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Exciting Journey Ahead

Namaste, and welcome on board! I do hope 2018 has started on a great note for all of you. We, at AirAsia, are looking forward to achieving a few significant milestones this year. The team in India is preparing to welcome new aircraft to our fleet, as well as adding new destinations and hubs to our network.

India has and will always be an important part of AirAsia’s journey. Our presence is slowly, yet steadily, becoming stronger in the country. With the government investing heavily in regional connectivity and promoting tourism, connectivity in and from India has huge potential, waiting to be explored. This only indicates that the game is going to get bigger and better, with the tourism industry working towards improving air travel and connectivity in India.

This year will see continued expansion and growth for AirAsia in India. In the next few months, our fleet will hit the golden number 20 – achieving the mandated fleet size to operate international flights, as required by the government of India. The team is excited about this new journey, which we will embark on in the beginning of 2019, and preparations to launch international operations are in swing for us.

Flying to Australia, New Zealand, South Korea, Japan and other exciting destinations in Asia will be a breeze for our guests once we start international operations from India. Our multiple hubs in Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia will act as gateways to connect India to over 120 destinations across the globe. We are working around the clock to ensure that we’re at the top of our game in terms of our preparedness.

While we work towards that, you can continue to enjoy the seamless connectivity offered by the AirAsia Group to over 120 destinations across Asia, Australia, New Zealand, Middle East and US.

A lot of our campaigns over the last few months have consciously been planned for the digital segment, owing to the rapid growth we’ve seen in the medium. Our products and services are constantly evolving with new age tech savvy customer in mind. Innovation is key to our ongoing growth. We have a robust plan for inflight offerings to ensure a delightful onboard experience for all our guests. We hope you’ve been enjoying our inflight menu, Santan. If you have any suggestions on what we should sell on board, feel free to reach out to our friendly cabin crew.

As of Jan 2018, we’ve flown over 9.3 million guests across India, and it is you, our guests, who have made (and continue to make) each day of this celebratory journey a gratifying one for us. Whether you’re travelling for business, or for leisure with family and friends, or even on a solo trip, the best place to book your flight is airasia.com or via the AirAsia mobile app for the best deals! As we approach the summer holiday season, if you haven’t already made some Insta-worthy memories, I encourage you to make plans to take off for a fabulous destination. Here are my top picks – Srinagar, Bagdogra, Kolkata, Bhubaneswar, Jaipur, Kochi and Guwahati, or the all-time favorite, Goa!

Share your travel experiences with me on Twitter. I’m always on the lookout for suggestions to improve your experience. Don’t forget to use #FlyWithAirAsia in your travel posts.

Amar Abrol
MD and CEO of AirAsia India

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1st Prize
R Ramkumar

As an avid traveller, I enjoy reading inflight magazines as they often offer ideas for future trips, and AirAsia’s inflight magazine *travel 3Sixty* tops my list. I particularly liked the feature *Forgotten Trail of Nepal* in last October’s issue, about Nepal’s Indigenous People (IP) trail, which traversed a lesser-known route in the mountains. By spotlighting the trail, and the communities along the route, the article was an insightful read, and hopefully, will spur tourism to the region, which was affected by an earthquake in 2015. It was also interesting to read how, in its efforts to promote sustainable travel, AirAsia even considers the magazine’s weight and quality of paper. Keep up the good work!

2nd Prize
Sandy I

 Returning from a three-week trip in Japan, I recognised the December cover of *travel 3Sixty* as a traditional cabin in Shirakawa-go village. I immediately flipped to the feature *Alpine Awakening* so I could be transported back to this magical place where I experienced the first snowfall of the season. The story was a true delight to read, and aptly captured the charm and beauty of the village. I was also glad that it provided a detailed description of the Tateyama Kurobe Alpine Route, which sadly, I hadn’t been able to experience during my trip. Reading about the stunning place has inspired me to visit the Japanese Alps when I return to the country this spring for cherry blossom season. Thanks *travel 3Sixty*.

3rd Prize
Athirah Akib

I often fly with AirAsia to domestic or international destinations, and my best companion on board is always *travel 3Sixty*. Last October, I enjoyed reading about Vivy Yusof – co-founder of Malaysia’s famous fashion e-commerce retailer FashionValet – in the *Jetsetter* column. I’m a big fan of Vivy’s, and it was wonderful to get to know her better through the interview in the magazine. The article delved into many interesting aspects of Vivy’s life and business, which include her passion, commitment and foresight. This is a great column that allows readers to get to know their favourite personalities and what makes them tick – a truly inspiring read. Good job, AirAsia!

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Snap your best travel shots and tag us @officialtravel360 on Instagram for the chance to be featured right here.

@exilhamster Fixing the hair for a selfie session! #petronastwintowers #travel3Sixty #airasia

@awanswang An old Japanese proverb goes... fall seven times, stand up eight. #travel3Sixty #airasia #Japan

@shafikJaafar Tad Sae Waterfall, Luang Prabang, Laos. #LuangPrabang #travel3Sixty #airasia

@ezrmizar Taken at Gyeongbokgung Palace, Seoul, South Korea. #airasia #roamtheplanet #travel3Sixty
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Tell Tales

Travelling to the airport during the festive season can be chaotic and nerve-wracking. But take heart; AirAsia Allstars have been there too. So, enjoy these rib-tickling tales, and take heed of our travel guide. Happy travels!

I am what some may consider anal when it comes to being on time for important events. So, imagine my horror when I found myself running behind schedule for my own wedding! Of course, my siblings – who were tasked with driving me to the church – were unfazed. While my brother backed the car out the driveway, my sister amused herself with an awful rendition of Get Me to the Church on Time. Once we hit the highway, the real nightmare began; since both of them had forgotten their Touch ‘n Go cards and wallets, we had to detour to avoid toll roads. Fortunately, I made it on time, but I could’ve done with a lot less stress!

Beverly Rodrigues
Editor, travel 3Sixty°

Survival Guide: Lunar New Year Travel

Avoid the stress of peak season holiday travel with these simple tips.

Be an Early Bird
Remember, gates close 20 minutes before scheduled departure time!

Follow the Weight Limit
Carry-on luggage should not exceed: 56cm(L) x 36cm(W) x 23cm(H) in size, or the maximum weight of 7kg.

Beat the Queue
Make use of self/online check-in services, and print your boarding pass and bag tag at home.

Pre-book & Save
Enjoy great discounts when you pre-book your meals, pick a seat, upgrade your baggage allowance and purchase travel insurance via ‘Manage My Booking’ at airasia.com.

Time management is my kryptonite, but when it really counts like catching a flight, I’m early. There was one time, however, when I missed a train from Paris to London. I woke up early to get to the station but when I got there, my train had already departed. Only then did I realise that I hadn’t considered the time difference!

Danny Lau
Digital Content Editor, travel 3Sixty°

“Travelling on a budget to Maldives, I decided to skip the in-flight meal. Huge mistake! My stomach started rumbling loudly right after take-off. And by the time the food cart reached my seat, the hot meals were sold out, and I had to wait 4.5 hours until I landed in Male to finally have a proper meal. Don’t make the same mistake — pre-book your meal and seat!”

Ari Vanuaranu
Writer, travel 3Sixty°

I was almost an hour late for my solemnisation ceremony due to bad time management. My (then) future husband (pictured here with a keffiyeh, Arab headdress) was worried that I wasn’t going to turn up for our wedding!

Dils Kamarudin
Graphic Designer, travel 3Sixty°

Being a super nerd, I’m usually at the airport four hours before my flight, with travel documents printed out. On a recent trip, I travelled with a family friend who is calm, cool and fashionably late for everything. While my incessant nagging sped her up, it certainly didn’t prevent the unexpected traffic jam heading towards the airport. We parked a good 150m from the terminal, lugged our heavy bags across the sky bridge, and ran for our lives – ala The Amazing Race, but minus the glamour and prize money. We checked in less than a minute before the gate closed, and at that point, I was pretty sure an oxygen tank would have come in more handy than a flight ticket.

Kerry-Ann Augustin
Senior Writer, travel 3Sixty°

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Supporting Sustainability

AirAsia and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on December 20, 2017, to collaborate on sustainable development in Thailand through four pilot initiatives in support of the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The initiatives comprise SDGs awareness creation (promoting understanding of the SDGs via a variety of media, including a special AirAsia SDGs aircraft livery); Eastern Sarus Crane conservation (supporting the conservation of the Eastern Sarus crane in Buriram province); Friendly Design universal accessibility (training AirAsia staff to serve guests with special needs and championing improved mobility systems in airports); and lastly, Journey D (a sustainable programme to develop community tourism).

“In joining with UNDP, AirAsia is looking to truly benefit communities while ensuring sustainability on a global scale.” ~ Tassapon Bijleveld, CEO of AirAsia Thailand

First to Jeju

AirAsia X made its maiden entry into the South Korean island of Jeju on December 12, 2017, making it the only airline operating direct non-stop services between Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, and Jeju. The new four-times weekly flight service marks Jeju as the airline’s third destination in South Korea, after Seoul (Incheon) and Busan. Aside from its popular beach draws, the beautiful island is home to the UNESCO World Heritage site of Jeju Volcanic Island and Lava Tubes.

“Apart from facilitating tourism and the cross flow of business and trade, this direct connection will also strengthen bilateral relations between Malaysia and South Korea.” ~ Tan Sri Rafidah Aziz, Chairperson of AirAsia X

Revitalising Force

AirAsia Berhad appointed Noor Neelofa Mohd Noor as Non-Executive Independent Director last December. Neelofa, a household name in Malaysia, is a successful celebrity turned entrepreneur who created the highly successful Naelofar Hijab brand. The brand of Muslim headscarves is available in 37 countries, including the US, UK, France, Australia, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Singapore and Brunei Darussalam. AirAsia board members look forward to Neelofa sharing her invaluable experience as an entrepreneur, a brand creator and an industry disruptor, and to provide fresh insights as AirAsia makes the transformation into a digital airline.

“Neelofa is super smart, young and independent – just what we need to help the company stay ahead. She is one of the few Malaysians named by Forbes Asia in their ‘30 Under 30’ entrepreneurs list, and her track record in championing women in business is an inspiration.” ~ Tan Sri Dr Tony Fernandes, Group CEO of AirAsia and Co-Group CEO of AirAsia X
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AirAsia Indonesia Goes Public

AirAsia’s Indonesian affiliate, PT Indonesia AirAsia (IAA), officially became a subsidiary of PT AirAsia Indonesia Tbk (AAID), a public listed company on the Indonesia Stock Exchange (IDX) on December 29, 2017.

“With improving governance and better transparency, we hope to drive the operating entity to even greater heights as we continue to deliver world-class service and affordable air travel, and provide significant value to our shareholders.” ~ Dendy Kurniawan, CEO of PT Indonesia AirAsia

At Japan’s Helm

AirAsia Group announced the appointment of Jenny Wakana as Director & CEO of AirAsia Japan in January. Wakana contributed to the recent launch of AirAsia Japan as a consultant, and in her new role will continue to build on group synergy aimed at the airline’s expansion. During her previous tenure as Group Head of Branding and Communications, Wakana led the airline in its multi-award-winning brand campaigns, and also oversaw AirAsia’s Corporate Culture department, as well as award-winning inflight magazine travel 3Sixty™. Jenny brings with her invaluable experience in branding and communications, having also been the Senior Director of Communications at multinational luxury fashion company Coach, and Editor of Martha Stewart Living magazine in Japan, prior to joining AirAsia.

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Reaching Out to Educate

AirAsia announced last December its contribution of MYR121,750 (approx. USD30,000) to the National Education Saving Scheme (SSPN-i) under the National Higher Education Fund Corporation Programme. The airline’s contribution will be utilised under the Geran Sepadan for Standard One students at government-aided schools, with an allocation of MYR50 (approx. USD12) per student. Through this contribution, the fund is set to benefit 2,435 underprivileged pupils. On December 12, 2017, Aireen Omar, Deputy Group CEO of AirAsia – Digital Transformation & Corporate Services, presented a mock cheque to Mastura Mohd Khalid, Deputy Chief Executive Officer of the National Higher Education Fund Corporation at RedQ (AirAsia’s headquarters). The cheque presentation was witnessed by YB Datuk Dr Mary Yap Kain Ching, Deputy Minister of Higher Education Malaysia.

“We are pleased to contribute towards the future of our children and to support the National Higher Education Fund Corporation in helping students in need. There is an abundance of talents in the country that will go far through beneficial programmes and assistance. Through SSPN-i, we hope that parents will also take this opportunity to start saving to support their children’s education.” ~ Aireen Omar, Deputy Group CEO of AirAsia – Digital Transformation & Corporate Services
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Penang Assam Laiza takes 7th place in CNN’s listing of the World’s 50 Most Delicious Foods
Two of Penang’s street food made it into the World Street Food Top 50 list at the World Street Food Congress 2017
CNN listed Penang as one of the 17 Best Places To Visit in 2017
CNN listed Penang as one of Asia’s 10 greatest street food cities (2013)
Charting the Future

AirAsia launches full speed ahead on its digitalisation journey with five senior leadership appointments, set to propel the airline towards its dynamic future.

Aireen Omar, formerly CEO of AirAsia Malaysia, was promoted to Deputy Group CEO of AirAsia – Digital Transformation & Corporate Services. Her new appointment clearly reflects the airline’s vision to cement its transformation from an aviation company into a digital corporation. In her new role, digital growth businesses are Aireen’s core focus, and this impacts AirAsia’s non-airline ventures such as BIGPay, BIG Loyalty, ROKKI Shop, travel360, RedTix and Santan. Her key functions also include overseeing strategic group-wide initiatives and providing direction for AirAsia’s transformation into a global, cloud-driven product and platform company, as she continues to lead the corporate services sector for the AirAsia Group.

Aireen joined AirAsia in January 2006 as Director of Corporate Finance, following which she was Regional Head of Corporate Finance, Treasury and Investor Relations before being appointed CEO in 2012.

“I’m honoured to lead the transformation of AirAsia from a traditional aviation company into a digital corporation. Digital transformation is a journey with profound innovation of the business ecosystem and organisational activities. I am excited to work closely with Allstars to promote innovation throughout the group, and continue to enhance your travel experience.” ~ Aireen Omar, Deputy Group CEO of AirAsia – Digital Transformation & Corporate Services

Bo Lingam, who was Chief Operating Officer of AirAsia until the restructuring in December, was appointed Deputy Group CEO of AirAsia (Airline Business). At the helm of the airline business, Bo extends his long tenure with AirAsia to further strengthen the airline’s operations, which serve close to 70 million guests per year.

“The new structure of ONE AirAsia will allow us to combine size and resources, and optimise productivity to deliver high quality products and services. To continue staying ahead of the game, we need to keep our eye on the ball, recognise the gaps, and take smart risks.”

~ Bo Lingam, Deputy Group CEO of AirAsia – Airline Business
Langur Way Canopy Walk

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Captain Adrian Jenkins, who served previously as Group Director of Flight Operations, was appointed as Group Chief Operations Officer, responsible for Group functions in relation to Ground Operations, Engineering, Safety, Security, QA, NMC and customer experience. Captain Jenkins joined AirAsia in 1996, and served in various positions before becoming Regional Head of Flight Operations in 2006. The new COO was instrumental in setting up AirAsia Thailand’s flight operations and pilot training. His talents launched him to a Group-level position in 2015, when he was appointed as Group Director of Flight Operations, overseeing pilot recruitment, training and operations, and ensuring compliance with national and international regulatory requirements. With his vast experience, Captain Adrian is expected to revolutionise operational efficiency.

On the airline’s international business front, the appointment of Rozman Omar, previously Deputy Group CEO, Strategy and M&A, as Executive Director of AirAsia International Limited (AAIL) – AirAsia’s holding company for the group’s overseas investments – completes the management restructuring. Rozman’s new role is key to the consolidation of the company’s Asean units in Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines and Indonesia under one listed holding company, namely One AirAsia.

“We will start to align the various ownership interests in our Asean affiliates, beginning with the creation of AirAsia Group Berhad. With the One AirAsia concept we are practising, a more open business practice and environment coupled with liberalisation of ownership will further enable us to share resources across countries for a more efficient and cost effective service and product delivery.”

~ Rozman Omar, Executive Director of AirAsia International Limited

Lastly, Riad Asmat officially joined the airline as the new CEO of AirAsia Malaysia on January 10. Prior to this, Riad was the CEO of Caterham F1 Team, as well as Director for Corporate Planning, Strategy & Business Development in Naza Corporation Holdings, and had successfully grown the company across diverse business functions including automotive, property, construction, food & beverage and telecommunications.

AirAsia has made an exciting start to the New Year with senior leadership appointments. There is no doubt that this is only the first chapter in the airline’s quest to become one of the most trusted, respected and dynamic companies in a fast-evolving digital world.
World’s Largest
free-flight walk-in aviary
Social Entrepreneurs to the Rescue

Did you know that more than half the world’s population now live in cities? According to the United Nations, by 2030, six in 10 people will be urban dwellers. This development has created new challenges on existing infrastructure. Fortunately, social enterprises are coming up with innovative solutions.

One impactful venture is located in the city of Malang in Indonesia, where over 55,000 tonnes of garbage is produced daily but only half is collected. Indonesia Medika Foundation started the Garbage Clinical Insurance (GCI) to allow low-income families to trade in recyclable trash for free medical services. After running its first clinic successfully, GCI is setting up a second clinic with our grant.

Another common problem is road congestion. Our Malaysian grantee, The Basikal, started as a grassroots cycling movement to reduce car usage and encourage a healthier lifestyle. Founder Akmal Abd Mutalib now runs a bicycle centre in the heart of Kuala Lumpur offering maintenance classes and training for underprivileged youths to set up their own services.

A third major challenge that many cities face is accommodating refugees from conflict zones. In Malaysia, The Picha Project is receiving our grant to expand its Open House Programme where refugee families open their homes to diners keen to taste their traditional meals. The young social enterprise is making Kuala Lumpur more inclusive by enabling locals to create positive change.

Across Asean, young urbanites are becoming more invested in the future of their cities. By sharing best practices and improving access to resources, global leaders can enable more cities to adapt and follow suit.

Urban Wellness

Kuala Lumpur plays host to the 9th World Urban Forum from February 7 to 13 for discussion of the United Nation’s New Urban Agenda – a guide on urbanisation and sustainable development. Among key attractions for the expected 25,000 attendees is the Urban Village living laboratory at Medan Pasar in the heart of Kuala Lumpur, jointly presented by Think City, Urbanice and Kuala Lumpur City Hall. Also in the line-up is AirAsia Foundation’s Destination: GOOD spotlight on Asean social enterprise. Check out our pop-up shop@2 Hang Kasturi (a multi-purpose community space in Kuala Lumpur), as well as our programme of talks and workshops featuring innovative social entrepreneurs and their enablers. Learn more at airasiafoundation.com.
We nurture your possibilities

For more information
email: akad@ukm.edu.my or call: +603 8921 5333

www.ukm.my
MUSLIM FRIENDLY TOHOKU

Delight in Halal foods in the heart of Japan

Muslim travelers will find joy in the true Japan - Tohoku.

Eat Pray Experience

With a heart of hospitality, "Peaceful" and "Delicious" Muslim-friendly travel is here in Tohoku!
For Muslim travelers, a fulfilling halal trip.

[Sendai Mosque / Morioka Mosque]
Find peace of mind in local mosques in Sendai City, Miyagi Prefecture and Morioka City, Iwate Prefecture.

[Geibikei Gorge]
Muslim-friendly foods and prayer rooms are available at Iwate Prefecture’s Geibikei Gorge, where the fantastical canyon can be enjoyed by riverboat ride.

[Halal Sukiyaki]
At Miyagi Prefecture’s Hotel Metropolitan Sendai, travelers can appreciate halal-certified sukiyaki.

[Tashirojima (Cat Island)]
On Tashirojima (Cat Island), travelers can encounter cute roaming cats.

[Wanko Soba]
Wanko Soba is a famous way to eat soba in Iwate Prefecture. Take the challenge - how many bowls can you eat?!

[Delicious Fruits and Vegetables]
There are plentiful, exceptionally fresh vegetables and sweet fruits in Tohoku! Enjoy a plan including all-you-can-eat fruit.

Access
Tohoku is blessed with an abundance of nature, from the sea to the mountains, and the lakes and rivers in between. Plus hot springs, gourmet foods, festivals, and other hot spots and events that are uniquely “Japan”.

Shinkansen (Bullet Train)
Tokyo Station ↔ Shin-Aomori Station [Fastest]: 3 hrs. 9 min.
Tokyo Station ↔ Akita Station [Fastest]: 3 hrs. 44 min.
Tokyo Station ↔ Morioka Station [Fastest]: 2 hrs. 11 min.
Tokyo Station ↔ Sendai Station [Fastest]: 1 hr. 32 min.
Tokyo Station ↔ Yamagata Station [Fastest]: 2 hrs. 42 min.
Tokyo Station ↔ Fukushima Station [Fastest]: 1 hr. 32 min.

Airplane
Narita Airport ↔ Sendai Airport Approx. 1 hr. 5 min.
Haneda Airport ↔ Aomori Airport Approx. 1 hr. 15 min.
Haneda Airport ↔ Misawa Airport Approx. 1 hr. 20 min.
Haneda Airport ↔ Akita Airport Approx. 1 hr. 15 min.
Haneda Airport ↔ Yamagata Airport Approx. 1 hr. 5 min.
Haneda Airport ↔ Shonai Airport Approx. 1 hr. 5 min.

www.muslimfriendly.aimatrip.com
**SPOTLIGHT**

**Blooming Beautiful**

Thailand’s Central Chidlom department store and Central Embassy luxury mall in downtown Bangkok put on a spectacular floral fiesta in conjunction with their 70th anniversary celebrations in November 2017. An annual floral exhibition in its 23rd year, the 2017 instalment themed ‘Love & Appreciation’ was a magnificent display of fresh, gorgeous blooms and plants, complemented with extravagant fashion shows and live music. Central Chidlom showcased creative floral displays that included a giant cradle swing, cactus garden and floral tunnels, while Central Embassy upped the ante with a giant two-storey glasshouse decorated with exquisite flowers, foliage, vines and creepers that had visitors queuing up for selfies and photo ops.

centralchidlom.com, centralembassy.com

**Movies with a View**

St George OpenAir Cinema comes to Mrs Macquaries Point, showcasing a compelling line-up of films against a stunning backdrop of the Sydney Opera House and Harbour Bridge. For the 2018 event, which runs till Feb 21, a massive 350sqm cinema screen is hydraulically raised every evening to present more than a dozen premiere and preview screenings, as well as a selection of 2017’s best art-house films. stgeorgeopenair.com.au.

**Wintry Challenge**

Athletes from around the world gather in South Korea this month as they vie for gold in the Olympic Winter Games PyeongChang 2018 that takes place from Feb 9 to 25, followed by the Paralympic Winter Games from Mar 9 to 18. The stage is set for a new generation of athletes to show their prowess on snow and ice! pyeongchang2018.com

**Triple Triumph**

Sheraton Bali Kuta Resort, a five-star resort in Kuta, Bali’s most popular tourist spot, recently bagged three accolades at the prestigious 2017 World Luxury Hotel Awards ceremony in St Moritz, Switzerland. The resort was named Country Winner for Best Luxury Rooftop Hotel for the fourth consecutive year, and also won two Regional Awards for Luxury Ocean View Resort and Luxury Family Resort. sheratonbalikuta.com

1. Soohorang, the mascot of the 2018 Olympic Winter Games
If you’re looking for a memorable and fun learning experience for the whole family, look no further than the Kuala Lumpur Bird Park in Malaysia. With over 3,000 birds and 200 species of birds from around the world like the Mandarin duck, peacock, pelican, hornbill and heron housed within the 21-acre sanctuary, a trip to the KL Bird Park promises to be educational and awe-inspiring. [klbirdpark.com](http://klbirdpark.com)

**Top View**

Head up to Level 77 of the Q1 Building in Gold Coast to enjoy a 360-degree view of the city from Australia’s only beachside observation deck at SkyPoint, which also features a museum, weather station, theatrette and lounge bar across two levels. For thrill-seekers, the SkyPoint Climb is a must-experience with an external building walk reaching a height of 270m. And for that extra adrenaline rush, the Night Climb certainly does the trick! [skypoint.com.au](http://skypoint.com.au)

**Pomp & Ceremony**

Singapore’s famous Chingay festival is said to have started as a way to repel evil spirits with noise and gaiety, due to the ban on fire crackers. Today, the iconic street parade showcases the country’s cultural diversity, with other ethnic groups joining in the fun. Don’t miss this year’s Chingay cheer from Feb 23 to 24, promising spectacular martial arts performances, street dances, a stunning float parade, and more. [chingay.org.sg](http://chingay.org.sg)

**FAST & Efficient**

Recent advancements allow AirAsia guests travelling through Terminal 4 (T4) at Changi Airport Singapore to enjoy the FAST (Fast and Seamless Travel) automated airport experience. Currently, FAST enables travellers to check-in at home via web or mobile, print bag tags at the self-service kiosks, and drop luggage at the airport’s auto bag drop machines, with further enhancements to be rolled out soon. [t4.changiairport.com](http://t4.changiairport.com)
Hot Dates
Don’t miss these sizzling events taking place around the world in the month of February.

