FOOTPR INTS

ISSUE 15 | 2018



MEKONG

Flowing with new adventures

ICONIC SURF

Surf's up down under

VICTORIA FALLS

Top ten ways to experience a world wonder



WALK WITH US

In this issue, we invite you to stroll the banks of the Mekong with us. This mighty river is very much inspiring us lately. Its storied region is home to our newly launched AVANI+ Luang Prabang, along with our new Mekong Kingdoms cruise experiences. These luxurious cruises invite you to explore the waterway from our tranquil Laotian hideway all the way to the Golden Triangle and northern Thailand, home to some of our most celebrated Anantara resorts.

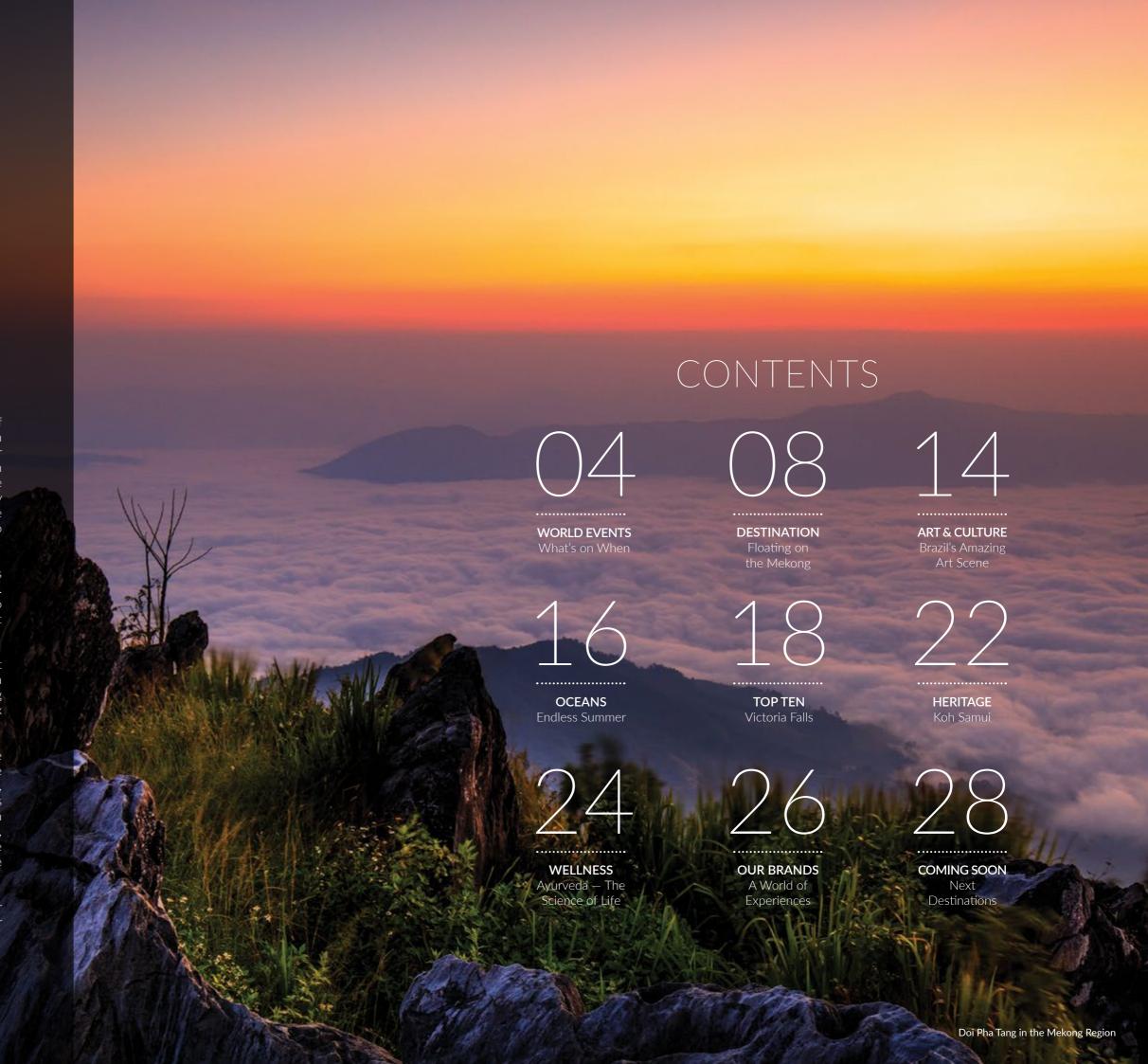
For more roaring waters, head to Africa's Victoria Falls where we invite you to fly, glide, raft, splash or plunge. Flip the pages for iconic surf spots in Australia. Go museum hopping in Brazil. Spa in Sri Lanka. Or get cultured in Koh Samui.

