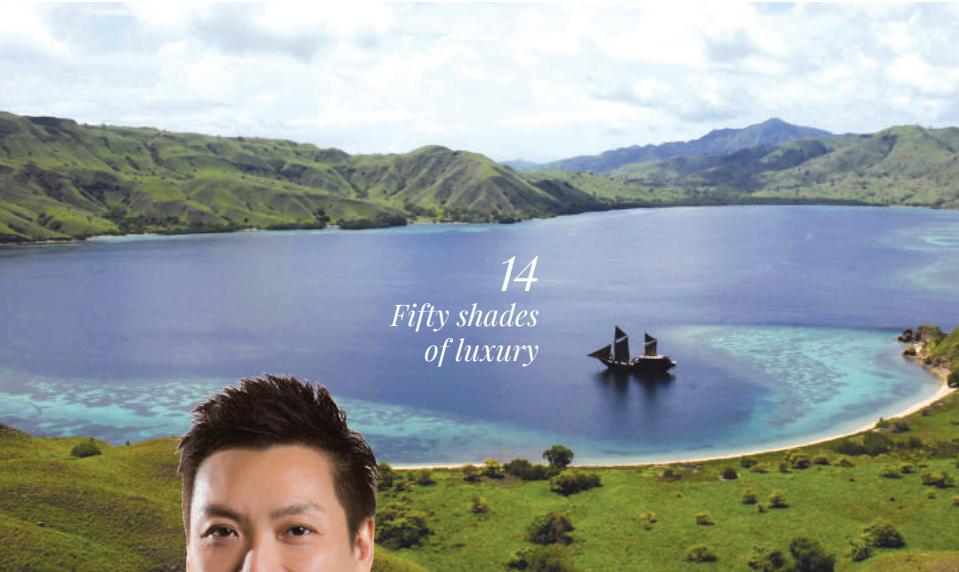
KATAMAMA



TTG ASIA

LUXURY

for buyers of premium travel and luxury meetings



14
*Fifty shades
of luxury*



29
*Past appeals
to present*



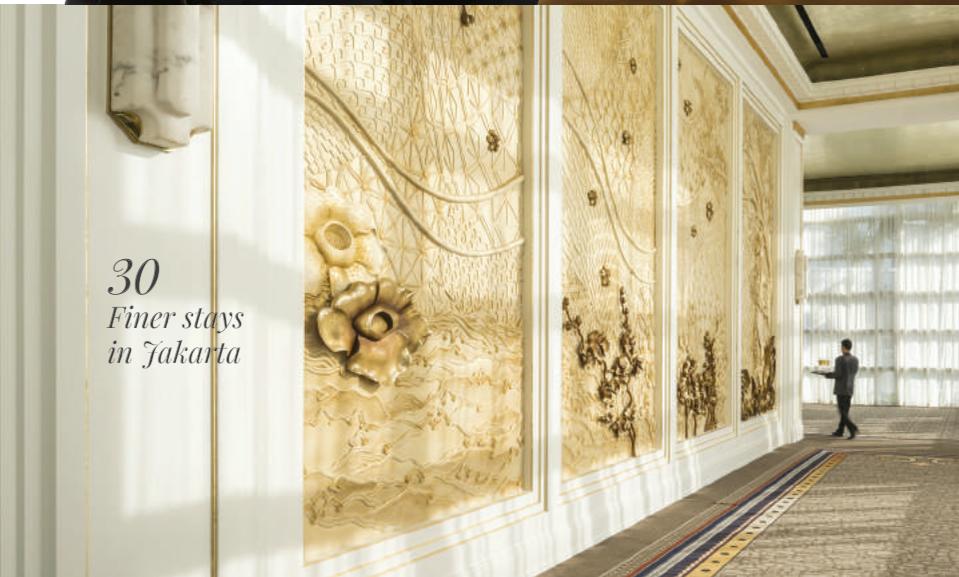
36
*Jewels,
rubies along
the coast*



12
*A brand
for every
young man*

December 2016

- 06 luxury market report overview
- 08 luxury market report india
- 10 luxury market report china
- 12 luxury market report case study
- 14 special report asean 50
- 20 focus heritage hotels
- 26 focus heritage hotels switzerland
- 30 destination indonesia
- 33 destination vietnam
- 36 destination australia
- 40 destination macau
- 42 gasp! the audacity of luxury



30
*Finer stays
in Jakarta*



42 gasp!

TTG ASIA
LUXURY
 for buyers of premium travel and luxury meetings

EDITORIAL

Karen Yue
 Group Editor
 (karen.yue@ttgasia.com)

Xinyi Liang-Pholsena
 Deputy Editor,
 TTG Asia & TTG India
 (liang.xinyi@ttgasia.com)

Dannon Har
 Assistant Editor,
 TTG Asia Online
 (dannon.har@ttgasia.com)

Paige Lee Pei Qi
 Assistant Editor, Singapore
 (lee.peiqi@ttgasia.com)

S Puvaneswary
 Editor, Malaysia / Brunei
 (puvanes@ttgasia.com)

Mimi Hudoyo
 Editor, Indonesia
 (idmfasia@cbn.net.id)

Rachel AJ Lee
 Sub Editor
 (rachel.lee@ttgasia.com)

Yixin Ng
 Sub Editor
 (ng.yixin@ttgasia.com)

Rebecca Elliot
 Correspondent, Australia
 (rebeccaelliott@hotmail.com)

Marissa Carruthers
 Correspondent, Cambodia
 (maris.carruthers@gmail.com)

Caroline Boey
 Senior Correspondent,
 China & Special Projects
 (caroline.boey@ttgasia.com)

Prudence Lui
 Correspondent, Hong Kong
 (prului@yahoo.com)

Rohit Kaul
 Correspondent, India
 (rohit.kaul@ttgasia.com)

Julian Ryall
 Correspondent, Japan
 (jryall2@hotmail.com)

Feizal Samath
 Correspondent,
 Sri Lanka / Maldives
 (feizalsam@gmail.com)

Chadamas Chinmaneevong
 Correspondent, Thailand
 (chadamasc@gmail.com)

Michael Sanderson
 Correspondent, Thailand
 (michael.sanderson@ttgasia.com)

Rosa Ocampo
 Correspondent,
 The Philippines
 (rosa.ocampo@gmail.com)

**Tan Kok Yong,
 Redmond Sia,
 Goh Meng Yong**
 Creative Designers

Lina Tan
 Editorial Assistant

SALES & MARKETING

Michael Chow
 Group Publisher
 (michael.chow@ttgasia.com)

Ar-Iene Lee
 Senior Business Manager
 (arlene.lee@ttgasia.com)

Hidy Lee
 Business Manager
 (hidylee@ttgasia.com)

Pierre Quek
 Publisher, Online Section
 (pierre.quek@ttgasia.com)

Cheryl Tan
 Corporate Marketing
 Manager
 (cheryl.tan@ttgasia.com)

Kwek Wan Ling
 Marketing Executive
 (kwek.wan.ling@ttgasia.com)

Cheryl Lim
 Advertisement
 Administration Manager
 (cheryl.lim@ttgasia.com)

Carol Cheng
 Assistant Manager
 Administration and
 Marketing
 (carol.cheng@ttgasia.com)

PUBLISHING SERVICES

Tony Yeo
 Division Manager

Kun Swee Qi
 Publishing Services
 Executive

Lynn Lim
 Web Executive

Katherine Leong
 Circulation Executive

TTG ASIA MEDIA

Darren Ng
 Managing Director
 (darren.ng@ttgasia.com)

Raini Hamdi
 Senior Editor
 (raini.hamdi@ttgasia.com)

OFFICES

SINGAPORE
 1 Science Park Road,
 #04-07 The Capricorn,
 Singapore Science Park II
 Singapore 117528
 Tel: (65) 6395-7575
 Fax: (65) 6536-0896
 traveltradesales@ttgasia.com;
 www.ttgasia.com

HONG KONG
 8/F, E168,
 166-168 Des Voeux Road,
 Central Sheung Wan,
 Hong Kong
 Tel: (852) 2237 7288
 Fax: (852) 2237 7227



As I pored through the latest studies on the Asian luxury travel market conducted by different organisations, one point came through strongly for me: there isn't one but many shades of luxury that exist inside the sophisticated traveller today.

That person may insist on nothing less than a five-star hotel in a good location when travelling on business, but will readily eschew the comforts of a consistent product for an untested destination lodge when on holiday.

There are different 'tribes' of luxury travellers, according to an Amadeus report. I get that; I myself feel I'm a different animal each time I book travel, the motivation of each trip rather than price guiding my booking decisions.

This is why the industry has seen an explosion of hotel brands as chains strive to cater to this 'different needs@different times' phenomenon, or

why new players such as Airbnb or Onefinestay are able to disrupt the market. Consumer loyalty is as soft as jelly, consumer behaviour as unpredictable as the British weather. Understanding the customer is not as straightforward as it used to be. Those that survive are the ones who accept that reality and who make a real attempt to listen to their customers when they come knocking on their doors.

So guess what my resolution for 2017 will be? If you've listened, you'd guess right! We need more listening skills, not necessarily more data.

On that note, happy holidays from all of us at TTG Asia Publishing to all our readers.

Raini Hamdi, Senior Editor



TTG Travel Trade Publishing is a business group of TTG Asia Media

TTG Asia Luxury is a product by TTG Travel Trade Publishing, a business group of TTG Asia Media. It is mailed free on written request to readers who meet predetermined criteria. Paid subscriptions are available to those who do not meet the criteria. MCI(P)092/08/2016. PPS1815/03/2013 (025540). Printed by Times Printer Pte Ltd, 16 Tuas Avenue 5, Singapore 639340.

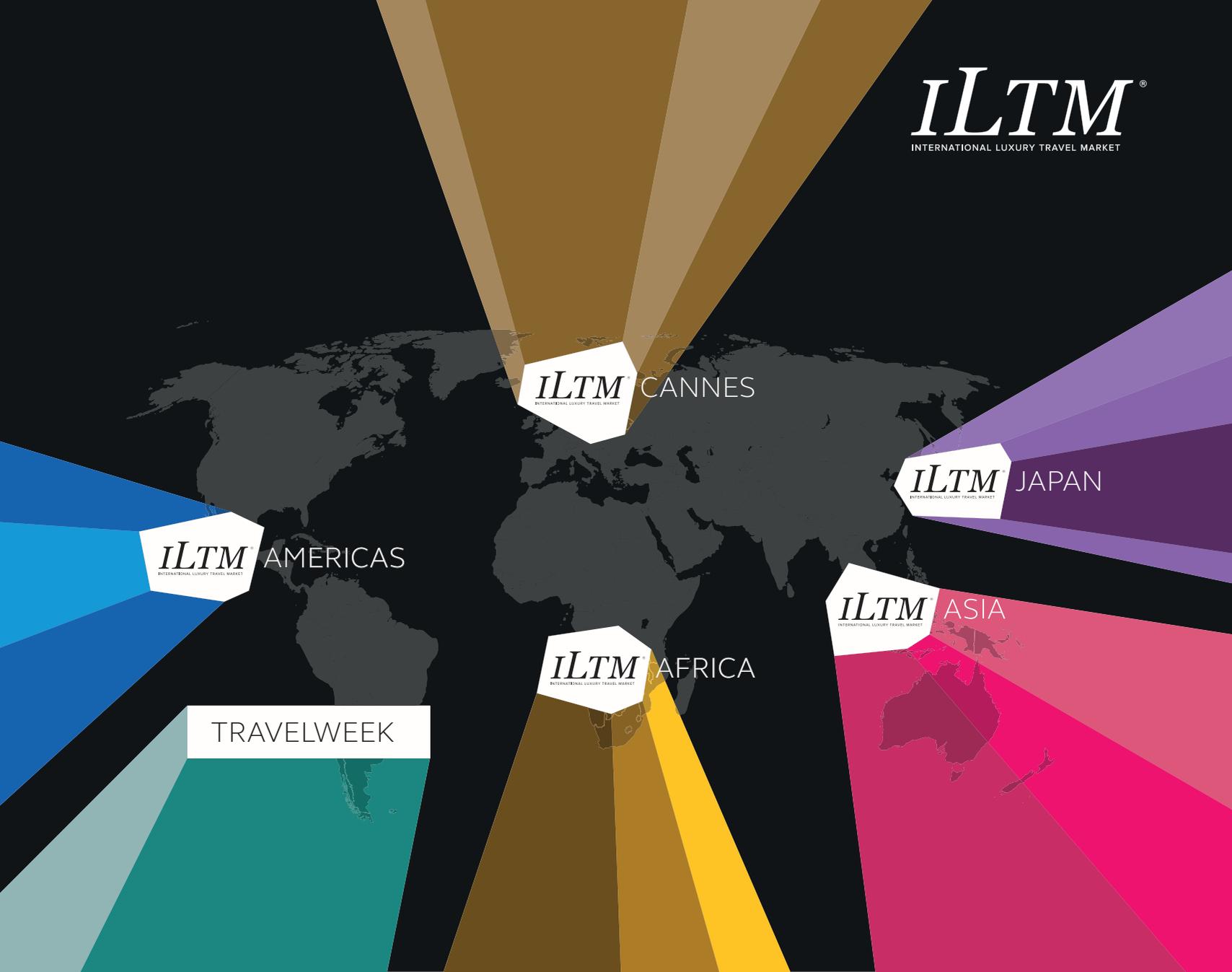
They say trust is key.

And we offer the key to
over 500 luxury
independent hotels in
more than 80 countries.

SLH connects you to a range of independently minded hotels around the world that will never fail to impress.
Be a travel hero, find out more about Small Luxury Heroes at agents.slh.com
GDS: LX for LuXury - VIP Desk: vipdesk@slh.com +65 3157 3190 (ASIAPAC)



Independently minded



International Luxury Travel Market is a portfolio of global, regional and specialist luxury travel events. It is where the luxury travel industry meets.

ILTM Americas

Mexico

25 – 28 September 2017

Market: North America outbound
Buyers: 100% North America (incl. Mexico)
Exhibitors: 100% International

ILTM

Cannes

5 - 8 December 2016

Market: Global luxury travel
Buyers: 100% International
Exhibitors: 100% International

ILTM Japan

Tokyo

27 February – 1 March 2017

Market: Japan inbound/outbound
Buyers: 50% Japan/50% International
Exhibitors: 50% International/50% Japan

ILTM Africa

Cape Town

20 – 23 April 2017

Market: Africa inbound
Buyers: 100% International
Exhibitors: 100% Africa

Travelweek São Paulo by ILTM

Brazil

25 – 28 April 2017

Market: Brazil & South America outbound
Buyers: 75% Brazilian, 25% Other Latin America
Exhibitors: 100% International

ILTM Asia

Shanghai

5 – 8 June 2017

Market: China & Asia outbound
Buyers: 40% China, 60% Other Asia Pacific
Exhibitors: 100% International

ILTM invitation only events bring together the best high quality buyers to meet and discover the most luxurious travel experiences.

For more information visit www.iltm.com or call **+44 (0)208 910 7988**

ASIA *TO OUTPACE* EUROPE



Growth in luxury travel will outpace overall travel. India is the market to watch in Asia-Pacific while China always matters, its rich millennials redefining trends. Here are the findings of latest studies on Asia's well-heeled travellers

luxury market report overview

“The Asian luxury travel market is one to watch. It presents a lucrative opportunity for travel players but will not be an easy one to crack. Asian luxury travellers have a unique set of motivations and needs...”

Hazem Hussein, executive vice president, airline group, Asia-Pacific, Turkey & Eastern Europe, Amadeus



Asia-Pacific’s luxury travel market will see faster overall growth than Europe’s from 2011 to 2025, according to an Amadeus report featuring data from Tourism Economics.