**NEPAL, TIBET, BHUTAN**

**Losar**

**Feb 16** This month, Nepal, Tibet and Bhutan celebrate Losar, the Tibetan New Year. Based on the traditional Tibetan lunisolar calendar, Losar is observed mainly by the Sherpa, Tibetan, Tamang, Bhutia and Yolmo people. Be sure to try *guthuk*, a barley broth with dumplings that are filled with varying ingredients symbolic of a person’s fortune in the coming year. [welcomenepal.com](http://welcomenepal.com)

**INDONESIA**

**Bau Nyale**

**Feb 20** Lombok’s famous annual festival celebrates the seasonal appearance of colourful palolo worms found in tropical waters. Considered a blessing as they are believed to be the hair of the legendary Princess Mandalika, the sea worms are used to fertilise paddy fields, and are a popular local delicacy. [indonesia.travel](http://indonesia.travel)

**SINGAPORE**

**Russell Peters – The Deported World Tour**

**Feb 24** World-famous comedian Russell Peters brings his world tour to the Singapore Indoor Stadium this month. The show features brand new material from Peters and promises his signature banter with the audience. [sportshubtix.sg](http://sportshubtix.sg)

**JAPAN**

**Sapporo Snow Festival**

**Feb 1-12** Not just famous for its spectacular snow and ice sculptures, the popular winter festival also features numerous concerts and events. This year’s festival takes place at three venues: Tsudome Site, from Feb 1 to 12; and Odori Site and Susukino Site from Feb 5 to 12. [snowfes.com](http://snowfes.com)

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At AirAsiaRedTix.com, you can purchase tickets for the events below:

### MALAYSIA

**ISAIFM Music Festival**

**Feb 17** The highly-anticipated event brings together celebrated local and foreign talents at StarXpo Centre, Kuala Lumpur. Be entertained by Indian hit makers such as Haricharan ft Bennet, Masala Coffee and Sabareesh ft Immortal Raaga, and homegrown artistes like Psychomantra and Lock Up.

**Tsai Chin Chinese New Year Eve Live in Genting**

**Feb 15** Experience a night of nostalgia as pop and folk singer Tsai Chin, best known for her Mandarin and Hokkien hits from the late 70s to mid-90s, renders her greatest classics at the Arena of Stars, Genting Highlands. Join Tsai Chin on a retro journey as you welcome the Lunar New Year.

**Be our fan on Facebook, follow us on Twitter and purchase your tickets for the events below at AirAsiaRedTix.com**

### PHILIPPINES

**Panagbenga Festival**

**Feb 1-Mar 4** Baguio City celebrate its flower-blooming season with a month-long festival. Event highlights include the Grand Street Dance Parade (Feb 24) and the Grand Float Parade (Feb 25), with stunning props and captivating choreography.

### AUSTRALIA

**BECK 2018**

**Feb 26 & 28** Renowned for his innovative and ever-evolving live performances, Beck travels Down Under this month for his first Australian tour in five years. Catch him on Feb 24 at Sydney City Limits, Sydney and Feb 28 at Margaret Court Arena, Melbourne.

### SINGAPORE, MALAYSIA, INDONESIA

**IN2IT Asia Showcase Tour ‘Carpe Diem’**

**Feb 2, 4, 10** Fans of IN2IT, get ready to meet the sensational Korean boy band on their Asia Showcase Tour, following their debut album Carpe Diem last Oct. Catch them on Feb 2 at School of the Arts (SOTA), Singapore; Feb 4 at PJ Live Arts, Malaysia; and Feb 10 at The Kasablanca, Indonesia.

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During Losar, the sacred Cham dance, performed by Buddhist monks wearing colourful masks and silk brocade robes, is considered a form of meditation and purification.

1. Buddhist monks performing Cham, a sacred dance to welcome Losar
2. A snow sculpture of Manila Cathedral at the Sapporo Snow Festival
3. Gendang beleq dance and music performance at a Bau Nyale celebration
4. Russell Peters
5. Haricharan
Kings of the Road

Metros and cabs might be the more convenient option for public transport, but these rides that are unique to Asean add to your travel experience in the region.

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**Kings of the Road**

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**Jeepney, Philippines** The most popular mode of public transport in the Philippines, and a national icon, jeepneys showcase flamboyant designs, and were originally repurposed from US military jeeps left behind from WWII. A cheap transport option, fares start from eight pesos (approx. USD0.20) a ride.

**Tuk-tuk, Laos** Like in Thailand, the tuk-tuk in Laos refers to a three-wheeled motorised vehicle that can seat six to eight passengers. The name 'tuk-tuk' is onomatopoeic of the putt-putting of the three-wheeler's engine.

**Angkot, Indonesia** Typically modified from a van or SUV to fit more passengers, angkot can seat two beside the driver, and eight to 10 in the rear. Some angkot are fitted with huge speakers, so expect to be 'treated' to blaring music during your ride!

**Songthaew, Thailand** Songthaew is really a pick-up truck fitted with two rows of benches along the length of its trunk. The word songthaew literally means 'two rows' in Thai. Some songthaew follow a set path, while others pick passengers up along the route in which the vehicle is travelling.

**Xe Ba Gac, Vietnam** The Vietnamese equivalent of tuk-tuk is xe ba gac, which is widely used as public transport in the countryside. In urban areas like Hanoi or Ho Chi Minh City, however, it is mainly used to transport parcels and goods – a more economical alternative to moving trucks.

**Pillion Plays**

Travel like a local when you try these innovative Southeast Asian motorbike rides.

**Remork-moto** Cambodia’s remork-moto, or remork for short, is a trailer hitched to a motorcycle. The name comes from remorque, which translates to 'trailer' in French.

**Bentor** In some places in Indonesia like Medan, the bentor’s passenger carriage is attached to the side of the motorbike, while in other cities like Makassar, the driver sits behind the carriage.

**Habal-habal** Essentially a motorbike with planks protruding from its sides and back, habal-habal can carry up to 10 people (or more!). This mode of transport is especially popular in Visayas and Mindanao in the Philippines.
Joyous Beginning

AirAsia Allstars from around Asean share their special Lunar New Year traditions.

“In my Peranakan family, Taon Baru (New Year) morning starts with the younger ones performing kui (kneeling) and extending wishes to the elders, who, in return, bless and present the youngsters with hong bao (red money packets).” ~ Ooi Mei Ying, Head of Ancillary, Malaysia

The 15-day Tahun Baru Imlek (Lunar New Year) celebration during the first lunar month is the most significant festival for Indonesian Chinese. The 15th day family dinner with lontong Cap Go Meh – a Peranakan Chinese-Indonesian feast that includes opor ayam (chicken in coconut milk) and telur pindang (marbled eggs) – is always a memorable occasion. ~ Amita Wijaya, Ground Operations Executive, Indonesia

Tet (Vietnamese New Year) centres on the coming together of family. On the first day of Tet, everyone gathers for the first breakfast of the new year. As a child, I was mostly excited to eat banh chung (glutinous rice cake) and receive li xi (lucky money)! ~ Nguyen Thi Phuong Thu, Marketing Executive, Vietnam

Under Different Stars

The Vietnamese zodiac shares 10 of the 12 Chinese zodiac signs – rat, tiger, dragon, snake, horse, goat, monkey, rooster, dog and pig. The Vietnamese, however, replaced the rabbit in the Chinese zodiac with the cat, and the ox with the water buffalo.

Home of Three

Borneo is the only island in the world divided between three nations – one per cent of its land mass is covered by the independent sultanate of Brunei Darussalam; 26 per cent by the Malaysian states of Sabah and Sarawak, as well as the Malaysian Federal Territoty of Labuan; and 73 per cent by the Indonesian provinces of East, West, Central, North and South Kalimantan.

National Day Pomp

Brunei Darussalam’s Independence Declaration was read at the Padang (a field located in Bandar Seri Begawan) on January 1, 1984. The site remains the focal point of the country’s National Day celebration, which is observed on Feb 23. If you’re in the capital on National Day, don’t miss the colourful parade and performances at the Padang.

Wonder Fruit

Known as fak khao in Thailand and tepurang in Indonesia, the prickly gac fruit (Momordica cochinchinensis), which looks like it belongs in a sci-fi movie, is tasty and nutritious. Relative to its mass, the superfruit contains 70 times more lycopene than tomatoes, 10 times more beta-carotene than carrots, 60 times more vitamin C than oranges, and 40 times more zeaxanthin than yellow corn!
On February 16, Chinese communities around the world usher in the new year, with feasting and festivities held over 15 days. Alongside time-honoured customs and traditions, food is an important facet of the festivities. During the celebrations, tables overflow with delicacies bearing auspicious names – a practice that is believed to bring good luck for the year ahead. Here’s a look at some lucky offerings.

**Fishing for Abundance** Yu (fish), which in Mandarin is a homonym for abundance, is a must during the Lunar New Year. By serving a fish dish, the host of the dinner is symbolically wishing his/her guests abundance for the coming year. Traditionally, fish is served whole, with head and tail intact to signify completeness.

**Prosper with Moss** Resembling coils of black hair, sea moss is hardly appealing. But, to the Cantonese, who refer to it as fatt choy, the fungus is an essential ingredient of celebratory meals. This is hardly surprising as fatt choy is a homonym for prosperity in Cantonese. For twice the luck, Cantonese cooks serve ho see (dried oysters), which sounds like ‘good things’ with fatt choy, as the phrase ho see fatt choy signifies good fortune and prosperity.

**Prawns for Laughs** Har, the Cantonese word for prawn, is also a homonym for laughter. The Cantonese often serve prawns at their reunion dinners in the hope that the new year brings joy and laughter. Tossed in a hot wok, deep-fried and topped with crumbled salted egg, or simply steamed, the shellfish – best savoured heads and all – add a tasty crunch to the festive feast.

**Lucky Eats** Can food bring good luck? In honour of Chinese New Year, we examine Chinese food symbolism.

**Symbolic Sweets**

**Nian Gao** To make nian (year) gao (cake), a paste made from glutinous rice flour, water and sugar is steamed. As the word ‘gao’ is a homonym for ‘high’, it is believed that eating the sticky treat will result in rising wealth and status.

**Fatt Gao** These fluffy steamed rice flour muffins are traditionally tinged pink. Offered at the altar during religious and festive occasions, fatt gao or prosperity cakes signify good tidings. Variants include palm sugar and pumpkin flavoured fatt gao.

**Tang Yuan** Made from glutinous rice flour, these chewy balls contain a filling of red bean or sesame paste, and are served in a sweet broth. This dessert represents reunion as the spheres symbolise completeness.
Inflight Delight

Ties that Bind

For Chinese communities around the world, the reunion dinner on the eve of Chinese New Year is of particular importance. This is when family members gather under one roof to enjoy a celebratory meal together. Referred to as tuanyuan (gathering around the family hearth), the reunion is a chance for families to reaffirm their love and respect for one another, and foster togetherness. Regardless of a family’s social status or income, the reunion meal is typically a grand affair, and comprises a variety of dishes, which include chicken, fish, pork, vegetables, soup and desserts.

Roar of the Lion

The Chinese ring in the new year with a lion dance, which features performers in a lion costume. Mimicking the movements of a lion, this entertaining dance is believed to repel evil spirits and invite good luck. When the ‘lion’ visits a home or office, its residents will often hang sang choi (lettuce) over the doorway.

Did You Know?

Mandarin oranges or tangerines signify wealth and luck, hence their popularity during the festive season. In Cantonese, the oranges are referred to as kam, which sounds like the Cantonese word for ‘gold’, while in Mandarin, oranges are referred to as ji, which is a homonym for the word ‘lucky’.

Emperor Fried Rice

Celebrate Chinese New Year on board with the latest addition to AirAsia’s inflight menu – Emperor Fried Rice. Fluffy grains of rice are stir-fried with egg, green peas, diced carrot, chillies, pineapple chunks, raisins and scallion, and seasoned with a blend of aromatic spices. The rice is then topped with chicken floss and golden morsels of chilli glazed chicken, which add extra flavour and elevate the dish. Available on board AirAsia Malaysia, AirAsia Indonesia and AirAsia X flights. airasia.com

Yee sang or raw fish salad is a must-have during Chinese New Year in Malaysia, Singapore, and recently, Hong Kong. The salad features slivers of raw fish (salmon in upmarket restaurants), julienned vegetables, crushed peanuts, and crunchy crackers, drizzled with a sweet and tangy plum sauce. Though yee sang is addictively tasty, the fun is in the tossing, when friends and family gather around the table, and using their chopsticks, toss the salad as high as they can while wishing for good fortune. It is believed that the higher the toss, the larger the fortune!

Roar of the Lion

1. A typical reunion dinner feast. 2. Fatt choy (sea moss) is served in a variety of dishes, including poon choy, a one-pot meal layered with meats, seafood and vegetables. 3. A man in a Laughing Buddha costume dangles sang choi before the lions during a lion dance.

Toss For Luck

Just before Chinese New Year, households offer treats to the Kitchen God to ‘sweeten’ his tongue, in the hope that he will relay a good report to the Jade Emperor – considered the supreme ruler of heaven and earth.

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Celebrating Love

Make this Valentine’s Day a celebration of true love rather than just romance, with a book for all the special people in your life.

On February 14, it’s chocolates, roses and candlelit dinners galore – and while there’s nothing wrong with a little romance, it’s also nice to expand the celebration to include friends and family. And we’ve got some book suggestions to help you fete them.

The 12 Days of Valentine’s by Jenna Lettice, with illustrations by Colleen Madden, lets you start the Valentine’s hijinks 12 days early with a rhyming countdown to also spark activities. The first day involves a warm, fuzzy hug; the second brings two cups of sparkles (time for some fun crafts, perhaps?); and on the third, you can make cards with three pink pens. And for a bonus: there are stickers for each of the days!

For the young and young-at-heart, The Fault in Our Stars is John Green’s moving story of two teenagers falling in love even as they battle terminal illnesses. I’m not big on sappy romances, and this really isn’t that. What it is: all the beauty of love, in its powerful, life-transcending glory, with a generous dose of laughter and light thrown in. You’ll need tissues, but it’ll be worth it.

If you want your passion unbridled and sweeping, Gabriel Garcia Marquez’s Love in the Time of Cholera will have you tumbled about by his rich prose and compelling storyline, which spans years. Young Florentino Ariza and Fermina Daza fall madly in love... but Fermina chooses to marry another, wealthier suitor. Fifty years later, Florentino is a successful man, but his heart still belongs with Fermina. And when Fermina’s husband dies, Florentino heads to the funeral with love and purpose. This intricately woven book explores the many aspects of love, the myriad faces and forms it wears, and the ultimate power we give it over us.

If you firmly believe the way to anyone’s heart is through their stomach, you might want to get cracking in the kitchen. But if you want a gift for someone you love who is also an avid cook, check out A Taste for Love by Elizabeth Harbison and Mary McGowan. It has heaps of menu suggestions, with dishes ranging from Pleasantly Puffed Scallops, to Soupe de Provence avec Pistou and Chocolate Kahlua Souffle, all coupled with romantic verse, and ideas for music and decor.

Of course, all these dishes will lend themselves just as nicely to a family dinner or friends’ gathering. And if you’re giving this as a gift, it may just work as the biggest hint you could muster, too!

Finally, for a little poetry, few can rival the sensual, lush, passion-driven, deeply evocative words of Chilean poet Pablo Neruda. Try the simply-titled Love Poems for a taste of the Nobel Prize winner’s style. Here’s a nibble – “And when you appear all the rivers sound in my body, bells shake the sky, and a hymn fills the world.”

ALLSTAR TAKE “Single on Valentine’s Day? Try the bookstore; maybe you’ll meet a cutie in the literary aisles. Worst-case scenario – you’ll go home with a title or two. But that still counts as a great day in my book!” ~ Irvin Hanni, Digital Photojournalist, Malaysia
Leonardo Da Vinci: The Biography
Walter Isaacson
Based on Da Vinci’s own notebooks, as well as discoveries about the genius, Isaacson’s book explores the life and mind of one of history’s most famous personalities. Da Vinci pursued cutting edge studies of anatomy and flying machines, geology and weaponry, always poised at the intersection of art and science.

Night of Cake and Puppets
Laini Taylor
This is the story of Mik and Zuzana’s fantastical first date. Tiny Zuzana is forthright and fierce, but talking to Mik makes her quail. Steeling her courage, she comes up with a magical treasure hunt of a plan that will take Mik all over Prague on a first date to end all first dates.

The Cuban Affair
Nelson DeMille
Highly-decorated US Army vet Daniel ‘Mac’ MacCormick is now a charter boat captain, and about to sail his most dangerous cruise ever. When he agrees to take on hotshot lawyer Carlos – who has connections with anti-Castro groups – a simple trip to Cuba soon involves a whole lot of thrilling twists and turns.

The Incredible Cabinet of Wonders
Lonely Planet Kids
A creatively curated collection from some of the world’s greatest museums, this book brings together 12 collectors – from toy makers to monster hunters – who have filled their own themed, illustrated cabinets with their favourite things. The interactive book lets kids lift the flaps and open cabinet doors to discover 100 extraordinary objects.

Lair of Dreams
Libba Bray
In this sequel to The Diviners, Evie O’Neill’s ability to read people’s deepest secrets is out, while dream-walking Diviners Henry Dubois and Ling Chan struggle to keep their powers a secret. As a mysterious sleeping sickness claims victims in New York, the Diviners must descend into the dreamworld to save the city.

Legacy of Violence
Blind Date with a Book
According to the Guinness Book of World Records, the longest novel ever written is Remembrance of Things Past by Marcel Proust – clocking in at an estimated 9,609,000 characters!
Successful entrepreneurs can definitely relate to this ideology – creating, running and growing a business while enjoying the freedom to live life as they wish. The best way to do this is to turn your passion into a business.

But there’s a method to it, of course. It isn’t enough to simply start a business with the fervent hope that it takes off. You need to have a strategy in place, to ascertain that what you’re passionate about and capable of supplying actually meets market demands.

Count the ‘Likes’ Start by conducting an actual survey. Nowadays, there are various websites that offer market testing options at affordable prices or even for free, so there’s no need to hire a costly consulting firm for the job. You can customise questions that suit your requirements from product name to branding to interest level; and receive the responses you need in no time at all.

Base Benchmark According to marketing research experts, only if your survey garners 40 to 60 per cent positive feedback should you consider your idea a viable investment. From then on, it’s all about creating a workable marketing model to suit your service or product. Remember, a sound marketing plan goes a long way in solidifying your brand and differentiating you from the competition.

Get your Hong Bao Now!

To celebrate the Lunar New Year, AirAsia is offering guests complimentary specially-designed hong bao packets, which feature a promo code for savings when you book flights via AirAsia’s mobile app between February 12 and 25.

Filling the Gap

With increasingly hectic lifestyles, millions of consumers have either little or no time for the simple, basic chores in life. This gap actually provides sure-fire opportunities for aspiring entrepreneurs. Some innovative services to pop up in recent years include food delivery service Foodpanda, with operations in Hong Kong, India, Malaysia, Philippines, and other countries; Malaysia’s GoGet, which deploys its runners on errands such as standing in line at the post office to transporting furniture and doing pharmacy runs; and Jakarta-based HappyFresh, which does your grocery shopping for you, and delivers to your doorstep within an hour!

According to Forbes, 2017 recorded the highest number of billionaires worldwide – 2,043 individuals, with a total net worth of USD7.67 trillion!
Discover a Unique Shopping Experience

One-stop Centre for Malaysian Batik, Souvenirs, Collectibles & Handicraft

Built in 1888, Central Market started off as a bustling wet market. It has now transformed into charming lanes where visitors can enjoy conducive shopping ambience displaying the best of Malaysian art, culture, craft and heritage at more than 300 bazaar-like shops and kiosks.

Festivities are regularly celebrated with local demonstration, cultural show, art & paintings as well as local cuisines at this must-visit destination. Along with exciting handicrafts, souvenirs, antiques and batik products, Chinese New Year celebration is always wondrous with charming lanterns and floral elements at Central Market Kuala Lumpur.

Central Market Sdn Bhd (64327-SW)
Jalan Hang Karut, 50050 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
Fax: +603-2032 2399 Email: info@centralmarket.com.my
Operating Hours: Monday-Sunday, 10am - 9:30pm

Contact us:
☎ 1300-22-8688
centralmarket.com.my
cn.centralmarket.com.my
Facebook: CentralMarketKualaLumpur
Instagram: CentralMarketKualaLumpur
Weibo: weibo.com/centralmarketkl
PRESCRIPTION

Siesta Fiesta

Poor sleep habits deprive you of quality sleep, leaving you feeling sluggish even after the recommended eight hours of slumber.

1,361 grams is the average weight of an adult brain. This lightweight marvel consumes 20 per cent of the body’s blood supply and contains about 400 miles of blood vessels!

Plant Power

How are vegans different from vegetarians? Vegetarians don’t consume meat (seafood included); vegans take that up a notch by also avoiding animal products such as milk, eggs and even honey. Scientifically-proven benefits of a vegan diet include better digestion, lower blood sugar levels, reduced inflammation, better sleep and increased energy. Adopting a plant-based diet is great for the environment and supports animal welfare too.

Workout Wonders

Exercise not only keeps your weight in check, it also boosts your immune system and can help lower your risk of cancer. Here are some proven facts.

- Exercise lowers the risk of 13 types of specific cancers including bladder, breast, colon, kidney, liver, lung and stomach cancers.
- Prolonged sedentary behaviour, like sitting for hours at your desk or in a traffic jam can increase the risk of cancer.
- Cancer survivors who work out face a lower risk of relapse.
- Walking for just 30 minutes five days a week meets the American Cancer Society’s recommended exercise regimen for adults – 150 minutes of moderate-intensity or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic exercise a week (or a combination of both).

The lesson here is – just keep moving!

Sleep is vital to our overall wellbeing, but experts have recorded an increase in sleep deprivation, calling it a ‘global epidemic’, with 75 per cent of adults in the US alone experiencing daytime drowsiness. Sleep deficiency also leads to health problems like obesity, diabetes, heart and kidney diseases, and stroke.

There’s good news though – achieving quality sleep is well within your control. Start by observing your daily habits. For instance, consuming stimulants like caffeine and alcohol, or engaging in stimulating activity right before bedtime, is a no-no. Your surroundings are also important. Create a conducive sleeping environment by maintaining an ideal room temperature (approximately 15 to 25 degrees Celsius). Go to bed only when you are genuinely tired; if you haven’t fallen asleep within 20 minutes, do some light reading or listen to soothing music until you start feeling drowsy.

Technology can also come to your rescue. Mobile apps such as Sleep Genius, Pillow and Awaken monitor your sleep patterns so you get the most out of slumber. Various apps feature helpful functions, like reducing stress by playing calming music so you sleep better; or analysing your heart rate and movements while you sleep, then providing insightful data to help improve your sleep quality.

So, take time to examine your lifestyle and daily habits, and make the necessary changes. Now, get some sleep!
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- **EmbryoScope + Time Lapse Incubator**
  Ensuring optimal embryo development.

- **Piezo-ICSI**
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- **Blastocyst Culture**
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- ICSI – Intra Cytoplasmic Sperm Injection
- IUI – Intra Uterine Insemination
- PGS / PGD – Preimplantation Genetic Screening / Diagnosis
- Egg / Sperm Donation Program
- Egg / Sperm / Embryo Freezing
- Advanced Reproductive Keyhole Surgery
- Obstetrics & Gynaecology Care
- Numerous latest effective techniques (Refer to website)
Aiming for a fitter you in 2018? The effective three-times weekly basic High Intensity Training (HIT) routine saves you time and money – great motivators to keep exercising.

