

# Footprints

MINOR HOTEL GROUP / ISSUE 9 / 2015

## UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

A MODERN OASIS  
STEEPED IN LEGEND

NIYAMA  
NATURE'S PLAYGROUND  
JUST GOT BIGGER

SPA  
THE SPA WORLD  
REFRESHED

WINE GURUS  
AN EXCLUSIVE  
EDUCATION





# MINOR HOTEL GROUP

HOTELS AND RESORTS,  
WORLD-CLASS SPAS AND  
AWARD-WINNING  
HOSPITALITY



## PER AQUUM

Bold, imaginative and renowned for their trailblazing concepts such as the Maldivian underwater spa, a modern campsite dining experience or simply spectacular views of the Dubai city skyline from a boutique retreat set on a private polo estate.

[PERAQUUM.COM](http://PERAQUUM.COM)



## AVANI HOTELS & RESORTS

Contemporary, relaxed and imaginative. Be it a leisurely family break or romantic escape, AVANI hotels and resorts provide the right space for relaxed and inspired comfort. Discerning service, relaxed dining and engaging recreation facilities for all guests are a given.

[AVANIHOTELS.COM](http://AVANIHOTELS.COM)



## MSPA

MSpa International currently operates 56 spas in a diverse collection of exclusive worldwide properties. With current expansion projects underway in China, the Middle East, Africa and the Maldives, MSpa International has risen to become a leading international spa operator.

[MSPA-INTERNATIONAL.COM](http://MSPA-INTERNATIONAL.COM)

## MINOR HOTEL GROUP PCL.

A HOTEL OWNER, OPERATOR AND INVESTOR WITH A PORTFOLIO OF MORE THAN 120 HOTELS AND RESORTS UNDER THE ANANTARA, AVANI, OAKS, PER AQUUM, ELEWANA COLLECTION, FOUR SEASONS, ST.REGIS, MARRIOTT, AND MINOR INTERNATIONAL BRANDS. TODAY, MINOR HOTEL GROUP OPERATES IN 19 COUNTRIES, INCLUDING AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND, CAMBODIA, CHINA, INDONESIA, KENYA, MALAYSIA, MALDIVES, MOZAMBIQUE, QATAR, SRI LANKA, TANZANIA, THAILAND, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES AND VIETNAM.



## OAKS HOTELS & RESORTS

A unique blend of city hotels in central locations and resort style accommodation in tourist destinations across Asia Pacific and the Middle East. For both short and longer stays, families and groups enjoy friendly service, superior accommodation and quality onsite leisure facilities.

[OAKSHOTELSRESORTS.COM](http://OAKSHOTELSRESORTS.COM)



## ANANTARA VACATION CLUB

A unique luxury vacation ownership product offering the opportunity for 5 Star holidays in choice destinations. The vacation lifestyle is yours to explore with Anantara and affiliated destinations, from one exotic locale to the next, for your family today and generations to come.

[ANANTARAVACATIONCLUB.COM](http://ANANTARAVACATIONCLUB.COM)



## ANANTARA HOTELS, RESORTS & SPAS

Luxurious and heartfelt hospitality. Embark on a journey rich with discovery at these unique destinations. Be it a quick city break or an extravagant once in a lifetime experience, Anantara offers indigenous and exotic retreats that draw on the locale's heritage.

[ANANTARA.COM](http://ANANTARA.COM)



## ELEWANA COLLECTION

Each of the camps, lodges and hotels within the Elewana Collection offers unique accommodations of exceptional comfort in Africa. Their iconic locations provide any discerning world-traveller one of the most rewarding experiences they could wish for; close access to all the drama and spectacle of African wildlife.

[ELEWANACOLLECTION.COM](http://ELEWANACOLLECTION.COM)



## MJETS

Convenience, flexibility and a more personalised service with Thailand's premier private jet service. Providing a full range of services to executive customers and their jets, a 2,000 sq ft. executive lounge offers a relaxing environment, luxurious services including shower facilities and a business centre for passengers and pilots.