There is so much new and exciting that we couldn't squeeze into this issue. We closed 2017 by signing a strategic joint venture with Corbin & King, marking our entrance into the UK with a collection of six restaurants and a five-star London hotel.

Meanwhile, our Elewana Collection grew with the addition of Kifaru House in Kenya's Lewa wildlife conservancy. Along with more openings worldwide, our total portfolio has grown to 161 hotels and resorts in 26 countries. Ready to expand our footprint even further and offer you even more destinations to relax, celebrate or get down to business yourself, we're dreaming up new hotels around the globe. Glimpse just a few of them on the back cover.

I wish you a pleasant promenade in the pages of our latest Footprints, where you may chance upon your next journey or must-try moment.

DILLIP RAJAKARIER CEO, MINOR HOTELS









CARMEN

The Armenian National Academic Theatre Opera and Orchestra performs Bizet's beloved Carmen at the Dubai Opera.

WHERE: Dubai, UAE
WHEN: 6 - 8 September 2018
STAY: Anantara The Palm Dubai Resort,
AVANI Deira Dubai Hotel



SÃO PAULO ART BIENNIAL

Modelled on the Venice Biennale and featuring both Brazilian and international contemporary artists.

WHERE: São Paulo, Brazil WHEN: 7 September - 9 December 2018 STAY: Tivoli Mofarrej São Paulo Hotel



Feliciano Centurión, Title: Cordero sacrificado [Sacrificed Lamb], 1996, Acrylic on polyester blanket, Collection: Blanton Museum of Art (purchased with funds provided by Donald R. Mullins, Jr., 2004 – 2004.173) © Rick Hall













THE ENGLISH NAME 'MEKONG' DERIVES FROM A THAI AND LAO COMBINATION MEANING 'MOTHER OF WATER' ravelling the Mekong River might take place at a snail's pace, but it's an experience packed with unforgettable surprises. You might spot monks shortly after dawn, carrying alms bowls brimming with rice. Lush palm trees sway as farmers tread rice paddy fields. Birds swoop and fish splash around intermittently. Here, in the beautiful nowhere dispersed between charming floating villages and colonial relics, it's possible to enjoy the perfect balance of calm and spine-tingling excitement at the very same time.

The Mekong River is the life vein of Southeast Asia, connecting small communities all the way from western China down to southern Vietnam. The English name 'Mekong' derives from a Thai and Lao combination meaning "mother of water," but this great waterway goes by many different monikers across the diverse region: 'Turbulent River,' 'Great Waters' and 'Nine Dragons' to name a few. The Mekong unites millions of people who are dependent upon it for trade transportation, resources and even hydropower.