HIT (not to be confused with High Intensity Interval Training – HIIT) comprises shorts bursts of highly intense exercise, with short recovery breaks in between that incorporate more of the same exercise but at a lighter pace. Every workout is primarily geared towards burning calories, so that your body is conditioned to maintain a healthy weight and your organs continue working effectively. One of the main causes of poor health is loss of insulin sensitivity where the body fails to regulate blood sugar properly, leading to diabetes. Insulin not only controls blood sugar, but body fat as well.

While hours of gym work is a given for those who want to get muscle-ripped, the HIT routine is ideal for those on ‘budget workouts’ or who struggle to manage proper exercise time. HIT was tested by popular BBC TV personality and medical journalist Michael Mosley, who discovered surprising benefits, especially for diabetics. All you need is a stationary bicycle to start. Follow this simple programme: First, do a 2min warm-up with gentle cycling; then, cycle as fast as you possibly can for 20sec. Repeat this three times and you’re done! After four weeks of this programme, Mosley discovered that his insulin sensitivity rose by 24 per cent – great news for diabetics! Perhaps starting your own home spin cycle sessions will also be the perfect start to the year.

9,173 km is the distance of the Red Bull Trans-Siberian Extreme multiple stage bicycle race – the world’s longest bicycle road race.

Run Right

While the Achilles tendon – the fibrous tissue located at the back of your ankles connecting the calf muscle to the heel bone – can bear loads exceeding 900kg, it is still prone to injuries. So, when running, invest in good shoes. The right footwear can help prevent injuries caused by long-term running, which puts a strain on the Achilles tendon as it absorbs impact.

Power to Piloxing

What is Piloxing? Pilates, boxing, and dance! According to workout gurus, this core-based sporting exercise is a superb muscle toner and calorie burner (up to 900cal per hour-long class). Fans of Piloxing – created by Swedish dancer, fitness expert and celeb trainer Viveca Jensen – swear by this arduous workout, which they say gets you into optimal shape in a flash.

Tech Flex

Performance and health technology company MuscleSound recently added a new muscle size feature to MuscleHealth – its assessment tool that provides users with vital muscle symmetry that tracks the progress of muscle thickness and growth. MuscleHealth can also alert users by detecting muscle decline. Currently, the cloud-based health system can determine quadriceps thickness, and is being expanded to cover more muscle groups.
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On a recent trip to Tokyo, I enjoyed bento, the popular Japanese lunchbox meal, but my experience at the Robot Restaurant surpassed the traditional ‘work lunch’ concept. I savoured my meal while watching a show featuring cyborgs, lasers, ‘battling’ women and bikini-clad drummers – quite a lollapalooza for a menu that comprised only three choices of bento!

From chats with many millennials, I find that experiences like dinner at a rooftop restaurant no longer seems to satiate the appetite of the discerning millennial traveller who’s constantly looking for bigger thrills at the dining table.

To appeal to this new generation of diners, many establishments are striving to up their game. Dinner in the Sky in Malaysia – where you dine mid-air, 40-45m above the ground – is a must for thrill seeking foodies in Kuala Lumpur. Taipei’s Modern Toilet Restaurant may not be an enticing treat for all travellers, but an unforgettable experience all the same. And Treepod Dining at Soneva Kiri Resort on Koh Kood island, which offers a gastronomical affair in a suspended pod amidst the lush rainforest of Thailand, tops every millennial’s travel list. Underwater dining, dining in the dark and gourmet busses – there’s no end to the imagination of restaurateurs to draw the crowds.

Whatever the idea, one thing’s for sure: Asia’s appetite for unusual dining experiences has only grown stronger. So, enjoy your meal and take home an amazing experience!

Full Moon Shoot

No, I’m not referring to the Chinese custom that celebrates a baby turning a month old. A trend has recently emerged among new-age expectant mothers to be photographed during their last trimester in beautiful lingerie-like garb to commemorate the last months of their pregnancy. Showing off that baby bump and making a lasting souvenir of your pregnancy is a great way to celebrate those nine months as you await the arrival of your bundle of joy.

This, That & the Other

Cocktails are now the toast of the town with a new wave of cocktail bars across Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia, where the piece de résistance is unique concoctions by superstar mixologists. The cocktails might be a tad too creative for some though – imagine chocolate, cinnamon, cayenne pepper and barley in your drink! But I have to say, I can’t wait to see what else unfolds in our glass.

Singles Day, China’s answer to Valentine’s Day, is celebrated annually on November 11. A particular Singles Day highlight is massive online sales, thanks to China’s e-commerce giant Alibaba, which kick-started the event, with other shopping portals like Lazada, Zalora and Shopee now in on the action too. Last year, Alibaba recorded a whopping USD25.3 billion in Singles Day online sales, beating Cyber Monday and Black Friday. Shopping, here I come!

Self-Made Celebs

There seems to be a new meaning to the term ‘celebrity’ in Asia as YouTubers, Instagrammers, bloggers (though passé but unrelentingly prevalent) and other types of online content creators rival actors and pop stars for international recognition. Drawing fans by the thousands, if not millions, personalities like Happy Polla, Pearypie and The Ming Thing are the new breed of superstars, even considered KOLs (key opinion leaders) in their respective ‘crafts’, as they lay claim to fame and fortune.
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**FUTURE FORWARD**

**Reinventing Intimacy**

Advancements in technology have now made it possible for couples to touch and hug across oceans, connecting on a whole new level.

In recent years, apps like Skype and Apple’s FaceTime have helped couples in long distance relationships stay connected. But maintaining a relationship across the miles is no easy feat.

Fortunately, technology has now advanced to a point where you can actually touch and feel your significant other despite being separated by distance.

For starters, the wireless digital wristband Pillow Talk by American company Little Riot allows you to send your heartbeat to your loved one and receive theirs, in real time, as if you and your partner were right next to one another. The device enables both users to listen to each other’s heartbeat, however far apart they are.

Haptic feedback devices like the Flex-N-Feel glove, which simulates the sense of touch, are now a scientific reality. The gloves transmit the touch of one user’s hand to the other. When sensors in the glove detect the movement of the hand and fingers, a wireless signal is sent to the sensors in the other glove miles away, replicating the sender’s hand movement and enabling the receiver to feel the ‘touch’. At present, the Flex-N-Feel glove device is in the final stages of research and development at Canada’s Simon Fraser University. But soon, you will be able to touch the face of a distant loved one, and feel their touch, via the Internet.

If hugging is your thing, then the Hug Shirt™ that is available for purchase is your go-to device. Sensors embedded in the fabric of the shirt detect the sender’s touch, which is transmitted wirelessly to the recipient. The intensity and duration of the touch is replicated for the receiver, and conveys the sender’s hugs virtually.

As we continue our tech journey towards perhaps making the iconic holodeck of the epic *Star Trek* movie franchise a reality in the near future, VR (virtual reality) and AR (augmented reality) technologies are very much a part of our present.

The HTC Vive (VR) and Microsoft HoloLens (AR) headsets, for instance, provide users the opportunity to ‘interact’ with loved ones as if they were in the same room.

One thing is for sure: New tech solutions help support long distance relationships ensuring that physical distance is no barrier to love.

---

**ALLSTAR TAKE**

“Nothing beats the marvel of digitalisation for bridging borders. With real time touch now a part of technology’s impressive arsenal, you are always within reach of your loved one.”

~Rajiv Ravikumar, Network Engineer, India
Digital Device Buddies

These gizmos don’t just offer great functionality, they look hip too!

**Logitech M590 Multi-device Silent**
With just the press of a button, this wireless mouse, with 90 per cent click-noise reduction, can navigate seamlessly between two computers. It uses both radio via a dongle and Bluetooth connectivity, and can last up to two years on a single AA battery! Now, that’s a mouse you want to have around. logitech.com

**SanDisk iXpand Base**
Offering up to 256GB of storage, the iXpand Base keeps your files safe with automatic backup. And with the iXpand Base app, retrieving your files is a cinch. It is also a charger – just plug in your iPhone and the 15W charger powers up the battery in a flash! sandisk.com

**Liva Q**
A full-fledged pocket-size PC, Liva Q by ECS can playback 4K content with ease. Powered by an Intel Apollo SoC, it can run Windows 10, and features a complete input/output selection including HDMI, USB 3.0 and Wi-Fi connectivity, plus a microSD slot for expansions. ecs.com.tw

**Lofree Four Seasons Keyboard**
This typewriter-inspired wireless mechanical keyboard is functional retro at its best, and comes in four seasonal colours – Vernal White (spring), Aestival Blue (summer), Autumnal Grey (autumn) and Hibernal Black (winter). It features mechanical switches and finger-friendly spherical keycaps, while its Bluetooth connectivity is device agnostic – so it works with everything! lofree.co

**PLANET OF THE APPS**

Get creative and broaden your horizons with these cool apps.

**PicsArt Animator**
Named ‘most entertaining app of 2017’, this animation maker is guaranteed to bring your smartphone images to life. From animated GIFs to videos, the app can help you create fun art with a couple of taps on your smartphone.

OS: iOS/Android
Price: Free

**Star Walk 2**
This app encourages young minds to stargaze, right on your mobile device! With Star Walk 2, you and your kids get to explore the solar system, constellations and celestial bodies as the app features a full encyclopaedia of interesting games and educational movies on the subject.

OS: iOS/Android
Price: Free

**Inkitt**
The go-to app for avid readers, this free library offers the best in fiction from independent authors. With numerous titles and discussion topics to browse and choose from, Inkitt will keep you engrossed for hours.

OS: iOS/Android
Price: Free

**Tip of the Month**

Enhance your Mac to the max with these cool functions.

**Apple Watch Unlock**
Turn on the Two-Factor Authentication on your Mac and iPhone, and enable the ‘Allow your Apple Watch to unlock your Mac’ option in the Security & Privacy setting. And the next time you near your Mac while wearing your Apple watch, it will magically unlock itself.

**Apple Photos Search**
Just type in what you want to find, and the AI-trained search algorithm will seek out the image on your Mac. Nine times out of 10, you will get the desired result.

**Night Shift**
Designed to be in tune with your body’s circadian rhythm, Night Shift adjusts the colours of your display to kinder tones after dark. This function can be turned on by going to the Notification Centre, which can be activated by either swiping on the trackpad with two fingers from the right-hand side, or clicking the Notification Centre icon in the menu bar.
TOUCHDOWN

Jeju, South Korea

Also known as Island of the Gods, Jeju’s astounding beauty is a slice of heaven on earth.

Named one of the New Seven Wonders of Nature, Jeju, home to three UNESCO World Natural Heritage sites, exudes laid-back, romantic charm. Located 130km off the Korean Peninsula, the island, a solid mass of ancient volcanic rock, boasts cascading waterfalls, dramatic cliffs, and stunning shorelines.

In summer, Jeju’s beaches are a pristine shade of pale, the perfect accompaniment to the turquoise waters that hug its shores. In spring, the island is awash in pretty pastels, with cherry blossoms lining the streets and mustard yellow fields that stretch across the miles leading to South Korea’s highest point – the majestic Mount Halla. In autumn, hues of crimson swaying Eulalia grass dot the landscape, while winter’s white blanket transforms Jeju into an ethereal wonderland.

Its dreamlike, romantic settings make it a highly popular film location for Korean dramas, but Jeju’s natural beauty is just part of its celestial charm. Geographically isolated from the mainland, the people of Jeju developed their own way of life over the centuries, with reverence for female deities in particular and a strong culture of women as breadwinners. A great example and icon of the island are the haenyeo (female divers) – a community of female divers who traditionally dive without equipment. Over 400 dang (shamanic shrines) dot Jeju, and visitors can get a sneak peek into its rich past, ancient folklore, customs and legends at the many museums on the island. Today, the 600,000 islanders who call Jeju home welcome visitors seeking a bit of everything – adventure, culture, history and romance – all against the breathtaking backdrop of Jeju’s unrivalled beauty.

“I first visited Jeju in 2011 with my family, and immediately fell in love with its natural beauty. Although I grew up in Seoul, I always knew that the island south of the Korean Peninsula was unique in many ways. One of the things you must experience here is the Jeju Olle Trail – walking along the winding road with the view of the ocean and feeling the sea breeze against your skin is very refreshing and liberating. Getting around Jeju island is also easy. You can opt for public transport, rent a car or motorbike, or even cycle around, although I recommend going for a rental car, which allows you to appreciate Jeju’s beauty more. And if you are a foodie like me, look out for galchi jorim (grilled cutlass fish) and Jeju’s winter delicacy bangeo (yellowtail fish), which can be found at the homes or shops run by Jeju’s famed haenyeo.”

Seoul-native, Min Kyungwon (Lisa), Internal Communications Executive, Malaysia, offers insights on some must-dos in Jeju.

Images: Getty, 123RF

WORDS: KERRY-ANN AUGUSTIN

FOLLOW US ON
## Budget & Blowout Guide

Treat yourself, or save your South Korean Won? Our guide can help you decide.

### Save

<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Within the vast emerald grounds of the Seogwang tea fields, O’SULLOC – the Korean tea culture brand – has set up a museum that documents Korea’s age-old tea traditions, and a café that serves tea-infused and tea-inspired desserts. You can also get unique items like green tea hand cream and green tea milk spread at the gift shop.</strong></th>
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### Spend

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<th><strong>Sightseeing tours on the ultra-luxurious GRANDE BLEU YACHT offer guests panoramic views of the island. Wine and dine on board, or opt for their fishing and snorkelling packages. Occasionally, dolphins are sighted swimming next to the yacht, making the KRW60,000 (USD55) price tag totally worth it.</strong></th>
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### DO

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<th><strong>Within the vast emerald grounds of the Seogwang tea fields, O’SULLOC – the Korean tea culture brand – has set up a museum that documents Korea’s age-old tea traditions, and a café that serves tea-infused and tea-inspired desserts. You can also get unique items like green tea hand cream and green tea milk spread at the gift shop.</strong></th>
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### EAT

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<th><strong>Head to DONGBOK-RI HAENYEO-CHON where some of the island’s haenyeo turn their freshest catch of the morning into scrumptious offerings. The fare is reasonably priced; signature dishes – hwoe-guksu (sashimi and noodles) and seonggge-guksu (sea urchin noodle soup) cost KRW7,000 (USD7) each, and jeonbok-juk (abalone rice porridge) is only KRW10,000 (USD9).</strong></th>
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### SHOP

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<th><strong>Whip out your wallet for a Korean craft that dates back to 5,000 BC. At DOYE-CHON, artisan craftsmen create traditional earthware called ongi. The place is one-of-a-kind, hidden in a remote part of Seogwipo, where you can pick out small hand-crafted ongi priced from KRW10,000 (USD9). More elaborate pieces fly into six-figure prices.</strong></th>
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### STAY

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<th><strong>The THE SEAES HOTEL &amp; RESORT in Seogwipo is a picture perfect romantic getaway. Countless K-dramas have been shot here, thanks to its beautifully-manicured gardens and stunning ocean views from the hotel’s seven different luxurious, wood-based abodes. Prices start from KWR192,000 (USD180).</strong></th>
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<th><strong>Do as the locals do, and head to the TRADITIONAL FIVE-DAY MARKET. These make-shift markets open on dates that end with ‘2’ and ‘7’ (at 5-day intervals), originated in 1906, and have since been attracting locals and tourists looking for fresh and affordable produce, livestock, clothing, cutlery and crafts, among the many goods available here.</strong></th>
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<th><strong>Sleek, contemporary, clean and inexpensive, ROBERO HOTEL is located in Jeju-do, the island’s historical district and city centre. Boasting 113 rooms from KWR38,000 (USD35) onwards, the hotel is 2.9km from Jeju International Airport, and close to Jungang, an underground mall, and the stunning Gwandeokjeong Pavilion.</strong></th>
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### NOTE

All prices listed here are approximate values at the time of print.

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**GETTING THERE**

AirAsia flies to Jeju from Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. airasia.com
Dreamy Havens

These romantic getaways are the perfect setting for honeymooners to begin a wondrous journey of a lifetime together.

Cape Weligama

When I imagine a romantic retreat, I dream of a hideaway fringed by swaying palms – a paradise that offers privacy and peace, and preferably an adult-only pool!

On a recent getaway to Sri Lanka’s stunning southern coast, my partner and I were thrilled to find a sanctuary that delivers all the above (and more). Perched on a promontory overlooking the Indian Ocean, Cape Weligama offers an idyllic setting for couples to reconnect and recharge.

Designed by Thai starchitect Lek Bunnag, this luxury escape – the second in the Resplendent Ceylon portfolio – was inspired by a traditional village, and is located just 10 minutes from Weligama, a coastal town that literally means ‘sandy village’.

Spread across the 12-acre Relais & Chateaux-listed property are 23 villas tucked within stonewalled frangipani-scented wattas (gardens), and 16 suites. Each of the wattas reference an explorer whose journey to this serendipitous island inspired others to follow in their footsteps.

Our spectacular ocean villa was located in a leafy garden named after naval officer Joris van Spilbergen – the first Dutchman to set foot on the island.

Although we shared our watta, which came replete with a 15m pool, with two other villas, the garden was designed in a way that ensured privacy. Only once did I spot the couple who occupied the villa across the hedge from ours!

The 130sqm Ocean Villa – our home away from home – showcased a bedroom and living room, walk-in dressing room, and a generous bathroom kitted out in luxurious custom-developed camellia sinensis-infused Ophir toiletries. The ample bathroom featured twin vanities, a shower/steam room, and sumptuous bath that opened onto the lush tropical surrounds.

The terracotta-tiled villa also featured a vast verandah ideal for lounging and taking in the stunning seascape. Caressed by the ocean breeze, we spent many pleasurable hours here, sipping specialty Dilmah teas – a bonus since the property is owned by Dilmah’s founders, the Fernando family. We never once turned on the 46-inch TV preloaded with complimentary movies!

While its facade resembled a village-inspired bungalow, on the inside, the villa was stylishly decorated with an earthy, contemporary palette of beige and dark wood. Adding an ocean-inspired pop of colour to this elegant backdrop were turquoise walls, against which resided our king-sized bed with its show-stopping carved headboard. Sepia-toned maps and prints of Ceylon adorned the walls and added interest, while books on ancient Sri

Must Try!

At the Cape Club, afternoon tea is served with a selection of brews from The Teamaker’s Private Reserve. An ideal choice is Ceylon Artisanal Spice Chai – an aromatic full-bodied tea with hints of clove, ginger, cinnamon and lemongrass from Dilmah’s Nilagama Estate.

*Words: Chitra Santinathan*
Lanka offered an introduction to the island’s charms.

So cosy was our villa that we prised ourselves from its comforts only to explore the scenic surrounds or the tempting treats at Ocean Terrace – one of four F&B venues at the resort. Aside from its sweeping swoon-inducing views, the cobalt-walled restaurant dished up a fusion of East and West with locally sourced ingredients such as crusty village bread, fish and seafood, as well as traditional favourites.

For lunch, menu highlights included a daily selection of Sri Lankan curries, served with rice and condiments, and fusion fare like Ceylon tacos – tortillas bursting with grilled fish, crunchy lettuce, herbs, and a spicy tomato and onion sambal. Dinner at Ocean Terrace featured delicate appetisers like Weligama Bay tuna carpaccio bisque – yellowfin tuna served with arrack-infused roasted shellfish bisque, and hearty mains such as chicken stew, goat curry or devilled prawns with steaming rice, brinjal moju (pickle) and tempered dhal (lentils). For after-dinner indulging, the restaurant’s sensational sweets are to-die-for. We savoured Sri Lankan-inspired cheesecake – a light and fluffy bar made from buffalo curd, with a ginger crumble base, as well as brandy-soaked fudge garnished with white chocolate shells – to the last bite, which says a lot for two people who don’t possess a sweet tooth!

While Ocean Terrace is itself a romantic enclave boasting breathtaking views, a candlelit dinner for two can be set up at the resort’s panoramic lookout point for more privacy.

After all the wining and dining, more adventurous couples would appreciate the activities offered by the professional crew at the resort’s Sports Centre. Located on a curve of golden sand to the east of the resort, the Sports Centre is a five-minute walk away, and a base for kayaking, snorkelling and surfing (Weligama’s gentle curls are perfect for beginners).

On the west of the resort is another picturesque beach accessible via a stone pathway. West Beach, as it’s called, offers more privacy and is great for sunset strolls. For those who prefer a few leisurely laps in the pool, the crescent-shaped and adult-only Moon Pool is recommended. With its infinity edge, the pool seems to float above the surf, and is just as resplendent day or night.

With our grown-up neighbours heading for the Moon Pool, and children, the Cove Pool, we were left the exclusive use of the shimmering pool within our watta. What luck! Cosying up on a sunbed on our final evening, we lapped up the solitude, save for the sound of the surf and the whispers of the breeze – now what could be more romantic than that?

Hotel Tugu Lombok

The romance of a magical, faraway escape is a reality at Hotel Tugu Lombok, situated on the pristine sands of Sire Beach. With azure waters and the mythical Mt Rinjani dominating the backdrop, the hotel’s architecture pays homage to Lombok’s art, culture and heritage.

Jl. Pantai Sire, Desa Sigar Penjalin, Kecamatan Tanjung, Kabupaten Lombok Utara, Nusa Tenggara Barat 83352, Indonesia

Abigamana Road, Weligama, Sri Lanka
The St Regis Langkawi

When John Jacob Astor IV first opened The St Regis in New York City, US, he envisioned a hotel of the finest standards and utmost opulence, with the most exclusive address. Some 114 years later, The St Regis name is engraved at the entrance of 62 luxury properties across the globe, retaining the romantic splendour and spirit of the original masterpiece. Revisiting Astor’s legacy far from the bright lights of the Big Apple, I make my way to The St Regis Langkawi, Malaysia – one of the St Regis group’s newest properties.

This St Regis is cradled comfortably in the southern tip of Langkawi, away from the island’s popular party streets. The property, fringed by 600m of white sand and the blue of the Andaman Sea, is surrounded by the lush greenery of the Kilim Karst Geoforest Park (part of the Langkawi UNESCO Global Geopark), making it a sanctuary for those looking for a secluded retreat for lavish romancing.

Blanketed by towering trees, the driveway is dotted by date palms and azure Moorish lamps, alluding to the property’s architectural influences – a medley of Middle Eastern and Javanese aesthetics. And bigger than the ferns that ornament the entrance of the hotel lobby are the smiles of the St Regis butlers who escort me to my Pool Suite – 90sqm of contemporary elegance embellished with classic fixtures. Blending blues, greys and hues of khaki, the room features furnishings fit for a queen – plush bedding with opulent fixtures and a floor-to-ceiling marbled bathroom, where the bathtub with a gleaming pearl backsplash takes centre stage.

The romantic allure of the setting extends to its lounge, where honeymooners can canoodle while enjoying the view of the outdoor private pool framed by a sprawling garden.

I soak up the sun in the private pool by day, but take advantage of the privacy by immersing myself in its cool waters at night while watching stars glimmer across Langkawi’s skies.

Mornings are best spent exploring Kubang Badak River Mangroves with Jungewalla tours. Not far from St Regis, this quiet, tranquil river houses five million-year-old limestones, and myriad flora and fauna. The beauty of this geopark is humbling. And for luxurious relaxation, the award-winning Iridium Spa’s Urut Melayu, a traditional Malay massage that employs deep tissue pressure, is hard to beat. The jewel of The St Regis Langkawi is undoubtedly Kayu Putih. Designed by renowned interior architect Bill Bensley, the fine-dining restaurant sits on stilts overlooking the Andaman Sea, making its sunsets a most mesmerising sight. Here, I savour a six-course meal of poached lobster tail, roasted beef strip loin and the insanely delicious black bee honey dessert while gazing into the horizon.

To wrap up the night in style, I make a champagne toast to Mr Astor for the magic he first created 114 years ago.

Jalan Pantai Beringin, Langkawi, 07000, Malaysia

The Shore at Katathani

Perched majestically atop a lush hill on Phuket’s Kata Noi Beach, the property has everything from sunken lounges framed by pools to luxurious bedrooms with full ocean views. But it is the villas’ private infinity pools, which bleed out to the tranquil, turquoise waters of the Andaman Sea, that will leave you in the mood for love.

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14 Kata Noi Rd, Karon, Muang, Phuket 83100, Thailand

WORDS: KERRY-ANN AUGUSTIN
The biggest retail and wholesale mall in Kuala Lumpur with over 800 outlets. KWC Fashion Wholesale has the latest fashion products and the most complete Muslimah wear outfit. The more you spend, the more you save.
Spa Village Resort Tembok Bali

Ensoconced within a leafy enclave along Bali’s unspoilt northern coast, Spa Village Resort Tembok is made for romance.