[MJETS.COM](http://MJETS.COM)

## WELCOME

On behalf of everyone at Minor Hotel Group, let me take this opportunity in wishing you all a Happy New Year.

And what a year we have to look forward to. With more than 120 properties in 19 countries, we continue to expand across the Asia Pacific region; embracing the local people, their culture and hospitality to create the type of travel experiences that live on in the mind long after the journey has ended.

Our cover story highlights the timeless wonders of the United Arab Emirates, a desert nation most people identify with Abu Dhabi and Dubai. But as our cover story points out, beyond the world's tallest buildings and most opulent shopping malls, there's a rich culture waiting to be discovered. Let us be the ones to take you there.

Similarly, the emergence of NIYAMA, one destination on two islands, is raising the bar on destination travel in the Maldives. With a chill and play philosophy that accommodates a world-class spa alongside the thrill of water sports, NIYAMA balances tranquillity with stimulating fun for couples and families of all ages. Dining venues range from six metres underwater at Subsix to six metres above ground at Nest, where peacocks and parrots replace tropical fish as dining companions. Meanwhile, at the new Children's Club, activities are designed to ignite youngsters' imaginations, and allow them the freedom to express themselves in a safe environment.

The days when spa treatments were seen by many as the domain of women are long gone. AVANISPA reaches out across all nationalities, genders and age groups with world-class treatments that really do relieve stress and infuse the body and mind with renewed energy. Turn to page six to find out why AVANISPA has been making waves in Sri Lanka, Mozambique, the Seychelles and Vietnam.

Last but not least, I'd like to congratulate all our associates on their multiple travel and tourism awards throughout 2014; many of our achievements wouldn't be possible without the passion and dedication to excellence of our associates. Your unwavering commitment to excellence continues to drive us forward. We wish you and your families a happy and healthy New Year. Have a great 2015.

Dillip Rajakarier  
CEO Minor Hotel Group



As the first AVANI hotel in Thailand, the newly opened AVANI Atrium Bangkok offers a prime location in the capital. Blending contemporary style and an upbeat vibe, Thai hospitality and professional, welcoming services, all the details that matter are covered for a relaxing, satisfying stay. General Manager, Francis Zimmerman, explains the unique appeals of this upscale urban hotel.

### How does the hotel cater for guests' lifestyle needs?

The 12 storey atrium lobby offers a trendy lifestyle hub. Social and private spaces mean guests can interact, catch up with friends, meet for business, or just enjoy quiet time. The communal living area also includes Pantry@AVANI - serving drinks, snacks and light meals, either to eat in or grab on the go.

### What dining options can guests look forward to?

Guests can chill out by the pool with refreshments, eat whenever they like thanks to all day dining, kick back with daytime drinks, pre-dinner cocktails and nightcaps at the Pantry@AVANI. We are also very excited to announce the opening of famous Japanese teppanyaki restaurant Benihana in March 2015. This launch is sure to bring a new level of dining entertainment to the hotel and this region of Bangkok.

### What facilities does the hotel offer for business and leisure?

Guests can refresh after exploring the city or attending a business meeting with time out at the pool and massage or beauty salon pampering. Those with energy to burn can stay in shape at the gym or aerobics studio - then relax afterwards with a steam and sauna.

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### BOOK YOUR TRAVEL ITINERARY ON ANANTARA.COM

It has never been easier to book your Anantara journey of discovery. Anantara Hotels & Resorts recently launched its itinerary booking functionality on [anantara.com](http://anantara.com). Whether you are booking a few days in Bangkok followed by a weekend getaway in a private villa in Phuket or booking your desert hideaway at Qasr al Sarab before you journey on to Eastern Mangroves, it's all easily bookable with our new functionality.