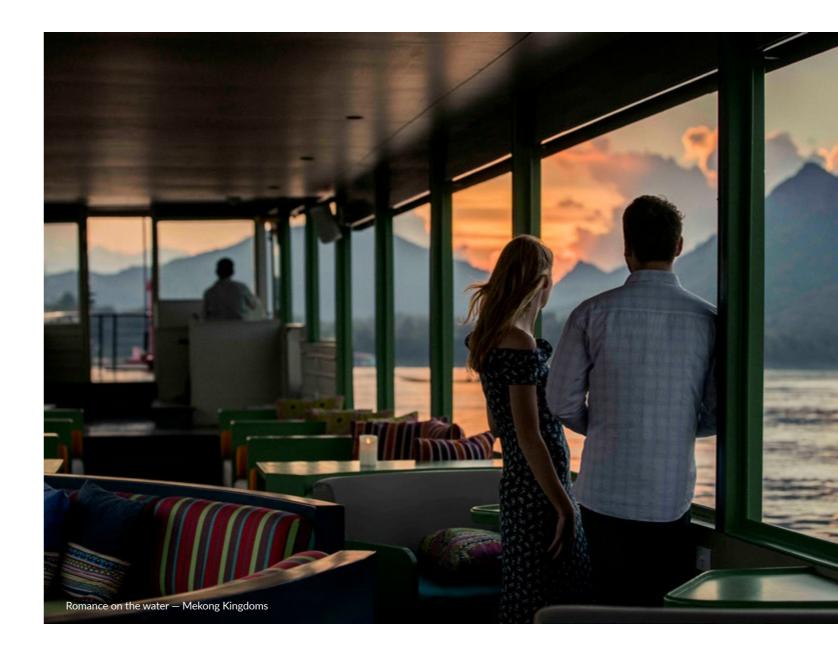
Sailing these tides is a unique opportunity to get up close and personal with rural life and also tropical nature. After the Amazon, the Mekong is one of the richest areas of biodiversity in the world, with thousands of different plants, mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians. New species are being discovered all the time.

Most travellers start their journey across the Mekong River at the Golden Triangle, the scenic tripoint border area where Thailand, Laos and Myanmar meet. The northern Thai city of Chiang Rai, with its elephant sanctuaries and surrounding hill tribe villages, makes the perfect launching pad.

That first part of the journey into Laos is a mixture of dense jungle, rice terraces and vibrant riverside life. All of Laos' major cities and settlements are located on or near the Mekong's riverbanks.

One of them is Luang Prabang, a northern Lao town that doubles as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Spiritual energy runs strong in this ancient capital, known for its many revered Buddhist sanctuaries. In addition to the gilded temples and monks in saffron robes, Luang Prabang is known for its Indochinese architecture and Gallic-inspired restaurants. The encompassing nature boasts beautiful waterfalls and misty mountain trails — perfect for trekking and mountain-biking too.

From here, the Mekong's path crosses to Cambodia, where it's possible to stop off and travel by vehicle to Siem Reap and Angkor Wat, one of the great ancient wonders of the world. Besides plentiful opportunities for temple hopping, Siem Reap is a laidback river town that also offers world-class dining, great



shopping and sumptuous spas. A major attraction is the Cambodian Circus, which offers evening theatre performances put on by economically and socially underprivileged Cambodian youth.

Continuing the Mekong journey downwards takes travellers to southern Vietnam, and the famous Mekong Delta. Recognised as the 'rice bowl' of Vietnam, this is one the world's largest rice-growing regions with around 10,000 square kilometres of cultivation land. Boats, houses and markets float upon intertwining canals, streams and mangrove swamps, across labyrinths of lush green. Spot a water buffalo cooling off in a rice paddy. Procure a fresh coconut from a floating fruit seller. As the boat draws forward, Khmer pagodas and Buddhist temples emerge from beneath verdant foliage.



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BRAZIL'S

AMAZING

ART SCENE

SALVADOR

Salvador is the cultural gem of Brazil's sunny Bahia state, radiating a unique blend of African and Portuguese influence. Prepare to be dazzled by exquisite artefacts, colonial buildings turned into museums and idyllic tropical scenery.

Museu de Arte Moderna

Located in a former sugar mill, this bayfront museum is known for its out-there modern art and elegant sculpture garden. Catch a Saturday evening jazz and bossa nova jam, sipping a Caipi at sunset.

Museu de Arte da Bahia

Enter this urban palace and get lost in a labyrinth of renowned Brazilian and international artists. Look out for works by Argentine contemporary artist Carybé and Bahia's illustrious José Teófilo de Jesus.