Arriving at the resort after a three-hour drive through Bali’s lush inland landscape of rolling hills and rice terraces, my partner and I were treated to a welcome ritual that consisted of a foot soak and a neck-and-shoulder massage in an airy pavilion. Whatever fatigue we felt until that point simply vanished, and was quickly replaced by a sense of serenity.

The resort’s remote location, coconut-fringed shoreline and mesmerising views added to its romantic appeal. Here, black volcanic sands tumbled into the shimmering sea, framed by magnificent mountains. This was Bali at its rustic best; one of our most cherished memories was that of fishermen casting their nets at sea.

The resort’s ‘16 and above’ policy helped create a tranquil child-free atmosphere, conducive for newlyweds, as well as not-so-newlyweds looking to rekindle the flame. Our room, elegantly appointed with dark wood panelling, was bereft of TV or Wi-Fi connectivity, encouraging digital detox. With no distractions, we found it easy to focus our attention on one another.

They say the way to a man’s heart is through his stomach, and I guess this is true, as I relished every meal at the resort. Wantilan, the resort’s sole dining venue, offered a forever-changing menu of delicious Indonesian and Western culinary favourites, celebrating the freshest catch of the day and locally sourced seasonal ingredients. Our intimate dinners were made even more memorable with scrumptious local specialties like sate celeng (minced pork satay) and godoh biu (banana fritters with honey).

Every day without fail, we walked along the frangipani-strewn path that connected our room with the spa to indulge in its various offerings. The highlight for us was the Penganten Melukat treatment, which is inspired by the traditional rituals for Balinese brides and grooms. A blushing bride I may not be, but after a relaxing traditional massage and reinvigorating body scrub, I emerged from the floral bath reborn, and ready for love!

We ended our blissful retreat with a magical in-resort activity: starlight gazing from the infinity pool. Speckled with luminous stars, the sky hinted at the vastness of the universe burning with celestial bodies billions of years older than me and light years away. In contrast, it reminded me of how short life is – much too short not to love with all your heart.

Lying on our floating beds with hands entwined, we drifted across the calm pool lulled into a dream-like state by the gentle ripples.

A hidden gem tucked away in a corner of this tropical paradise, Spa Village Resort Tembok Bali seemed worlds away, and is exactly the type of property that inspires romance and wonder.

Must Experience!

A sunrise or sunset cruise in the Bali Sea on a jukung (traditional outrigger canoe) makes your holiday all the more special. And who knows, you might even sight a dolphin or two!

WORDS: ARI VANUARANU

Danang Banyan Tree Lang Co

Snuggle up in this luxurious pool-villa property on one of Central Vietnam’s most exclusive beaches with the Truong Son Mountain Range in the background. A stay here is further enhanced by romantic dining options – a lantern-lit dinner overlooking the sea, private dining along the golden shores, or an intimate dinner in the courtyard of your own villa.

Cu Du, Loc Vinh, Phu Loc, Thua Thien Hue, Vietnam

Jl Singaraja-Amlapura No. 100, Desa Tembok, Tejakula, Buleleng, Bali, Indonesia
nova 2i – The World in Your Hands

They say a picture paints a thousand words and the generation today takes that saying to heart. This is evident through the continuing popularity of photo apps and social media platforms that document a person’s travel, lifestyle, hobbies and even works of art. Apart from good photo taking skills, the perfect photo taking tool is essential to produce an engaging photo.

Enter the Huawei nova 2i. The perfect tool for taking DSLR-like photos, equipped with quad lens that feature a 13MP + 2MP lens on the front and a 16MP + 2MP lens on the back. Like its “older brothers” from the Mate and P family, it comes with Bokeh effect that blurs the edges of photo naturally. This is made possible with the 2MP 1.75um cameras that enable depth sensing and natural Bokeh effect.

While other smartphones give you the opportunity to set your phone before taking a photo, the Huawei nova 2i with its wide aperture mode allows you to re-select your focus point and adjust the level of blur after you’ve taken a photo. Taking selfies is also more fun now, with built-in stickers and filters.

These stunning photos, taken by Vietnamese photographer, Dat Vu Nguyen are a testimony of what the Huawei nova 2i is capable of. Taken in various lighting conditions and landscapes, these photos show that you do not need a big professional DLSR camera to take great photos on your travels anymore.

To view those stunning pictures you’ve taken, the Huawei nova 2i is the first ever smartphone to have a 18:9 display which allows it to have a 5.9 inch full HD inclusive of the panel while retaining the dimensions of a 5.5 inch phone. This allows you to have a larger screen to view all the digital content that comes through your phone.

As travel becomes more affordable and is a lifestyle need for today’s generation, you would want to document your travels in the best way possible. The Huawei nova 2i is the ideal companion to capture, retain and showcase those stunning pictures. Be it capturing a sunset on the pristine beaches of Boracay or the glorious sunrise in temple ruins of Angkor Wat, the Huawei nova 2i captures your perfect moment every time.
Indonesia

Titi

Deep in the rainforests of the Mentawai Islands live one of the last few indigenous people of Indonesia who still practise an age-old way of life, and among the ancient customs of the Mentawai people is their tattooing. In the past, Mentawai tattoos, known as titi, were etched using sharpened tree bark or a thorn, but today a brass nail is more commonly used. The Mentawai believe that to keep the soul closely connected to the body, they must adorn the body with tattoos, flowers and beads. Without these beautifications, they fear that their soul may find the physical body unattractive and choose to roam. Tattoos are also believed to ward off evil spirits and help ancestors recognise their kin after death. Both men and women tattoo their bodies, with designs consisting primarily of patterns constructed from lines across the arms, legs, chest and back. A full set of tattoos takes years, as different parts of the body are tattooed at various stages of life.

Meet the Mentawai

Here are some interesting facts about the Mentawai.

- The Mentawai is one of the oldest ethnic communities in Indonesia – believed to have inhabited the Mentawai Islands since 500 BC.
- Their staple food is sago, and not rice, which is the norm in most parts of Asia.
- The Mentawai believe in Arat Sabulungan (a form of animism), which upholds that every living thing has a soul, and that the sacred titi represents the harmonious balance between humans and nature.

From ancient times to the present day, tattoos and body art continue to serve important functions: to beautify, identify, bless or protect.
India

**Mehndi**

Henna body art, or mehndi, is a practice steeped in over 9,000 years of history. The ancient Egyptians used henna as a means to create body art, and this form of beautification has also been practised in India, Africa and the Middle East for centuries. Henna dye, which is made from crushed leaves of the henna tree, produces a temporary burnt orange or dark brown stain on the skin. Depending on how long the dye is applied before being washed off, the stain can last for up to months at a time, making it perfect for creating temporary tattoo designs. In India, henna art can typically be witnessed at wedding ceremonies, where a bride’s hands and feet are covered with intricate designs of geometrical shapes and flowers. Adorning a bride with mehndi is a pre-wedding highlight leading up to the nuptials, and is usually a women-only ritual. While the bride receives elaborate henna designs, her guests participate in the festivities by also adorning themselves with smaller designs on their hands and feet.

West Africa

**Facial Scarification**

Unlike conventional tattoos, facial scarification involves shallow incisions on the skin. Traditionally, many West African tribes etched scars on their face using stones, glass and knives. The scars were seen as a sign of recognition for men, a symbol of beauty for women, and a way of identifying allies in tribal wars.

New Zealand

**Ta Moko**

For the indigenous Maori of New Zealand, the ta moko remains a cherished symbol of their people’s tradition, values and history. Ta moko tattooing focuses on the carving of symbols on the skin that signify a person’s genealogy, or whakapapa, allowing the wearer to affirm lineage and cultural social standing in a visual way. Each tattoo design, which consists of flora and fauna motifs, represents a piece of tribal history that tells a story of personal value to the wearer. In the early 20th century, the art was almost lost, but is seeing a revival in recent times as more and more Maori get in touch with their ancient culture. Both men and women can apply the ta moko, with face tattoos being among the most traditional form. Men often sport full face ta moko while women typically tattoo the chin, forehead or upper lip area. A facial ta moko is considered the ultimate representation of a person’s Maori pride, as the head is regarded as the most sacred part of the body.

Samoan **Tatau**

The tatau tattoo tradition is regarded as one of the world’s oldest. Traditionally, Samoan men sported the malofie, which covered the skin in intricate designs from the waist to the knee, while a less elaborate version called malu was reserved for the daughters of high-ranking leaders.

Ireland

**Celtic tattoos**

In the old days, Celtic warriors adorned their bodies with tattoos to intimidate opponents. Celtic tattoos, worn by both men and women, are also a symbol of great pride and typically feature interlacing knots, patterns, and motifs of animals and nature.

Samoa

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USA

Kakau

When Polynesians first arrived on the islands of Hawaii around AD 400, they brought with them their traditional tattoo art known as kakau. Aside from being adornments, kakau was said to influence physical and spiritual well-being, and represent social status and distinction within the community. Tattoo designs depicting lizards and the Hawaiian crescent fan called peahi niu were reserved for society’s most well-respected members. More common designs include patterns symbolising natural elements, and tributes to departed family members, leaders and personal heroes. Traditionally, the tattoos were etched onto the skin using a needle made from animal bones and hand-tapped using a mallet, and the pigment ink was made from a mixture of soot and vegetable juices. Usually, kakau tattooing for men was done on their arms, legs, torso and face, or even the entire body, while women sported tattoos on their hands, fingers and wrists. Kakau is now experiencing a revival, as the younger generation becomes more interested in their roots. hawaiitourismauthority.org

Egypt

Coptic tattoos

For Egypt’s Coptic Christians, tattoos are an enduring testament of their faith, and typically portray a crucifix on the arm, hand or wrist. Coptic tattoos are reputed to date back to 8th century priests, who began etching Christian symbols on their arms as a sign of their faith. egypt.travel

Thailand

Sak Yant

Although sak yant tattoo art is not part of the Buddhist school of thought, it has been adopted into the religious practice of many Thais. Sak yant tattooing is rooted in shamanistic traditions and was practised long before Buddhism spread across Asia. The sacred tattoos are believed to have magical powers and the ability to protect the wearer. For centuries, both Khmer and Thai soldiers adorned themselves with the awe-inspiring sak yant, which struck fear in the hearts of their opponents. The tattoos feature geometrical designs that incorporate Buddhist psalms and mantras, although some also include a combination of shamanistic runes. Only a sak yant monk, or Ajarn, with in-depth knowledge of the ancient tradition can etch this tattoo, and the art form takes many years to master. Aside from bestowing a sacred tattoo, the monk also blesses the symbol and casts protective charms on its wearer during the tattooing ritual. tourismthailand.org

Sacred by Design

As sak yant is a holy art form, it is often the Ajarn who decides on the design and placement of the tattoo on the wearer’s body, based on their aura and spiritual needs.
During a tattoo session, the modern tattoo machine punctures the skin up to 3,000 times per minute!

In ancient times, the use of tattoos was widespread but during the 7th century, tattoos gained a stigma, as they were used to brand criminals, a practice that continued for over a thousand years. At the time, the practice of inking the body was confined to people who hailed from what was considered the 'lower classes', which included underworld gangs, cementing its unsavoury image. This aversion to tattoos grew to the point that it was made illegal for a Japanese person to sport tattoos, although tattoo artists in Japan were allowed to work on foreigners. In the 17th century, with the rise of the famous ukiyo-e woodblock print and painting styles, irezumi mirrored the design of the prints, depicting mythical creatures, nature and characters from local legend in dramatic visuals showcasing a sophisticated gradation technique. The widespread adoption of irezumi by foreigners led to worldwide appreciation of the art. Although Japan lifted its ban on tattoos in 1949, many public places still do not allow inked individuals to use their facilities.

Among the most popular irezumi motifs is the dragon, which symbolises fearlessness, wisdom and power.

Way of the Dragon

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Japan

Irezumi

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China

Ci Shen

Ci Shen or Wen Shen tattooing has been recorded in Chinese history as early as the Han Dynasty in 206 BC. In olden days, tattoos were considered unfavourable, as the art was practised by minority tribes who were looked down upon by the ruling elite. Classic Chinese literature mentions tattooed characters, and among the most famous is the legendary General Yueh Fei, who, when his superior turned traitor during battle, resigned in protest. When he returned home, his mother was so incensed by his decision that she tattooed four Chinese characters on his back that bore the meaning ‘serve your country with ultimate loyalty’. Traditionally, tattoos were also used to brand criminals, particularly for offences such as adultery and robbery. Those convicted were tattooed on the face and exiled – this form of sentencing was known as Ci Pei, or ‘Tattoo Exile’. Today, Ci Shen commonly depicts highly artistic renditions of Chinese zodiac characters and auspicious creatures such as the dragon, tiger and phoenix.

tcnto.org

Etched to Protect

Traditionally, some Iban men tattooed a design of a hook tied to a bamboo raft on their legs, in the belief that it prevented crocodiles from biting them in the river.

Malaysia

Pantang

The Iban is one of the largest indigenous communities in East Malaysia, mainly concentrated in Sarawak state. Like other native groups of Borneo, the Iban have their own unique customs, dialect and culture, and tattooing is an essential feature of traditional life. For the Ibans, their tattoos, called pantang, are sacred and are believed to have powers that can protect the wearer from evil and harm. Historically, young Iban men would receive their first tattoo to mark their coming of age journey into the jungle, or bejalai. The flower-shaped tattoo, known as bungai terung (eggplant flower), is placed on each shoulder just beneath the collarbone, and is believed to give the wearer strength for his journey ahead. Iban tattoos typically feature designs based on anthropomorphic animals, plants and other natural elements. In the past, Iban women also wore protective tattoos to repel evil spirits but over the years, this practice has gradually tapered.

tourism.gov.my
This serene scene of a young Buddhist monk standing before a sculpture of Lord Buddha presenting the mudra (ritual gesture) of Bhumi Parsa – calling the Earth to witness the truth – was captured at the Dhammayangyi Temple in Bagan, Myanmar. This massive temple, which was constructed between 1167 and 1170 by the order of King Narathu, has a dark story. According to local legend, the temple was commissioned by the king as atonement for having murdered his own father and older brother to ascend the throne. King Narathu is said to have supervised the construction of the vast temple, and ordered amputations and beheadings if he could slide a needle between bricks! The temple was never completed as King Narathu was assassinated; though various conspiracy theories abound, the most famous points to the chief of Pateikkaya (a kingdom in the west) whose daughter, one of King Narathu’s wives, had been murdered by the king. The local tale tells of how eight assassins, disguised as Brahmin astrologers, slayed the king within the Dhammayangyi Temple.
Amid brutal body slams, dramatic double leg take-downs, sneaky superman moves and furious hooks, history was made at Shanghai’s Mercedes-Benz Arena in November 2017, when the Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) held its inaugural event in mainland China.

Though the much-awaited event was headlined by former UFC Middleweight champ Michael ‘The Count’ Bisping and rising star Kelvin Gastelum (who was filling in for Anderson Silva), the significance of the fight reached far beyond the battle in the Octagon. For several years, the UFC had been raring to bring its action to Shanghai, seeing access to this glitzy city as an opportunity to appeal to one of Asia’s most powerful markets, China.

In fact, looking to develop Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) and increase its footprint in Asia, UFC announced its search for the next big Asian fighter in November 2017. To this end, UFC has teamed up with AirAsia, the leading largest low-cost carrier in Asia, on the first-ever UFC scholarship programme, offering one promising Asia-based athlete a full scholarship and training at the UFC Performance Institute in Las Vegas, Nevada.

And so, this historic fight in China was really just the beginning of an exciting journey for MMA fighters in Asia. Marking the growing presence of UFC in Asia, Bisping addressed the event

**UFC, Undefeated**

Starting as a professional mixed martial arts (MMA) organisation back in 1993, UFC was founded to establish new fighting standards by experimenting with a range of different fighting styles. The core values of MMA have been greatly influenced by Bruce Lee’s fight philosophy, which combines fluidity and adaptability of form in fighting techniques. With a rich tradition of competitive MMA, UFC welcomes hybrid athletes who must be skilled in various disciplines – karate, jiu-jitsu, boxing, kickboxing, grappling, wrestling, sumo and other combat sports – in order to battle with the best. Instrumental in revolutionising the fight business, UFC is now touted as the fastest growing sports organisation in the world, bringing some of the biggest names in MMA to packed stadiums the world over.

**In the Octagon**

All UFC fights occur in the Octagon, a padded cage that measures 30 feet across and rises six feet high. Its special shape – not square, since this would benefit boxers, and not circular, so as not to favour wrestlers – ensures no one martial arts discipline has advantage over the other. And, its wide angles prevent fighters from being cornered. A fight is also known as a bout, and during a championship event, each bout consists of a maximum of five rounds, with each round lasting no more than five minutes.

**Training for Top Spot**

UFC fighters undergo years of rigorous training before they can even qualify as a candidate for the UFC. They have individualised training camps that consist of several coaches and sparring partners to help them strategise fighting techniques. Prior to a UFC event, each fighter has to undergo a process of weigh-ins to ensure that they fall within the correct weight division. Fighters who agree to compete at a specific weight class must maintain that same weight.
powerful punches just 15 seconds into the first round!

Meanwhile, fighter Xiaonan ‘Fury’ Yan, making her UFC debut against Kailin Curran in the strawweight division, really lived up to her moniker. Xiaonan and Curran’s fight was an incredibly aggressive one, with Curran drawing blood. But, in the end, Xiaonan’s swift and accurate striking and heavy hands defeated Curran in the third round.

Following the winning streak for China, crowd favourite welterweight ‘The Leech’ Li Jingliang unleashed his wrath on Zak Ottow with a rapid succession of punches and hammerkicks, leading to a total knockout in the first round. A heart-warming moment ensued when ‘The Leech’ ran up to his wife sitting in the audience to plant a celebratory kiss after his fight.

And, featherweight ‘The Dongbei Tiger’ Wang Guan, who was initially slated to fight Alex Caceres in June 2017, but couldn’t due to a knee injury, really brought his game during his debut. Despite being struck several times, Wang Guan emerged triumphant, dropping Caceres just seconds to the end of the first round and not letting up with his heavy right hand till he claimed victory.

as a “testament to the future of Chinese MMA”, as there would inevitably be an increasing number of Chinese fighters entering the cage.

**Power & Pride** In the Mercedes-Benz Arena, the excitement was palpable as proud cries of ‘China Power’ reverberated every time a local fighter stepped into the Octagon (the padded cage-like fighting ring), fuelling the energy of the fans who had come to witness extraordinary displays of skill and courage. It was heartening to see a nation come together to support its fighters.

And though the preliminaries looked to favour the visitors, the arrival of featherweight Song ‘The Terminator’ Yadong with his old-school roundhouse right and guillotine choke brought his opponent Bharat ‘Daring’ Khandare to his knees and local fans to their feet.

UFC Shanghai continued to surprise and impress, with an extraordinary display by the Chinese fighters. Kenan ‘The Assassin’ Song, who fought against Bobby Nash in the welterweight category, proved quick and efficient; he went home with a ‘Performance of the Night’ bonus, knocking out his opponent with

...
A zip across Hunter Valley, one of Australia’s oldest wine regions, reveals top drops, gourmet produce and sky-high thrills.

WORDS Chitra Santhynathan  PHOTOGRAPHY Chew Win Win

Hot air ballooning at sunrise offers visitors a bird’s eye view of Hunter Valley and its vast vineyards.
With over 120 wineries in the region, Hunter Valley produces a splendid array of top shelf wines.
Just about a two-hour drive north of Sydney lies the picturesque Hunter Valley – one of Australia’s main wine producing regions with a viticulture history that dates back to the 1820s. Sprinkled with charming villages and carpeted by vineyards, Hunter Valley is an idyllic escape for city slickers in search of country fresh air, and fortification of the wine variety.

Spread across approximately 12,000 square miles, the valley is delineated by the undulating country of the Upper Hunter in the north, and in its south, the Lower Hunter – a cluster of small towns, villages and vineyards. Here, within old timber sheds and sleek ultra-modern wineries, passionate vintners follow in the footsteps of their forebears, coaxing luscious flavours from the distinctive terroir.

Working side by side with the winemakers – some of whom can trace their roots to the region’s pioneering viticulturists – is a new generation of chefs, cheesemakers and farmers with a zeal for transforming local produce into epicurean eats. While a leisurely tour of the region is recommended, Hunter Valley offers plenty of adventures that can be enjoyed in a weekend. With less than 36 hours to explore the Hunter, I embarked on one such adventure – a whirlwind sampling of the valley’s delights.

Up, Up & Away Muffled against the cold in the inky pre-dawn, I watched in awe as a hot air balloon was resuscitated on a patch of farmland. This multi-coloured behemoth was to be my ride over the Hunter on this late autumn morning. At the break of dawn, Byron Hall, our balloonist, signalled for the group to climb aboard. With a few huffs and puffs (on our end), and Hall’s deft manoeuvring of the burner, we were off!

Soaring 3,000 feet above ground, I was bewitched by the landscape – a patchwork of vineyards and farmlands framed by majestic ranges. My sunrise hot air balloon tour of the Hunter was an amazing introduction to the vast valley. Though I’m nervy of heights, my anxiety melted away as the sheer exhilaration of floating through the clouds (it was my first hot air balloon flight) took over. Of course, it helped to know that I was in experienced hands – multi-award winning Balloon Aloft balloonaloft.com has been offering balloon tours over the Hunter for more than three decades.

As we drifted above the small towns of Rothbury, Lovedale, and Pokolbin – the heart of Hunter Valley – Hall amused us with ballooning anecdotes.

“We can accommodate up to 20 people in a balloon, but we can’t fit many more. By law, if we fly more than 24 people, we’d need an air...
Wine production in the region received a boost in the 1830s, when Scottish emigrant and keen viticulturist James Busby – regarded as the father of the Australian wine industry – returned from his travels to the wine regions of France and Spain with armloads of cuttings.

“Wine production in the region received a boost in the 1830s, when Scottish emigrant and keen viticulturist James Busby – regarded as the father of the Australian wine industry – returned from his travels to the wine regions of France and Spain with armloads of cuttings.”

1. Pokolbin’s original parish church is now a part of Usher Tinkler Wines – one of Hunter Valley’s most progressive wineries.
2. In preparation for lift off, the flame from the burner is used to heat the air and inflate a hot air balloon.
3. Pictured here is a wine tasting at Brokenwood Wines, one of the Hunter’s most reputable labels. Guided tastings allow visitors to appreciate the individual characteristics of the available varieties and vintages.
4. Tyrrell’s Wines boasts picturesque vineyards framed by the Barrington Tops Range.
At Usher Tinkler Wines’ cellar door, visitors can order a selection of delectable salumi and cheese to complement their wine tasting session.
Wine & Dine in the Hunter

Sample the valley’s myriad offerings with our handy guide.

1. Binnorie Dairy
Cheesemaker Simon Gough produces a delightful array of soft cheeses, which includes labna, a Middle Eastern-style cheese marinated with chilli, rosemary and garlic.

2. Keith Tulloch Wine/Muse Kitchen
Set within the picturesque courtyard of the Keith Tulloch Wine estate, Muse Kitchen serves up European bistro fare made from local and seasonal ingredients.

3. Hunter Distillery
The only certified organic distillery in the Hunter, this boutique operation produces top shelf spirits, which includes its award-winning Copperwave Gin, vodkas, liqueurs and schnapps.

4. Tyrrell’s Wines
The Winemaker’s Selection is among Australia’s most awarded wine collection, and features a vat numbering system derived from the oak vessels used for wine maturation.

5. McGuigan Wines
Four-time International Winemaker of the Year at the prestigious International Wine and Spirits Competition, the winery was instrumental in the export of Hunter Valley wines.

6. Brokenwood Wines
The winery’s Graveyard Vineyard Shiraz is the Hunter’s highest rated in Langton’s Classification of Australian Wine – a widely respected honour roll of fine Australian wine.

7. Tempus Two Cellar Door
This sophisticated cellar door stocks exquisite wines produced at its cutting-edge winery with fruit sourced from the country’s top wine regions.

8. Usher Tinkler Wines
Sample ‘nose-to-tail’ wines to appreciate less popular varieties and styles, and single vineyard vintages alongside a selection of salumi and cheese.

9. Hunter Beer Co
Highlights at this small brewery include German-style kolsch (golden ale) and bock (dark lager), as well as Belgian-style witbier brewed with fruit and spices.