## GHA DISCOVERY

GHA Discovery is the Anantara, AVANI and Per AQUUM partnership with Global Hotel Alliance. With over 460 partner hotels globally, there's a hotel almost everywhere you need one offering great rewards and benefits. A world of possibilities is yours to explore across 27 member hotel chains in the alliance. Join GHA Discovery today by going to [anantara.com/discovery](http://anantara.com/discovery) and start seeing the rewards.



WHEN TO GO

For many people, the determining factor for when to visit UAE is the weather. From late October through to mid-March it's quite pleasant, with high temperatures ranging from around 27°C to lows of around 15°C. It is almost always sunny. It does sometimes rain between November and February, and can cause road hazards when it does. In the summer, the temperatures can soar to around 50°C degrees with high humidity.

WHERE TO STAY

Minor Hotel Group has nine properties under three brands located throughout the UAE. These include six Anantara properties, two Oaks properties and one Per AQUUM. For comprehensive details on each of our UAE accommodations please visit our website.

GETTING THERE

There are many airports in UAE but the main one is Dubai International Airport. Citizens of most industrialised countries will receive a 30-day visa on arrival in the United Arab Emirates free of charge. This can be extended for up to 90 days after arrival for a fee. Visas on arrival are available for all 28 EU countries, Australia, Andorra, Brunei, Canada, Hong Kong, Iceland, Japan, Liechtenstein, Malaysia, Monaco, New Zealand, Norway, San Marino, Singapore, South Korea, Switzerland, the United States of America and the Vatican City.

GETTING AROUND

Public transportation within most cities remains rudimentary. Dubai is building extensive Metro, monorail and tram networks, and has invested heavily in the local bus network in recent years. The other Emirates offer very little public transportation. Abu Dhabi has a network of city buses that are fairly reliable. Intercity bus services are fast, comfortable and reasonably frequent. In the cities of Dubai, Abu Dhabi, and Sharjah taxis are widely available.

CURRENCY

The UAE currency is the Emirati Dirham. All international Visa and MasterCard's are accepted.

LOCAL LAWS & ETIQUETTE

Be aware that the UAE is a Muslim nation that is known for its tolerance towards travellers.

Alcohol and pork are available for tourists only in certain venues.

Drugs are strictly prohibited.

As a general rule, it's advisable to dress modestly especially when visiting temples.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES  
A MODERN OASIS STEEPED IN LEGEND

THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES IS A LAND OF INTRIGUE WHERE ANCIENT HISTORY BLENDS WITH FUTURISTIC DESIGNS. VAST STRETCHES OF ARID EARTH AND ROLLING DUNES DOMINATE A LANDSCAPE THAT BORDERS SAUDI ARABIA TO THE SOUTH, OMAN TO THE WEST AND THE PERSIAN GULF TO THE NORTH. IT'S HERE WHERE THE ICONIC CITIES OF DUBAI AND ABU DHABI STAND LIKE CITADELS OF THE MODERN AGE: ICONIC SKYSCRAPERS, CITY-SIZED MALLS, INDOOR SKI SLOPES, PALM-SHAPED ISLANDS AND PALATIAL BEACH RESORTS ATTRACT MILLIONS OF TOURISTS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.

It is in the deserts and historic trade routes to the south where legends were born and the lore of the land is etched. For centuries past, versatile tribesmen and nomadic groups gravitated toward the Persian Gulf, hunting for pearls and trading with seafarers and trade convoys. By the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the area now known as Abu Dhabi had become a trading settlement, with the Portuguese, followed by the British, establishing a strong presence. However, it wasn't until the discovery of oil in 1958 and the establishment of UAE as a sovereign nation in 1971 that the region was catapulted into the modern era with unprecedented speed.

ABU DHABI AND DUBAI

Where world cities such as London and Rome evolved through centuries of cause and effect, Abu Dhabi and Dubai gained world recognition in as little as two decades. Certainly, the shopping and entertainment facilities are world-class, but what shouldn't be overlooked is the strong sense of Arabian identity that underlines and permeates these new-born cities. The sound of Muslim prayer can be heard like a poet's call through the gilded streets of high end shopping centres and citadels of commerce. In the traditional markets, known as souks, the scent of herbs and spices are powerful reminders of a past that deserves to be cherished above modern influences.