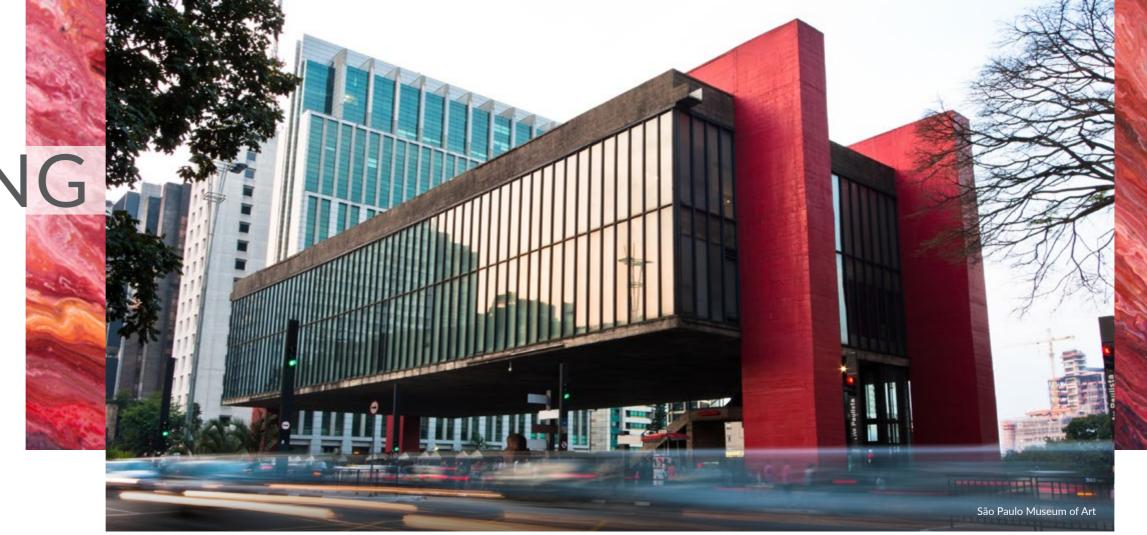
Palacete das Artes

Get to know the French sculptor, Rodin. His masterpieces are spread across the mansion's lush garden. Rotating exhibitions and a café make for a perfectly delightful sightseeing stop.

Museu da Misericórdia Pelourinho Salvador

The Museum of Mercy is situated in a 17th-century mansion, once Brazil's first hospital. Multifarious beautiful vestiges recount Salvador's political and social history. Paintings, sculptures, tools, furniture and more, promise to keep guests gaping for hours.





THINK BRAZIL AND YOU'LL THINK OF GORGEOUS BEACHES. THAT BEAUTY IS ONLY AMPLIFIED CONSIDERING IT IS ONE OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST ART ESCAPES. IN TWO OF BRAZIL'S BIGGEST CITIES, SALVADOR AND SÃO PAULO, TROPICAL RHYTHMS AND COSMOPOLITAN ACTION COMBINE FOR UNFORGETTABLE GALLERY HOPPING.

SÃO PAULO

São Paulo, or Sampa for short, is a rowdy concrete jungle on the same wavelength with New York City and Tokyo. The city's fast creative pulse skews worldly, untamed and experimental. Culture vultures are sure to fall in love with all the big art museums.

São Paulo Museum of Art

This museum has the finest collection of European art in Latin America — perhaps even the Southern Hemisphere. It's worth a visit just for the building's wacky brutalist design — giant red legs upholding a freestanding space of concrete and glass.

São Paulo Museum of Modern Art

Modelled after the MOMA in the Big Apple, Brazil's oldest museum of modern art houses an excellent collection of

Brazilian talents such as Anita Malfatti and Di Cavalcanti, and prolific works from Miró, Chagall, Picasso and Dufy.

Museu Afro Brasil

The Museu Afro Brasil is of huge cultural importance, chronicling the African diaspora in Brazil. Paintings, photography and relics delve into topics such as slavery and religion, also commemorating the millions of Africans who died constructing the country.

Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo

The grand neoclassical jewel makes for a fun afternoon exploring Brazilian art from the 19th century to today. Afterwards, relax and sip a coffee on the museum's outdoor terrace overlooking the flourishing greenery of Jardim da Luz.



© João Musa, Giovanni Battista Pittoni, Venice, Italy, 1687-1767 (Collection: Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand)

DISCOVER SÃO PAULO'S ARTSY MILIEU FROM THE CENTRAL URBAN OASIS OF TIVOLI MOFARREJ. SALVADOR MAKES FOR A FANTASTIC DAY TRIP FROM TIVOLI ECORESORT PRAIA DO FORTE BAHIA, JUST AN HOUR'S DRIVE AWAY ON A BEAUTIFUL REMOTE BEACH.