North America and Western Europe lead the world’s luxury travel market (in terms of outbound flights on business or first class), accounting for 64 per cent of global outbound luxury trips despite only making up 18 per cent of the world’s population. However, the Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) in luxury outbound trips for Asia-Pacific from 2011 to 2025, projected at 6.3 per cent, will be higher than Europe (5.3 per cent).

Leading the region are India and China, with a CAGR of 12.8 per cent and 12.2 per cent respectively. India’s projected growth in luxury travel is the highest of the 25 countries explored in the report and presents great potential for luxury travel investment over the coming decade.

The report further finds that growth in luxury travel will outpace overall travel, spurred on by consumers’ desire for life experiences. Over the next 10 years, the growth rate in outbound luxury trips is projected at 6.2 per cent, almost a third greater than overall travel (4.8 per cent).

“The Asian luxury travel market is one to watch. It presents a lucrative opportunity for travel players but will not be an easy one to crack. Asian luxury travellers have a unique set of motivations and needs – truly understanding what drives their travel behaviour will be critical for travel providers looking to tap into that segment,” said Hazem Hussein, Amadeus’ executive vice president, airline group, Asia-Pacific, Turkey & Eastern Europe.

Other key findings from the report, *Shaping the Future of Luxury Travel*, include:

- We have entered a new age of luxury travel, where luxury is curated, real-time and experience-led
- Driven by India’s impressive luxury market growth, South Asia’s luxury travel market will expand at a faster rate than any other region explored
- China’s relatively mature luxury market is set against a backdrop of tightening regulations and a battle against corruption. This means luxury travellers in China are more conscious about flaunting their wealth
- South-east Asia, including Singapore, Thailand and the Philippines, will also see luxury travel outpace overall travel
- A human desire for more rewarding experiences provides an





“This is why offering luxury customers a relevant personal and exclusive experience will become even more crucial than it is today – it will be a differentiating factor between old and new luxury.”

Rob Sinclair-Barnes,
strategic marketing
director, Amadeus
IT Group

essential catalyst to evolve and improve travel industry quality and service standards

- A hierarchy of luxury travel needs is identified, ranging from five-star quality and service standards to exclusive VIP privacy and security

“Luxury means different things to different people and this is especially true today. As emergent middle classes seek the material aspect of luxury travel, more mature markets are craving a new, evolved kind of luxury. This is why offering luxury customers a relevant personal and exclusive experience will become even more crucial than it is today – it will be a differentiating factor between old and new luxury. Exploring the latest technologies and innovations for making the industry work better as a whole is key to achieving a new level of luxury that has never existed before,” said Rob Sinclair-Barnes, strategic marketing director at Amadeus IT Group.



Six luxury traveller tribes

The report also identifies six luxury traveller tribes to help travel providers better target their luxury customer market: Always Luxury; Special Occasion; Bluxury; Cash-rich, Time-poor; Strictly Opulent; and Independent Affluent

4%

Always Luxury

Money is no object whatsoever for this traveller tribe. Luxury is a minimum requirement rather than a perk, and an essential tool for making their life discreet, streamlined and comfortable. They will travel in first class or by private jet, stay in top-tier room categories and pay to outsource decision-making to trusted parties. Unlike other luxury traveller tribes, their travel intentions do not change, and they do not shift between tribes.

20%

Special Occasion

For them, luxury travel is a treat rather than a given, and despite their relative affluence, they're seeking 'wow-factor' experiences. They may use their loyalty points to upgrade their cabin class, seek out prestigious dining experiences and indulge in some well-deserved spa treatments. They may be willing to compromise on comfort at certain stages of their journey if necessary if it means they'll get an incredible travel experience, such as sacrificing luxurious facilities to go on an independent-guided tour of the Arctic.

31%

Bluxury

They will have the seniority and salary to extend their business trip for some luxury leisure travel. Typically CEOs and company leaders, their business objective comes first, but they also want to make the most of their time once the work is done. They may do business in Nairobi, then fly their family to join them on a luxury safari, or extend their stay in Milan to spend a Saturday with a personal shopper.

24%

Cash-rich, Time-poor

Members of this tribe won't necessarily have an objective they need to fulfil during their travel, but they will have responsibilities that dictate when they can and can't travel. Their plans often change at the last minute, so they may travel on flexible tickets. These travellers will most likely outsource their travel planning to third parties, and are willing to pay for expertise. However, they will want their snatches of leisure time to feel private, as it's a rare chance to reconnect with themselves and their loved ones.

18%

Strictly Opulent

This tribe is all about seeking out the best and the most glamorous travel experiences. Sharing their luxury holiday on social media is an important part of this experience – they want to be seen to be having fun, living life to the fullest and being able to indulge. They'll want to know about ways to enhance their trips by consulting luxury influencers. Hiring a luxury yacht for a group of friends would appeal.

3%

Independent & Affluent

This tribe turns to luxury travel when they want to pamper themselves, or try something new. As they have little or no ties, they are free to please themselves when it comes to making travel decisions, and will either travel alone or with a select few friends. They may seek travel brands and destinations suitable for solo travellers, and may be looking for options that enable them to meet new people. They will want to feel that their travel provider is looking after them and helping them make the best choices for their trip, which could typically be a luxury yoga retreat in the Himalayas, or a cookery weekend in the south of France.

India's richest people

Hurun Report India recently released its Rich List 2016, its fifth edition. Here are a few snapshots:



Above Mumbai continues to dominate with 30 per cent of the Rich List residing there

- Hurun Report finds 339 individuals with INR1,600 Crore (US\$240 million) or more, up 43 from last year and double that of two years ago
- The average wealth dropped seven per cent year-on-year, owing to a lacklustre performance of key sectors such as technology, jewellery and trading
- The number of dollar billionaires has increased to 126, up two from last year. The inaugural Hurun India Rich List in 2012 had 59 billionaires
- Thirty-two have migrated from India and are NRIs (Non-Resident Indian). The UAE and the UK are the capitals for NRIs
- With a cumulative net worth of INR6,600 Crore, the Turakhia brothers (aged 35 & 36) debuted on the list. Their advertising technology company media.net was acquired by a Chinese consortium for almost US\$1 billion
- The Usain Bolt of Hurun India Rich List 2016 (fastest-riser) is Vijay Shekhar Sharma (38) of Paytm, a payment technology company. His wealth shot up by 162 per cent to INR7,300 Crore
- Six saw their wealth double year on year
- 123 individuals saw their wealth decline, led by the jewellery sector, which witnessed strikes because of regulatory duty hikes
- With a fortune of INR163,400 Crore, Mukesh Ambani (59) of Reliance holds on to his position as the richest man in India

- Mumbai continues to dominate with 30 per cent of the list residing there. Delhi came in second with 19 per cent, followed by Bengaluru with eight per cent
- Pharmaceuticals dominate with 12 per cent of the list, followed by FMCG and Chemicals & Petrochemicals with 11 per cent and six per cent respectively
- Self-made, with a little help from parents, was the most common route to becoming a billionaire, featuring 51 per cent of the list, followed by self-made without help from parents (nine per cent) and inheriting a business and growing it into a much bigger entity (eight per cent)
- Only 55 per cent are first-generation entrepreneurs, or self-made, down one per cent from last year. This compares with 80 per cent in China
- Savitri Jindal (66), the richest woman in the list with a fortune of INR35,000 Crore, saw her wealth rise by 123 per cent. This is backed by the stellar performance of JSW steel, which doubled in value over the past year
- Just four women occupy a place on the list
- 13 individuals made it to the list after going IPO last year
- The combined wealth of India's richest is a staggering US\$482 billion, equating to one-fifth of India's GDP last year and larger than the GDPs of UAE (US\$325 billion), South Africa (US\$266 billion) & Singapore (US\$294 billion)

Note: The ranking of the richest people in India has a cut-off of INR1,600 Crore. Wealth calculations are a snapshot of the net worth of living individuals as at July 31, 2016, when the rate of exchange to the US dollar was INR66.69

Where to look for rich Indians (by industry)

The industries that added the most number of new millionaires to the list were pharmaceuticals, FMCG, financial service, chemicals, and engineering and construction

Pharmaceuticals

With an astounding figure of 21 billionaires and 18 other individual mentions, the pharma sector has registered the highest contribution to the list. In 2016, the sector witnessed a 17 per cent growth in cumulative wealth compared with 2015, where the number of individuals doubled. The growth in cumulative wealth is substantially driven by the performance of private players; the listed players fared poorly.

FMCG

In 2016 where most sectors failed to keep up the momentum, FMCG registered a decent growth of 14 per cent in terms of the cumulative wealth.

Chemicals & Petrochemicals

Twenty-one individuals derived their wealth from the Chemicals & Petrochemicals sector. Six new entrants are in the list. This sector saw its wealth increase an average of 18 per cent compared with last year.

Consumer durables

Backed by increased disposable income and technological innovations, the entrepreneurs in consumer durable industry showed a positive trend with a decent five per cent growth in average wealth. The sector produced three new entrants to the list. As per studies, the consumer durables market is expected to expand at a compounded annual growth rate of 14.8 per cent and Hurun Research Institute expects significant wealth creation in the near future.

Financial services

Financial Services added six new faces into the list.

Charts

The top 10 rich people of India

Rank	Name	Wealth INR Cr	Change	Company	Age	Residence
1 -	Mukesh Ambani	163,400	2%	Reliance	59	Mumbai
2 -	Dilip Shanghvi	121,500	-4%	Sun Pharma	60	Mumbai
3 ↑	Pallonji Mistry	101,100	16%	Shapoorji Pallonji	86	Mumbai
4 ↓	SP Hinduja & family	100,700	-2%	Hinduja	81	London
5 ↑	Cyrus S Poonawalla	83,000	97%	Serum	74	Pune
6 ↑	Azim Premji	74,700	44%	Wipro	71	Bengaluru
7 ↓	Shiv Nadar	73,000	-22%	HCL	71	New Delhi
8 ↓	LN Mittal	66,900	-20%	ArcelorMittal	66	London
9 ↑	Uday Kotak	51,600	8%	Kotak Mahindra	57	Mumbai
10 ↓	Sunil Mittal & Family	50,300	4%	Bharti Airtel	58	New Delhi

↑ Rank increase yoy; ↓ Rank decrease yoy; - No Rank change yoy; * New to Top 10
Source: Hurun Research Institute

Mumbai has highest concentration of super-rich

With 104 individuals, Mumbai is the capital for India's super-rich, followed by New Delhi (65) and Bengaluru (28)

Geographical spread of Hurun India Rich List 2016

Rank	City	No. of individuals	% change	Change in no of individuals	Richest person
1 -	Mumbai	104	30%	+17	Mukesh Ambani
2 -	New Delhi	65	19%	+10	Shiv Nadar
3 -	Bengaluru	28	8%	+4	Azim Premji
4 *	Hyderabad	18	5%	+8	PV Ramaprasad Reddy
5 ↑	Kolkata	14	4%	+4	Benu Gopal Bangur
6 -	Pune	13	4%	+2	Cyrus S Poonawalla
7 ↓	Ahmedabad	11	3%	+1	Gautam Adani
8 ↓	Dubai	9	3%	-3	Micky Jagtiani

↑ Rank increase yoy; ↓ Rank decrease yoy; - No Rank change yoy; * New to Top 8
Source: Hurun Research Institute

Rich young Chinese seek enrichment

Young, wealthy Chinese want their minds to be as rich as their pockets. Consequently, their travel desires are much broader than just travelling for mere leisure, reports **Raini Hamdi**



Kzenon/Shutterstock.com

Above Wealthy Chinese are set to travel even more over the next few years

Rich Chinese millennials have an average household travel spend of RMB420,000 (US\$65,000) per year – correct, that’s average household *travel spend*, not average household spend – and are set to go on more trips in the next three years.

Hurun Report on *The Chinese Luxury Traveler 2016*, done in conjunction with Marriott International, surveyed 525 rich Gen Ys aged 18 to 36 years old with an average personal wealth of, get this – RMB38.8 million – from sources including investment returns (42 per cent), personal salary (23 per cent) and inheritance (20 per cent). Over half (55 per cent) were male, 77 per cent married and, of that, 75 per cent were with one child.

But the report shows leisure travel has dropped as the major motivator for travel, with 68 per

cent citing this as the reason for travel in the next three years, compared with 82 per cent in 2015.

Instead, exploring the world has jumped as reason for travel in the next three years (50 per cent, from 40 per cent in 2015), along with adventure travel (35 per cent from 23 per cent), cruises (28 per cent from 26 per cent), polar exploration (22 per cent from 16 per cent) and road trips (21 per cent from 12 per cent).

Travel for celebrations and events, study and golf have also dropped.

Because of the shifting trend, interest in neighbouring countries such as Japan (ranked the most memorable travel destination in 2015), South Korea, Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan, and regions

such as South-east Asia, South Asia are less preferred travel destinations in the next three years. Longhaul countries such as the US, the Pacific Islands & Oceania, Africa and the Middle East have seen more interest, increasing by 27 per cent, 49 per cent, 179 per cent, 129 per cent and 73 per cent respectively.

At a media conference at ILTM Asia in June, when asked what Asian destinations could do so as not to lose out to longer haul destinations, Rupert Hoogewerf, chairman and chief researcher of Hurun Report, said: “In terms of frequency of travel, there are still going to be the trips to Japan, South Korea, South-east Asia, etc, because of the geographical advantage – four hours and you’re there.

“But in terms of aspirations, this generation wants to go farther. It strikes me how different they are. I have friends in the UK or Europe, we may go to Italy, Greece, may be Thailand, but rarely do we see the younger people just travelling absolutely anywhere in the world, which is the case for China. And some of the remote or experiential places are pricey, they could well be US\$20,000 per person.

“So I see they will travel two or three times within Asia and longhaul becomes the annual trip. It’s not really a threat to Asian destinations but a demonstration of young Chinese travellers wanting to go farther afield.”

Peggy Fang Roe, chief sales & marketing officer Asia-Pacific of Marriott International, agreed there was no threat. “In Asia-Pacific, we operate in 12 countries. With China as the largest and fastest-growing source in every single market except India, everyone is just trying to figure out how we can look after demand than worry about demand being small.”

From the latest findings, Fang

Roe said Marriott took away three lessons that it would use in particular – these travellers want more personalised service, more digital interactions and more adventurous trips (see case study in the next pages on Marriott's strategy to gain a bigger pie of rich Chinese millennials).

WeChat emerged as the primary source of travel information for these travellers, however, 73 per cent said they had tried personalised travel services offered by a travel agency. The three most important factors that influenced their choice of agent were personalised travel services (70 per cent), expertise (57 per cent) and itinerary planning (54 per cent). But what they found poor most about agencies were their ability to book flights (28 per cent), plan an itinerary (27 per cent) and make food arrangements (27 per cent).

The top 12 outbound luxury travel agencies in mainland China in 2016 are My Tour, Ctrip, 8

“Despite the economy slowing, the impact on outbound travel from high net worth individuals seems to have steadily grown. Young luxury travellers have developed significant spending firepower, minted on the back of the recent boom in Chinese entrepreneurship, together with a growing class of second generation ‘rich kids’.”

Rupert Hoogewerf, chairman and chief researcher, Hurun Report, Shanghai



Above Ritz Carlton Bali spa

Continents, HH Travel, Zanadu, Imperial Tours (first time in the top 12), CITS, CITS Amex (first time in top 12), Diadema, CYTS, Wild China and CTS, while American Express is considered the best outbound agent in Macau and Taiwan. This was based on a survey with 56

respondents from senior hotel management during April-May 2016.

In choice of luxury hotel brands, the most popular is Ritz-Carlton (same as last year's findings), followed by Four Seasons, Peninsula, Mandarin Oriental, Shangri-La, Banyan Tree, St Regis and Park Hyatt.

Room cleanliness, personalised service and quality of bedding are the three major factors when choosing a hotel. However, for young Chinese travellers with a household net worth of over RMB100 million, personalised service is tops (42 per cent), followed by guestroom view.