10. Emerson’s Café & Restaurant
Located within the stunning Adina vineyard, this restaurant helmed by award-winning chef Emerson Rodriguez dishes up contemporary modern Australian cuisine such as octopus carpaccio with black garlic aioli, and wild rice with kale and labna.
Grape to Glass Because grapevines are not native to Australia, the first grapes were grown from imported cuttings. Historians believe that the very first vine cuttings reached Aussie shores in 1788 via a ship travelling to Australia from Cape of Good Hope. These were planted in Sydney but did not survive the heat and humidity. In the ensuing years, aspiring winemakers experimented with wine cultivation in cooler regions, and by the 1820s, vineyards had already been cultivated on the northern banks of the Hunter River.

Wine production in the region received a boost in the 1830s, when Scottish emigrant and keen viticulturist James Busby – regarded as the father of the Australian wine industry – returned from his travels to the wine regions of France and Spain with armloads of cuttings. These European varietals soon found their way to Hunter Valley, and by the turn of the century, the region’s wines began to gain the attention of European wine appraisers. Towards the latter quarter of the 19th century, names such as Lindeman and Tulloch were synonymous with wines from the valley.

On the hunt for lunch and libation, I found myself at Keith Tulloch Wine keithtullochwine.com.au, established by Keith Tulloch, who is descended from one of the Hunter’s early winemaking families, and his wife Amanda. Inspired by traditional French winemaking techniques, Tulloch, who had honed his winemaking skills in France’s Rhône Valley, combines French finesse with local character in the family’s range of standout wines. Located in Pokolbin, with the Brokenback Range to its east, the Keith Tulloch Wine estate houses a winery, a cellar door that overlooks the vineyards, an artisanal chocolaterie, and a hatted on-site restaurant – Muse Kitchen.

The estate is an all-in-one experience for visitors short on time. Here, guests can enjoy some of the estate’s finest wines alongside seasonal produce dished up by an award-winning chef, and nibble on artisanal chocs made from local ingredients after!

All about Character After a hearty lunch at Muse Kitchen, I headed to Tyrrell’s Wines tyrrells.com.au, a family-owned business founded in 1858, to learn about the region’s wine history. Though the Hunter is a relatively young wine region at 200 years, many of the big names in the valley such as Audrey Wilkinson, Drayton’s, Lindeman’s, and Tyrrell’s have been around for over a century.

With 500 acres of vineyards spread across the Hunter, Tyrrell’s is based at the site of an over-a-century-old slab hut. Its cellar, is in fact, a part of the still-standing original building.

Whilst sampling various vintages from the cellar’s oak barrels, I couldn’t help but appreciate the winemaker’s legacy. Through
trial and error, generations of vintners have passed down their knowledge of what works and what doesn’t in these parts. The result – a proliferation of Sémillon, Chardonnay and Shiraz. Among the Hunter’s top drops is its much-awarded Sémillon, and at Tyrrell’s, this varietal is the star.

Zesty, and with a startling acid finish, Sémillon is an acquired taste, and in wineries like Tyrrell’s Wines, the focus is very much product driven, where the landscape, environment and seasons influence the wine style. You either like the wine or you don’t. There’s nothing mass market about this winery – something that informed consumers will surely appreciate.

Not far from Tyrrell’s is Binnorie Dairy facebook.com/binnorie-dairy, which produces a range of delectable cheeses with unique characteristics that reflect the local environment, much like wine. Using only locally sourced goat’s and cow’s milk, Binnorie specialises in handcrafted soft cheeses. I would have happily packed the cheeses for home, but since I did not want to risk them going bad during my journey back, I greedily chowed down as many mouthfuls as I could of the dairy’s vintage cheddar, ‘gold medal’ marinated feta, and labna (fresh, creamy cheese made from strained yoghurt) while I was in the store!

New World Winemaking While the Hunter’s winemaking tradition tends to be more European, the wines here are full of local flavour. Having had to experiment with a variety of grapes and the environment to produce world class wines, Aussie winemakers often exhibit a pioneering spirit. They are, after all, at the forefront of new world winemaking.

A good example of this can-do ethos is Brokenwood Wines brokenwood.com.au, which was started by three Sydney solicitors and self-professed hobby winemakers in 1970. What began as a weekend venture is now one of Australia’s most reputable wine labels, and one of its original owners – James Halliday – is today a renowned wine critic. The project was a labour of love for the trio, who purchased a 10-acre block originally slated as a cricket pitch in the foothills of the Brokenback Range. Here, they planted Cabernet Sauvignon and Shiraz.

1. The Hunter boasts wineries that are full of character. Pictured here is Pepper Tree Wines, a delightful winery set amidst manicured gardens. 2. Fig and raspberry torte with salted caramel and crème fraîche is one of many tempting desserts served at Muse Kitchen.
“Today, with over 120 wineries in this beautiful pastoral landscape, exceptional wines are produced from every harvest.”

The first vintage, harvested with the help of friends and family, and bottled in a little shed, was released in 1973 to high praise. In 1978, with more partners on board, the vineyard was extended to include the nearby parish cemetery – but worry not, no bodies had ever been interred there! Instead, the site was planted with more Cabernet Sauvignon and Shiraz and in the owners’ own words, now “produces wines of marvellous body”. The heavy clay soil produces low yields, but berries with concentrated flavour. The result – a distinctive red labelled the Graveyard Vineyard Shiraz – Brokenwood’s flagship wine. Today, Brokenwood makes 100,000 cases of wine annually, and its premium red is rated exceptional by the Langton’s Classification of Australian Wine.

Since I like my wines on the sweet side, I sampled their Sticky Wicket, a dessert style Sémillon, which far from being cloyingly sweet, still produced a punch at the end.
Going to the Chapel The Hunter’s younger generation of winemakers are adding their own spin to the valley’s time-honoured traditions. Among them is Usher Tinkler, one of Australia’s most dynamic young winemakers. Tinkler, and his wife Ebony, purchased and renovated the old Pokolbin Church that was built in 1905. Within this charming building bursting at its seams with character is the Usher Tinkler ushertinklerwines.com cellar door. Furnished with an eclectic mix of tables, chairs, and church pews, and featuring stunning stained glass panels, this cosy cellar door is a sanctuary for fine wines.

The winery is known for its particular style of Chardonnay, aged for six months in French oak barrels and with a mineral backbone. Established in 2014, and with the first vintage released the following year, the label is among the Hunter’s newest, and yet, it is fast gaining a following with wine aficionados. In addition to Chardonnay, Merlot, Sémillon and Shiraz, Usher Tinkler also produce a deliciously toasty fortified Verdelho.

I would have been happy to lug back a few bottles of their Mr T’s Rare Batch Fortified – a Verdelho with a whisky twist – but unfortunately, they had run out. Barrel aged for 15 years and produced in small batches, Mr T’s is masterfully crafted and deliciously flavourful with notes of caramel, whisky, toast and spice. What a fitting way to wrap up my spin around the Hunter – sipping an ambrosial wine in heavenly confines!

A Special Place The Hunter has been through its fair share of challenges. In the wake of the Great Depression and WWII, winemakers here struggled to gain the recognition they deserved. Production slumped, and the future of the Hunter hung in the balance. But thanks to the fortitude of the winemakers, and their indomitable spirit, things took a turn for the better in the 1960s, when the demand for wines renewed the Hunter’s prospects. Soon, boutique wineries were all the rage, and the Hunter was back in business.

Today, with over 120 wineries in this beautiful pastoral landscape, exceptional wines are produced from every harvest. With such a beautiful setting in which to savour exquisite wines, fine foods and experiences crafted by people passionate about their legacy and community, the Hunter is definitely, aside from being one of Australia’s top wine regions, a great place to be!
WANDERLUST / Tehran, Iran
Carpet vendor Parsa Gholami poses against the backdrop of a typical Esfahani carpet. Esfahani carpets are often inspired by the intricate interiors of Isfahan’s grand Shah Mosque, which features designs such as the plumage of a peacock – depicted within the central medallion of the carpet pictured here.

Woven into the very fabric of Iranian history and culture, Persian carpets – one of Iran’s most famous exports – are a timeless symbol of the country’s artistic heritage.
I arrive in Iran’s capital city of Tehran on a mission – to explore the fascinating world of Persian carpets. But my quest isn’t going to be easy. I stand before Tehran’s prominent 500-year-old Grand Bazaar, with its numerous corridors, many of them leading into seemingly endless retail labyrinths over 10km long. The marketplace is exactly what you would expect – vast, noisy and chaotic. I am surrounded by shops that sell goods of every kind, including carpets. There is abundant ‘material’ for my expedition all around me, but I face a major dilemma. How do I find the right person with genuine knowledge on the subject, someone who can help me decipher the ancient craft?

Through tedious exchanges with vendors at the bazaar, I come to realise that the major carpet producers are mostly situated outside Tehran – in cities like Isfahan, Yazd, Kashan and Qom. Now I know my next move – I have to travel outside Tehran, in search of a story that began over 2,000 years ago.

And the Story Goes Each of the Persian carpet-producing regions showcase their own ‘flavour’ in their handmade marvels – unique characteristics differentiated by distinct weaving techniques, patterns, colours, and materials used.

Today, there are approximately three million Iranians working in the carpet industry, about four per cent of the country’s population. This number includes, carpet sellers, designers, weavers, dyers and carpet washers who ready the rugs for sale. It is interesting to note that less than five per cent of Iran’s population makes this country the largest producer and exporter of handwoven carpets in the world!

There is a worldwide fascination with Persian carpets, and its global propagation is evidence of this. To the untrained eye, a Persian rug may look like any other carpet at first glance. But, when you look closely, the true beauty of it is revealed. You will notice that the pattern of each carpet is distinct, and there’s much more to this amazing artistry than meets the eye.

Persian carpets can broadly be categorised according to two different types of design: urban (or city) and nomadic (or tribal) carpets. As the name suggests, nomadic carpets are woven by nomadic...
1. Before embarking on the weaving process, a carpet weaver first creates a drawing of the intended design on graph paper, with each grid representing one knot. Drawings for a single carpet can take about a month to complete. 2. Proper maintenance of a Persian carpet, which includes regular vacuuming, goes a long way in ensuring its durability and preserving its aesthetics. However, should the need arise for a carpet ‘overhaul’, repair shops provide services from patchwork and re-weaving to renewing colour and increasing the thickness of the rugs. 3. Carpets on display at Khan Bazaar in the city of Yazd. One of the most unique marketplaces in Iran, the labyrinthine bazaar winds past local bathhouses, teahouses, as well as art and curio shops. 4. Carpet weavers in Kashan, Isfahan Province – one of Iran’s leading carpet producers. Kashan carpets are known for their vivid colours and intricate designs, and in 2010, the traditional skill of carpet weaving was inscribed in UNESCO’s Intangible Cultural Heritage list. Interestingly, two-thirds of the city’s carpet weavers are women.

communities like the Bakhtiari people of the Zagros Mountains in western Iran, and are mostly made of wool. The urban carpets, on the other hand, which are produced in big cities, are far more expensive than their tribal counterparts, although carpet-lovers would find the latter more authentic.

Twists & Turns Isfahan (also known as Esfahan) in central Iran is one of the country’s largest carpet producers. Due to its elaborate workmanship, Esfahani carpets are considered high in value. A carpet’s quality is assessed by its knot density, which determines the value of the rug. One of the best-known methods of measuring the knot density of a carpet is by its KPSI (knot per square inch). The higher the KPSI, the greater the value of the carpet, and the more expensive it is.

I discover a good deal talking to the locals in Isfahan, particularly 35-year-old Parsa Gholami, a carpet dealer who owns a shop near the Shah Mosque in the south of the famous Naghsh-e Jahan Square. After exchanging only a few words, I know I’ve finally met the right person. Parsa is well-versed and shows great passion for the product he sells. His ability to speak multiple languages only enhances his expertise in the trade.

“Actually, this is not a family business,” explains Parsa. “My mother was a carpet weaver. And since I was six or seven years old, I’ve been witnessing first-hand the intricate, mesmerising art of carpet weaving. Then, about 15 years ago, a friend from Isfahan introduced me to the carpet business and I started out just delivering carpets to customers. Listening to my boss talk about the history of the carpets struck a chord in me. As I was already passionate about Persian carpets since childhood, I decided to learn as much as I could.”

According to Parsa, Persian carpets are of such variety and have such diversity that even the experts can’t claim to know everything on the subject. When I quiz him about how the industry has evolved in the past 15 years since he’s been dealing with Persian carpets, Parsa tells me that there have been some major changes in the production process, especially concerning the colours.

“Previously, carpet makers used natural dyes like indigo, and the carpets were washed with saffron water, which adds a beautiful sheen to the material. But, this is extremely expensive. Now, non-organic fixed colours are used, so the production cost is less. This, of course, affects the price; it is the quality/knot density, colour and workmanship, not the carpet size, that determine the price. And, if natural dye is used, the carpet is more expensive. My carpets range from USD2,500 to USD5,000, but you can also get some for a few hundred dollars.”

Classic Creations With a great start to my Persian carpets expedition, Parsa does me one last favour before
Inside Tehran’s cavernous Grand Bazaar, which offers everything from spices to souvenirs, an entire section is dedicated to Persian carpets. With over 200 carpet vendors occupying three floors of the vast marketplace, you can find an endless array of nomadic and urban carpets, as well as carpet cleaners and repair shops.

Rugs of War

During the Soviet-Afghan War (1979 to 89), many Afghans fleeing the conflict in their homeland crossed the border into Iran. Among this refugee community were carpet weavers who brought with them a unique craft – war rugs. The rugs depict symbols of conflict such as tanks, grenades, military aircraft, and soldiers, and represent the harsh realities faced by these refugees during the war. In contrast to traditional Afghan carpets that feature more sedate floral motifs, war rugs document the war years, and the tradition of incorporating such symbolism into rugs has continued with other more recently displaced Afghan carpet weavers as a sort of commentary of their lives. Today, these war rugs can be found in Iran’s vast marketplaces, as well as in museums around the world.

Origin by Design

Those well-acquainted with Persian carpets can identify a rug just by its patterns, as designs often represent the region in which a carpet is made. Esfahani carpets are mainly inspired by monuments such as mosques and palaces, while Yazd carpets often showcase a central medallion framed by a symmetrical border. Carpets from Kashan, which usually feature a central medallion in a red field framed by ivory and navy borders, are among the most recognisable – unsurprisingly, many people envisage this design when they think of Persian carpets. Kashan carpets are also luxurious – some are made entirely of silk. Qom, which is about a two-hour drive southwest of Tehran, is another major Persian carpet producer. Qom carpets exhibit curvilinear designs and floral motifs, as well as medallions, and are among the more expensive varieties of Persian carpets.
I bid him farewell. He introduces me to a reliable contact to further my quest, and with that, I head off to the desert city of Yazd, located almost 300km southeast of Isfahan, to meet Adel Fadhil Ali.

This chapter of my Iran journey covers nomadic carpets I meet Adel at his shop in Khan Bazaar. It is lunchtime and we chat away as a constant wave of tourists passes through the little alleyway where his shop is located.

“My grandma used to make carpets and my parents were carpet sellers, so I have a good understanding of the colours and motifs. The trade has been a part of my life since childhood. When I was 23 years old, I travelled around the country and stayed with nomads. That’s how I learnt about their craft,” says Adel, now in his forties.

Adel explains to me how colours vary according to the region where a Persian carpet is produced. In Yazd, for instance, rugs display vivid colours like hues of red and blue in contrast with the region’s stark desert surroundings. The same principle of distinction applies for the motifs. For example, a special feature in nomadic rugs is the triangle of charm motif, believed to deflect evil vibes so that the weaving work can be completed smoothly.

“For me, nomadic carpets have more ‘soul’ because they are produced in a natural environment, and they display more creative charm. Each nomadic rug is unique – no two carpets are the same. Even the little mistakes in the designs add to their uniqueness.”

Of course, Yazd being another major Persian rug producer, also offers an array of urban carpets. Compared to Isfahan’s carpets, Yazd’s urban carpets are thicker, with simpler designs and often come in shades of blue, as it is considered a happy colour.

“Persian carpet production in Yazd is slowing,” says Adel. The younger generation shows little interest in urban carpet production, and the nomads are also adapting to living in villages, so they are giving up their nomadic practices, which include carpet weaving.”

Path Well Woven Leaving the desert, my odyssey leads me back to Tehran’s Grand Bazaar. Visiting the marketplace, it seems like a veil has been lifted, and I view the carpets, their ageless beauty on display, with greater appreciation.

However, there is widespread concern that the industry is on the decline. The ancient art is at risk of disappearing, as traditional weavers move towards modernity, making the Persian carpets woven today even more precious.

Koladhzuan and Hormoz, two major carpet dealers in Tehran, captured the essence of Persian carpets perfectly when they said that, since in Islam it is believed that only God has the power to create, Persian carpets symbolise man’s imagination in art form. The carpet patterns are a hidden language embodied in living art.

A BIG THANK YOU travel 3Sixty wishes to thank Aidan Mahmoodi and Maysun Gasht from Khoban Travel Agency for their invaluable support in producing this story.
Bonds of Love

As we celebrate two festivals that are very much about love and family – Chinese New Year and Valentine’s Day – here’s a look at the wedding traditions of the Peranakan people: a community borne of the union of 15th century Chinese traders and local women of the Straits Settlements of Singapore, and Penang and Melaka in Malaysia.

WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHY: Nicky Almasy
The bride, Mizuo Yuki, is in deep concentration as she pays homage at the family altar. Traditionally, the bride wears the informal wedding attire known as the hock-chiew, which includes a stiff embroidered handkerchief (pictured here in the bride’s hands).

Opposite page: During this Melaka-style Peranakan ceremony, the groom Lee Ong Siow is dressed in traditional Baba wedding attire. The red thread that hangs from the groom’s queue is symbolic of a custom that dates back to the Qing Dynasty (1644-1912). The red thread is wound into the groom’s queue for the last time by his mother, signifying the ‘handing-over’ of her responsibilities to the bride after the wedding.
1. The mother of the groom guides the page boy through the rites of the hair combing ceremony. Here, the pageboy is shown clasping a stalk of spring onion and ixora blooms. On his head is the groom’s bowl cap, transferred in the hope that the couple will have male offspring, as boys are expected to care for their parents later in life.

2. The use of bunga rampai reflects Malay influence. Typically, the fragrant mix, which serves as potpourri, includes finely shredded pandan leaves and the petals of flowers like jasmine and chrysanthemum, with patchouli magnifying the scent.

3. During the wine libation ceremony, a helper first pours the wine into a cup that is placed on a platter held by a second helper. The father of the groom then offers the wine to his soon-to-be-married son – welcoming him into adulthood.

4. The bridal couple is fed kuih ee, red and white glutinous rice balls, their first official meal together as husband and wife. The dish represents a sweet start to the couple’s life together, as well as unity, owing to the sticky texture of the delicacy.
Heritage Hubs

Discover the unique culture of the Baba Nyonya community at these Peranakan museums.

Up till 1985, the building that is now the Baba & Nyonya Heritage Museum in Melaka, Malaysia, was home to four generations of the Chan family, dating back to 1861. Today, the museum is managed by members of the Chan family, who are proud to share their opulent Peranakan heritage, artistically captured in the home of their forefathers. babanyonyamuseum.com

The Pinang Peranakan Mansion in the northern state of Penang, Malaysia, is housed in an old-style mansion that is an exquisite recreation of a classic Peranakan home, and showcases over 1,000 artefacts from the height of Baba Nyonya artistry in the late 1800s. pinangperanakanmansion.com.my

Singapore’s Peranakan Museum along Armenian Street boasts extensive galleries covering the history, religious beliefs, wedding traditions, language, fashion, food and way of life of the Peranakan community. peranakanmuseum.org.sg

Nyonya Nuptials

Traditional Peranakan wedding ceremonies are elaborate and typically last for 12 days. The last time anyone witnessed a Peranakan wedding with all the traditional bells and whistles was said to be the 60s; these days, due to time constraints, many couples opt for a pared down affair.

The Peranakan wedding ceremony typically begins on the eve of the first day, with the ‘hair combing ceremony’, which signifies the attainment of adulthood – a reminder of the responsibility to care for one’s family. On the first day of the Peranakan wedding is chim pang or the unveiling ceremony, where the couple partakes in their first meal as husband and wife, and exchange rings. On the third day of the Peranakan wedding ceremony – sojah tiga hari – the couple typically pays respect to the Jade Emperor and the Buddha, as well as ancestors and elders. This may be followed by the tuang teh or tea ceremony, where the couple is formally introduced as husband and wife.

In olden times, the twelfth day was traditionally the day when the bride’s status as a virgin was ascertained; however, today, this tradition is considered archaic and is no longer practised.

1. The chanap is a special arrangement of pickled papaya strips carved into crab claws (crabs are symbols of happiness), pickled limed called lemo kekya, and papaya in the shape of the champaca flower, all crowned by blooms crafted from velvet, atop an antique lacquered gift box. It is an important item in the sam kai altar. This arrangement is becoming increasingly rare these days, as few artisans are able to create such an exquisite work of art.

OPPOSITE PAGE The exquisite bridal headdress called sanggol kemanten is adorned with gold and silver floral hairpins and fenced with Pak Sian, a headband mounted with effigies of the Eight Immortals (signifying happiness) and the Star of Longevity. In the past, sparkling krosangs (brooches) owned by various family members were used to embellish the armour-like plate on the bride’s chest, showcasing her family’s wealth.
Culinary Treats

The Chinese-Malay fusion of traditions has lent Peranakan cuisine its one-of-a-kind flavour. Here are some dining venues to visit.

When in Melaka, be sure to head to Big Nyonya Restaurant. Masterchef Datuk Kenny Chan, the mastermind behind this popular eatery, is a seventh generation Baba and a well-known entertainer. His local TV series Baba dan Nyonya, which enjoyed a record-breaking 509-episode run, is recognised in the Malaysia Book of Records as the longest-running TV series in the country.

Mama’s Nyonya Cuisine is the go-to venue for Peranakan fare in George Town, Penang. The restaurant has not only captured the hearts of local foodies with traditional Nyonya dishes like jiuhu char (stir-fried jicama), ioh bak (fried meat rolls) and otak-otak (grilled spiced fish cake), it also boasts celebrity clientele like footwear icon Jimmy Choo and film director Ang Lee.

Closer to Kuala Lumpur, about a 30-minute drive from the city centre, is the Little Heritage House in Petaling Jaya. The restaurant serves authentic Peranakan favourites such as Curry Chicken Kapitan and bubur pulut hitam (sweetened black glutinous rice porridge) and showcases a collection of Baba Nyonya antiques.

In Singapore, Candlenut, reputedly the world’s first Michelin-starred Peranakan restaurant, serves up traditional fare with a contemporary twist. Must-tries include their buah keluak (fermented fruit of the kepayang tree) creations, including buah keluak-braised chicken and an interesting buah keluak ice cream with Valrhona chocolate and chilli.

1. Pictured here is the almanac, one of the paraphernalia associated with the hair combing ceremony. The almanac symbolises wisdom, while the scales represent justice and the scissors, a reminder to be decisive.

A BIG THANK YOU travel 3Sixty® wishes to thank Cedric Tan, Peranakan wedding planner and consultant; and Lee Yuen Thien, Curator of Baba & Nyonya Museum, Melaka, for their invaluable support in producing this story. The team would also like to thank the bridal couple – Mizuo Yuki and Lee Ong Siow – for sharing their special day with us. We wish them many happy years ahead.

GETTING THERE
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Tel: +603 6148 1886
Tel: +603 5635 6966
Tel: +603 7687 5299
Tel: +603 6668 4366
Tel: +603 8281 2416
Tel: +603 3358 5166
Tel: +603 3341 3216
Tel: +603 8170 9828
Tel: +603 8175 3288
Tel: +603 8648 8828
Tel: +603 9280 2569
Tel: +603 8747 3268
Tel: +603 8759 8977

Mid Valley Megamall (2nd Floor)
Mid Valley Megamall (3rd Floor)
Bangsar Village II (1st Floor)
Bangsar Village II (3rd Floor)
Petaling Jaya
Puchong
Shah Alam
Kajang
Sunway Velocity Mall
Seremban
Mall
Mall @ Seremban
2
The Gateway Hotel & Spa, Port Dickson
Awana SkyWay Station, Genting Highlands
JB City Square Shopping Centre
Kajang
Adon Mall, Seremban
Adon Mall, Kajang

Tel: +603 2282 1222
Tel: +603 2203 1268
Tel: +603 2285 2436
Tel: +603 2201 2899
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ADOON Mall, Kajang
Kajang, Selangor
ADOON Mall, Seremban
Adon Mall, Sepang
Adon Mall, Kajang

Tel: +607 601 0698
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WANDERLUST / AirAsia Special

16 Unique Routes

Just 16 sweet years after AirAsia first took flight, the airline boasts an expansive network with unique routes and extensive connections that allow you to expand your travel horizons.