For tourists and travellers, the list of things to do continues to grow. World-class restaurants, museums, golf courses and gargantuan shopping malls are a given in both cities as are access to big game fishing excursions, yacht cruises and desert safaris. In Dubai, indoor skiing has artificial snow and challenging slopes while in Abu Dhabi the Ferrari World Theme Park blows away global opposition as the world's largest indoor theme park. Both cities continue to raise the bar in terms of tourist entertainment and global recognition.

SIR BANI YAS - AN ISLAND ESCAPE

The UAE's coastline, stretching over 1,300 kilometres, takes in almost 200 islands and is a highlight of any trip to the Persian Gulf. Sir Bani Yas Island, 250 kilometres to the west of Abu Dhabi, has been labelled the Galapagos of the Middle East for good reason. Travellers to this island gem will discover a wonderful array of exotic species that include giraffe, flamingos, hyenas and cheetahs. Likewise, snorkelling and diving enthusiasts can discover the secrets of the world beneath the surface of the Persian Gulf, spotting large sea turtles along with a theatre of brilliant Arabian fish in crystal waters.



THE EMPTY QUARTER - A DESERT ADVENTURE

While the world identifies the UAE with Dubai and Abu Dhabi, many travellers choose to travel inland and into the heart of the Empty Quarter, one of the largest sand deserts in the world. The landscape is dominated by rolling sand dunes that change colour with the rise and fall of the sun; from shades of yellow at noon to burnt ochre at dusk. Few places in the world offer the sense of wide open space and freedom to explore.

While many luxuriate in the opulent surrounds of their chosen resort, others venture into the desert to practice the ancient art of archery in the company of a range master. For centuries the tribesman of Liwa have practiced archery for hunting and continue to pass on the skill to the next generation, if not for survival then to keep the traditions alive. Falconry and hunting with salukis are other traditional practices dating back thousands of years and shared with travellers. Other activities include; sunset and family camel treks, horse riding, land sailing, swimming, biking, dune walks and, for the wild at heart, dune bashing in a specially adapted 4x4 vehicle.

Perhaps the most magical moments here can be found during the still of the night. This is the time when an eerie silence descends and a canopy of stars cast shadows across the landscape, stirring the imagination and setting the stage for 1001 Arabian nights. The script, from therein, is in your hands and for you to discover each unfolding chapter.



ANANTARA.COM | PERAQUUM.COM | OAKSHOTELSRESORTS.COM



# AVANISPA

## THE SPA WORLD REFRESHED

STEP INTO A REFRESHINGLY DIFFERENT SPA WORLD; ONE THAT FEELS CONTEMPORARY, PURE AND RELAXED, WHERE YOU CAN LEAVE LIFE'S COMPLICATIONS BEHIND AND ENJOY THE BEAUTY OF SIMPLICITY.

### BOOST

A revitalising boost is the perfect tonic to re-energise the body, rejuvenate your mind and uplift the spirit, to revive you in every way.

### BALANCE

Find your natural flow with therapies to ground and restore harmony, so you can face the world afresh, feeling cool, calm and collected.

### CALM

De-stress with treatments that melt muscle tension, soothe nerves and quiet busy thoughts, for a calm and serene glow that radiates from the inside out.

### PURIFY

With specialist techniques and products to detox your body and deep cleanse skin, the search for purity comes with a touch of heavenly pampering.

Time is precious and every moment counts, which is why AVANISPA offers a tailored experience to focus on just what you need, without any hassle or fuss.

Rather than booking treatments beforehand, simply tell us how you feel, your physical state and lifestyle, to determine your desired outcome from four treatment categories; Boost, Balance, Calm and Purify.