Overall, young Chinese luxury travellers have an average hotel room budget of RMB3,113 per room per night.

As to how they splurge that average household travel spend of RMB420,000 per year, more than half of that (RMB220,000) goes to shopping – clothing, bags, watches, jewelry, local specialities, electronic products and alcohol, in that order, mostly for themselves (96 per cent said so), as gifts (indicated by 68 per cent) and bought on behalf of friends or family (12 per cent).



A brand for every young man

Marriott International has not yet captured lots of rich Chinese millennials in its Asia-Pacific hotels and intends to do so by expanding its luxury brands in China and Asia-Pacific. By **Raini Hamdi**



Above Peggy Fang Roe

Hurun Report on *The Chinese Luxury Traveler 2016*, done in conjunction with Marriott International, shows Ritz-Carlton as the most popular hotel brand for young wealthy Chinese travellers. That should make Marriott smile. But considering Marriott has 19 brands, and the rest did not appear in the top eight, a lot more needs to be done.

Of the 19 brands, 10 are represented in the region and four are luxury brands – Ritz-Carlton, JW Marriott, Edition and Bvlgari.

The company's chief sales and marketing officer-Asia-Pacific, Peggy Fang Roe, guessed that the chain's share of young Chinese

travellers in the region is around 20 per cent. In the upper-end bracket, these are mostly guests at the 25 Ritz-Carlton hotels across Asia-Pacific, comprising 'older young' people who are likely to be staying on corporate account.

At the other spectrum comprising young Chinese travellers whose price points are lower, the chain loses out because it is concentrated mostly on four- and five-star brands.

Marriott however, is plugging this gap with its agreement with China's Eastern Crown Hotels Group, inked in February, to develop Fairfield by Marriott hotels in China. The total target is 140 Fair-

fields – a new affordable mid-range brand – of which the company plans to have 100 open by 2021. As well, it is looking to bring Moxy to China, its latest entry-level brand designed to hook millennials to the chain.

"The younger Chinese travellers in the mid class tend to have a lower price point. But we see they are wanting to stay in more established, international brands, with quality as a key consideration. Today, their choices are the local brands and Airbnb. That's why you will see us move more down, partly driven by the economic environment but also to cater to demand from the next generation," said Fang Roe.

In the luxury tier, the chain looks to Edition, JW and Bvlgari to net more rich Chinese millennials. A Bvlgari hotel will open in Shanghai next year but it is the Edition brand that is gaining traction in Asia.

Worldwide, there are currently only four Editions – London, New York, Miami and Istanbul – in operation. A collaboration with Ian Schraeger, the brand targets the next-generation traveller with design, personalised service and entertainment, among others.

The first Edition in Asia opened in Haitang Bay, Sanya, last October. This will be followed by two others in Shanghai and Bangkok in 2017-2018. And in one fell swoop, Marriott also signed a deal with Singapore tycoon Kwek Leng Beng (City Developments Limited) to open a new-build Singapore Edition in the Orchard Road district in 2019 and to relaunch (last month) the Philippe Starck-designed South Beach hotel as a JW.

"Our own research shows young customers don't stick one brand, even within luxury. In the US, maybe they do, but in Asia, a young luxury consumer may go to Sanya and stay at Ritz-Carlton for one night, and at Marriott for three nights. Even though they have a lot of money, they are focused on value.

"So luxury isn't just one tier but

“So luxury isn’t just one tier but segments based on attitudes, behaviours and different price points.”

Peggy Fang Roe,
chief sales and marketing
officer, Asia-Pacific,
Marriott International

segments based on attitudes, behaviours and different price points. Thus, we’re looking to segment luxury even more. We believe we can offer distinctive tiers – that’s where you’ll see us going in the future,” she said.

When asked if 19 brands are too many, Fang Roe said: “Hotel branding started in the US and hotels were a cookie-cutter. What people wanted was a Courtyard – travel was hard and people wanted consistency, no surprises. Today, people don’t want that anymore. They want much more design, lifestyle, customised services, so having more brands help.

“The trick is for us to teach people what is available in our portfolio and we use our Marriott Rewards (loyalty programme) to do that. We’re spending more time communicating that we have 19 brands, and the different experiences they can enjoy with each.”

Elite Member benefits now include such experiences as VIP access to culinary demonstrations, concerts, catwalks and the NBA



Global Games in China. The chain is also piloting a new hospitality programme called Li Yu, tailored specifically for Chinese guests, with Mandarin-speaking personalised assistance and service across its hotels.

Fang Roe said Marriott asked the Hurun Report to focus on Gen Y Chinese because it wanted to understand them even more.

“They define the future of travel. A lot of what we do – building hotels, designing experiences – take time, so we have to study these behaviours in order to innovate for the future,” she added.

And three key learning points? According to Fang Roe, that would

From top
The Miami Beach
Edition; JW Mar-
riott Singapore
South Beach

be how to marry their desire for personalised service with their love for the digital (little or no human interaction), how to feed their hunger for adventure and unique travel experiences, and how to keep them loyal because these young luxury travellers perceive loyalty programmes as low value and not unique.

FIFTY

shades of luxury

Lewzstock/Shutterstock.com

Idyllic river towns like Laos' Vang Vieng offer a taste of the slow life



2017 marks 50 years of the founding of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), which comprises the 10 countries Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. In this special report, luxury travel planners show the many shades of luxury their clients can enjoy in a region that is so blessed with diverse attractions

The luxury of doing nothing



Do nothing, and Laos is the best place to do nothing.

Unwind, get offline, get a coffee, watch the Mekong. Or, just have a French-inspired lemon tart...

Doing nothing is easily achieved in Luang Prabang's boutique hotels with their private pools and lotus ponds.

Do nothing in style is the ultimate luxury and there is no better place than Laos and Luang Prabang to do...nothing.

– *Andreas Hofmann, managing director, Asian Trails Laos*



The luxury of new discoveries



Undoubtedly, the luxurious South-east Asia holiday one can enjoy today is to charter a yacht or *phinisi*, which is a traditional Indonesian two-mast sailing ship, and go on voyages of discovery through the stunning, undiscovered waters of the Indonesian archipelago such as Raja Ampat and Komodo.

One of the most luxurious liveaboard *phinisi* ships in Asia is the *Alila Purnama*, which provides ultra-modern and relaxing accommodation for up to 10 guests. The five suites with large windows give 180-degree views of the ever-changing landscape. There's even a fully licensed PADI dive centre, a spa therapist and plenty of space for wining, dining and relaxation on board.

– *Jess Yap, general manager, Country Holidays, Singapore*





NatlyPTG/Shutterstock.com

The luxury of private access

“As crowds in and around Angkor Archaeological Park continue to increase, I like venturing a bit further. Board a private helicopter, accompanied by the deputy director of the Greater Angkor project, Damian Evans, and fly to a distant ruin away from the touch of tourism. During some seasons, temples such as Banteay

Ampil have no road access, so you are often alone amidst the ruins.

A gourmet hamper accompanies for refreshment, and Evans gives up-to-the-minute information on his cutting-edge research and findings, which made world headlines this year.

The luxury of limited access – an Angkor temple to oneself and a private expert guide – cannot be overstated.

– *Ethan Crowley, director of business development, ABOUTAsia Travel, Cambodia*



The luxury of high service levels

“Not too long ago, I was given an assignment to plan a trip for one of my high income net worth clients. The brief was “a private arrangement” as it was his honeymoon.

I chose the Amanpulo resort on Pamalican Island in the Philippines and was invited to accompany him.

Arriving on a private executive jet from Manila, our entourage was met by a team of professionals who were both discreet and extremely attentive to the needs of everyone in the party. This increased my client’s expectations, as he did not imagine that such high service levels could exist on a remote island. I was overcome by the quiet sense of purpose and security, factors that rank quite highly for my clients.

This was supplemented by special butler services and professional concierge who were discreet and knowledgeable. In addition, each meal was an out-of-this-world experience as menus were based on each individual’s preference e.g. food cooked to one’s dietary requirement, be it fat free, low calorie, low salt, gluten-free, etc.

The private beach gave us the unique feeling that we owned the resort. The dive and snorkel sites nearby also offered a fantastic glimpse of the underwater world.

This is the most luxurious South-east Asia experience, which I would encourage others to experience for themselves.

– *John Chan, business development director, Kris International Traveltours, Malaysia*

Facing page, clockwise from top *Alila Purnama*, a luxurious liveaboard; Yap on vacation; Indonesia’s spectacular marine life; the secluded islets and turquoise waters of Raja Ampat **Top** Angkor Wat at sunset **Bottom** View of the Sulu Sea at Amanpulo



The luxury of uniqueness



I cannot really pinpoint one South-east Asia experience as the “most luxurious”.

However, I can suggest a few unique experiences in the region.

Myanmar screams exotic and is sure to thrill travellers of varied tastes. From ballooning over the stunning ruins of ancient temples at Bagan in the fiery hue of the rising sun followed by a champagne breakfast, to absorbing the Burmese way of life on a luxury cruise aboard the all-balcony *Sanctuary Ananda* along the Ayeyarwady River, one can soak in the calm and tranquillity in this country.

Laos is one of Asia’s best-kept secrets. Watch the daily dawn procession of Luang Prabang’s saffron-robed monks, float down the Mekong to see Buddhist caves and whiskey-brewing villages, swim in the azure waters of Kuang Si Falls.

You have to visit Cambodia to

witness the breathtaking sunsets over the Angkor Wat complex. Over in Cambodia, a decadent way of seeing the famous World Heritage Site, Angkor Wat complex, is to explore the temples’ rich history and awe-inspiring architecture by a helicopter. You can also indulge in a private sunrise yoga session! Taking a boat trip across Tonle Sap Lake is also a wonderful experience.

– *Ratti Dhodapkar, managing director, Abercrombie & Kent Vacations, India*

The luxury of pristine places



An archipelago comprising more than 1,500 islands, Indonesia has a lot of islands unex-

posed to tourism.

Raja Ampat is home to 540 types of corals, more than 1,000 types of coral fish and 700 types of mollusc, a heaven for divers. For those who

Above Hot-air balloons over the temple-dotted plains of Bagan

prefer to just relax, the sights of so many islands with crystal-clear water are overwhelming. It is heaven for them, too.

On Moyo Island in Sumbawa, you can scuba dive or snorkel to meet sea turtles; hike or do a jeep expedition in the tropical forest; take a midnight cruise to the Amanwana Bay.

Moreover, Indonesia offers luxurious hotels such as Amanwana, part of Amanresorts, where you can enjoy the beauty of Moyo Island in a splendid tented camp accommodation.

But the luxury experience need not mean expensive things. It is more about the opportunity to cherish and appreciate the originality of the surroundings. This can be in the form of having tea from a teapot made by local artisans, or eating food that comes from a nearby village. It is being able to enjoy local products in a beautiful place.

– *Bernard Akili, group chief marketing officer, Smiling Tours & Travel, Indonesia*



The luxury of great events

“ South-east Asia has become a popular destination for ‘young money’, wealthy 20-somethings, educated overseas, speak English and arts/event-related travel is their kind of thing.

I have a customer who attended the Ultra Music Festival Bali and booked the Ultra Pool Suite package at Potato Head Beach Club for the two-day event on September 15 and 16 at US\$12,000 a day.

After that he travelled around Bali with around 10 friends and the group stayed in a 14-bedroom private cliff villa estate. The overall package for his four-day stay in Bali, including the event tickets, business class air travel and expenses, was around US\$60,000 to US\$65,000.

He and his friends departed from different cities in China and went to Bali just to attend the event and explore the place.

The Ultra Music Festival is a series event held in Seoul, Tokyo, Taipei, Hong Kong, Singapore, Manila and Bali, and my customers normally attend at least two events on the circuit.

– *Mango Li, owner, Shanghai My-Tour Travel, China*

The luxury is in the details

“ Franca Sozzani, the editor-in-chief of *Vogue Italia*, is quoted as saying that luxury is not to be shown because it is made up of details. Not much is shown when you arrive at Phuket’s Trisara resort as most of its delights are hidden behind the manicured tropical gardens. With its exclusive collection of sheltered pool villas, it is detail-packed, from the breakfast treat of avocado on sourdough toast with lime, coriander and balsamic reduction, to the secluded pools in each villa.

– *Roger Harris, founder and director of Charlotte Travel, Hong Kong*

Above Trisara’s attention to details conveys luxury cues for Harris
Left Shanghai My-Tour Travel’s Li



1 The new campaign will promote the twin objectives of commemorating the 50th anniversary of ASEAN in 2017, and embracing the South-east Asia region as a single and united, yet diverse, tourism destination.

2 Further objectives include raising international arrivals to South-east Asia from 108.9 million in 2015, to 121 million by the end of 2017, and increasing tourism receipts from US\$75 billion in 2014, to US\$83 billion by the end of next year.

3 Key target markets for VisitASEAN@50 are the longhaul markets such as Europe, the Middle East and North America, as well as intra-ASEAN, China, Japan, South Korea, India and Australia.

4 VisitASEAN@50 will be official launched at the ASEAN Tourism Forum in January 2017 in Singapore.

5 There will be media familiarisation trips showcasing ASEAN connectivity and multi-country travel routes and campaign promotion in international travel trade shows in key source markets. As well, cooperative marketing programmes with travel, media and airline partners, print and online advertising, TV, video and promotions, social media campaigns to enhance consumer engagement, and promotional programmes by ASEAN’s NTO’s targeting trade, consumer and MICE markets throughout 2017.

6 There will also be special tour packages with offers, special airfares, shopping discounts for travel in 2017.

7 VisitASEAN@50 is part of the ASEAN Tourism Strategic Plan 2016-2025, which was adopted by the association’s tourism ministers in Manila in January 2016.



Repurposed fully yours

Military blocks, woolsheds, embassies, among others, have been repurposed into hotels offering high tech, high touch and rich history. Here's a look at a few good old-new properties

▲ *JW Marriott Singapore South Beach*

Why it is historic

Singapore's first JW Marriott occupies a large part of The South Beach mixed-use development which comprises not only the hotel but a range of offices, restaurants and bars. It has historical significance because it was the site of Beach Road Camp, the Singapore Volunteer Corps' headquarters in the 1930s. It also became headquarters of the Singapore Military Forces (SMF) when the SMF was set up in 1954. After Singapore became independent, some of the country's first military units were based there as well.

Three army blocks – blocks 1, 9 and 14 – along with the adjacent Non-Commissioned Officers (NCO) Club, were given conservation status in 2002 and became the four heritage buildings used by The South Beach today.

How it was restored

Block 1 is now home to South Beach Quarter, comprising a club, a bar and two restaurants run by lifestyle group Massive Collective while block 14, now renamed Assembly, houses a bar and 15 meeting rooms. Block 9, once the drill hall of the Straits Settlements Volunteer Force, is now The Grand Ballroom. Keeping to its social past, the NCO Club has been restored and will be home to four upcoming F&B concepts.



▼ *The Murray, a Niccolo Hotel, Hong Kong*

Why it is historic

The Murray Building was built in 1969, designed by acclaimed architect Ronald Phillips together with the then Public Works Department, and was the former site of government offices on Cotton Tree Drive, Central, in Hong Kong.

With nearly 50 years of history, this 27-storey building was the tallest government building at that time and was designed with its windows accurately oriented to avoid excessive direct sunlight.

The tall white landmark structure, with its distinctive arches and unique recessed windows, has since won many awards for its groundbreaking and energy-efficient design.

How it is being restored

The award-winning architecture of this iconic building will be preserved during the transformation into a contemporary urban chic

hotel, bringing new design while conserving The Murray Building's civic architecture style of the 60's.

World-renowned British international studio for architecture and design Foster and Partners has been engaged as designers for the project. No strangers to landmark developments in Hong Kong, their works include The Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank headquarters and Hong Kong International Airport.