You’ve heard the adage: the journey is the destination. Perhaps you’ve even rolled your eyes at it. But when AirAsia co-founders – Tan Sri Dr Tony Fernandes, Group CEO of AirAsia and Co-Group CEO of AirAsia X; and Datuk Kamarudin Meranun, Executive Chairman of AirAsia Berhad and Group CEO of AirAsia X – launched the initiative that would change air travel, they rejuvenated the cliché, and underscored its truth.

Democratising air travel and destroying its elitism was only one part of the story. Curating unique routes was another – and important – one. It meant that the way you arrive at your ultimate destination really is as important as the destination itself, and there is just as much to discover and enjoy on the journey.

Planning unique routes – taking travellers to Jaipur in India by way of Bengaluru, or to the beautiful island of Honolulu in the US via Osaka in Japan – adds richness and a whole other dimension to your trip, opening up possibilities for travellers to experience more.

And on the flip side, it has impacted the cities that have become markers on these unique routes, in many cases increasing their allure – whether this means putting them in the travel journal for further discovery, or extending a layover to wander and wonder.

Check out some of the distinctive and varied routes AirAsia has to offer, to make your trip that much more special.

Sapporo, Japan

Hokkaido’s capital has shed its cloak of synonymy only with winter, although February’s Snow Festival, with its ice sculpture competition, remains a huge draw. In summer, beer and food festivals abound in this city, which already has a thriving food, café and nightlife scene.

While you’re here, visit the oldest standing building, the Clock Tower, and the long and narrow Odori Park in the centre of the city, which is particularly nice in summer; for springtime cherry blossoms and the blazing colours of autumn, head to Asahiyama Park, overlooking the city. There’s also Moerenuma Park, with its man-made mountain from which you can survey the whole of Sapporo!

The famous Sapporo Brewing Company has its own museum – and tours finish off with beer tastings, of course. On the outskirts, the Hokkaido Pioneer Village preserves a snapshot of the country as it was newly-industrialised, with buildings that predate the 20th century, as well as shrines and gardens.

Connections • Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia • Nagoya, Japan

1. Winter wonderland for kids of all ages at the Snow Festival in Sapporo, Japan 2. The stunning golden doorway of Jaipur’s famous City Palace, India
Jaipur, India

The stately, history-laden capital of Rajasthan offers an abundance of architectural marvels. It is called the Pink City for the distinct colour of its buildings, and at its heart stands the opulent City Palace court complex, complete with gardens and museums. But Jaipur is first and foremost a city of palaces.

Wander around gaping at the gorgeous mirror and glass mosaics that turn the Amer Fort Palace Hall of Mirrors into an inverted jewel box, or marvel at the dusky pink façade of the Wind Palace (Hawa Mahal). The outdoor observatory of Jantar Mantar is an astronomer’s playground, with some of the stone and brass instruments as high as a two-storey building. Jaipur is also the place to go for both traditional and contemporary North Indian food, quick custom-tailed clothes that boast high-quality workmanship and fabrics, and embroidery, antiques and jewellery.

Connections • Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Kolkata & Pune, India • Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia • Bangkok, Thailand
Luang Prabang, Laos

Famed as one of those rare places that has enjoyed a boom but retained its laidback vibe and spiritual pulse, Luang Prabang is a UNESCO World Heritage site that many consider to be the heart of the Laotian experience.

Encircled by mountains, it sits at the confluence of the Mekong and Khan rivers, and boasts an atmospheric mix of gilt wats and lovingly refurbished French villas. Here, locals still retain age-old customs, like almsgiving, which may be observed at the break of dawn when saffron-clad monks make their silent rounds.

In addition to the charm of the town itself, there is an abundance of spots in which to go hiking, biking, or kayaking, as well as many waterfalls and river cruises.

Visit the village of Ban Phanom, where families produce traditional cotton and silk textiles by hand; the Elephant Village Sanctuary on the banks of the Khan river, which provides a haven for rescued Lao elephants; and the Pak Ou Caves, a millennia-old holy site with over 4,000 icons of the Buddha.

Connections • Bangkok, Thailand • Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Shantou, China

The port city was once one of the most bustling in China; while it has calmed on that front and grown as an industrial city, it still lures with its lovely attractions.

One of these is Nan’ao Island, just a short ferry or bus ride from the mainland. Beautiful beaches are a given, but there’s also an oyster farm and a fishing community who call the island home – making seafood at one of the restaurants here a must – plus areas for hiking and cycling.

Entered through a six-pillared red gate, Zhongshan Park is one of the Four Famous Man-Made Gardens created in the 1920s, and retains its splendour with a pond, promenades, gardens and mini zoo.

Also check out the Lotus Mountain Hot Springs Resort, where pools are decorated with everything from fake granite to fairy lights; Longquan Temple, which is set in the hills that form Shantou’s backdrop and boasts a plaster dragon; and Mazu Palace, a temple dedicated to Mazu, the mother goddess and protector.

Connections • Bangkok, Thailand • Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Surabaya, Indonesia

The vibrant port city of Surabaya is a great place to experience the old and the new existing in perfect harmony – towering skyscrapers rub shoulders with Dutch colonial heritage buildings in a friendly manner. It’s a dark horse on the tourist trail, in spite of being Indonesia’s second-largest city.

Enjoy epic views across the water as you eat your way through a list of the city’s signature dishes like bakso (meatballs in soup) and rawon setan (spicy beef soup). Check out the Surabaya National Monument and the iconic Suramadu National Bridge, which connects Surabaya to Madura island – after dark is best, when it’s lit.

Surabaya is also the jumping-off point for excursions to Mount Bromo. Midnight tours will land you at the active volcano in time to catch a stunning sunrise.

Connections • Jakarta, Indonesia • Kuala Lumpur, Johor Bahru & Penang, Malaysia

Book Your Flight

With great connections across the AirAsia Group, these cool destinations are easily accessible via AirAsia’s Fly-Thru service.

Kuching, Malaysia

Sarawak’s capital is the perfect meeting point of old and new, with a bustling food scene, colonial shophouses, museums and temples and a beautiful riverfront walk. It’s also a gateway to excellent national parks boasting ancient rainforests, and beautiful marine and coastal destinations.

Connections • Bintulu, Johor Bahru, Kota Bharu, Kota Kinabalu, Kuala Lumpur, Miri, Penang & Sibu, Malaysia • Singapore

Kochi, India

This Indian port city boasts a blend of European and Chinese influences; there’s a particular sense of pride in the diverse influences of its heritage – from cantilevered Chinese fishing nets still in use to ancient mosques and a synagogue that is said to have inspired Salman Rushdie’s descriptions in The Moor’s Last Sigh. It’s also a centre for Keralan arts.

Connections • Bengaluru, India • Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Da Nang, Vietnam

For a beautiful coastal destination fringed with mountains, Da Nang is hard to beat; it is developing rapidly, but retains its charm with centuries-old pagodas, French colonial buildings and beautiful national parks. It is also famed for its exotic spa resorts and as a jumping-off point to UNESCO-listed Hoi An Ancient Town.

Connection • Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Jeju, South Korea

South Korea’s largest island appeals to tourists and locals alike, thanks to its alluring beaches and lush forests. Hike up Hallasan, the country’s highest mountain, or the easier Jeju Olle Trails. The seafood is bountiful too, including shellfish brought up by the famed haenyeo, female free-divers. (For more info on Jeju, turn to page 48)

Connection • Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

1. Haw Pha Bang, also known as ‘The Royal Temple’, is located next to the Royal Palace in Luang Prabang, Laos. 2. When in Shantou, China, a visit to Nan’ao Island is a must for nature lovers and seafood fans. 3. A breathtaking view of Mount Bromo and the surrounding Bromo-Tengger-Semeru national park at sunrise
Explore More

Be adventurous; take advantage of AirAsia’s wide network to discover new destinations.

**Gold Coast, Australia**
Built for pleasure-seekers, this is a place for sand, surf, sun and fun, with a little something for families and party people alike. A throbbing nightlife pervades Surfer’s Paradise, while Main Beach and Broadbeach are destinations for the chic and trendy; Burleigh Heads, Mermaid and Palm Beach are gourmands’ havens, and Coolangatta is especially for surfers.

**Connections** • Auckland, New Zealand • Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

**Macao**
Glitter and history thrive in the ‘Vegas of China’, where casinos tower over Chinese temples, colonial architecture and cobbledstones of the former Portuguese colony. Local bites range from Cantonese delicacies like dim sum to Portuguese bacalhau (codfish) fritters, and there are colonial villages and picturesque beaches to explore too.

**Connections** • Johor Bahru & Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia • Bangkok, Chiang Mai, Pattaya & Phuket, Thailand • Manila, Philippines

**Xi’an, China**
Xi’an’s past is entwined with tales of emperors, poets, monks and merchants – and much of the ancient city of Chang’ an remains intact. Check out the Army of Terracotta Warriors, the Tomb of Emperor Jingdi, as well as pagodas and museums.

**Connections** • Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia • Bangkok, Thailand

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1. The bay at Waimea in Oahu boasts some of Hawaii’s biggest swells, reaching up to 35ft. It is also an ancient belief that the waters here are sacred.
2. There is no lack of colour and vibrance at the Iloilo Dinagyang Festival, Philippines.
3. A picturesque temple on a pier in Koh Phayam, Ranong, seemingly adrift in the Andaman Sea.

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**Honolulu, US**

The capital is touted as the place to experience the real Hawaii, a little more off the tourist track. It is home to Iolani Palace – the only royal palace in the US – as well as the modern landmark Aloha Tower, which boasts spectacular sea views, and beautiful buildings with Victorian-era architecture.

Famed beaches like Waikiki and North Shore need no introduction, and you can also go hiking in the forest around the Ko’olau Range, drive up Mount Tantalus, or head to one of the many art museums in the city. For all your shopping needs, there’s the world’s largest open air shopping centre at Ala Moana (and Ala Moana Beach Park offers unparalleled sunset views).

And, of course, while Honolulu boasts a globally-influenced, cosmopolitan dining and nightlife scene, do also seek out unique Hawaiian cuisine. Must-tries include poi (a staple made from mashed taro) and kalua pork or turkey, slow-cooked in underground ovens for smoky, melt-in-your-mouth goodness.

**Connections** • Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia • Osaka, Japan
**Iloilo, Philippines**

In its heyday, Iloilo was known as the Queen of the South, and Spanish colonial architecture in churches, stately houses, and commercial buildings is testament to those days. The rapidly urbanising city has a lively nightlife scene, particularly concentrated around Smallville Complex; on the flip side are the calming riverside views along the Iloilo River Esplanade, an oasis of calm in a busy place.

Iloilo is well-known for its food, so look out for specialities like *la paz batchoy* (egg noodle soup with pork and organ meats) and *pancit molo* (shredded chicken and dumplings in soup) originating from the town of Molo.

The Iloilo Dinagyang Festival in January is one of the country’s biggest religious and cultural festivals, with thousands of Dinagyang Ati performers dancing in the streets to the thunder of drums. Also visit the many heritage sites like restored buildings and churches on Calle Real, Plaza Libertad and the Iloilo Provincial Capitol Grounds, in Jaro and Molo.

**Connections** • Clark & Manila, Philippines

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**Ranong, Thailand**

Ranong is Thailand’s least-populated province, and just 45 minutes by boat to Myanmar. It opens up into a scenic traveller’s dream, with mist-shrouded mountains, waterfalls that are active all year long, and beautiful coastlines and islands surrounding the city. You’ll also find several hot springs and mangroves – visit the Ngao Waterfall National Park for a cross-section of these natural treasures – and the Laem Son National Marine Park for its islands and beaches.

Quaint boutique hotels and bustling markets aside, travellers should look out for Chinese gates and shrines which dot the area.

Ranong is also a popular spot to embark on dive trips to popular destinations like the Burma Banks, Surin and Similan Islands. A must-visit is Koh Phayam, known for its white sandy beaches. Speedboats may be hired to return to the mainland.

**Connection** • Bangkok, Thailand
Myth vs. Reality

Captain Lim Khoy Hing debunks aviation myths and shines light on intriguing little-known facts to ensure you enjoy worry- and guilt-free travels.

The idea that there is less oxygen at higher altitudes is a myth. In reality, the amount of oxygen in the atmosphere (21 per cent) remains almost the same regardless of the altitude.

What actually happens at higher altitudes is that the reduced atmospheric pressure (partial pressure effect) makes it difficult for oxygen to be absorbed into the blood stream. Due to this, the aircraft must be pressurised when flying at higher levels, so that your body is able to absorb about the same amount of oxygen as the plane climbs to cruising altitude.

Calming the Pressure

Even though you may be cruising at 35,000ft, the aircraft cabin altitude is, in fact, automatically adjusted to simulate a lower one, such as from 6,000 to 8,500ft.

This is achieved through pressurisation. The aircraft cabin is just like a balloon – air from the engine acts like a pump to pressurise the cabin in order to ensure that pressurisation is maintained.

Air Play

The environment inside the cabin is designed with passengers’ comfort in mind. To achieve this, the air-conditioning system uses a mixture of fresh and recirculated engine air to maintain a cozy temperature range.

Due to the restricted space within the aircraft cabin, passengers might mistakenly think that the recirculation of air by the air-conditioning system can cause the spread of viruses. The truth is, cabin air is probably cleaner than the air in a regular office building! Fresh air is drawn from the outside and filtered through hospital-grade filters, which remove 99.97 per cent of bacteria and tiny particles, before it is channelled into the cabin. The plane’s cabin air is refreshed about 15 to 20 times every hour.

On rare occasions, passengers in smaller jets might notice an odour, similar to that of a car’s exhaust gas, shortly after push back from the terminal gate. This is due to the plane’s exhaust gas being drawn into the air-conditioning system. The culprit is usually strong headwinds, causing the air to flow back through the air-conditioning pack inlets, but the good news is that such unpleasant odours quickly disappear.

And speaking of cabin atmosphere, it’s a fact that cabin air is very dry – containing only about 12 per cent humidity, it is drier than most deserts! Dehydration can make you feel more tired and prone to headaches, and cause increased discomfort when wearing contact lenses. To prevent dehydration, passengers are advised to drink plenty of water, especially on long-haul flights.
Captain Lim Khoy Hing is a former AirAsia Airbus A320 and AirAsia X A330/A340 pilot who also used to fly the Boeing 777. He has logged a total of more than 25,500 flying hours and is now a Flight Simulator Instructor with AirAsia X. In his spare time, he shares his opinion on aviation issues with others.

Blue from the Sky

You might have heard stories about 'blue ice' or 'poopsicles' dropping from the sky, giving the impression that human waste was being indiscriminately dumped from passing planes. There may have been such occurrences during WWII, when fighter or bomber planes did not have the high-tech flushable toilets that we have in modern aircraft today. In fact, the flight crew would urinate in bottles and dispose of their waste in cardboard boxes! Thankfully, this is no longer the case today.

Incidents of 'blue ice', which, in fact, is blue coloured deodorising liquid, only arose with later aircraft. The liquid is purely a cleansing and treatment agent for the waste system, and does not contain any human waste. Today, modern airborne waste control technology in your Airbus A320 or A330 is highly efficient. It relies on strong suction to eradicate waste with just a fraction of a gallon of water. The waste is then accumulated in special tanks in the plane, and is sanitised and deodorised. After the aircraft lands, the waste is taken to a treatment facility for processed disposal. Passengers can rest easy in the knowledge that toilet waste has never been disposed from commercial planes in mid-flight; only water from the sinks is dumped directly through the drain mast into the atmosphere.

Cabin Delight

With increased air travel worldwide and more passengers than ever before jet setting about, it makes good sense to pay even greater heed to environmental sustainability. So, the next time you feel a drop on your head when a plane passes by, you can be sure that it isn’t something that has been flushed by a passenger on board! And when you are on a plane, you can be sure that your call of nature will be taken care of discreetly and safely when you reach your destination.

Happy travelling!
TRAVEL LOG

Kuala Lumpur Spin

Michelle Monroy steps out of her comfort zone to travel abroad alone, and ends up having a rockin’ good time!

My flight from Manila, Philippines, to Kuala Lumpur (KL), Malaysia, last October was the first time I travelled overseas, solo. I felt nervous as the plane took off but thanks to the friendly AirAsia cabin crew who helped ease my jitters, I soon settled in and enjoyed the journey.

My cousin, who had graciously volunteered to be my guide and photographer during my two-day stay in Malaysia, greeted me at the airport. As my trip was such a short one, we zeroed in on all the best attractions.

Our first stop – the famous Petaling Street, KL’s pasalubong (souvenir) central. After a quick snack at a cafe to catch up, we made our way through the throngs as we passed rows and rows of shops selling knick-knacks of every kind. Clothing, bags, household and decorative items were offered at bargain prices. And just a stone’s throw from Petaling Street was Central Market, a well-known hub for arts and crafts created by local artisans. Needless to say, I found some lovely souvenirs for family and friends back home, within just a few hours of landing in KL!

On a roll from our Petaling Street/Central Market escapade, we decided to continue our shopping spree at Suria KLCC, the mall that’s adjoined to the world-famous Petronas Twin Towers. After an hour or so of shopping, we were ready to collapse! Resting our tired feet at one of the mall’s numerous restaurants, we enjoyed delicious local desserts as we sipped teh tarik, the popular milky ‘pulled tea’. It felt good to unwind after an exhausting but fun romp. There was just one more thing to do though before we called it a day... it was a dream come true for me when we ventured outside for some snapshots near the majestic Petronas towers. I had admired the ‘twins’ in movies, even Hollywood films, since I was young, and standing at the foot of the iconic buildings was simply surreal – I was awe-struck! There couldn’t have been a better close to my first day in KL. And according to my cousin, I didn’t stop smiling until I went to bed that night.

Following the hectic activities of the previous day, I was glad that my cousin had more...
laidback plans for my second day in KL.

After breakfast, we made our way to Batu Caves. The Hindu temple there, built for the worship of Lord Murugan (Hindu god of victory), is a popular pilgrimage site for Hindus, and a famous attraction. The resplendent 43m-high golden Lord Murugan statue at the entrance of the temple site is indeed mesmerising. The temple itself is situated in the caves at the top of a low-lying hill, and visitors have to climb 272 steps to get to the shrine. But your efforts will be worth it when you find yourself standing at the beautiful temple amidst the serene ambience of the magnificent caves.

With some time left on our hands after our Batu Caves visit, we returned to Suria KLCC for a late lunch and to enjoy some downtime before the grand finale of my trip later that evening – Taeyang’s White Night World Tour 2017 held at KL’s impressive Stadium Negara! I’m a huge fan of the South Korean singing sensation, and the concert was one of the reasons I chose to visit KL. The show was beyond my expectations, and my cousin and I had a fabulous time. It was no wonder that I went to bed for the second night in a row with a big smile on my face!

As I packed my bags the next morning for my flight home, I reminisced about my wonderful Malaysian adventure. It was truly an unforgettable holiday, and I was glad that I had stepped out on my own. This time as the plane took off, I wasn’t nervous. I knew that this many-splendoured journey was only the beginning of many more amazing solo travels to come.

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Winner of the Month

Win a 3D/2N stay at W Bangkok’s Spectacular Room, inclusive of breakfast for two at The Kitchen Table.

Shanghai
One of the world’s largest and most populous cities, there is always something to see, do and experience in China’s amazing powerhouse.

Singapore
The Lion City is a magnificent fusion of old and new, as history and heritage are proudly upheld amidst an ultra modern landscape.

Tokyo
Always vibrant, the capital city of Japan is a futuristic metropolis that preserves a colourful past within its glorious present.

GETTING THERE
AirAsia flies to Kuala Lumpur from various destinations airasia.com

Images: 123RF

Got an interesting tale about your travels with AirAsia? Email your story (around 800 words) and images (high res min 1MB in size and clearly captioned) to us at travel3Sixty@airasia.com with TRAVEL LOG in the subject line. Published submissions will receive a complimentary stay at a fabulous hotel or resort. travel3Sixty reserves the right to edit the article for clarity and length or change the value of the prize to another gift of similar value. Prize vouchers cannot be exchanged for cash and the Editorial’s decision is final. Entries must include name, address, e-mail address and telephone number.
Enchanting Best

Whether you’re celebrating Chinese New Year or looking forward to Valentine’s Day, or just getting ready to conquer the year, do it at your best.

Eye Appeal
Precise lid lining is no longer a challenge with Maybelline’s Hyper Tight Liner, a revolutionary 15-degree angled eyeliner. Crafted for easy control during application and for perfect accuracy when lining your upper and lower lids, the ultra-black ink gives you fuller eyes for an alluring impact. maybelline.com

Eco-hip Design
Step out in style as you stay eco-conscious with the latest ‘it’ bag – fresh tropical-coloured abaca bags by Philippine social enterprise, Anthill Fabric Gallery. Also known as Manila hemp, abaca is an environment-friendly plant fibre, considered the strongest of its kind. Anthill works with indigenous weaving communities and uses natural dyes to produce the two-toned colours of its chic bags.

Handy Treasures
Marrying the iconic Vara bow ornament with modern geometric design, Salvatore Ferragamo presents the Vara Rainbow Bag. The bag comes in various colours ranging from classic black to pastels and striking red, with the back pocket featuring a multi-compartment gusset in different hues.

Images: barbiemedia.com, ZALORA

Words: JUSTINE MEI-ERN
Meaningful Gifts
Gift your beloved with the Heart Moon & Star Pendant by Infinity & Co. The ideal gift during this season of romance comes with a card bearing the message 'Just to say... I love you to the moon and back', a luxury gift bag, and a one-year international warranty.

infinityandco.com

Simply Divine
Here are some style tips for the month of love.

Sweet & Sassy
This embroidered mini skirt with front slits is all about elegant chic. The A-line silhouette is flattering for most figures, making it great for day-to-night wear.

Evening Elegance
Pair this flowy chiffon cold shoulder dress with a glittery clutch or elegant earrings for the perfect evening ensemble.

Casual Appeal
For a laidback date, reach for this classic blue jeans with soft floral design. Pair it with your favourite sandals and you’re set for stylish comfort.

Natural Charm
This Secret Beauty Powder compact by Canmake from Japan illuminates the skin for a translucent and natural appearance, while concealing flaws for a clearer complexion. Enriched with five moisturising agents, it also absorbs excess sebum to keep your skin silky-smooth, giving you a youthful dewy look.
canmake.com

Lavish Strides
Malaysian bespoke footwear label XALF introduces its Xtraordinary capsule collection inspired by Bentley. Discover timeless silhouettes, with Xceptional for him and Xquisite for her. Handmade to perfection, the shoes feature exquisite gold piping for a touch of luxury.
xalfdesign.com

Brow Perfection
Show off perfect brows with the all-in-one Eyebrow Kit from South Korean brand Eglips. Its light and mocha brown shades make it suitable for all skin tones. The kit includes a dual-ended brush to shade, contour and comb your brows, and fixing wax that ensures long-lasting colour.
eglips.com

Effortlessly Pure
Simplify your skincare routine with the Philosophy Purity one-step facial cleanser for face and eyes. The 3-in-1 formula with natural, plant-based oil extracts gently removes makeup and deep-cleanses the pores, while toning and hydrating the skin.

Rokki shop.com

Have your purchases delivered to your seat (on selected flights) when you pre-book duty free products online.

02 18

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Rokki shop.com

Have your purchases delivered to your seat (on selected flights) when you pre-book duty free products online.
Malaysian indie rap artist Tang Eu-Jin, aka Jin Hackman, has collaborated with AirAsia on a special Chinese New Year video. Read on to learn about Jin Hackman’s take on the growing Asian hip-hop scene, as well as not being able speak in his own mother tongue!

Your stage name is clearly a play on the actor Gene Hackman – why did you decide to go with that name? It was super random, to be honest. My mentor back then, Azwan (WordsManifest), and I were talking one day and he jokingly called me Jin Hackman. I needed a new stage name (the one I had at the time – Incognito – was so cheesy), so I decided to just roll with it. And the name stuck, I guess.

What made you fall in love with the art of hip-hop in the first place, and who were your musical influences growing up? It was after listening to Eminem’s Marshall Mathers LP – I was blown away by the lyrical content. Rappers always have a unique way of looking at things. There’s also that element of rebellion, which I thought was pretty cool (I was 13 or 14 years old at the time). Growing up, I also listened a lot to Nas. He’s still one of my biggest musical influences.