EXPLORE MORE AT TIVOLIHOTELS.COM

14

ENDLESS





ome to some of Australia's most iconic surf beaches, the Gold Coast boasts a wealth of surfing hotspots. Such is the quality of the surf on offer, it is the breeding ground for more world champions than any other place on the planet.

Starting south of the border in New South Wales, try your hand at Duranbah Beach, where you might spot an ex-world champion or two honing their craft. Internationally renowned for its high-quality, powerful breaks, it has previously been home to internationally sanctioned pro events. But D-bah takes no prisoners, so is best left to the pros or those with some serious experience.

A short stroll north to Coolangatta, Queensland will take you to Snapper Rocks on Rainbow Bay. With its manmade sandbar, it hosts the Quiksilver and Roxy Pro every March. Sheltered from the rips that can be found elsewhere, the beach is also family- and swimmer-friendly.

If you are looking for the perfect (and possibly the world's best) sand-breaking, right-hand point, scramble up the beach towards Kirra and try your luck with the big boys. But be sure not to drop in on anyone else's wave!

North of Brisbane is the fabled Sunshine Coast. Offering a broad range of surf, it caters for first-timers as well as experienced board riders. It is also Australia's northernmost stretch of surf beach and the 10th world surfing reserve.

Offering a gentle introduction to the world of surfing, Noosa Main Beach is also home to several surf schools. Its north-facing location also makes it something of a novelty amongst Australian surf beaches.

Noosa National Park offers some excellent surfing under the right conditions. But take note, these waves are the real deal and best suited to those with serious time on the board.

Locally known as A-bay, Alexandria Bay offers respite from the crowds, but a little effort is required to get there. A-Bay also brings the goods when other spots are looking flat and tired.

TAKE IN THE GOLD COAST'S ICONIC SURF BEACHES, INCLUDING THE FAMED SNAPPER ROCKS, ALL WITHIN WALKING DISTANCE OF OAKS CALYPSO PLAZA IN COOLANGATTA. A SHORT 30-MINUTE DRIVE UP THE COAST, AVANI BROADBEACH PROVIDES A PRIME BEACHSIDE ADDRESS AND EASE OF ACCESS TO SOME OF THE CITY'S MOST POPULAR EXPERIENCES AND ATTRACTIONS.

ON 10 ACRES OF LUSH TROPICAL GARDEN, OAKS OASIS RESORT IN CALOUNDRA IS ONLY FIVE MINUTES' WALK FROM LOCAL BEACHES. OAKS SEAFORTH RESORT ON THE BEACH AT ALEXANDRA HEADLAND OFFERS SURF AND SURFING LESSONS ON YOUR DOORSTEP AND IS ONLY A SHORT JOURNEY NORTH TO SOME OF THE SUNSHINE COAST'S FAMED SURF BEACHES.

VISIT **AVANIHOTELS.COM** AND **OAKSHOTELS.COM** TO BOOK YOUR BEACHSIDE GETAWAY.

'BEAUTIFUL ONE DAY, PERFECT THE NEXT' WAS QUEENSLAND'S SLOGAN FOR MANY YEARS. YOU ARE UNLIKELY TO FIND A MORE APT DESCRIPTION FOR THE SURFING PARADISES OF THE GOLD AND SUNSHINE COASTS.





magine being David Livingstone on 16 November 1855, standing on the rocky plateau and gazing down the largest waterfall in the world. Seasoned explorer though he was, as the first European to witness the sight in real life, it's fairly safe to assume he was floored.

Named by the Scotsman for his queen, it's generally referred to as Victoria Falls on the Zimbabwean side of the border, but over the Zambezi in Zambia it's also known in local language Toka Leya Tonga as Mosi-oa-Tunya — 'The Smoke that Thunders'. Until you've stood on Livingstone Island and seen first-hand the mist thrown up from the crashing tumult below, it's difficult to truly grasp how fitting a name that is. So, how best to experience one of the world's seven wonders for yourself?

Here are our top ten ways:

1. TAKE IN THE MAJESTY FROM ABOVE

Follow the Zambezi's curves by helicopter to witness its transformation from a tranquil river into a tumultuous, tumbling force.