Unique aspects

The 336-room hotel will offer a sophisticated sanctuary in the heart of the city with a stunning rooftop bar overlooking breathtaking views of the city, said a spokesperson. A series of signature restaurants and creative event and meeting facilities are also being planned. – *Raini Hamdi*

Sales & marketing contact

Maxine Howe, director of sales and marketing
Email: maxine.howe@niccolohotel.com

The four heritage buildings blend with two new towers standing 45- and 34-storeys tall that first opened in 2015. One is occupied by JW Marriott since November while the other is primarily an office building with tenants such as Expedia and Facebook.

Unique aspects

The JW Marriott Singapore South Beach today is a successful marriage of heritage with modernity, according to its spokesperson. The Philippe Starck-designed property is not only an iconic structure that has altered Singapore's skyline but is an eco-friendly building as well. The most striking feature that weaves through the entire development is a microclimatic wave-like canopy that covers the open spaces, linking the conservation buildings with the two towers. The canopy acts as an environmental filter, providing shelter and drawing air currents to cool the area beneath it. – *Dannon Har*

Sales & marketing contact

Email: contactus.jwsingapore@marriott.com



► *The House on Sathorn at W Bangkok, Thailand*

Why it is historic

Dating back to 1889, the House on Sathorn has changed hands a few times in its long history. Luang Sathorn Ratchayukta, who was in the realty business and developed the canal network in the Bangkok district of the same name, originally built it as two separate residential structures. The son who inherited the property built two wings to connect them, creating a courtyard garden, but family debts saw it handed over to the Royal Treasury in the 1920s and it was put to use as the Hotel Royal. The longest owner was Russia, as it was home to the embassy from 1948 to 1999, after which it went unused until Starwood built the W Hotel and renovated the house.

How it was restored

When it reopened in 2015, the house had been through about five years of renovation and redecoration, some of which took place as the adjacent 31-storey hotel was being built. The main challenge is the one that's hardest to see: all the electrical wiring required upgrading. Given the property's history, Thailand's Department of Fine Arts set strict rules for the renovation and Starwood said it worked with it every step of the way. The house was painted in the original colour scheme, but modern art and decor were picked for contrast while keeping the spirit of the original.

Unique aspects

W Bangkok's spokesperson said the main appeal of The House on Sathorn is its classic looks and history. But beyond this, there are three F&B spaces. The signature, The Dining Room, showcases chef Fatih Tutak's progressive Asian cuisine, the other two are a bar and the courtyard which are more casual. The Conservatory function space, formerly a small school when it was the Russian embassy, is popular for weddings. "When you come in here it's very different," said the spokesperson. "We are in the heart of the city. Outside the traffic is really bad, but here it's really relaxing." – *Michael Sanderson*

Sales & marketing contact

Sales: sales.wbkk@whotels.com

Events: events.bangkok@whotels.com





▼ *The Phoenix Yogyakarta, MGallery by Sofitel*

Why it is historic

This hotel was built in 1918 as a private house of a well-known spice trader, Kwik Djoen Eng. In 1930, it was transformed into the Splendid Hotel and was renamed Yamato Hotel during the Japanese occupation in 1942. From 1946 to 1949, it was the official residence of the Chinese Consulate.

This hotel has been a great part of Indonesia's history, in particular in 1951, when it became the temporary residence of the governing president, Soekarno, when the capital city of Indonesia relocated to Yogyakarta. During this period, the hotel was given a new name, Hotel Merdeka.

The first Indonesian president's room has been well maintained,

with an authentic writing desk inside the suite.

The building itself is an example of elegant Indische architecture, with a mixture of European Art Nouveau with Javanese and Chinese culture elements.

Later renamed The Phoenix Hotel, it received a Heritage Award in 1996 from the Yogyakarta Heritage Society, recognising the area as a conservation site in Yogyakarta and the hotel's efforts to restore the building's original look and protect its rich heritage.

How it was restored

The first restoration took place in 1993. The hotel had undergone a massive renovation to match the upscale standard of the Grand Mercure brand.

The façade and front part of the hotel were kept to their original architecture. The dining room was transformed into the library room.

Two wings of rooms were built behind the original building, in a fashion that harmonised them with the original building.

Unique aspects

A heritage hotel. The first building of the hotel is as original as it was in 1918.

It also enchants guests with the experience of a Javanese cultural heritage in Yogyakarta. Its guest relations department gives a memorable tour of the hotel, sharing with them the history of the building and the unique elements at the hotel.

Guests can also see vintage newspapers, old photos and antique objects in the hotel. There's even a city tour in an antique Mercedes sedan. The hotel also tries to deliver local experiences in house such as conducting a *jamu* class. – *Mimi Hudoyo*



Sales & marketing contact

Email:

info@thephoenixyogya.com



▲ *Eichardt's Private Hotel, Queenstown, New Zealand*

Why it is historic

Eichardt's was born as a result of the rich vein of gold, which drew many prospectors, opportunists and down-right optimists from around the globe to the shores of Lake Wakatipu. The quest for pastoral land brought William Gilbert Rees to the shores of Lake Wakatipu in 1859 when he built a homestead on the lakefront and erected a woolshed on the site now occupied by Eichardt's.

When gold was discovered in the nearby Shotover River, Rees found himself at the centre of a gold rush – his homestead declared an official goldfield and the main business area developed around the station. The entrepreneurial Rees quickly turned to hotelkeeping; the woolshed was given a wooden façade and turned into a hotel and named the Queen's Arms.

In early 1866, Rees entered into partnership with Albert Eichardt who went on to become the sole proprietor of the hotel three years later. Eichardt renamed the hotel Eichardt's Queen's Arms Hotel, but during his time there, it came to be known simply as Eichardt's Private Hotel, catering mostly for tourists as the town evolved from a mining settlement to something

more permanent.

Eichardt's is a significant local landmark, listed as a Category 2 historic place by the Historic Places Trust. Eichardt's today accommodates discerning travellers from around the globe.

Unique aspects

Melding the old with the new, a new penthouse is the jewel in Eichardt's crown, featuring a commercial grade kitchen with private chef, state-of-the-art entertainment system, outdoor kitchen, and sauna and outdoor spa on the private rooftop terrace with uninterrupted views over Lake Wakatipu.

Guests can also enjoy the award-winning Eichardt's Bar, and The Grille by Eichardt's. Opened in spring this year, The Grille is situated on the shores of Lake Wakatipu with impressive views of the surrounding mountain vistas. Everything it serves is homemade and homegrown, with a new kitchen tricked out for curing, smoking and grilling, taking standards up a notch. – *Small Luxury Hotels of the World*

Sales & marketing contact

Email: eichardtsmedia@eichardts.com





◀ *The Edison George Town, Penang, Malaysia*

Why it is historic

The building was commissioned and built in 1906 as a residence for a tycoon named Yeo Wee Gark. It was designed by architect David Nathaniel, and was converted into a hotel after World War II. During the Japanese Occupation of Penang, the building was used as their administrative centre.

The restoration of the hotel was a 24-month journey starting with design planning in July 2014. It reopened this year.

The building was designed with many of the opulence associated with the wealthy of those years, for instance, generous space planning and the extensive use of metal works imported from the UK. The grounds were fairly extensive and atypical of a tycoon's place of dwelling, housing the main residence and an annex for the servants' quarters.

Unique aspects

The aspiration of rekindling the romance of staying in a hotel for each of its guest is what sets the hotel apart, said a spokesperson. The brand pillars of alluring heritage, timeless design, diverse culture and affordable luxury characterise its personality. – *Small Luxury Hotels of the World*

Sales & marketing contact

Sales: Charles Ayerru, executive assistant manager

Email: charles-ayerru@theedisonhotels.com

Marketing: Ivan Khoo, executive assistant manager

Email: ivan-khoo@theedisonhotels.com



◀ *The Tokyo Station Hotel, Tokyo, Japan*

Why it is historic

The Tokyo Station Hotel originally opened inside the Tokyo Station Marunouchi Building, an iconic landmark in the heart of Tokyo, on November 2, 1915, and over the past century has been called home by famous Japanese writers and prominent worldwide figures.

In 2003, The Tokyo Station Marunouchi Building was officially designated an Important Cultural Property of Japan and underwent major preservation and restoration in 2006. The hotel was temporarily

closed for six years and re-opened in 2012.

Unique aspects

With renewed European classic interiors, there are 150 guestrooms and banquet rooms, 10 restaurants and two bars, and a fitness & spa centre. Located just 30 steps away from JR Tokyo Station, the hotel offers a complimentary Meet & Greet service to and from Tokyo Station platforms. – *Small Luxury Hotels of the World*

Sales & marketing contact

Atsushi Ueda,

international sales manager

Email: ueda@tokyostationhotel.jp



Destination hotels with lineage

Switzerland boasts many historic hotels and recent years have seen a flush of private funds going into a string of these storied properties, their serious-dollar renovations rekindling the domestic travel market's interest in their locations, and even helping to launch whole destinations to foreign travellers.

With wealthy Asian clients desiring more unique experiences on the one hand, and these hotels recognising the power of the emerging Far East on the other, the setting is set for a match made in heaven. At The Dolder Grand in Zurich, for instance, China already contributes a four per cent share and is continuing to be fast grow-

ing, according to managing director Mark Jacob, who also noted "a strong pick-up" from South-east Asia and Australia.

The lure of these heritage hotels goes beyond their lineage. Often, their location and brazen renovations make them unique destinations in their own right.

And these properties need not be in places that are far-flung to or out-of-reach of time-poor/cash-rich Asian guests. Some are right under the noses of Asian luxury travel planners.

Raini Hamdi spotlights two such hotels, The Dolder Grand, Zurich and Hotel Villa Honegg within the vicinity of Luzern.



◀ **The Dolder Grand, Zurich**

Why it is historic

In the 1890s, a private entrepreneur saw how people had a need for leisure time in a city that was fast growing, so he built a restaurant (now the Dolder Waldhaus, four-star sister of The Dolder Grand) on a hillside location, Adlisberg Hill, blessed with super-abundant greenery and overlooking Lake Zurich, the city and the Alps. He even built a tram to bring people up to the place and till today, this delightful little tram continues to be the link between the city and the resort.

In 1899, he built The Dolder Grand. As the city grew, the hotel witnessed the city's transformation from where it stood. Its fame grew as city views grew. VIP guests, the likes of Winston Churchill and Albert Einstein, made it a point to go to the Dolder.

Entrepreneurs seem to have a thing with Dolder. In 2001, Swiss entrepreneur Urs Schwarzenbach became majority shareholder of the hotel and put in a sensational US\$470 million to renovate it.

Since re-opening in 2008 after a four-year upgrade, the 175-room hotel has been welcoming today's VIPs including Hillary Clinton and Leonardo DiCaprio and wealthy guests from Switzerland and international markets.

How it was restored

Lovingly and under the expert hands of famous London architects Foster and Partners. The historic main building of the hotel has been preserved and two modern buildings – the Spa Wing and the Golf Wing – now flank the hotel.

The restoration also enables the hotel to use geothermal energy for efficient energy consumption, with 70 probes sunk 150m into the ground. But the over-arching message behind the restoration is clearly one of 'lifestyle', bringing The Dolder Grand's history as a place for relaxation and recovery from life's stresses to heights it probably never imagined it would be delivering one day.

Unique aspects

Art, wellness, fine dining, golf or plain doing nothing but soaking in the fresh air and natural environs and be pleased by classic service make The Dolder Grand a complete lifestyle package.

The Dolder Grand Spa encompasses a space of 4,000m² with 18 luxurious treatment rooms and also offers medical wellness.

More than 100 artworks adorn the hotel, their information digitalised and iPads provided for guests to do their own self-guided tours.

F&B outlets include a two-Michelin-star restaurant and a 14-GaultMillau points all-day dining, Saltz, with indoor/outdoor seating.

Sales & marketing contact

Anna Roost,
director of sales
Email: sales@dolderhotelag.com





▲ *Hotel Villa Honegg*

Why it is historic

The hotel was built in 1905 by Emil Durrer, the nephew and godson of legendary hotel entrepreneur and railway builder Franz Josef Bucher-Durrer, in one of the finest locations on Burgenstock mountain opposite Lucerne.

From where it stood on Ennetburgen, 482m above Lake Lucerne, the hotel has been enthralling guests with numerous points of view, not least beautiful Lake Lucerne, the Bernese Alps and the Engelberg valley.

A carpenter, Durrer built and designed the hotel himself and even built a connecting route from the hotel to Felsenweg, a spectacular path along a vertical rock face which affords walkers more sensational views of Lake Lucerne and the Alps.

Today, anyone can walk the trail that leads to one of Switzerland's most jaw-dropping attractions, the Hammetschwand lift, Europe's highest open outdoor lift, and be carried in it 153m down a vertical cliff under

a minute to the Felsenweg path.

The hotel saw good times until 1914, when World War I broke out. Injured German internees were accommodated there during the war years 1914-1918.

The business later continued with the family running the hotel. In 1977, the family sold the hotel to Frey AG Mattgrat but plans to build a health centre failed due to a lack of funding. Later the hotel was used as a film set.

Since 2007, it has been in private ownership and was re-opened in May 2011 after a multi-million dollar renovation that lasted several years.

How it was restored

Handsomely and elegantly refitted, reflecting the new owners' (a Qatari-based private concern) penchant for top quality and luxurious facilities. For only 23 rooms, the hotel has the full service and facilities of large hotels, yet its boutique size and private environs create a secluded villa feel.

Unique aspects

This is an all-weather hotel designed to make guests feel they are in their

own private villa estate with top-notch service where staying indoors if it rains isn't an issue as it is such a complete hotel ideal for relaxation and pampering.

Rain or shine, guests can while away their time in a gorgeous L-shaped outdoor pool and marvel at the sight of the alps while being soaked in perfectly-heated water and strategically-placed spa jets and a whirlpool. There's also an indoor pool which has underwater music.

There's even an in-house cinema with 20 plush leather seats which guests can book at no charge for a private screening of a movie of their choice. Other comforts include a modern spa, an exclusive gym, a children's playroom, a recreation room, a cigar lounge, a fine-dining restaurant and a private terrace serving superb regional fare. Or guests can simply sleep in. Breakfast is served till 14:00.

Sales & marketing contact

Marc Metzger

Email:

Marc.Metzger@villa-honegg.ch

Past appeals to present

Historic hotels are never out of vogue and have also found a following among deluxe younger travellers. Mark Wong, Small Luxury Hotels of the World vice president Asia-Pacific, tells **Raini Hamdi** why



Are historic hotels back in vogue? What do your bookings show and what are some of the trends?

Historic hotels have never been out of fashion as consumers never tire of hotels and experiences that hark back to another era.

Our historic hotels have always had their niche clientele, but recently we do see more of a growing demand from a generation of younger travellers. These travellers are increasingly achieving their status fix from the stories they can tell about the brands they use, which reaches far beyond the star rating of a hotel.

Small Luxury Hotels of the World currently has 71 historical hotels in its portfolio of over 500 hotels ranging from medieval convents to lavish chateaus, private mansions to captivating castles. Many of them are historic landmarks and heritage buildings lovingly restored and repurposed as boutique hotels, while others have been handed down from generation to generation. They all provide a storied and meaningful connection to their destinations and evoke emotional connections with the locale. The fact that these hotels contribute almost 15 per cent of our global revenues attests to their popularity with travellers.

Do they really appeal to the next-gen traveller who has so many new millennial brands to choose from?

Historic hotels appeal to a wide audience and increasingly the millennial traveller. What's interesting is that while millennials love the stories attached to a heritage hotel, they also don't want to sacrifice their modern-day comforts. They are looking for nostalgia but with a twist and our character-filled, historic hotels intrigue them with the stories they have to tell. They offer them a sense of place and an immersion of local history and culture. Many of them incorporate certain elements that give guests a glimpse into the backstory of the hotel.