You joined Malaysian online forum The Basement.com where you met like-minded folks interested in your genre of music – did that platform change the way you saw the future of hip-hop in Malaysia? The forum certainly got me trying my hand at rapping.

It made me realise that there were others like me here in Malaysia, which was kinda rad! I’ve met most of them in person (through gigs), and a few have become my closest friends.

Your yearly rap-ups about Malaysia are extremely popular – what is usually the most challenging aspect of composing these verses? Trying to recall in December what happened in January!

But seriously, it’s tackling the darker/heavier subjects. It’s always easier to just call out someone on something silly they did. But when it’s something that affects people on a deeper level, that’s when I have to be careful. I approached the latest rap-up a little differently. I wrote my lyrics more subtly, visual cues were also less obvious – my fear with this, however, is that viewers could have missed some of the references.

You are spearheading the hip-hop project Raising the Bar, now in its seventh year. How has the scene changed since the project first started in 2010? It’s changed tremendously, and for the better I feel. There are more DIY artists (self-sufficiency is key) that I can keep up with and output is at an all-time high. Sonically, it’s far more diverse than before. And concerning identity, I believe Malaysia is starting to find its voice and place in hip-hop. There’s been an influx of multilingual rappers, which is great! Back then, you’d have to sound like your US counterparts to make it. Not anymore. You can just be yourself. People appreciate
individuality and can tell when you’re faking it.

Asian hip-hop is really picking up. What do you think has contributed to the trend? I think it all started with Keith Ape’s *It G Ma* (2015). Then a year later, Rich Chigga continued the hype with *Dat Stick*. Asian hip-hop has always been around, but never received the same kind of global attention these songs did. Much of Asian hip-hop’s rise can also be attributed to media outlet 88Rising; their reach is amazing, and they help market the artists and videos to a wider audience. In Malaysia itself, we have young, up-and-coming artists such as Airliftz, Kidd Santhe and Zamaera pushing the envelope.

If you could have a rap battle with anyone out there, who would you go against and why? Kanye West, and it has to be set at a lake. But really, I’m just using ‘rap battle’ as an excuse to meet him.

Do you have a ritual before you get on stage and perform? I like watching performance videos of my favourite artists to get myself amped up. I can also be seen backstage pacing back and forth/talking loudly/rapping to myself before a show. I’m not sure why, but doing that seems to calm my nerves.

Your 2015 song *Banana* resonated with Malaysian audiences. What triggered the need to write the song? I just felt like the topic had not been covered before, and I wanted to be the first to address it. It was me drawing from real life experiences, as well as taking a dig at myself and my inability to converse in Mandarin. Just a lot of self-deprecating humour! On a side note though, if you don’t know something – go learn it.

How do you intend to survive AirAsia destinations like China with your limited Mandarin language skills? Google Translate!

Which Chinese New Year tradition is most important to you, and why? The traditional Chinese New Year reunion dinner for sure; getting together with family far and near. I always look forward to catching up with relatives. And there’s always that awkward moment when the last piece of chicken or prawn or squid is left on the plate. Nobody wants to be that guy who reaches for it. That’s when I step in.

What similarities do you see between your style and AirAsia’s? We both fly!
**Top Shots**
Just snapped a cool picture? Send it to travel3sixty@airasia.com with ‘Picture Perfect’ in the subject line.

**WINNER**
Horse training in progress, Mt. Bromo, East Java, Indonesia
Michael Choong, Singapore

**Best Picture Wins**
A 3D/2N stay in Four Points by Sheraton Puchong’s Deluxe Corner Room, inclusive of breakfast for two, worth approx. USD230!

The hotel boasts 249 guestrooms, each fitted with the Four Points by Sheraton Four Comfort™ signature bed that assures a restful slumber. Travellers have easy access to shopping and entertainment venues nestled in the neighbouring foodie’s paradise of Bandar Puteri Puchong. The hotel also offers its own all-day dining menu at The Eatery, and guests can relax and unwind in the Lobby Lounge, which serves Four Points by Sheraton’s renowned Best Brews™ collection of beers.

FOUR POINTS BY SHERATON PUCHONG
1201, Tower 3, Puchong Financial Corporate Centre (PFCC), Jalan Puteri 1/2, Bandar Puteri, 47100 Puchong, Malaysia
fourpointspuchong.com

**Second Prize Wins**
A 3D/2N stay in Four Points by Sheraton Sandakan’s Deluxe Room, inclusive of breakfast for two at The Eatery, worth approx. USD145!

Offering panoramic views of the Sulu Sea, Four Points by Sheraton Sandakan is located in the heart of the city of Sandakan. The city’s proximity to amazing wildlife, magnificent rainforests and stunning karsts makes it a popular destination for nature lovers. Local ecotourism spots such as Sepilok Orang Utan Rehabilitation Centre, Bornean Sun Bear Conservation Centre, Rainforest Discovery Centre, Labuk Bay Proboscis Monkey Sanctuary and Gomantong Caves are easily accessible from the hotel.

FOUR POINTS BY SHERATON SANDAKAN
Sandakan Harbour Square, 90000 Sandakan, Sabah, Malaysia
fourpointssandakan.com

**RUNNER-UP**
Women in hanbok (traditional Korean dress), Gyeongbokgung Palace, Seoul, South Korea
Esther Yap Lih Yin, Melaka, Malaysia

**Terms & conditions**  
• Readers may submit images that are 300dpi and 1MB in size (minimum half A4 paper size)  
• Each entry must include name, address, phone number and complete caption  
• Readers must own the rights to the picture submitted and must have obtained permission to photograph human subjects depicted  
• Judges’ decision is final  
• Entries are automatically disqualified if they do not meet our criteria and stated T&C  
• Winners will be notified via e-mail when the prize is ready to be sent out  
• Prizes cannot be exchanged for cash.
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JAWATIMUR PARK 3
Jawa Timur Park 3 offers a dino-themed park from museum, rides, high tech games. Also, you can enjoy the shopping mall, hotel & apartment to entertain your family at once!

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is a science and coaster park. The park offers you the culture zone about Indonesia, science center and coaster area. Jawa Timur Park 1 is a complete package for you to learning and playing at the same time!

MUSEUM SATWA
offers a lot of animals around the world that already preserved. You can learn about them easily and attractively through the magnificent dioramas.

BATU NIGHT SPECTACULAR
is the place you can enjoy the city lights while playing many extreme rides. Batu Night Spectacular also offers the biggest lantern garden in Indonesia.

THE BAQONG
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offers a brand new kind of learning fun with the unique & giant properties of our body parts. Also meet the real preserved human body or call it Cadaver!

MUSEUM ANGIHUT
as the best museum in Indonesia 2017 by ministry of education & culture, are housing a lot of vehicles from time to time. Also, special classic car parade is ready to be enjoyed for everyday!

BATU SECRET ZOO
is a modern zoo that offering a lot of unique animals of the world. As the #9 best zoo in Asia, Batu Secret Zoo also has a lot of fun rides and kids waterpark.

ECO GREEN PARK
is homing more than a thousand birds from all over the world. Eco Green Park has a complete environment learning activities, from recycle the waste, biggest learning, to earthquake simulator.

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Why is there a weight limit for cabin luggage? What’s wrong with packing e-cigarettes in checked-in baggage? Are airlines just being fussy or are there genuine reasons why certain restrictions are enforced? With almost 20 years in the aviation industry (on the ground and in the air!), Group Cabin Safety Manager Rooha Jami Subramaniam is well equipped to answer your questions.

Don’t You Always Have To Be Nice To Me? Our cabin crew are trained to provide guests with the best in-flight experience. In fact, we received the award for World’s Leading Inflight Service at the World Travel Awards™ in December 2016! An integral part of stellar inflight service is ensuring the safety, security and comfort of ALL our guests and crew. Therefore, we practise zero tolerance of abuse and intoxication on board. Unruly guests will not be tolerated and may be handed over to local authorities. Our cabin crew reserve the right to decline serving and selling alcohol to anyone who appears intoxicated. Consumption of personal alcoholic beverages is prohibited on board.

Can I carry self-heating meals? No, AirAsia practices a strict no-outside food policy. Self-heating meals (pre-prepared meals heated using a chemical reaction within a flameless ration heater (FRH) bag) are strictly prohibited, as the by-products of the chemical reaction pose a fire hazard.

Why Can’t I Carry Cabin Baggage Exceeding 7Kg? Although our cabin crew are always there to lend a hand with stowing luggage for guests travelling with infants, young guests travelling solo, the elderly, and guests with reduced mobility, we need to ensure that our cabin crew do not throw their backs out by trying to lift a 20kg monster bag! This weight restriction is in place to minimise occupational hazards, as well as to ensure you, our guests, don’t hurt yourselves either while trying to stow or retrieve your own luggage. All cabin baggage must be able to fit in the overhead compartment or underneath the seat in front of you. Each guest is permitted to carry on two items of hand luggage, with a combined weight not exceeding 7kg.

When Can I Use My Portable Electronic Devices? All PEDs must be switched off once aircraft doors are closed. Mobile phones in flight mode may only be used during cruise and when instructed by the crew. Devices that transmit strong signals (eg. radios, remote control toys and walkie-talkies) must remain switched off throughout the flight, as they can interfere with the navigational equipment on board. In fact, the Captain may prohibit the use of any device that has the potential to interfere with the aircraft system. All devices must be switched off and stowed when directed by cabin crew and during emergency preparations. In the event that your phone, tablet or other small device gets lodged anywhere between the seats, and you are unable to retrieve it, do not try to adjust the seat. Please inform the cabin crew immediately.

Can I Vape Or Smoke On Board? We practise a strict no-smoking policy on board across the entire AirAsia Group, and this policy covers battery-powered portable electronic devices such as e-cigarettes, personal vaporisers, electronic nicotine delivery system and other similar devices. Smoking in the lavatories and tampering with smoke detectors are serious violations that will lead to a fine or imprisonment. If you’re planning on taking your electronic cigarette with you when you travel, please do ensure that you carry your device on you or in your carry-on baggage, and NEVER in your check-in luggage to avoid potential fire hazards. Recharging of the device in-flight is not permitted.
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A travel companion like no other – check out our monthly guide from travel3sixty.com to discover the best of Asia Pacific and beyond.

With white sandy beaches and spectacular dive spots, Cebu in central Philippines has everything you’d expect from a tropical island. Cebu is also a jumping-off point to the neighbouring island of Bohol, which features centuries-old heritage sites, and natural wonders. Find the best deals for a holiday in Cebu and Bohol at deals.airasia.com and use the promo code – CALMCEBU – for a 15 per cent discount on activities!

**Badian Canyoneering and Kawasan Waterfalls from Cebu**
(From approx. USD45) Gear up for adventure with a private day tour of Badian, which boasts the gorgeous three-tiered Kawasan Falls. Hiking, swimming, rafting, and cliff-jumping are among the highlights of this tour.

**Mactan Island Hopping Including Olango, Hilutungan and Pandanon Islands**
(From approx. USD85) Sunshine-filled days make Cebu the perfect place for island-hopping. On this day tour departing Mactan Island, guests can swim and snorkel in the crystal-clear waters of Olango, Hilutungan and Pandanon.

**Bibingka**
Cebu is known for delicious delicacies, which include Mandaue-style bibingka, a spongy rice cake. This bibingka is made with ground rice, coconut milk, sugar, and tuba (local coconut wine), and baked in a terracotta oven. Masareal, bars made from ground peanuts and sugar syrup, as well as salvaro, wafer-thin coconut-flavoured crisps are equally yummy.

**Bohol Beauty** Neighbouring Bohol offers visitors natural wonders like the famous Chocolate Hills, geological formations covered in vegetation that turn a toasty chocolate during the dry season; picturesque beaches; as well as magnificent churches. A highlight is the Philippine Tarsier Sanctuary – a refuge for saucer-eyed tarsiers, one of the world’s smallest primates.

**About Us**
Aaron Sarma, Founder & CEO of Touristly, and his team are always cooking up some travel magic for AirAsia guests.

“It’s been 20 years since my first trip to Cebu and the island has only gotten better over time. Often referred to as the ‘Queen City of the South’, Cebu is a traveller’s paradise. Pristine sandy beaches, heritage sites, wilderness trails and magnificent waterfalls, tempting cuisine, and a buzzing nightlife scene, this island has it all! Check out travel3Sixty.com for a selection of exciting and exhilarating experiences in Cebu, and neighbouring Bohol.”

For more ideas on places to visit and things to do in and around Cebu (and beyond!), visit travel3sixty.com and type your destination of choice in the search bar.

**Your Guide to All Things Fun!**

**SHARE & WIN!** Upload snaps of your favourite Cebu attractions on Instagram with the hashtag #t360Cebu for a chance to be featured on our website, and win exclusive travel 3Sixty° merchandise.
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Movies/tonton

Sixty Million Dollar Man
Flirting with the girlfriend of Mafia boss Fumito results in dire circumstances for Lee, a rich playboy. In order to save his life, Lee’s professor transforms him into a cyborg. Lee gradually rebuilds his life as a school teacher, and even finds love, but Fumito discovers Lee’s true identity and is on his trail.

Fat Choi Spirit
This comedy tells the story of legendary mah-jong player Andy, who seems to be losing his magic touch just when he needs it the most. Completing this comedic cast is the gambler’s ill mother, down-on-his luck brother, and warring ex-girlfriend, whose antics will leave the audience in stitches.

Folks and Tales
In this tonton presentation, hosts Chrystina Ng and Winson Voon take viewers on a fascinating cultural journey, as they uncover rich Chinese customs and taboos.

Esports
League of Legends
Popular multiplayer online video game League of Legends (LoL) demands quick reflexes and even faster strategic thinking. The Summoner’s Rift (LoL’s version of a basketball court or baseball diamond) is where the game’s electrifying competitive action takes place – two teams of five players each face off on virtual battlefields. Players pick one champion from a pool of over 130 master players, each with their own unique play style that adds strategic depth and variety to each match. League of Legends videos are available via ROKKI inflight entertainment on selected AirAsia flights.

GOASEAN
BEAT of Southeast Asia, the world’s first exclusive Southeast Asian travel and tourism platform, covers the region’s best offerings in food, culture and unique experiences. This original series traverses Southeast Asia and showcases the best of the region, through its cuisine, culture and diverse peoples.
Malaysia - The destination of choice for a new generation of international student adventurers

Malaysia has always been a good option for students looking to immerse themselves in an array of cultures & settings and for very good reasons too. International students are attracted to Malaysia’s exciting cities, wonderful food, fantastic natural beauty, ideal location for exploration, and low costs both in terms of tuition fees and living expenses. In fact, capital city Kuala Lumpur was ranked the most affordable student city in last year’s QS Best Student Cities. Malaysia boasts some of the finest private institutions in the region and few come better equipped for today’s overseas student adventurer than Sunway University, fabulously located within the Amazing Sunway City.

1. WHERE IS SUNWAY UNIVERSITY? HOW FAR IS IT FROM KUALA LUMPUR/AIRPORT?
Sunway University is located in Sunway City, an amazing integrated leisure and lifestyle resort. Just 30 minutes away from the airport and short ride from the capital Kuala Lumpur.

2. WHY SUNWAY CITY?
The popular Sunway City has long been an attractive place to relax and enjoy life for Malaysians over many years. Not only is it blessed with all the facilities a young person would wish for like shopping malls, hotels, theme parks and an array of entertainment options for all the family. It is also supported by a 24-hour community Sunway auxiliary police team with CCTV around Sunway City.

3. DO YOU HAVE LOTS OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS?
Over the last 10 years the number of international students has risen dramatically as Malaysia has become a hub for international education and Sunway University has rapidly become a market leader in the area. Nationalities from over 90 countries study at our Sunway Campus, so making new friends is never a problem.

4. DO YOU HAVE ACCOMMODATION ON SITE OR DO WE HAVE TO TRAVEL LONG DISTANCES?
The Sunway campus is truly spoiled for choice when it comes to student accommodation. Thousands of students stay in our numerous resident options, all strategically priced for all budgets and literally located within the campus grounds. The university as well as the gym, library and Sunway City facilities are minutes away.

5. MAY I KNOW YOUR QS STARS & MYQUEST STAR RATING?
The Sunway College has been awarded the highest MyQuest accolade of Tier 6. Whilst Sunway University enjoys the highest possible QS rated 5 Stars in Teaching, Facilities and Employability.

6. DO YOU HAVE ANY INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS?
Probably two of the strongest in the world. Lancaster University, which is top 6 UK University and recently awarded UK’s best University of the year by Times Higher Education, has just renewed its affiliation with Sunway University for another 5 years. The ever increasing popularity of culinary arts in Asia has seen the world renowned, Le Cordon Bleu, open up in Malaysia and choose Sunway University as its partner of choice. Students will be awarded with 2 certificates upon graduation.

7. WHAT ARE THE OTHER PROGRAMMES AVAILABLE IN SUNWAY UNIVERSITY AND SUNWAY COLLEGE?
Pre University: Internationally recognised Programmes that will link students to the world
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• School of Hospitality
• Sunway University Business School
• School of Mathematical Sciences
• School of Science & Technology
• School of Psychology
• Sunway Institute of Healthcare Development
• School of Hospitality

8. DO YOU OFFER SCHOLARSHIPS?
Yes, we do offer scholarships up to a certain figure based upon academic results.

9. HOW MUCH WILL IT COST TO STUDY IN SUNWAY/MALAYSIA (ALONG WITH LIVING EXPENSES)?
Far less than you would think and with everyday expenses in Malaysia being hugely competitive when compared to Singapore, Thailand, Hong Kong or Mainland China, the added financial attraction of Malaysia has proven very popular.

10. SO WHEN DO I START?
Well, let’s chat first. Our dedicated International Office Team is on hand to provide all the information you need and will proactively assist with all the paperwork as well as Visas.

Contributed by:
Lim Shui Chin
Director, International Office and Special Projects, Sunway University, Malaysia.

sunway.edu.my
info@sunway.edu.my
Joy of Flying

Whether on a short- or long-haul journey, flying can be a pleasant experience if you are well-prepared. Here are some simple steps to ensure you have a safe, smooth and comfortable journey.

Inflight Exercises
Troy Bantleman, personal trainer to celebrity athletes and AirAsia big boss Tony Fernandes shows you how to perform easy exercises for a comfortable flight.

**Chest Stretch**
Sit upright with arms held on either side of the body, and push both elbows back while stretching the spine. You should feel the stretch in your back.

**Shoulder Stretch**
Place your right hand horizontally in the crook of your left elbow and press gently against your chest. Hold for 10 seconds, repeat on the other side.

**Lower Limbs/Buttocks Stretch**
Sit straight and cross your right leg over your left leg. Hold your right knee with both hands and lean forward. Hold for 10 seconds, and repeat on the other side.

**Onboard Care**
Aircraft cabins are generally very dry and dehydration can occur easily. To overcome this:

**Drink**
Lots of water but ensure the intake is slow and regular. Drinking too much water at one go will cause the body to expel the water quickly too, forcing you to visit the toilet frequently.

**Lubricate**
your eyes with eye drops, as eyes are aggravated by dry atmosphere. Also, ditch the contact lenses and opt for spectacles during the flight.

**Hydrate**
your skin by applying moisturiser or spraying a body spritzer on exposed body parts.

**Avoid**
tea, coffee and alcohol, or keep intake to a minimum.

Prevent DVT
Deep Vein Thrombosis can occur when a blood clot forms in the large veins of the legs or arms, blocking blood circulation. Inactivity during long flights may lead to the occurrence of DVT. If you are flying long distance, ensure you perform inflight exercises such as those listed above as a precaution against developing DVT. When possible and permissible, stretch your legs and walk along the aisle. Be aware of symptoms such as pain or swelling in the legs, which can happen even after you disembark. Seek medical attention if these occur.

Beat the Lag
To counter the effects of jetlag, get as much sleep as possible when flying west to east. When flying in the reverse direction, try to stay awake as much as you can. AirAsia’s chic Snug-as-a-bug hoodie keeps you cosy with its neck pillow attached to a soft hooded collar, and is easily deflated for storage upon landing. Enjoy savings when you pre-book this item at rokkishop.com

Ear Comfort
Changes in air pressure or altitude cause our ears to ‘pop’ and sometimes ache during take-off and landing. For a comfortable flying experience, suck on sweets or, mimic the act of chewing and swallowing if you do not have any sweets with you. This will relieve the discomfort and help stabilise the pressure in the ear canals. Pacifiers will work just as well for toddlers. If you have a cold, use a nasal decongestant to clear your nasal passage and alleviate the ache.
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NEAR BTS ASOKE AND TERMINAL 21
### DESTINATIONS

#### AUSTRALIA

- **Gold Coast**
  - **Airport**: Gold Coast Airport
  - **Currency**: AUD (Australian Dollar)
  - **Dialing Code**: +61 7
  - **Language**: English
  - **Distance to City**: 20km
  - **Points of Interest**: Warner Bros. Movie World, Kurumbin Wildlife Sanctuary, SkyPoint Observation Deck

- **Melbourne**
  - **Airport**: Melbourne (Tullamarine) Airport
  - **Currency**: AUD (Australian Dollar)
  - **Dialing Code**: +61 3
  - **Language**: English
  - **Distance to City**: 22km
  - **Points of Interest**: National Gallery of Victoria, Queen Victoria Market, Yarra River Cruise

- **Sydney**
  - **Airport**: Sydney (Kingsford Smith) Airport
  - **Currency**: AUD (Australian Dollar)
  - **Dialing Code**: +61 2
  - **Language**: English
  - **Distance to City**: 14km
  - **Points of Interest**: Sydney Opera House, Bondi Beach, Taronga Zoo

- **Beijing**
  - **Airport**: Beijing Capital International Airport
  - **Currency**: RMB (Chinese Yuan Renminbi)
  - **Dialing Code**: +86 10
  - **Language**: Mandarin
  - **Distance to City**: 30km
  - **Points of Interest**: Forbidden City, Tiananmen Square, Great Wall of China

- **Changsha**
  - **Airport**: Changsha Huanghua International Airport
  - **Currency**: RMB (Chinese Yuan Renminbi)
  - **Dialing Code**: +86 731
  - **Language**: Mandarin, Hunanese
  - **Distance to City**: 35km
  - **Points of Interest**: Window of the World, Yuelu Academy, Hunan Provincial Museum

- **Hangzhou**
  - **Airport**: Hangzhou Xiaoshan International Airport
  - **Currency**: RMB (Chinese Yuan Renminbi)
  - **Dialing Code**: +86 571
  - **Language**: Mandarin, Wu Chinese
  - **Distance to City**: 33.8km
  - **Points of Interest**: Hefang Street, National Tea Museum, Lingyin Temple

#### CAMBODIA

- **Phnom Penh**
  - **Airport**: Phnom Penh International Airport
  - **Currency**: KHR (Cambodian Riel)
  - **Dialing Code**: +855 23
  - **Language**: Khmer
  - **Distance to City**: 10km
  - **Points of Interest**: Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, Royal Palace, Silver Pagoda

- **Siem Reap**
  - **Airport**: Siem Reap–Angkor International Airport
  - **Currency**: KHR (Cambodian Riel)
  - **Dialing Code**: +855 63
  - **Language**: Khmer
  - **Distance to City**: 7.3km
  - **Points of Interest**: Angkor Wat, Cambodia Landmine Museum, Angkor Silk Farm

#### BANGLADESH

- **Dhaka**
  - **Airport**: Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport
  - **Currency**: BDT (Bangladeshi Taka)
  - **Dialing Code**: +880 2
  - **Language**: Bengali
  - **Distance to City**: 16km
  - **Points of Interest**: Lalbagh Fort, Jatiyo Sriti Shoudho, Sixty Dome Mosque

#### BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

- **Bandar Seri Begawan**
  - **Airport**: Brunei International Airport
  - **Currency**: BND (Brunei Dollar)
  - **Dialing Code**: +673
  - **Languages**: Malay & English
  - **Distance to City**: 10km
  - **Points of Interest**: Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddin Mosque, Jerudong Park, Kampong Ayer

#### CHINA

- **Beijing**
  - **Airport**: Beijing Capital International Airport
  - **Currency**: RMB (Chinese Yuan Renminbi)
  - **Dialing Code**: +86 10
  - **Language**: Mandarin
  - **Distance to City**: 20km
  - **Points of Interest**: Forbidden City, Tiananmen Square, Great Wall of China

- **Changsha**
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  - **Dialing Code**: +86 731
  - **Language**: Mandarin, Hunanese
  - **Distance to City**: 35km
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  - **Airport**: Hangzhou Xiaoshan International Airport
  - **Currency**: RMB (Chinese Yuan Renminbi)
  - **Dialing Code**: +86 571
  - **Language**: Mandarin, Wu Chinese
  - **Distance to City**: 33.8km
  - **Points of Interest**: Hefang Street, National Tea Museum, Lingyin Temple

All information correct at press time. Some information contained here are approximates only. DIY research is highly recommended.
Asia’s first immersive experienced snake museum

Experience the World through Snake Eyes. Are you attracted by the utterly unique and unusual? Then take a journey to the other side of incredible at Asia’s first and only totally immersive snake experience. You will not only feel the amazing sensation of being a snake for a day but will also hear fascinating facts about these extraordinary creatures.