Once you have chosen your treatments it's time to rest while we customise the details that matter, from the refreshments served before and after your treatments, to the welcome and reawakening rituals. Your glorious therapies are enjoyed with a personal touch, so you can lay back and relax with the ideal aroma and music.

For spa guests in need of physical and emotional balance, the experience begins with a vitamin packed rose beverage and floral water face spritz. An opening ritual of light vibrational finger tapping, as well as neck and shoulder stretching, gets your mind and body prepped to absorb the full benefits of the treatment. You then enjoy a balancing treatment, such as a Herbal Harmony full body massage, which incorporates a grounding essential oil blend and a heated herbal compress to warm and relax muscles. Unwind even further with a music playlist that coaxes you to wind down and reflect to the grounding sounds of nature. Then come around with a reawakening ritual that treats you to a harmonising aroma spray and a beverage of hot rose tea, to lock in all the wonderful balancing effects.

AVANISPA experiences are currently available at AVANI Bentota Resort & Spa in Sri Lanka and AVANI Pemba Beach Hotel & Spa in Mozambique, as well as at the soon to open AVANI Seychelles Barbarons Resort & Spa in the Seychelles, and many more great locations to come.

Get away from it all and feel renewed at AVANISPA.

MSPA-INTERNATIONAL.COM

## TASTE YOUR WAY AROUND HUNTER VALLEY

EXPERIENCE ONE OF AUSTRALIA'S MOST EXCITING DESTINATIONS FOR WORLD RENOWNED WINES AND GOURMET ARTISAN PRODUCE, AS WELL AS SPORT, LEISURE AND SPA PLEASURES, FROM THE COMFORT OF VILLA STYLE ACCOMMODATION AT CYPRESS LAKES RESORT BY OAKS.

Hunter Valley Vineyard

Just a two hour drive from Sydney, a trip to New South Wales' iconic Hunter Valley promises a picturesque, tranquil and memorable getaway. For locals, the 'Hunter' is renowned as a gourmand's paradise, brimming with verdant vineyards and boasting some of the best artisan produces in Australia.

The region is home to over 150 wineries, with some belonging to Australia's oldest and most acclaimed wine families, who through six generations of winemakers continue to ensure that Hunter Valley remains on both Australia's and the world's wine radar. Cellar doors at every corner offer a profusion of tastes to please every palate, and while the region produces a wide array of world class wine varieties, it is the Hunter

Valley Semillon that enjoys a very special place in the world wine industry. As award-winning Australian wine writer Campbell Mattinson explains, Hunter Valley, "produces a wine that is acknowledged as the best in the world, the benchmark. It is the same kind of advantage enjoyed by Burgundy and Bordeaux and Champagne."

Sampling local produce is also an experience not to be missed, with establishments like The Hunter Valley Smelly Cheese Shop offering a mouthwatering selection of cheeses and accompaniments, as well as cheese making courses. Right next door, Tempus Two is arguably Hunter Valley's most contemporary winery, fusing sophisticated and award-winning wines with the region's largest amphitheatre, which has attracted world class entertainment acts, including Elton John, Santana, KD Lang and Duran Duran. For sweet aficionados, The Hunter Valley Chocolate Company is well worth a visit. Using only the finest Belgian chocolate, together with Australian dried fruits and nuts, visitors can sample and select from an extensive range of delicious chocolate, fudge and indulgent gourmet treats.

Although you could be mistaken for thinking that Hunter Valley is just for culinary buffs, the region also offers a year round destination for sport, leisure and spa enthusiasts. From biking, hiking and hot air ballooning, to a myriad of health and beauty havens, the Hunter Valley's scenic, undulating landscape and open blue skies make every day the perfect day to try something new.