At our latest New Zealand

property in Christchurch, Hulbert House, for example, its six elaborately-designed suites are named after figures related to the property's history including Horatio Nelson Firth who built the house in 1888. Black-and-white prints depicting Queenstown in the Victorian era from the Arrowtown Museum also adorn the walls throughout the building.

Another of our hotels, L'Hotel, Paris was Oscar Wilde's last home. It currently has a package available until January 15 comprising a walking tour re-tracing Oscar Wilde's footsteps through Paris in the 1800's, tickets to a new Oscar Wilde exhibition at Le Petit Palais, lunch at its Michelin starred Le Restaurant or a speciality afternoon tea.

New millennial brands are not able to replicate the authenticity of historic properties or the bespoke curated experiences that the millennial travellers desire.

Any tips for luxury travel planners on how best to sell historic/heritage hotels?

It's important to learn about the history and architecture of such hotels, which goes hand in hand with the hotel's interesting stories. Your clients will be more fascinated with the colourful past-life of the hotel and the local community than the actual thread count of the bedlinen. Travellers nowadays seek to make their hotel stay a memorable part of an overall vacation experience, hence hotels with rich histories can make them feel they have been part of something meaningful. Our dedicated voice team has in-depth knowledge and is always on hand to divulge interesting facts about our hotels.

Historic hotels do not mean old and outdated. On the contrary, our hotel interiors are equipped with modern luxuries and technology, while the architecture and design integrity are intricately restored and conserved – sometimes brick by brick. Your clients will appreciate the attention to detail and quality craftsmanship on the finishing, coupled with the personalised service that defines our modern age.

Finer stays in Jak



Luxury hotel brands have opened fast and furious in Jakarta, but those alone will not be enough to lure high-paying guests. What's needed are infrastructure improvements.

By **Mimi Hudoyo**

Over the last few years, Jakarta has seen the opening of upper upscale and luxury hotels, with the market showing no signs of abating.

Among the properties that entered the market last year were the 173-room Raffles Hotel Jakarta, 380-room Fairmont Jakarta, 293-room Sheraton Grand Jakarta Gandaria City and 505-room Grand Mercure Maha Cipta Kemayoran.

More recently, the 125-suite Four Seasons Jakarta and 272-room The Westin Jakarta were added to the inventory. Currently, there are a

total of 9,555 rooms spread across 35 hotels in the upper upscale and luxury category operating in Jakarta.

From now until 2020, at least 14 more high-end brands – with more than 3,450 rooms – are set to open in Jakarta, according to STR's July 2016 data. These include storied names such as St Regis, Waldorf Astoria, Park Hyatt and Langham, all of which are new to the market.

According to Alexander Nayoan, chairman of the Jakarta Hotels Association and managing director of The Dharmawangsa, these new developments will further propel Jakarta's position as an upmarket



Left Ballroom foyer of the new Four Seasons Hotel Jakarta



Jakarta is one of the region's busiest business hubs. We have already hosted retail events, for clients such as Aston Martin and other high-end luxury retail groups, and will host many more.

Christian Poda, general manager, Four Seasons Hotel Jakarta



destination. "The entry of luxury brands will result in a positive image of the city, as Jakarta is included in the brand's websites. The more Jakarta properties there are means the more visible Jakarta will be in the hotels' affiliated GDS," he said.

Nayoan also pointed out that there were brand junkies among travellers and that "such travellers will look first for the brands they like when they need to travel". As such, the more brands Jakarta has, the more opportunities there are to accommodate new travellers.

Arun Kumar, general manager of The Westin Jakarta, added: "Jakarta as a city is gaining recognition. As a market, it is still maturing, and there is still a lot of room to grow."

Christian Poda, general manager of Four Seasons Hotel Jakarta, concurred: "Jakarta is a city very much on the rise in terms of culture, food, art and music. The city has a vibrant and diverse variety of restaurants and bars, and world-class shopping."

While many of these properties are concentrated in the heart of the city along Jalan Jenderal Sudirman, Jalan MH Thamrin and the Mega Kuningan compound, some of the newer ones are further afield, in line with the city's move to create multiple business and lifestyle areas.

For example, Raffles Jakarta is located on Jalan Prof Dr Satrio, the first luxury property along this stretch. It is part of the upmarket Ciputra World superblock development that includes offices, shopping mall and residences. It is also linked to the Ciputra Artpreneur Centre, which opened last year.

Similarly, Sheraton Grand Jakarta Gandaria City is part of a mixed-use development comprising an office tower, shopping mall and apartments – located in a residential neighbourhood in south Jakarta.

Meanwhile, the Grand Mercure Maha Cipta Kemayoran is the first upper upscale property located near the Jakarta International Expo,

a major exhibition facility. Apart from catering to exhibitors and buyers, the hotel aims to draw on the growing commercial, housing and tourism businesses in north Jakarta.

Like many capital cities, the corporate market is a major source of business in Jakarta.

Matt Gebbie, director of Horwath HTL, said: "Jakarta is Indonesia's economic hub (and it has been) attracting high net worth business travellers. The C-suites look for luxury and increasingly, they have solid choices in Jakarta."

Poda agreed: "Jakarta is one of the region's busiest business hubs. We have already hosted retail events, for clients such as Aston Martin and other high-end luxury retail groups, and will host many more."

However, while some destinations like Singapore and Hong Kong also attract leisure markets in addition to business travellers, Jakarta still needs to work on capturing this segment.

Poda elaborated: "The leisure travel market is relatively small, but a growing number of travellers are now using Jakarta as their starting point for discovering the rest of Indonesia."

Gebbie added: "Jakarta is not the obvious choice for luxe travellers' vacations. However, as a short stopover, for weddings, visiting friends or before they jet elsewhere, Jakarta offers various luxe options. These include hotels, dining and entertainment, shopping, clubs, golf, incredible people and high service standards."

He added that as upper upscale and luxury hotels open, these properties also bring with them facilities like spas, restaurants, bars/clubs, pools and even jazz clubs – all of which add value to the destination and improve the general service standards.

However, before the leisure market can be courted, industry play-

ers *TTG Asia Luxury* spoke to opined that Jakarta needed to improve its infrastructure, create products that are suitable for the luxe travellers, and promote them well regionally and internationally.

Renato Domini, CEO of Panorama Destination, opined that Jakarta needed to come up with luxury experiences to attract the leisure market.

Domini said: "Asia World Indonesia (Panorama Destination's sister company) has been trying to come up with luxury products in Jakarta. The city has luxury facilities like hotels, dining and entertainment spots, but luxury leisure travellers want authentic experiences and this is the element that is lacking in the city."

Kumar added: "Jakarta is not a leisure-driven market. Indonesians from other parts of the country may come during the weekends for shopping, but the price point for this market is pretty much in the three-star hotel category.

"For example, our kids want to spend the weekend in Singapore because there are many things they can do there. It is that kind of infrastructure that we need to build in Jakarta."

Gebbie said: "On the leisure side, luxe travellers can go anywhere as money is not the driving force, time and experiences are. A destination must be accessible, hassle-free and safe. For Jakarta, convenience and accessibility can be improved."

He stressed on the importance of infrastructure development and said that the opening of Soekarno-Hatta International Airport's Terminal 3 was a "great start".

"The airport train plus MRT will help to alleviate the pressure on the roads," explained Gebbie. "The continued improvement of Halim Perdanakusumah Airport as an alternative central airport and private jet gateway, the addition of green spaces and the perception of increased security and safety are all the things the city needs."

Three luxe products

Fit for royalty

The beachfront Rumah Luwih has opened in Gianyar, Bali. Designed by prominent Indonesian architect Hendra Hadiprana, the resort's architecture is inspired by the Ujung Water Palace in Karangasem, a historical site known for melding Balinese with European architecture.

The resort has 75 luxurious rooms – including three suites – with sizes ranging from 40m² to 200m², including private balconies. F&B facilities include the all-day dining Andrawina Restaurant, The Living Room for light meals and refreshments, and the Beach Pavilion.

Purify your soul

Guests can take part in a time-honoured Hindu-Balinese tradition while staying at The Ritz-Carlton, Bali. The 45-minute spiritual programme takes place on the beaches of the resort in the early morning, when Surya (Sun God) rises. Balinese Hindus believe that blessings from both Surya and Baruna (Ocean God) are required for a clean and fresh new beginning.

The process starts with a Balinese priest offering a devotion to both gods, followed by a ritual where the guest's hands, feet, face and mouth are cleansed thrice with holy water, symbolising the cleansing of the body, mind and soul. After which, a prayer follows and a three-coloured string is tied around the guest's wrist and worn until it falls off.



Cempedak Private Island

This private island in Indonesian waters is being developed into a luxurious tropical retreat featuring 20 handcrafted bamboo villas, designed to cocoon guests in comfort amid a lush tropical paradise.

Each villa features a generous deck and plunge pool, while a spiral staircase leads to a spacious bedroom with folding glass doors onto a balcony.

To get there, a short ferry journey takes guests to Bintan and, after immigration, guests are driven in a private vehicle to Cempedak Jetty for a 25-minute speedboat ride to the island.

Above Cempedak Private Island



Jimmy Tran/Shutterstock.com

Masterminding repeat success

Lang Co beach near the Hai Van pass mountain in Hue, Vietnam

Laguna Lang Co is a viable add-on in a high-end Vietnam round trip but as a standalone, it depends on whether Banyan Tree Holdings can replicate its Laguna Phuket success there. By **Yixin Ng**

Tourism in Lang Co has remained in a state of slumber unlike the crescendo of buzz in neighbouring Danang and Hoi An. The addition of Laguna Lang Co, its first integrated resort, promises new possibilities for this yet unspoilt, peaceful, quaint coastal township in the Phu Loc district.

Lang Co enjoys a diverse landscape of mountain range, lagoon and ocean. It is also part of a designated economic zone, even though signs of a maturing economy here are currently few and far between.

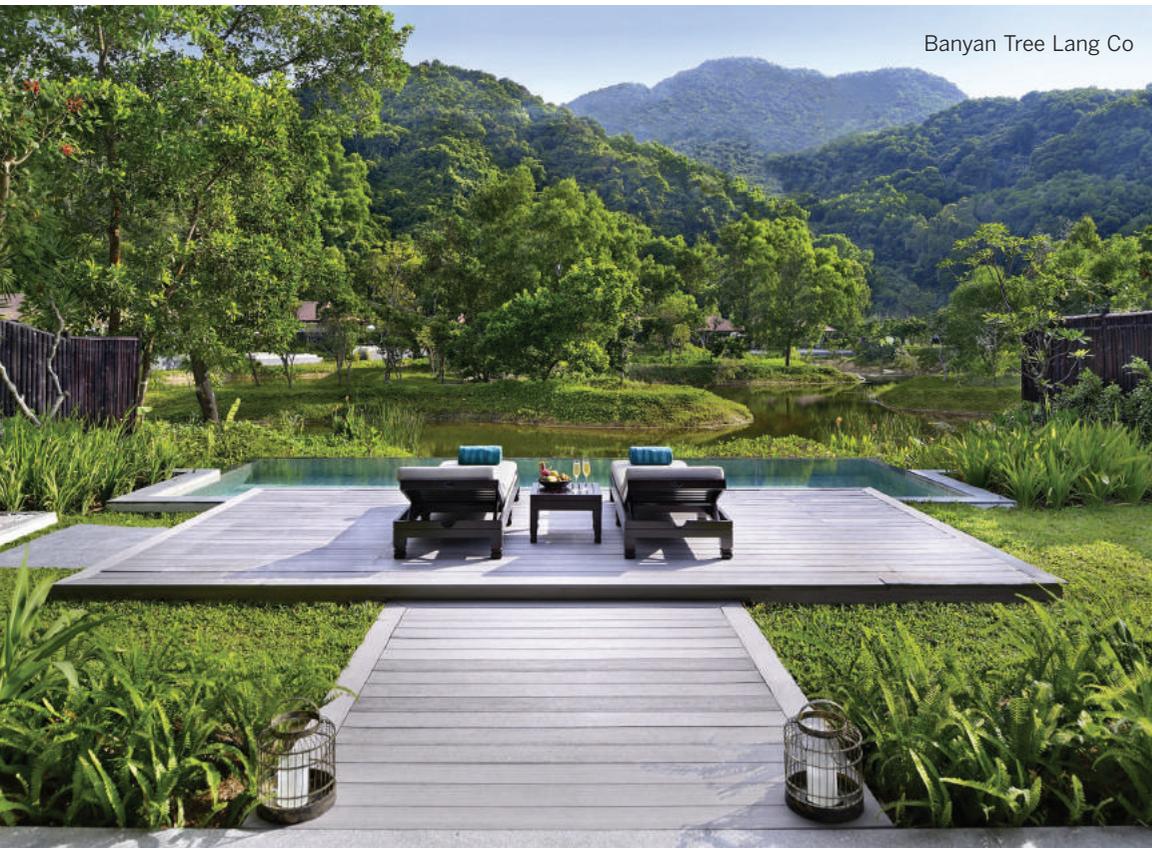
Exiting from the Hai Van tunnel

from Danang, the drive into Lang Co pulled into view a pristine landscape dotted with fishing boats, fields and cattle.

The Laguna Lang Co resort, a joint venture between majority stakeholder Banyan Tree Holdings and local investors which was launched in 2013, is the mainstay of Lang Co as a luxury destination.

Michal Zitek, area general manager of Banyan Tree Lang Co and Angsana Lang Co, explained what the area has got going for it: "The integrated resort is located near Lang Co Bay and is flanked by the Truong Son Mountain Range and the East Sea. With stunning

destination vietnam



Banyan Tree Lang Co

views, an entire protected bay with our own hillside as well as a three-kilometre stretch of private beach, it is the perfect location for a tropical getaway.”

The resort is a self-contained complex, providing guests with everything they need from F&B



With stunning views...it is the perfect location for a tropical getaway.

Michal Zitek,
area general
manager, Banyan
Tree Lang Co and
Angsana Lang Co



and retail outlets, to entertainment facilities, and even activities and tours.

Beyond its confines, however, the work-in-progress state of the destination is apparent. With a lack of street lamps or roadside establishments that provide residual lighting on the roads, the drive back into the resort from a day tour can be in near pitch darkness for stretches of up to 20 minutes at a go.

Alexander Leven, director of product development at HG Travel, reckoned the addition of a prestigious hotel brand to Lang Co isn't enough to give tourism in the area a jump-start.

He opined: “In the case of Laguna, it is (positioned as an) integrated resort because it is in a far-off location without any other infrastructure (and things to do) around it... There are currently too many downsides to lead us to predict a bright future (for tourism here)”.

Some may argue that Lang

Co's attractiveness depends on whether clients are seeking a predominantly resort holiday, or a more immersive experience of the destination. However, even considering that the former is a big part of luxury travel, the tourism cement may not have set enough yet in the township to give city slickers the level of luxury they are accustomed to.

But Laguna Lang Co as a location for travellers to put up at, or as a wind-down leg in a roundtrip holiday, makes a lot of sense for the luxury crowd. For an area that can so convincingly claim to provide a sense of seclusion and exclusivity, it is not that far-flung from the activity centres and must-sees in the region. Danang – pulsating with activity from its beaches, hills, casino and golf courses – is only over an hour's drive from Laguna Lang Co, while the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Hoi An is just under two hours away.

As a standalone destination, however, it faces serious competition from other choices in Vietnam and the rest of South-east Asia. And with all the recent chatter on how the profile of luxury travellers is evolving, lines between 'culture culture' and 'resort loungers' have blurred. For many discerning luxury travellers, a diversity of offerings, or simply the option of strolling out from the hotel to discover aspects of the local culture, has become the standard expectation.