2. SKIM THE SURFACE

Get close enough to feel the spray in an exhilarating ride over the falls, open to the elements in a microlight.

3. GLIDE UP THE CLIFF FACE

Air-conditioned and effortless, the Batoka Gorge cable car is the serene and sedate way to experience the majesty.

4. RAFT THE WHITE WATERS

Rush with the thundering Zambezi rapids over boulders and through the rocky canyon under the supervision of experienced river guides.









5. PADDLE THE UPPER ZAMBEZI

Explore the waters by canoe at a more gentle pace and take in the stunning scenic panorama.

6. SWIM TO THE EDGE OF THE WORLD

Step off Livingstone Island and take a soak in Devil's Pool, surrounded by the rainbowed mists thrown up by waters crashing at the bottom.

7. SPLASH IN THE LAGOON BELOW

Surrounded by soaring basaltic rock faces, take a swim in the rock pools at the base of Victoria Falls.

8. MEET THE LOCAL INHABITANTS

Explore the stunning national parks that border the falls and get up close with exotic African wildlife, including elephants, lions and leopards.

9. BRIDGE THE GAP

For one of the finest views of the spectacular falls, take a walk along Victoria Falls Bridge and stand right in between Zambia and Zimbabwe.

10. TAKE THE PLUNGE

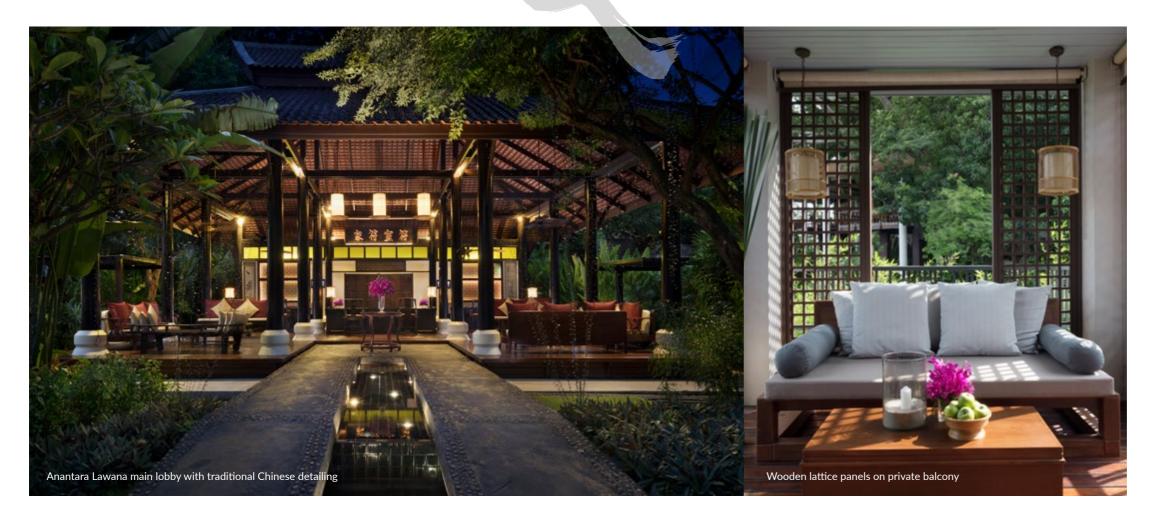
What better backdrop for a death-defying, 111-metre bungee jump off the bridge than one of the Seven Wonders of the World?

EMBARK ON YOUR LOVE AFFAIR WITH VICTORIA FALLS FROM AVANI VICTORIA FALLS RESORT OR BASE YOUR ADVENTURES IN LUXURY AT ROYAL LIVINGSTONE VICTORIA FALLS ZAMBIA HOTEL BY ANANTARA. THE ONLY TWO HOTELS ON THE ZAMBIAN SIDE OF THE ZAMBEZI, BOTH OFFER UNIQUE ON-FOOT ACCESS TO THE TREASURES OF THE FALLS, AS WELL AS EXCLUSIVE WATER TAXI TRANSFERS TO AND FROM LIVINGSTONE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT.

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A SINO-THAI TREASURE HUNT IN KOH SAMUI

HOW AN ISLAND'S HISTORIC SETTLERS ARE INFLUENCING A MODERN LUXURY RESORT.