For a resort experience that ensures everything the



Cypress Lakes Resort by Oaks



Restaurant at the Vineyard

Hunter Valley has to offer is within easy reach, Cypress Lakes Resort by Oaks provides a quality, comfortable retreat to relax, surrounded by picturesque hinterland scenery. Settle into villa style accommodation that is perfect for couples, groups and families. Enjoy extensive resort facilities, including the 18-hole championship golf course, three swimming pools, tennis courts, a gym and the popular Bodega Restaurant & Bar, as well as the iconic Golden Door Health Retreat & Spa - Elysia, located just next door.

### STAY:

Cypress Lakes Resort by Oaks  
McDonalds and Thompsons Road  
Pokolbin, Hunter Valley NSW 2320



Hunter Valley Winery

OAKSHOTELSRESORTS.COM



# AND THE WORLD'S TOP TRAVEL AND TOURISM AWARDS FOR 2014 GO TO...

MINOR HOTEL GROUP'S DISTINCTIVE BRANDS AND UNIQUE PROPERTIES  
HAVE PROVED THEIR WORTH TIME AND TIME AGAIN THIS YEAR,  
AS THE TRAVEL INDUSTRY AND PUBLIC NAMED AN INCREDIBLE NUMBER  
OF OUR HOTELS AS THE BEST OF THE BEST. HERE ARE JUST SOME OF THE MANY HIGHLIGHTS...



## ANANTARA HOTELS, RESORTS & SPAS

Offering journeys rich with discovery, Anantara's engaging experiences received social media recognition by winning the HOTELS' Social Hotel Award for Best Facebook Page. While individual hotels in some of the world's most exotic destinations were crowned with a glittering array of prestigious awards.

### ANANTARA BANGKOK RIVERSIDE RESORT & SPA

Feeling like a tropical hideaway along the River of Kings in Thailand's capital, this spacious waterfront oasis beat stiff competition to win first place for *Best Hotel in Asia* in the *Go! Asia* awards.

### ANANTARA CHIANG MAI RESORT & SPA

Blending luxurious riverside tranquility with striking contemporary design, Thai elements and a charming colonial house; *Condé Nast Traveler* featured this urban sanctuary in its coveted Gold List as well as 8<sup>th</sup> in the *Top 20 Resorts in Asia*. The glowing reviews continued with *Voyages de Reves* naming it in the *200 most beautiful hotels in the world* and *the best hotel in Thailand*.

### ANANTARA LAWANA RESORT & SPA SAMUI

This tropical haven at the quiet northern curve of Samui's longest beach spoils couples with fine dining in treetop salas, side by side spa rituals and vintage décor inspired by the island's merchant heritage, making it well deserving of the title *Asia's Most Romantic Resort* in the *World Travel Awards*.

### ANANTARA BOPHUT RESORT & SPA KOH SAMUI

Boasting an incredible destination spa of glass walled treatment pavilions surrounded by tranquil water gardens and palatial walls, Anantara Bophut won *Best Spa Manager* in the *World Luxury Spa Awards* and was a finalist for *Best Luxury Resort Spa*.

### ANANTARA HOI AN RESORT

Blending riverside relaxation, a UNESCO World Heritage Site on its doorstep and beautiful beach life just a bicycle or boat ride away, this charming hotel was named *Best in Travel* by *Smart Travel Asia*.

### ANANTARA DHIGU RESORT & SPA

In the world's greatest paradise, at a resort where the Indian Ocean is your playground above and below the water, it comes as no surprise that Anantara Dhigu was named *the Maldives Leading Family Resort* in the *World Travel Awards*.

### BANANA ISLAND RESORT DOHA BY ANANTARA

Coming in 12<sup>th</sup> for *the most anticipated hotel openings in 2014* by *CNN*, this island resort is the first of its kind in Qatar, intertwining traditional Thai and Qatari hospitality, and offering impressive facilities for relaxation, adventure, wellness and indulgence.