That's why all eyes are on Laguna Lang Co to potentially give the township a boost if it realises its vision of building a community with the addition of six complementary properties to the compound.

Given Banyan Tree Holdings' track record of repurposing wasteland into tourism goldmines, specifically Laguna Phuket, there's good reason to hope.



**Five
luxé
products**

Wyndham in Danang

Wyndham Hotel Group will open the five-star Wyndham Soleil Danang, set to become the city's tallest building at 199m, in September 2018.

The 3,200-key, 57-storey, four-tower condotel will be the brand's second property in Vietnam, after the Wyndham Legend Halong Bay which debuted in July this year.

The development comprises apartments, studios and hotel rooms; extensive conference facilities; a retail and dining precinct; and recreation parks. Other amenities include a restaurant and bar, swimming pools, a gym, spa, and health and wellness centre.

Cave in to this tour

The Va and Nuoc Nut caves, part of the renowned Phong Nha-Ke Bang cave system, are now open to the public. Oxalis, the only licensed operator for most cave tours in the

area, has received approvals to conduct tours to the two caves and has launched 2D1N programmes.

The tours operate thrice a week from February to August for a maximum of eight participants in a group. Prices start from 8 million dong (US\$359).

Nam Hai rebranded

The Nam Hai Hoi An has been relaunched as the Four Seasons Resort The Nam Hai, Hoi An. New offerings include a beach bar, a kids club and a variety of water sports, which complements the existing tennis, badminton and basketball courts, and fitness centre.

Pool villas relaunched

Located along a 1.6-kilometre stretch of private beach in Nha Trang, Six Senses Ninh Van Bay has relaunched its 35 beachfront pool villas.

Enhancements include pool tiles resembling the granite boulders the bay is known for, surround sound system and solar panels. In addition, each ground-floor bathroom in the resort's 59 villas has received floor-to-ceiling glass panels and air conditioning

units, while outdoor showers have been retained.

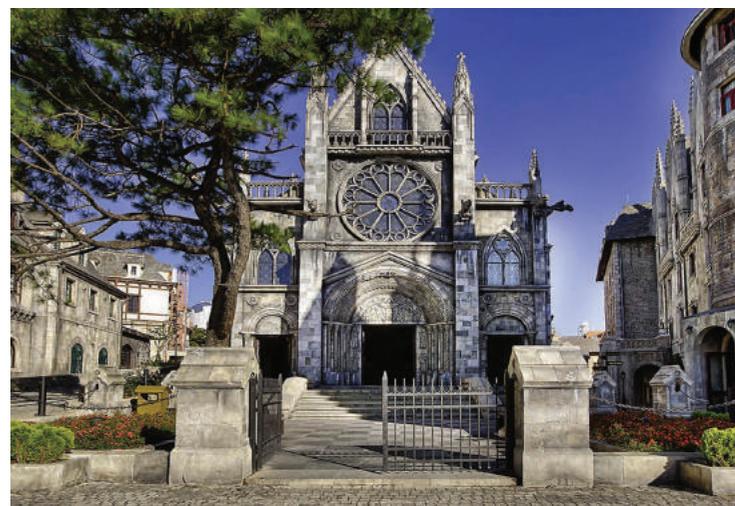
New family rooms at Mercure Danang

Mercure Danang French Village Bana Hills launched a new room category in July, months after opening in March with 494 European-style rooms and suites.

Equipped with two bunk beds, the 25m² Family Room adds to the existing room categories of Standard, Superior and Deluxe, and Family Suite and Royal Suite.

The resort is perched 1,480m above sea level on the Bana mountain range just 25 minutes outside Danang.

Above Wyndham Soleil Danang; **Four Seasons Resort The Nam Hai** **Bottom** Mercure Danang French Village Bana Hills





Jewels, rubies along the coast

Surfers at sunrise at Currumbin Rock, Gold Coast

A string of swanky developments is set to help Australia's Gold Coast surf up a new image as an exciting luxury destination for discerning Asian travellers,

Paige Lee Pei Qi reports

The Gold Coast has long laid claim to being the birthplace of the Australian beach holiday and deservedly so with its ideal ingredients of golden sands, blue skies and azure seas.

Yet beyond this stretch of coastal goodness, large-scale developments which are starting to sprout and tower over the sparkling waters are injecting a luxurious appeal that has escaped the Gold Coast in the past.

One such is the Jewel Resort, a A\$970 million (US\$745 million) project by China's Wanda Ridong

Group, the first beachfront resort development on the Gold Coast in three decades.

The shimmering exterior of Jewel's three crystal towers, coupled with the illusion that they are rising from the sand, is enough to make Andrew Bampton, Wanda Ridong Gold Coast Development director of sales and marketing, wax lyrical about the Jewel as "one of the grandest structures on earth".

This visual spectacle, whose tallest tower spans over 45 storeys, will have 512 apartments, 171 hotel rooms and several luxury retail precincts when completed in 2019.

With this "unprecedented oppor-

Backed by Chinese investors, Jewel Resort adds a luxurious shine to the Gold Coast



tunity to live an extravagant life” as guests get to walk from their luxury accommodation directly onto the world’s most celebrated sands, Bampton said: “We believe it’s the perfect pairing to create a lifestyle like nothing that’s ever been offered anywhere else in Australia, and in very few places around the world.”

The Jewel is but one of the ongoing investment projects worth a total of A\$3 billion brimming along the golden strip which will help ensure the destination is well poised to serve luxury travellers, said Gordon Price, director of international market for Gold Coast Tourism.

One of Gold Coast’s most significant hotel refurbishment and extension projects is underway at the Jupiters Hotel and Casino. The property’s A\$345 million transformation will see the addition of a new six-star 17-storey 700-key hotel tower in front of the existing 592-key hotel.

The new tower is touted to feature some of Australia’s most luxurious accommodations, and is set to be completed ahead of the 2018 Commonwealth Games.

The ongoing A\$1.4 billion Ruby development, an integrated residential and resort precinct at Surfers Paradise, is also being hailed as yet another game-changer on the coastline. It will also be ready to welcome guests in 2018.

With this steady supply of new high-end products, Price said: “We see the luxury segment originating from almost all of our international source markets. Whether from the Middle East, China or India, there is a noticeably growing proportion of travellers desiring luxury products and experiences.



We see the luxury segment originating from almost all of our international source markets. Whether from the Middle East, China or India, there is a noticeably growing proportion of travellers desiring luxury products and experiences.

Gordon Price,
director of
international
market, Gold Coast
Tourism



“Luxury for many travellers can no longer be defined simply in terms of opulence. More recently luxury travellers are going after a more profound connection with the communities of the destinations they visit,” he added.

Elaborating further on the Gold Coast’s competitive advantage, Price said: “We provide an abundance and versatility of experiences as the Gold Coast’s luxury offering covers the full spectrum of luxury villas through to fully integrated resort accommodations, boutique beachside markets to high-end shopping malls.”

Indeed, shopping has also taken on a different tune on the golden strip.

Targeting the deep pockets of luxury shoppers, the Gold Coast is swiftly establishing itself as Australia’s biggest shopping mecca with the massive redevelopment of major malls.

For instance, the revamped Pacific Fair shopping centre, which is completing its A\$670 million expansion this year, is slated to become the fourth-largest shopping centre in Australia.

Upon completion, it will transform from a regular shopping mall into a designer destination fielding brands such as Givenchy, Gucci, Hermès, Louis Vuitton and Prada.

Adeline Yeo, operation manager of Perfect Tours Australia, said destination Gold Coast was “definitely growing beyond its beachfront image”, and that the revamped shopping malls would be an attractive magnet especially for Asians.

“Previously, the shopping in Gold Coast might be more about the factory outlets but with premium brands entering the market we will be able to get a good mix of budget and luxury shopping which enhances the destination,” Yeo said.

Six luxé products

A new lure at Penfolds Magill Estate

The sprawling Penfolds Magill Estate in Adelaide Hills, just 15 minutes by car from Adelaide city centre, has opened the Magill Estate Kitchen to offer visitors more wining and dining opportunities.

The Magill Estate Kitchen's warm wooden interiors and large window panes that let in views of the verdant outside make it a charming venue for casual get-togethers in the day and romantic nigh-outs after sunset.

The new restaurant is available for corporate hire and can accommodate 60 guests seated, or 200 people for a cocktail party setting.

Dining, canapé and wine packages are available for luxury planners to choose from. All dietary requirements can be catered for with prior notification.

While smaller groups can book the Magill Estate Kitchen for a gathering over brunch or lunch 24/7, private hires are only accepted in the evenings. Private hires require a minimum spend of A\$6,000 (US\$4,448) from Monday to Thursday, A\$8,000 on Friday and A\$10,000 on weekends.

In addition to the Magill Estate Kitchen, the winery also offers a degustation experience in its Magill Estate Restaurant, canapé-style parties in various locations such as the Magill Estate Gallery, and a nine-course tasting menu in the Max Schubert Cellar.

A structured Penfolds Tour and Wine Tasting programme is available as an add-on to a main event.

Ditch the standard pre-dinner cocktails

Why settle for a predictable pre-dinner cocktail in the foyer of a ballroom when you can do the same inside a tram that travels from Stamford Plaza Adelaide Hotel in the city centre to either of its two sister properties along Glenelg Beach, the Stamford Grand Adelaide Hotel or the Morphettville Racecourse?

The tram ride lasts around 35 minutes door-to-door, a suitable duration for guests to enjoy canapés and wines, as well as good conversations and the city's sights, before arriving at the next destination for dinner.

According to Russell Cool, area general manager of Stamford Hotels Adelaide, who oversees the two five-star hotels in Adelaide, South Australia, the arrangement is flexible as more tram cars can be added to the line for larger gatherings.

The two hotels also work closely with the Morphettville Racecourse to put together creative offsite parties for clients.

Champagne breakfast and hot views

Give your clients the perfect start to the day with Hot Air Balloon Gold Coast.

The company offers a hot breakfast with champagne at O'Reilly's Vineyard, followed by a 35-minute ride in a hot air balloon.

It is one of the best ways for clients to view the picturesque hinterland as they soar to an altitude of 915m and float blissfully away against a mesmerising and unforgettable backdrop of a rising sun, while being safely tucked in the balloon.





Paige Lee



Glamping in the wilderness

Located within 90 minutes of the cities and Queensland beaches, Nightfall Wilderness Camp offers a glamping experience in untouched rainforests. The boutique hideaway is a luxury tented camp retreat, located beside the iconic Lamington National Park. The camp is limited to only six guests at any one time, ensuring exclusivity and supreme relaxation.

Just what the doctor would order

Perched on the peak of a hill overlooking the Tallebudgera Valley in the Gold Coast, Gwinganna Lifestyle Retreat has won multiple awards as a wellness destination.

Spread across 200ha of lush Queensland hinterland, this exclusive resort aims to help guests regain their balance by engaging in wellness activities, eating organic cuisine and doing treatments in its

Spa Sanctuary. A top accommodation choice is its Signature Villas which come with luxury features such as plunge pools, hot tubs and private steam rooms.

Opulent luxury at Palazzo Versace

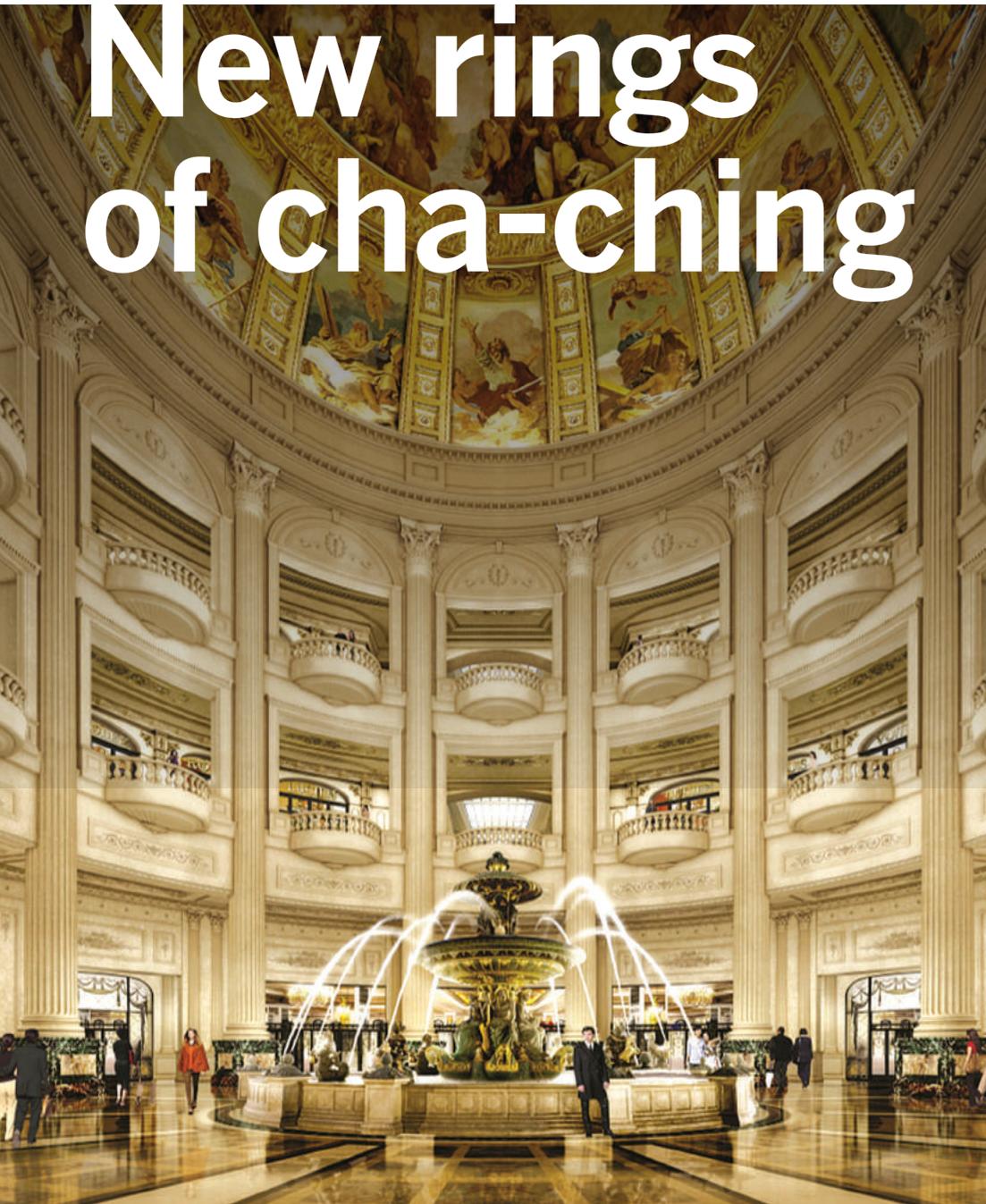
The world's first Versace-branded hotel, Palazzo Versace Gold Coast, is the ideal choice for clients who love opulent luxury. The hotel's 200 light-filled bedrooms and suites, along with 72 condominiums, are decked with Versace Home furnishings and private "Juliet" balconies which welcome the signature Gold Coast sunshine to pour in.

Clients who are in the Imperial suites can request for butler service for intimate dinners comprising two to eight guests. The hotel also has a full-service spa, two pools, a private marina and a 24-hour fitness centre.

– Compiled by Paige Lee Pei Qi and Karen Yue

Top Palazzo Versace; Hotair balloon; Magill Estate Private Tasting Room; Left Gwinganna Lifestyle Retreat

New rings of cha-ching



The Parisian Macao

Two attention-grabbing new properties in Macau could bring more well-heeled families and MICE groups to the SAR and usher the traditionally gaming-reliant destination further down its path of transformation. By **Prudence Lui**

The debut of Wynn Palace and The Parisian Macao in August and September respectively is promising to attract droves of leisure and MICE tourists that Macau badly needs following a fall-off in gambling visitors, especially from the China market.