1 Immersive Snake Museum

Experience the amazing sensations of being a snake-including reproduction, hunting, skin shedding etc-through interactive media at the world’s first serpent sensorium.

2 Snake Planet

Come face to face with over 70 species of snake form all around the globe in truly realistic environment at the world-class serpentarium.

3 Naka Theatre

Thrilling Thai snake-related performances of humans and snakes based on highly unique style that cannot be witnessed elsewhere.

Tickets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Adult</th>
<th>Child* (90 - 135 cm)</th>
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<td>Thai Nationals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exports (Over 1 meter)</td>
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</table>

*Remark
- The elderly aged 60 and above and children under 90 cm tall will enjoy free admission.
- Student tickets are offered for all students from kindergarten through undergraduate without an age limit. Present a current student ID at the Box Office to purchase tickets.

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**DESTINATIONS**

**INDIA**

**Guwahati**
- Airport: Lokpriya Gopinath Bordoloi International Airport
- Currency: INR (Indian Rupee)
- Dialing Code: +91 361
- Distance to City: 25km
- Points of Interest: Garbhanga Forest, Kamakhya Temple, Guwahati Planetarium
- Transport: Taxi, Bus, Ride-hailing

**Hyderabad**
- Airport: Rajiv Gandhi International Airport
- Currency: INR (Indian Rupee)
- Dialing Code: +91 40
- Languages: Telugu, Hindi, Urdu
- Distance to City: 30.1km
- Points of Interest: Golconda Fort, Qutub Shahi Tombs, Ramoji Film City
- Transport: Taxi, Bus, Ride-hailing

**Imphal**
- Airport: Imphal International Airport
- Currency: INR (Indian Rupee)
- Dialing Code: +91 3852
- Languages: Manipuri, Hindi, English
- Distance to City: 8.8km
- Points of Interest: Tagore Hill, Panch Gagh Falls, Jagnanath Temple
- Transport: Taxi, Bus, Train, Ride-hailing

**Jaipur**
- Airport: Jaipur International Airport
- Currency: INR (Indian Rupee)
- Dialing Code: +91 141
- Languages: Hindi, Rajasthani, Dhundari, Marwari, English
- Distance to City: 12.7km
- Points of Interest: Jaigarh Fort, City Palace, Hawa Mahal
- Transport: Taxi, Bus, Train, Ride-hailing

**New Delhi**
- Airport: Indira Gandhi International Airport
- Currency: INR (Indian Rupee)
- Dialing Code: +91 11
- Languages: Hindi, English
- Distance to City: 14.1km
- Points of Interest: Qutub Minar, Red Fort, Swaminarayan Akshardham Temple
- Transport: Taxi, Bus, Train, Ride-hailing

**Pune**
- Airport: Pune International Airport
- Currency: INR (Indian Rupee)
- Dialing Code: +91 20
- Languages: Marathi, English, Hindi
- Distance to City: 12.2km
- Points of Interest: Parvati Hill, Pune-Okayama Friendship Garden, Aga Khan Palace
- Transport: Taxi, Bus, Ride-hailing

**Ranchi**
- Airport: Birsa Munda Airport
- Currency: INR (Indian Rupee)
- Dialing Code: +91 651
- Languages: Hindi, Urdu, Bengali, Maithili, Sardi, Oraon
- Distance to City: 5.2km
- Points of Interest: Tagore Hill, Panch Gagh Falls, Jagnanath Temple
- Transport: Taxi, Bus, Train

**Visakhapatnam**
- Airport: Visakhapatnam Airport
- Currency: INR (Indian Rupee)
- Dialing Code: +91 891
- Languages: Telugu, English, Hindi
- Distance to City: 8.9km
- Points of Interest: Kailasagiri Hill Park, Borra Caves, Yarada Beach
- Transport: Taxi, Bus, Train

**Bali**
- Airport: Ngurah Rai International Airport
- Currency: IDR (Indonesian Rupiah)
- Dialing Code: +62 361
- Languages: Indonesian, Balinese
- Distance to City: 5km
- Points of Interest: Tanah Lot Temple, Mt. Agung, Ubud, Tegalalang, Rice Terraces
- Transport: Taxi, Bus, Train, Ride-hailing

**Jakarta**
- Airport: Soekarno-Hatta International Airport
- Currency: IDR (Indonesian Rupiah)
- Dialing Code: +62 21
- Languages: Indonesian
- Distance to City: 33km
- Points of Interest: Taman Mini Indonesia Indah, Monas, Ancol Dreamland
- Transport: Taxi, Bus, Train, Ride-hailing

All information correct at press time. Some information contained here are approximates only. DIY research is highly recommended.
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<tr>
<th>Country</th>
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<th>Points of Interest</th>
<th>Transport</th>
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<td>Palembang</td>
<td>Sultan Mahmud Badaruddin II International Airport</td>
<td>IDR</td>
<td>+62 711</td>
<td>Indonesian, Musi</td>
<td>15km</td>
<td>Ampera Bridge, Kuto Besak Fort, Punti Kayu Natural Park</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Pekanbaru</td>
<td>Sultan Syarif Kasim II International Airport</td>
<td>IDR</td>
<td>+62 761</td>
<td>Indonesian, Malay, Minangkabau</td>
<td>4.8km</td>
<td>Points of Interest: Sang Nila Utama Museum, Great Mosque of An-Nur</td>
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<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>Pontianak</td>
<td>Supadio International Airport</td>
<td>IDR</td>
<td>+62 561</td>
<td>Indonesian, Pontianak Malay, Hakka</td>
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<td>Points of Interest: Kapuas Square, Equator Monument, Museum of West Kalimantan</td>
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<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>Semarang</td>
<td>Ahmad Yani International Airport</td>
<td>IDR</td>
<td>+62 24</td>
<td>Indonesian, Javanese</td>
<td>8.7km</td>
<td>Points of Interest: Surakarta Hadiningrat Palace, Sriwedari Park, Kampung Pelangi (Rainbow Village)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Solo</td>
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<td>+62 271</td>
<td>Indonesian, Javanese</td>
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<td>Points of Interest: Golestan Palace, The Grand Bazaar, Azadi Tower</td>
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<td>Tehran</td>
<td>Imam Khomeini International Airport</td>
<td>IRR</td>
<td>+98 21</td>
<td>Persian</td>
<td>50km</td>
<td>Golestan Palace, The Grand Bazaar, Azadi Tower</td>
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<td>Japan</td>
<td>Nagoya</td>
<td>Chubu Centrair International Airport</td>
<td>JPY</td>
<td>+81 52</td>
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<td>Points of Interest: Nagoya Castle, Higashiyama Zoo and Botanical Gardens, Nagoya TV Tower, Nagoya City Science Museum</td>
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<td>Points of Interest: Odori Park, Shiroi Koibito Park, Sapporo Beer Museum</td>
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<td>Tokyo</td>
<td>Tokyo Haneda International Airport</td>
<td>JPY</td>
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<td>27km</td>
<td>Points of Interest: Tokyo Disney, Ueno Park, National Museum of Nature and Science</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laos</td>
<td>Luang Prabang</td>
<td>Luang Prabang International Airport</td>
<td>LAK</td>
<td>+856 71</td>
<td>Lao</td>
<td>6km</td>
<td>Points of Interest: Golden City Temple, Mount Phousi, Royal Palace Museum</td>
<td>Taxi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DESTINATIONS

LAOS
Vientiane

Airport: Wattay International Airport
Currency: LAK (Lao Kip)
Dialing Code: +856 21
Language: Lao
Distance to City: 4km
Points of Interest: That Luang, Patuxai, Buddha Park
Transport:
- Taxi
- Bus

MALAYSIA
Alor Setar

Airport: Sultan Abdul Halim Airport
Currency: MYR (Malaysian Ringgit)
Dialing Code: +60 4
Languages: Malay, Mandarin, Tamil, English
Distance to City: 11.2km
Points of Interest: Zahir Mosque, Paddy Museum, Alor Setar Tower
Transport:
- Taxi
- Bus
- Ride-hailing

Malaysia
Bintulu

Airport: Bintulu Airport
Currency: MYR (Malaysian Ringgit)
Dialing Code: +60 86
Languages: Malay, English, Mandarin
Distance to City: 20.9km
Points of Interest: Niah National Park, Similajau National Park, Tanu Market
Transport:
- Taxi
- Bus
- Ride-hailing

Johor Bahru

Airport: Senai International Airport
Currency: MYR (Malaysian Ringgit)
Dialing Code: +60 7
Languages: Malay, Mandarin, Hokkien, Tamil, English
Distance to City: 27km
Points of Interest: Sanrio Hello Kitty Town, Legoland, Sultan Abu Bakar State Mosque, Karat Market, Johor Premium Outlet
Transport:
- Taxi
- Bus
- Ride-hailing

Kota Kinabalu

Airport: Kota Kinabalu International Airport
Currency: MYR (Malaysian Ringgit)
Dialing Code: +60 88
Languages: Malay, Hakka, Mandarin, Cantonese, English
Distance to City: 7.8km
Points of Interest: Mount Kinabalu, Kota Kinabalu City Mosque, Lok Kawi Wildlife Park
Transport:
- Taxi
- Bus
- Ride-hailing

Penang

Airport: Penang International Airport
Currency: MYR (Malaysian Ringgit)
Dialing Code: +60 4
Languages: Malay, English, Hokkien, Mandarin, Tamil
Distance to City: 21.8km
Points of Interest: Kek Lok Si Temple, Penang Hill, Fort Cornwallis, Komtar
Transport:
- Taxi
- Bus
- Ride-hailing

Kuala Lumpur

Airport: Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA/KLIA2)
Currency: MYR (Malaysian Ringgit)
Dialing Code: +60 3
Languages: Malay, English, Mandarin, Cantonese, Tamil
Distance to City: 58km
Points of Interest: Petronas Twin Towers, Batu Caves, Central Market
Transport:
- Taxi
- Bus
- Train
- Ride-hailing

Kuching

Airport: Kuching International Airport
Currency: MYR (Malaysian Ringgit)
Dialing Code: +60 82
Languages: Malay, English, Hokkien, Hakka
Distance to City: 15km
Points of Interest: Bako National Park, Waterfront Promenade, Sarawak Cultural Village, Mount Santubong
Transport:
- Taxi
- Bus
- Ride-hailing

Labuan

Airport: Labuan Airport
Currency: MYR (Malaysian Ringgit)
Dialing Code: +60 8
Languages: Malay, Hokkien, Hakka
Distance to City: 2km
Points of Interest: Gurnang Mulu National Park, Japanese Surrender Park, Labuan Museum
Transport:
- Taxi
- Bus
- Ride-hailing

Miri

Airport: Miri Airport
Currency: MYR (Malaysian Ringgit)
Dialing Code: +60 85
Languages: Malay, Mandarin
Distance to City: 10.8km
Points of Interest: Gunung Mulu National Park, Tusun Beach, Petroleum Museum
Transport:
- Taxi
- Bus
- Ride-hailing

Miri

Airport: Miri Airport
Currency: MYR (Malaysian Ringgit)
Dialing Code: +60 8
Languages: Malay, Mandarin
Distance to City: 10.8km
Points of Interest: Gunung Mulu National Park, Tusun Beach, Petroleum Museum
Transport:
- Taxi
- Bus
- Ride-hailing

Penang

Airport: Penang International Airport
Currency: MYR (Malaysian Ringgit)
Dialing Code: +60 4
Languages: Malay, English, Hokkien, Mandarin, Tamil
Distance to City: 21.8km
Points of Interest: Kek Lok Si Temple, Penang Hill, Fort Cornwallis, Komtar
Transport:
- Taxi
- Bus
- Ride-hailing

02
18
126
126

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DESTINATIONS

MALAYSIA
Tawau

Airport Tawau Airport
Currency MYR (Malaysian Ringgit)
Dialing Code +60 89
Languages Malay, Hakka, English
Distance to City 30.8km
Points of Interest Tawau Hot Springs, Tawau Hills Park, Teck Guan Cocoa Village, Maliau Basin Conservation Area
Transport 🚕 Taxi  ✈️ Bus  🚘 Ride-hailing

MALDIVES
Malé

Airport Velana International Airport
Currency MVR (Maldivian Rufiyaa)
Dialing Code +960
Languages Maldivian, English
Distance to City 3.5km
Points of Interest Maldives Grand Friday Mosque, Mulee aage Palace, Maldives National Museum
Transport 🚕 Taxi  🚕 Speedboat  🚤 Ferry  🛳 Seaplane

MYANMAR
Mandalay

Airport Mandalay International Airport
Currency MMK (Kyat)
Dialing Code +95 2
Language Myanmar
Distance to City 37.4km
Points of Interest Hsinbyume Pagoda, Golden Palace Monastery, Mandalay Hill
Transport 🚕 Taxi

MYANMAR
Yangon

Airport Yangon International Airport
Currency MMK (Kyat)
Dialing Code +95 2
Language Myanmar
Distance to City 12km
Points of Interest Shwedagon Pagoda, Bogyoke Aung San Market, Kandawgyi Lake
Transport 🚕 Taxi  🚕 Bus  🚘 Ride-hailing

NEPAL
Kathmandu

Airport Tribhuvan International Airport
Currency NPR (Nepalese Rupee)
Dialing Code +977 1
Languages Nepali, Newar, English
Distance to City 5.5km
Points of Interest Boudhanath Stupa, Bhaktapur Durbar Square, Langtang National Park, Swayambhunath Temple, Pasupatinath Temple
Transport 🚕 Taxi  🚕 Bus

NEW ZEALAND
Auckland

Airport Auckland Airport
Currency NZD (New Zealand Dollar)
Dialing Code +64 9
Language English
Distance to City 26km
Points of Interest Auckland Sky Tower, Cornwall Park, Auckland War Memorial Museum
Transport 🚕 Taxi  🚕 Bus  🚘 Train

PHILIPPINES
Boracay (Caticlan)

Airport Godofredo P. Ramos Airport (Caticlan Airport)
Currency PHP (Philippine Peso)
Dialing Code +63 36
Languages Tagalog, English, Aklanon
Distance to City 74km
Points of Interest White Beach, Puka Shell Beach, Ariel’s Point
Transport 🚕 Taxi  🚕 Bus

PHILIPPINES
Cebu

Airport Mactan-Cebu International Airport
Currency PHP (Philippine Peso)
Dialing Code +63 32
Languages Cebuano, Tagalog, English
Distance to City 14.1km
Points of Interest Mactan Island, Basilica Minore del Santo Nino
Transport 🚕 Taxi  🚕 Bus

PHILIPPINES
Iloilo

Airport Iloilo International Airport
Currency PHP (Philippine Peso)
Dialing Code +63 33
Languages Tagalog, English, Aklanon, Hiligaynon
Distance to City 20km
Points of Interest Jaro Cathedral, Iloilo River Esplanade, Museum Iloilo
Transport 🚕 Taxi  🚕 Van  🚘 Ride-hailing

PHILIPPINES
Manila

Airport Ninoy Aquino International Airport
Currency PHP (Philippine Peso)
Dialing Code +63 2
Languages Tagalog, English
Distance to City 15km
Points of Interest Rizal Park, Fort Santiago, Quezon Memorial Circle
Transport 🚕 Taxi  🚕 Bus  🚘 Train  🚘 Ride-hailing

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ABOUT RUBBERLAND

RUBBERLAND is the first and only rubber museum in Thailand that brings together all the wonders of rubber, which is Thailand’s key economic crop and a source of national pride. Here, we offer the rubbery experience that well reflects Thai culture, wisdom and lifestyle through interactive multimedia. Let’s experience Thailand’s pride together through our 4 well-designed rubber zones.

With the cool projection mapping, you’ll discover why rubber has become Thailand’s key economic crop. Moreover, you will get to venture into a rubber park among creative-looking rubber trees and have a fun and exciting rubbery experience.

With the mini rubber factory model and our virtual guides or “rubber gang”, you’ll experience the amazing transformation of rubber, from the plantation, production of concentrated latex and many advanced production techniques, to the resulting products found in everyday life.

Here, you will experience stunning range of rubber usage in everyday life - from balls to automotive components to trying on gigantic rubber shoes.

Wander into a fantastic world under the concept of “when everything is made of bouncy rubber” and discover the unexpected joys through fascinating themed Zones! THE JUNGLE; be amazed by the full range of animals made of rubber from Thailand’s tropical forests. THAI SWEETS; be surprised by the recreations of Thailand’s most famous dishes and snacks in a gigantic rubber forms. UNDER THE SEA; be dazzled by the amazing marine life, like you were diving into the beautiful underwater world yourself. INSPIRATION; be inspired by the creative innovations of rubber design.

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<td>Expats (Thai work permit holders)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Remark: The elderly aged 60 and above and children under 90 cm tall will enjoy free admission.

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<table>
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<tr>
<th>DESTINATIONS</th>
<th>THAILAND</th>
<th>SOUTH KOREA</th>
<th>SINGAPORE</th>
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<td>Bangkok</td>
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<td>Mae Fah Luang – Chiang Rai</td>
<td>Changi Airport</td>
<td>King Abdulaziz International Airport</td>
<td>Bandaranaike International Airport</td>
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<td>SAR (Saudi Riyal)</td>
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<td>Dialing Code</td>
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<td>+66 53</td>
<td>+65</td>
<td>+966 12</td>
<td>+94 11</td>
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<td>Points of Interest</td>
<td>Chatuchak Market, Wat Arun, Khaosan Road</td>
<td>Phanom Rung Historical Park, Muang Tam Sanctuary, King Rama I Monument</td>
<td>Gardens by the Bay, Universal Studios Singapore, Jurong Bird Park</td>
<td>Abdul Raouf Khalil Museum, Al-Shalali Theme Park, Nasseef House</td>
<td>Gangaramaya Buddhist Temple, Jami-ul-Alfar Mosque, The Independence Square, National Museum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
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## DESTINATIONS

### THAILAND

#### Loei
- **Airport**: Loei Airport
- **Currency**: THB (Thai Baht)
- **Dialling code**: +66 42
- **Language**: Thai
- **Distance to City**: 7.5km
- **Points of Interest**: Thung Khai Botanical Garden, Tham Le Khao Kop Cave, Somdet Phra Sinakharin Park
- **Transport**: Taxi, Bus

#### Nakhon Phanom
- **Airport**: Nakhon Phanom Airport
- **Currency**: THB (Thai Baht)
- **Dialling code**: +66 42
- **Language**: Thai
- **Distance to City**: 16.2km
- **Points of Interest**: Wat Okat Si Bua Ban, The Governor’s House Museum, Mekhong Walking Street
- **Transport**: Taxi, Bus

#### Nan
- **Airport**: Nan Airport
- **Currency**: THB (Thai Baht)
- **Dialling code**: +66 42
- **Language**: Thai
- **Distance to City**: 10.7km
- **Points of Interest**: 101ani Palace, Pearl Harbor, Waikiki Beach, Diamond Head, Pali Lookout, Hanauma Bay
- **Transport**: Taxi, Bus

### THAILAND

#### Phitsanulok
- **Airport**: Phitsanulok Airport
- **Currency**: THB (Thai Baht)
- **Dialling code**: +66 55
- **Language**: Thai
- **Distance to City**: 28.2km
- **Points of Interest**: Phu Hin Rong Kla National Park, Wat Phumian, Nan National Museum
- **Transport**: Taxi, Bus

#### Roi Et
- **Airport**: Roi Et Airport
- **Currency**: THB (Thai Baht)
- **Dialling code**: +66 43
- **Language**: Thai
- **Distance to City**: 18.9km
- **Points of Interest**: Phalanchai Lake, Wat Buraphaphiram, Roi Et National Museum
- **Transport**: Taxi, Bus

### THAILAND

#### Trang
- **Airport**: Trang Airport
- **Currency**: THB (Thai Baht)
- **Dialling code**: +66 75
- **Language**: Thai
- **Distance to City**: 7.5km
- **Points of Interest**: Chao Pho Kut Pong Shrine, Dan Sai Folk Museum, Chiang Khan Walking Street
- **Transport**: Taxi, Bus

### UNITED STATES

#### Honolulu
- **Airport**: Daniel K. Inouye International Airport
- **Currency**: USD (US Dollar)
- **Dialling code**: +1 808
- **Languages**: English, Hawaiian
- **Distance to City**: 10.7km
- **Points of Interest**: ‘Iolani Palace, Pearl Harbor, Waikiki Beach, Diamond Head, Pali Lookout, Hanauma Bay
- **Transport**: Taxi, Bus

### VIETNAM

#### Da Nang
- **Airport**: Da Nang International Airport
- **Currency**: VND (Vietnamese Dong)
- **Dialling Code**: +84 236
- **Language**: Vietnamese
- **Distance to City**: 2.5km
- **Points of Interest**: Marble Mountains, Linh Ung Pagoda, Cham Museum, Hoi An City
- **Transport**: Taxi

#### Hanoi
- **Airport**: Noi Bai International Airport
- **Currency**: VND (Vietnamese Dong)
- **Dialling Code**: +84 24
- **Language**: Vietnamese
- **Distance to City**: 28.2km
- **Points of Interest**: Imperial Citadel of Thang Long, Hanoi Museum, Water Puppet Theatre
- **Transport**: Taxi, Bus

#### Nha Trang
- **Airport**: Cam Ranh International Airport
- **Currency**: VND (Vietnamese Dong)
- **Dialling Code**: +84 258
- **Language**: Vietnamese
- **Distance to City**: 35.4km
- **Points of Interest**: Vinpearl Amusement Park, Po Nagar Cham Towers, Long Son Pagoda
- **Transport**: Taxi, Bus

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All information correct at press time. Some information contained here are approximates only. DIY research is highly recommended.
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Penang International Food Festival

For the third year running, the Penang International Food Festival captures the hearts (and stomachs) of foodies from all over the world. Listed as one of the top 50 street food places by the World Street Food Congress 2017, the Pearl of the Orient once again showcases its rich culinary heritage from Apr 14 to 29 in George Town. Join in the gourmet fun as generations of tastemakers serve up their best offerings – from char kuey teow (stir-fried flat rice noodles) and assam laksa (clear noodles in spicy fish soup), to nasi kandar (steamed rice served with various curries, meat and seafood) and much more. piff.com.my

Quill City Mall

Dine, shop and play at Quill City Mall in the heart of Kuala Lumpur and earn AirAsia BIG Loyalty points at the mall’s retail outlets, restaurants and entertainment venues. Download the AirAsia BIG Loyalty mobile app and use it at myriad Quill City Mall stores like H&M, Next, Hamleys, Best Denki, Longhorn Steakhouse, GSC, Celebrity Fitness, MPH and The Chicken Rice Shop to earn up to 1,000 BIG points a day. quillicitymall.com.my

Melium Designer Outlet

Head up to Genting Highlands (approx. 50km from Kuala Lumpur) in Malaysia for high fashion at Melium’s brand new outlet. Step into Sky Avenue Mall to feast your eyes on the range of apparel from Malaysia’s leading luxury and lifestyle specialist, and enjoy up to 70 per cent discount on luxury brands – from Hackett London and TOD’s to Max Mara, Emilio Pucci, MCM, Aigner, and many more. melium.com

Q-Dees

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Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM)

Established more than 47 years ago, UKM ranks among the world’s top 100 universities under 50 years old. With over 13 faculties and institutes, this leading research university has always placed great emphasis on its science and humanities programme, producing some of Malaysia’s most notable academic scholars, thinkers and personalities. ukm.my
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More than just a landmark, this arch holds much meaning for me. One look at it and I instantly fell in love with the elegance and grandeur of this place. In fact, it was where the love of my life and I vowed to cherish each other for life – the start of many happy days spent together here, where every day is a gift.