Hand-painted folded panel headboards

Picture a Chinese junk, weather-worn from a long voyage through the South China Sea, bringing sailors in search of a new life on an island paradise in the Gulf of Thailand. Plenty has changed since then – Koh Samui has transformed into an luxurious destination for holidaymakers from all over the world, yet the footprint of those early settlers endures today.

Since as early as 1687, Koh Samui has shown up on ancient Chinese maps, where it was labelled as 'Pulo Cornam', but it wasn't until the end of the 19th century that the island was rediscovered by sea traders from China, who first used it as a refuge against storms during their travels and later settled to stay. There is, in fact, an argument that the island's name comes from the Chinese word 'saboey', which means safe haven.

They brought with them traditions, recipes, religion and architecture. Hints of their well-established presence on the island remain today and their story is the inspiration behind the recent refurbishment of Anantara Lawana Koh Samui Resort. Since reopening in December 2017, the resort has welcomed guests with rooms filled with carefully curated design features that harken back to the days of historic settlers leaving their aesthetic influence while sampling the island's delights.

From vanity counters with traditional detailing, to the folded panel headboards, which were hand-painted by a local artist for the Deluxe Plunge Pool Rooms, the brand-new furniture throughout the resort is set off by personalised and thoughtful architectural and ornamental details. With vibrant colour palettes,

the new décor is an homage to the island's heritage, with a contemporary twist.

As if to set the scene for the storied rise of a prestigious Chinese immigrant family through island society, the Two Bedroom Lawana Pool Villa is lavishly furnished with one-of-a-kind treasures including an antique sofa and turquoise Chinese side tables with hand-painted ceramic table lamps in the living space, while the master bathroom features a large golden bamboo-trimmed turtle-shell mirror.

Now visitors to beautiful Samui can discover the fascinating history that made the island what it is, and enjoy the flavour, details and delights of its story in luxury.

22



THE THREE DOSHAS

There are three doshas in Ayurveda which summarise the body-mind state — vata, pitta and kapha. While all three are present in everyone, one is usually dominant. When our doshas are in harmony, we are healthy; when there are imbalances, diseases develop. Your dosha type determines what kinds of food groups, activities and physical environments to embrace and avoid, as well as ideal times for eating, exercising and resting.

AYURVEDIC TREATMENTS

Ayurvedic spa treatments are dosha-specific with particular oils and herbs employed depending on your dosha type. From improving circulation and lymphatic drainage, to boosting your immune and digestive systems and beautifying the skin, the benefits are myriad. Longer-term results include lowered blood pressure, increased energy levels, better quality sleep and a calm mind.

AYURVEDIC RETREATS

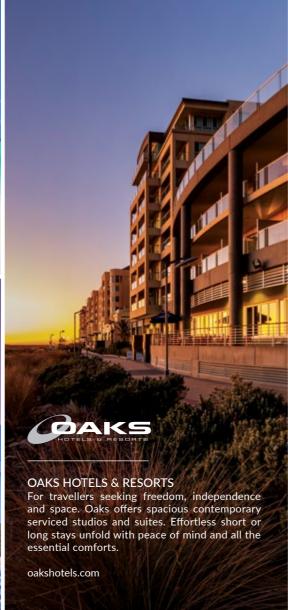
Ayurveda is a complete system that treats body and mind. As such, total immersions are highly restorative, whether you are suffering from stress, tiredness, aches and pains or general malaise. In addition, with a steep learning curve at the beginning of adopting a complete ayurvedic lifestyle, a retreat offers the ideal environment to learn how to eat, sleep and relax better.

IMMERSE YOURSELF IN HEALING AND WELLBEING WITH ANANTARA PEACE HAVEN TANGALLE RESORT'S SEVEN-NIGHT AYURVEDIC RETREATS. SALUTE THE SUN AND MEDITATE ON THE BEACH. INDULGE IN HEALTHY MEDITERRANEAN AND LOCAL CUISINE. EMBARK ON PERSONALISED WELLNESS JOURNEYS DESIGNED FOR INNER HARMONY, DEEP SLEEP, NATURAL WEIGHT AND A REBUILDING DETOX.

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