According to Sands China vice president of destination marketing & sales, Ruth Boston, Paris is an aspirational destination for Chinese travellers, so The Parisian is “absolutely the right product for the market”.

She said: “People are intrigued by the Eiffel Tower (replica on the property) and visitations are very high. Our key leisure markets are China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan, South Korea and India.”

MCI in Macau noted a high demand for Parisian as people want to try new facilities, according to business development and events director, Olinto Oliveira.

“We have a big group in November and they originally opted for The Venetian Macao (sister property of Parisian) but changed to Parisian... In fact, the Eiffel Tower, together with its swimming pool facilities, make the property very family-friendly as well.”

Oliveira added that Parisian has the added advantage of having an in-house team that comes from Venetian and an automated management system which is interconnected with the Cotai Arena.

Meanwhile, Wynn Palace, apart from attracting affluent leisure visitors from China, also aims to replicate the philosophy of Wynn Las Vegas and Wynn Macau when it comes to securing events. It caters for high-end gatherings, and creates compact and personalised experiences for exclusive groups – despite its large MICE venue and room keys totalling 1,706.

The hotel is targeting to work with corporate clients, MICE planners and professional conference organisers in feeder markets, namely Hong Kong, China, Macau, Taiwan, Japan and South Korea, said a spokesperson.

Perhaps, what can make the experience at Wynn Palace extra special for guests is creating a lasting first impression. The spokesperson elaborated: “(For) any successful meeting or convention, the first impression is key. The amazing journey through Wynn Palace starts with a SkyCab ride, just above the 30,000 square-metre Performance Lake.”

Event venues at the property were of course not forgotten in the brand’s extravagant ambitions. The spokesperson said: “Versatile meeting spaces combine lavish interior design with cutting-edge audio-visual technology.” In addition, the hotel features the Grand Theater Ballroom, a pillarless space boasting “dramatic seven-metre-high ceilings” and a “theatre-standard stage”.

MCI’s Oliveira observed: “Given its niche market, (the property) draws many high-end and exquisite events such the 30-40 pax leadership conference or summit rather than multiple breakout room events.”

In Hong Kong, a key visitor source market for Macau, agents are confident of the enclave’s enhanced appeal as more hotels and entertainment options open up.

Charlotte Travel, Hong Kong business development manager, Charlotte Harris, noted: “We are seeing a rise in family trips from both Hong Kong and mainland China into Macau over the weekends.”

“The latest hotels have created a lot of publicity and hype on family-related activities, changing the image and dynamics of Macau as not just a gambling city, but a weekend getaway.”

Added Faces of Hong Kong CEO Ivy Sung: “Both Wynn Palace & Parisian are good value-adds for Macau. They create additional high-lights for old and new clients.

“We have already submitted proposals to clients which include these two new landmarks for their accommodation and dining selections.”



We are seeing a rise in family trips from both Hong Kong and mainland China into Macau over the weekends.

Charlotte Harris, business development director, Charlotte Travel, Hong Kong

Five luxe products

The stuff of (shopaholic) dreams

The luxury retail area within the City of Dreams has been expanded to thrice its original size. Managed and operated by T Galleria by DFS, the expanded space was launched in phases between June and December. From here, shoppers can enjoy easy links to dining areas, casinos, retail stores, entertainment attractions and hotels. T Galleria’s signature services include its first-ever shoe salon and a multi-brand lifestyle shopping area dedicated to men’s fashion and grooming.

Nightlife extravaganza at Studio City

After Pacha Macau, the region’s first Ibiza-style nightclub, opened in Studio City in January, the hotel’s entertainment offering received an added boost with the launch of El Cielo in June. El Cielo is an outdoor lounge connected to Pacha Macau and features six cabanas with approximately 120 seats. Cocktail tables can also be arranged upon request. The venue is also connected to Studio City’s pool area.

Glamming up the good ol’ steakhouse

SW is one of five fine-dining outlets in Wynn Palace, which opened in August. Reimagining the classic American steakhouse into a contemporary space with three private rooms, it features quality steak and seafood from the US, Australia and Japan.

This 179-seat dining room pioneers a dinner show in theatri-



cal animation with 3D mapping vignettes to delight your senses. Six short three-minute plays themed around a waking dream are scheduled to run every 30 minutes from 19.00 onwards.

A grand Parisian spectacle

The Parisian boasts grand attractions like the Eiffel Tower Observation Deck, with a height equivalent to a 38-storey building. Even the over-40-second elevator ride up to the top is an experience. The viewing platform on the 37th floor is the only spot in Cotai with a 360-degree panoramic view of the Cotai Strip, the Macau Peninsula plus the neighbouring Chinese area of Hengqin in Zhuhai. Don’t miss the nightly light show taking place every 20 minutes from 19.20 to midnight.

Massive facelift for Grand Lapa

The five-star Grand Lapa hotel is undergoing its biggest-ever refurbishment since its inception in 1984. Targeted for completion in December 2017, phase-by-phase makeovers cover areas such as lobby, meeting rooms, spa and all 416 guestrooms.

As for the hotel’s F&B outlets, Cafe Bela Vista will receive a new look and food concept whereas the Vasco Bar will be integrated into the lobby.

And yes, there will be free Wi-Fi.



ADRIAN ZECHA CASTS HIS EYES TO THE SEA

Legendary hotelier Adrian Zecha's latest venture is Mahá Yacht Club (MYC), which aims to create the new ideal for superyachts by marrying marine expertise with hospitality excellence.

"In an ideal world, the perfect yacht would be custom-designed by the leading experts and the on-board service would be provided by industry specialists, not only hospitality professionals, but perfectionists in an industry that have been internationally noted for their excellence," said an MYC literature.

Zecha has teamed up with marine expert Stephen White and longtime hotelier partner Jonathan Breene (founder, Setai group) to create this game-changer in the waters.

Clients with 3.5 million euros (US\$3.9 million) to spare can join the elite club, which accepts only 60 members. The single upfront fee is for a 10-year membership that gives them four weeks access per year to one of MYC's six private fleets, four positioned in the Mediterranean, one Bahamas/Caribbean and one Phuket/Bali. The fleets are in their final design stage and construction will start in 2017 for operation in 2019.

"It's half the price if you were to charter a superyacht four weeks a year for 10 years. And if you own and use a yacht for the same duration, it'll cost you about 50 million euros," said White, who is MYC's CEO.

The fee includes all yachts maintenance expenses for the entire 10 years but excludes consumables onboard. The club has been approved and is regulated within the respected Jersey trust system.

Instead of just one 50m or 60m superyacht, members get a flotilla comprising a 36m stay boat (with room for eight to sleep), a 16m day boat and a 10m play boat. The 36m mother-ships are custom-built for MYC by Amsterdam-based Feadship, a leader in superyachts, and their interiors will be furnished by designers.

The superyacht can also be personalised to the client, who gets two square metres of belongings which are shipped to whichever ship they are going to and set up as their boat – just like the villas at Amanpuri, the first Amanresort which Zecha built back in 1988, where the space is set up for the client when he arrives and 'dismantled' when he goes.

MYC has full-time dedicated crew, with training standards set by Breene.

The target audience for the membership is a one-third split among rich Americans, Europeans and Asians. Said White: "The Americans get this model, it fits well with the way their society is moving. The Europeans are the most experienced. There's a large yachting demographics but a huge gap for a product like this... it's already been well-received in London.

"In Asia, people are starting to look at yachting, but not in the same way as the Russians in the 90s with the massive mansions at sea. Asians are looking at it as, how do I get the exclusivity, privacy and security but at the same time not break the bank? We know the rich Asian millennials from Hong Kong, China and South-east Asia are starting to buy yachts this size from Feadship but there's always the problem of, I've got a yacht, what do I do with it now?"

In a MYC video, Zecha said: "Being in the hospitality industry, it became apparent to me that what is still lacking is dependable, professionalised service and what we are attempting to do is to bring that professional service element to yachts.

"Service has two sides to it. Our business is a twin product. It's the hardware and the software. The hardware is of course the building, the interior design and all those things. The software is the service product but even with service, we believe there are two sides to it. One is what they call functional, which is obvious – where to put the fork, the spoon and so on. The other one is attitudinal – the genuine smile, the genuine warmth. That's more difficult."

If all this sounds like the makings of inimitable boutique hotels for which Zecha is the acknowledged master, it is.

Except, these ones move. – Raini Hamdi

Jakarta

TTG Asia Luxury wins gold award



Accepting the award in Jakarta is Mimi Hudoyo

TTG Asia Luxury has clinched its first award through a feature-length article in the December 2015 issue, *The New Glamorous*, written by senior editors Mimi Hudoyo and Raini Hamdi.

The story, which won a 2016 PATA Gold Award for Travel Journalism – Industry Business Article, studied how and why the old luxury of grand hotels, first-class air travel and limousine rides is simply not enough to satisfy a new breed of customers, and the extent to which the industry goes to provide out-of-the-world experiences for wealthy folks seeking deeper fulfilment in their travels.

TTG Asia Luxury is currently bi-annual and is directly overseen by Raini, who launched the publication three years ago. It is distributed to buyers of premium travel and luxury meetings in Asia-Pacific and gains an international read through an online presence on the ttgasia.com platform.

In another win for TTG Asia Publishing, S Puvaneswary, TTG Asia's editor-Malaysia and Brunei, recently took home an award for Business Events Journalism Excellence, Print/Online, given by the Sarawak Convention Bureau. She won the prize for an article published in *TTGassociations* in April 2015, titled *Watching And Waiting*, which was a profile of Ravi Chandran, congress president of the 24th Asian & Oceanic Congress of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, a convention held in Sarawak last year.

STREET FOOD WORTH A MICHELIN STAR

Singapore is the only country where you can obtain a one-Michelin-star meal for S\$4 (US\$2.90), and you can't make reservations. To taste the world's cheapest Michelin meal, you'd have to queue with the masses in a non-air-conditioned food court.

Normally an accolade reserved for renowned fine-dining F&B institutions, two hawker stores – Hill Street Tai Hwa Pork Noodle in Crawford Lane and Hong Kong Soya Sauce Chicken Rice & Noodle at Chinatown Food Complex – have managed to attain, in an unprecedented move, a Michelin star each on July 21, in the inaugural Singapore's Michelin Guide.

It is the highest recognition of culinary skill possible in the food world, and has elevated the country's reputation as a gastronomic hub.

Michael Ellis, international director, Michelin Guides, said: "This is one of the peculiarities that makes Singapore unique in the world. It's the hawker food and the incredibly important role it plays in the country."

Ellis elaborated: "To be at the star-level, that means that the two hawkers that received stars were able to bring the level of five criteria above and beyond what everyone else does. They hit the ball out of the park."

Michelin's five criteria when it comes

to deciding the stars are: quality of ingredients used; mastery of cooking techniques and flavours; projection of the chef's personality in his cuisine; value for money; and consistency, both over time and across the entire menu.

Alternatively, if fine dining appeals more to your clients, the Little Red Dot also has a sole three-Michelin-star establishment – Joël Robuchon Restaurant at Resorts World Sentosa. Otherwise, ask them to check out the six two-star restaurants, or one of the 20 other one-star recipients (for the full list, see <https://guide.michelin.sg/2016-michelin-guide-singapore-launches>).

Aside from the the two one-Michelin-star hawker stores, there is a whole range of other hawkers who have received a mention in the inaugural guide.

Ellis describes the stores that made it to the guide as "above average", while a Bib Gourmand indication meant "particularly good food at a particularly good price". The two hawkers that made the star level were "able to achieve an unusually high-quality in the food". "In Singapore, you have access to probably the best food at every level," Ellis opined.

My stomach agrees wholeheartedly.
– Rachel AJ Lee



Tai Hwa
Pork Noodle



Joël Robuchon
Restaurant

SINGAPORE IS THE ONLY COUNTRY WHERE YOU CAN OBTAIN A ONE-MICHELIN-STAR MEAL FOR S\$4

Mavis Liang

SKY PREMIUM EYES MORE TRAVEL PARTNERS

Luxury travel trade players can have the opportunity to partner Sky Premium, which has launched in Singapore as a "one-of-a-kind" membership services club providing personalised indulgent lifestyle experiences to members.

For its travel offerings, the club works with selected partners to present unique destinations and experiences. Currently, it has sealed partnerships with Karma Resorts, Oceania Cruises, Regent Seven Seas Cruises, Antarctica XXI, Unlisted Collection and Banyan Tree Hotels & Resorts.

The newly inaugurated club is targeting for 10,000 international members within three years, according to its general manager, Margaret Koh.

Distinguishing Sky Premium from other membership clubs, Koh said: "Unlike most clubs that cater to either dining or travel alone, we strive to combine the four main categories of lifestyle, namely travel, dining, shopping and wellness into one club."

The club will appeal especially to the "too busy" senior executives and entrepreneurs aged between 30 and 50, Koh added.

Koh said Sky Premium is on the lookout for new partners to allow members to keep up with the latest trends and offerings in the four categories.

Explaining how Sky Premium can curate an exclusive travel itinerary for its members, Koh gave this example: "Most visits to the Antarctica are via a cruiseship, and these

expeditions are typically arranged by large mainstream cruise liners. But our members will get to reserve their spot ahead of time via our partnered expedition cruise liner and operator."

Additional holiday privileges exclusive to members include complimentary room upgrades and airport transfers, and special rates at spa and golf facilities with selected hotel partners.

Membership costs S\$1,200 (US\$732) per year. Aside from travel, it offers an insider list to exclusive closed-door events, fashion shows, premium sake tastings as well as access to an array of networking opportunities and business facilities.

– Paige Lee Pei Qi

DELICIOUS AIRLINE FOOD - SERIOUSLY

TOP CHEFS BRING BACK GLAMOUR TO AIR TRAVEL

Leading Singapore airline caterer Sats now wields a star-studded culinary panel, which has worked with its team of chefs to create more than 100 dishes for airline clients to choose from to incorporate into their menus.

Bringing that extra expertise, star power and understanding of authentic local flavours are master chefs Dean Brettschneider from New Zealand, Singapore's Eric Teo, South Korea's Gwak Man Keun and Indonesia's Idham Mirwan.

Said Sats president and CEO, Alex Hungate: "You don't want (airlines) to end up in a commoditised situation where (the experience) is like getting on a bus. Traditionally, air travel has been the most glamorous form of travel, and this is what it should remain if the industry is going to continue to be healthy."

For Hungate, food is a good way through which airlines can "inject more glamour, more sense of occasion and something more memorable on board". This could then help justify the higher prices charged by full-service carriers compared to LCCs.

But glamour today isn't in the same form as before. "We know of certain tycoon billionaires living in Singapore who get on first class and order *char kway teow* instead of a lobster thermidor on their flight back," Hungate shared.

"It's not (about wanting the) most expensive food necessarily, sometimes they just want something that fits their desire for home at the moment."

Rick Stephen, director of kitchens at Sats, continued: "It's about keeping the flavour profile - we want Korean food to taste like Korean food, we don't want it to be Singapore-Korean, for example."

Since the inflight caterer introduced premium meal options in January, it has seen take-up from six carriers, including SilkAir and Xiamen Airlines. - Yixin Ng



Baekkich mar by SATS culinary consultant chef Gwak Man Keun; chilli crab tofu salad by SATS culinary consultant chef Eric Teo; fried banana with palm sugar sauce by SATS culinary consultant chef Idham Mirwan

AN INDONESIAN FEAST UP IN THE CLOUDS

Garuda Indonesia has created new inflight menus based on the unique and diverse Indonesian traditional dishes found across the country, for all three of its classes.

Vindex V. Tengker, vice president inflight services, said travellers nowadays equate their airline experience to a "hotel in the sky", and a way to provide a wholesome experience was to serve restaurant-quality food.

Garuda also has two chefs - one each for first and business class - onboard its international longhaul flights. These chefs check that food is heated to the correct temperature and the taste is consistent, before they plate and

present the dish to the passenger.

Flight attendants are also trained to be waiters and waitresses 38,000 feet above ground.

Vindex elaborated: "We have restaurant professionals who come in to teach our flight attendants how to present the food, introduce the items and its origins, and make wine recommendations."

TTG Asia Luxury sent an editorial member to test the new dishes for business-class and here's the verdict from **Rachel AJ Lee**:

"My appetisers were *gado gado*, a mixed vegetable roll served with peanut sauce; and

rujak buah, a mixed fruit salad. I also sampled three main courses: *rendang daging sapi*, an aromatic dry beef curry; the *ayam bakar bumbu rica rica*, tender pieces of roasted marinated chicken in *rica rica* sauce; and *ikan kappa saus woku*, pan-fried snapper in *woku* sauce.

"Overall, the dishes were piquant and delicious, and evoked a happy gastronomic memory of when I first had a taste of Indonesian cuisine during a visit to the country years ago. While I can't say the menu was entirely five-star, it is definitely well on its way there."

We're salivating just reading the menu...



Hoi An

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF SECRET AGENTS AND BIKE TREADS OF MOTORHEADS

Vietnam-based Exotic Voyages has launched two fully customisable tours, *Recreating Top Gear's Glory Days* and *A Modern Take On Classic James Bond*.

Local guides researched the exact filming locations and charted a plan to help travellers take the armchair out of armchair travel.

Recreating Top Gear's Glory Days is a 15-night itinerary that traces the 2008 journey Jeremy Clarkson, Richard Hammond and James May made on the eponymous TV show. It will span the length of Vietnam and visit Ho Chi Minh City, Dalat, Nha Trang, Hoi An, Hue, Halong Bay and Hanoi. Activities along the way include drinking locally-made spirits in Dalat, a motorbike ride along Hai Van Pass and tailor-making clothes in Hoi An. Packages

start from US\$3,225 per person.

Meanwhile, *A Modern Take On Classic James Bond* is a 13-night trip that visits Hong Kong, Macau and Thailand. Travellers can deal a hand at a floating Macau casino, be transported to Hong Kong by hydrofoil, watch a Muay Thai match in Bangkok and sail to Khao Phing Kan (commonly known as James Bond island) in Phuket. Packages start from US\$7,561 per person.

"We want to introduce travellers to the shows and films that have inspired our own travels," said Andrew Carroll, global head of sales and marketing at Exotic Voyages. "But we also wanted to make the journey more comfortable. There'll be no motorbike breakdowns or foes with golden guns on our itineraries."

Exclusive entry only

Aman is offering three new private experiences to guests.

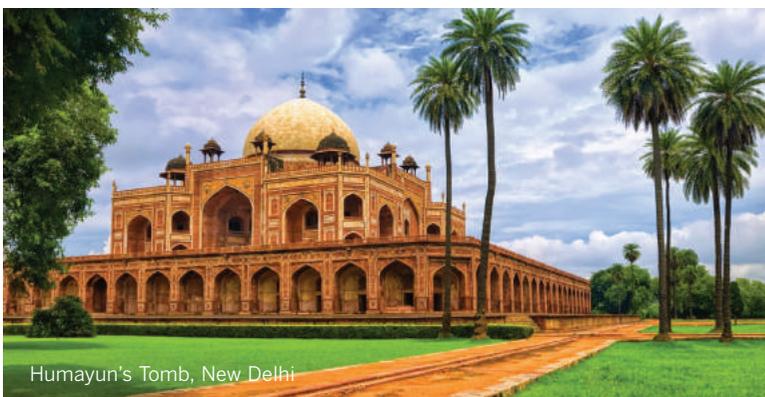
At Aman Canal Grande Venice, guests can have exclusive access to seats in the hotel's box at the Teatro La Fenice, one of the most renowned landmarks in the history of Italian theatre. With tickets something of a rarity, many claim that a night at the Teatro is an experience like no other.

Aman Sveti Stefan in Montenegro is offering guests a private visit to the house of the Masanovics who have been making wine for generations from the Montenegrin indigenous grape variety Vranac. Highlights include vintage wine tasting and a personal tour of the family vineyards and fruit orchards.

Guests of Amanjena can discover Morocco's first biological herb farm at the foot of the Atlas Mountains where the resort sources its bespoke organic bathroom products. They will learn about the making of the essential oils used in the bath and massage oils, soaps, salts and shampoos.



Aman Canal Grande Venice (top) and Aman Sveti Stefan



Humayun's Tomb, New Delhi

Private access to Jaipur's City Palace and other treats

Jacada Travel India said it has secured private access to restricted areas and off-the-beaten-track experiences that are inaccessible to most tourists in India.

Some of these new bespoke experiences include private access to Jaipur's City Palace to view its opulence; special access viewing and dinner at Mehrangarh Fort in Jodhpur; staying on the banks of the Ganges in the 18th-century BrijRama Palace and experiencing a private prayer ceremony; and a rare tiger encounter at the 400km² Bandhavgarh National Park.

LUXURY HOTEL OPENINGS



The Peninsula Beijing

The extensive RMB890 million (US\$123 million) makeover of The Peninsula Beijing will be fully completed in early 2017.

The property, located a short walk from Tiananmen Square, boasts 230 new rooms, including 61 suites. Room sizes which start at 60m² are among the most spacious in the country and they come with mod cons. Facilities include a 24-hour check-in, check-out service, The Peninsula Spa, a fitness centre, an

indoor swimming pool and three F&B options. Also, The Peninsula Academy offers in-house guest experiences such as jade appreciation courses or a lesson in the art of kungfu.

A contemporary take on Chinese culture and heritage was the design concept for the hotel, and luxurious materials such as bronze, onyx, white marble and rosewood have been extensively used throughout the hotel's new design.



The Anam, Vietnam

The Anam, a five-star all-villa property in Cam Ranh, south of Nha Trang in Vietnam, is now open. The independent property is one of six hotels and resorts worldwide that is in Worldhotels' new category, World Luxury. It features 105 villas, some with private pools, each decked out in fine Vietnamese hard-

wood, decorative stone and antique tiling.

Recreational facilities include a water sport centre, dive centre, and fitness and yoga areas. As well, a 300m-long private beach, three swimming pools, three dining outlets, a Balinese spa, and a kid's adventure club and playground.

Ani Villas, Dominican Republic

Ani Villas, which has two private resorts in Thailand and one in Sri Lanka, will be adding a fourth property, located in the Dominican Republic, to its portfolio next summer.

The new 1.6-hectare Ani Villas Dominican Republic will be a fully staffed and serviced private 14-bedroom estate set on its own peninsula. Designed by Sarah Garcia, the architecture will incorporate tropical design, contemporary finishes, and touches of Dominican heritage. Facilities include a spa, large event pavilion, gym, and sports facilities such as swimming pools and tennis courts.

The private resort concept taps into a growing segment of large single groups of travellers who want to vacation in the company of their loved ones and friends.

Stays at Ani Villas include all F&B, spa treatments and other onsite leisure pursuits from cooking class to paddle boarding. Nightly rates start at US\$4,000 in the low season for up to eight guests, and rise to US\$16,000 for 30 guests during peak periods.



Kerry Hotel, Hong Kong

Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts is opening its fourth property in Hong Kong this month. Located by the waterfront of Hung Hom Bay in Kowloon, the 545-key Kerry Hotel, Hong Kong has rooms ranging from 42m² to 294m², 60 per cent of them boasting harbour views.

The resort-style hotel caters for meetings, with facilities such as a 1,756m² Grand Ballroom that can seat up to 1,030 people banquet-style, 17 flexible meeting rooms that can accommodate between 30 and 600 pax, and other outdoor and indoor spaces. Other facilities include a 25-metre outdoor swimming pool, fitness centre, retail shops and five F&B options such as a vibrant food marketplace with 10 varying concepts.

SHOOTING FOR THE (ROCK) STARS

From having first forged their friendship in London's roaring music scene in the 1980s, two hospitality veterans recently sat down "over a few beers" and decided their next big hit would be a five-star line of aspirational rock-based hotels that bring rock musicians and music lovers together under one roof.

Mark Fuller, CEO of Sanctum Hotel Group, and John Spence, founder and chairman of the Karma Group, maintained they are "not in the accommodation business, rather the entertainment business". With this shared passion, the duo has embarked on a joint venture featuring hotels which they believe will be the real deal for lovers of the rock genre.

"Hard Rock has become very Disney-ish and commercial. It has the trappings of the rock industry but it's not somewhere rock musicians themselves would stay," Spence told *TTG Asia Luxury*.

What the new brand will do different, Spence said, is embody a certain "credibility and authenticity". For starters, it will be "populated and frequented by rock musicians, some of the biggest names in the industry".

This form of celebrity association appears to be a proven formula for building aspirational properties, with Spence citing the success of Planet Hollywood in Beverly Hills as an example.

The first property in the new line will share in this buzz of celebritydom from the nearby city of Los Angeles, another of America's showbiz capital; the second will take site in the Bahamas.

"(Our LA hotel) will be a city hotel where people (and rock musicians) pass through, and where people visit as a vacation destination as well. It will be out in the beaches, near Venice Beach and Marina del Rey, half city centre and half resort.

"The Bahamas is unashamedly a resort destination – we have a piece of land on Harbour Island where the (second hotel) will be built. The destination already has a big rock heritage. Dave Stewart from the Eurythmics is building a studio there and Jimmy Page has a house there," said Spence.

For the moneyed crowd with a taste for glamour, rock music and rubbing shoulders with the who's who – whether they be international or domestic visitors – the hotel with its private members' club and coveted gathering spaces seems the obvious place to be.

On-site facilities will include a recording studio, a bar that "runs all night where possible, specialising in rock-based deviant cocktails" and a screening room showing live feeds, red carpet events, first-releases and other big music events.

"The intention is very much to encourage bands that are touring to utilise the facilities while they're at the property," Spence said.

"There will also be a private members club so people who live in the vicinity who don't use it as a hotel can also use the bar, the recording studio and cinema," he added.

The membership club will provide discounts at the properties and 'money can't buy' benefits such as preferential tickets to rock concerts and VIP experiences like backstage tours.

– Yixin Ng



The way to loyalty is through the stomach

Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts has launched The Table by Golden Circle, its latest initiative in the ongoing transformation of its Golden Circle loyalty programme.

Reto Klausner, vice president and general manager, Shangri-La Hotel Singapore, said it is the industry's first instant dining rewards, allowing members to earn and redeem points on the spot without the need for vouchers.

The Table promises achievable redemptions and access to signature food experiences, exclusive events, unique surprises and special offers. Members also receive award points on all qualifying transactions including discounts, and earn award points at over 500 restaurants and bars found across the 98 Shangri-La, Hotel Jen, Kerry and Traders properties globally – even if they are non-stay-

ing guests. Jade and Diamond level members receive bonus earnings and more value on redemptions for dining transactions.

Klausner said: "Hotel loyalty programmes have covered only one aspect of the business and that is the room side. We are also very successful with our restaurants, and our catering businesses. We have been looking for a way to integrate these three segments under one programme."

Added Shangri-La's chief marketing officer Steven Taylor: "Our consumer research reaffirmed that the emotion attached to a dining experience is far more appealing than the functional benefit of discounts and points. Loyalty programmes must adapt to this trend and become increasingly more experiential."

– Rachel AJ Lee

APPOINTMENTS

Dardenne joins Jumeirah as group COO



Dubai-based Jumeirah Group has appointed Marc Dardenne as group COO.

Dardenne, who has more than 30 years of hospitality experience, was most recently CEO of Patina Hotels and Resorts based in Singapore,

where he oversaw brand creation, development and asset management.

In his new role, he will oversee Jumeirah's operations across its international portfolio, including the famed Burj Al Arab Jumeirah.

Dardenne, a Belgian national, has lived and worked in Europe, Africa, Asia and the Middle East.

NCL expands roles of its senior leadership



Bob Binder

Norwegian Cruise Line (NCL) Holdings has made three strategic changes to its leadership team.

Bob Binder, Andy Stuart and Jason Montague have been named president and CEO of Oceania Cruises, Norwegian Cruise Line and Regent Seven Seas Cruises respectively.

Binder is taking on the new post in addition to his current role as vice chairman of Oceania Cruises and Regent Seven Seas Cruises, a position he has held since 2011.

Prior to this, he served as president of Oceania Cruises, where he played a key role in the development and design of new Oceania ships and restaurant concepts for the line.

Meanwhile, Stuart,

president of NCL, and Montague, president of Regent Seven Seas Cruises, will add on the title of CEO to reflect their expanded roles with their respective brands.

All three executives oversee sales, marketing, passenger services and revenue management for their respective brands and continue to drive the development of itineraries and onboard products to ensure each line delivers its brand promise.

All report directly to NCL Holdings' president and CEO Frank Del Rio.



Andy Stuart



Jason Montague

PLAZA PREMIUM DEBUTS LOUNGE AND SPA IN AUSTRALIA



Jointly officiating the grand opening ceremony of Plaza Premium Lounge and Wellness Spa in Brisbane Airport are (from second left to second right): Plaza Premium Group's Linda Song and Song Hoi-see; David McLachlan (representing Lord Mayor of Brisbane); and Brisbane Airport Corporation's Julieanne Alroe and Andrew Brodie

Plaza Premium Group (PPG) has entered Australia with a lounge in Brisbane Airport.

Located on Level 4 of the International Terminal, the lounge spans over 418m² and has over 100 seats. Australian designer firm Mitchel Squires & Associates employs rustic elements with modern structures and fine materials to create a warm and relaxing ambience. Soaring windows fill the lounge with natural sunlight and offer magnificent views over the terminal and runway.

Other highlights include Plaza Premium's signature honeycomb seating which offers extra privacy for guests to work or relax. The menu includes live-cooking hot meals, salad bar and freshly brewed barista-made coffee.

The basic lounge use package of Plaza Premium Lounge in Brisbane starts at A\$66 (US\$51) for five hours. The lounge opens daily between 5am and 11pm.

The group also marks the official opening of Wellness Spa next to its lounge in Brisbane. Professionally trained therapists have prepared a selection of treatments using Australian spa products for travellers to recharge and rejuvenate before their onward journey. A 15-minute treatment starts from A\$49.

Silversea's new head honchos



Silversea Cruises has appointed Roberto Martinoli (left) as CEO, replacing Enzo Visone.

Martinoli has been a board member with Silversea since 2013 and has had a successful career in the cruise and shipping industry. He is based at the company's headquarters in Monaco, and reports directly to executive chairman Manfredi Lefebvre d'Ovidio.

The company has also appointed Amber Wilson as general manager for Asia-Pacific operations.

Wilson is responsible for revenue and the direction of sales and marketing departments. Based in Sydney, both the Sydney and Singapore teams report directly to her.

She has over 17 years of experience in the travel and cruising industry, including with companies such as Star Cruises and Norwegian Cruise Line. Most recently, Wilson was general manager, sales & marketing at CruiseCo.

TTG ASIA

[LUXURY]

for buyers of premium travel and luxury meetings

PATA GOLD AWARD

2016

Thank You

PATA & Our Readers

The article *The new glamorous* in TTG Asia Luxury December 2015 by Mimi Hudoyo and Raini Hamdi has been awarded a PATA Gold Award 2016 in the Travel Journalism - Industry Business Article category.



**PLAZA PREMIUM
LOUNGE**



Plaza Premium Lounge, Rio de Janeiro RIOgaleão - Tom Jobim International Airport

Enhancing Your Airport Experience

We are the world's largest independent airport lounge network, providing Premium Airport Services at 35 International airports



**World's Best Independent Airport Lounge
by Skytrax**

plaza-network.com

A member of Plaza Premium Group