### QASR AL SARAB DESERT RESORT BY ANANTARA

Qasr Al Sarab's iconic location and majestic luxury won it a place in the *Condé Nast Gold List* and 4<sup>th</sup> in *Condé Nast Traveler's Best Resorts in the Middle East & North Africa*. And the *World Travel Awards* named it *the United Arab Emirates' Leading Desert Resort*. While *Voyages de Reves* included this splendid sanctuary in the *200 most beautiful hotels in the world as the leading hotel in Abu Dhabi*.

### ANANTARA BAZARUTO ISLAND RESORT & SPA

Secluded in the breathtaking Bazaruto Archipelago, this paradise island hideaway has much to celebrate, having won both *Mozambique's Leading Resort and Leading Spa Resort* in the *World Travel Awards*, as well as being voted *no.5 of the Top 30 Islands in the World* by *Condé Nast Traveler*.

### ANANTARA VACATION CLUB

Anantara Vacation Club Phuket Mai Khao received two prestigious awards from *the American Resort Development Association (ARDA)* for *Resort Architecture* and one of the organisation's highest honours, *the ACE International Project of Excellence Award: International Developer*.

## PER AQUUM

Delivering luxury that dares to be different through bold concepts and impressive world first facilities, Per AQUUM offers aspirational experiences in truly unique settings; hallmarks which set the brand in excellent stead to stand proudly on the award podium.



### HUVAFEN FUSHI

The exceptional underwater spa here made it into *Mr & Mrs Smith's Top 10 Best Spas*, while the resort also caught the attention of *the Maldives Association of Travel Agents and Tour Operators (MATATO)*, who honoured Huvafen Fushi with its *Leading Luxury Resort award*.

### DESERT PALM

Situated in an exclusive Dubai polo estate, this sophisticated retreat was hailed as *the United Arab Emirates' Leading Boutique Hotel* in the *World Travel Awards* – which is recognised globally as the hallmark of quality, with its winners setting the benchmark to which all others aspire.

### NIYAMA

*Condé Nast Traveler Spain* named NIYAMA as the *Best International Resort* and *Voyages de Reves* in the *200 most beautiful hotels in the world*; accolades which are well deserved given its seductive and innovative features, including the world's first underwater music club and a floating restaurant 500 metres offshore.

## AVANI

Shining brightly on this year's award stage, AVANI has been well recognised for its fuss free appeals in great locations. Blending all the rights ingredients for relaxation with essential comforts, AVANI's upscale hotels and resorts make holidays easy and satisfying, whether you're looking for quality family time, active fun with friends or a touch of romance.



### AVANI ATRIUM BANGKOK

This upscale urban hotel proves that contemporary comforts can be eco-friendly. A prime location in the capital, stylish rooms and suites with top level Executive Floors, plus great dining and leisure options, appeal equally to leisure and business guests. While an *ASEAN Green Hotel Award* satisfies eco-savvy travellers.

### AVANI HAI PHONG HARBOUR VIEW

The *World Travel Awards* named AVANI Hai Phong Harbour View as *Vietnam's Leading Hotel*, thanks to its pleasing blend of French colonial décor with an international ambience, superb accommodation and facilities, matched by traditional Vietnamese hospitality.

### AVANI PEMBA BEACH HOTEL & SPA

Hailed as *Mozambique's Leading Hotel* in the esteemed *World Travel Awards*, AVANI Pemba's African and Arabian architecture meets oceanfront lawns, with guests enjoying relaxing pool and spa time, an ancient port town and amazing nature to explore, plus the perfect base for island hopping and safaris.

## ELEWANA COLLECTION

Elewana's iconic safari circuit and paradise beach settings invite discerning travellers to explore the natural wonders of Tanzania and Kenya from plush comforts, with the collection of luxury lodges, camps and hotels receiving high praise as the best of the best.



### SERENGETI PIONEER CAMP

A wondrous tented camp in the heart of the Serengeti has received a Highly Recommended for *Best New Safari Camp in Tanzania* in *The Safari Awards*, this camp boasts superlative access to the annual migration and 'Big Five', along with sweeping views overlooking Moru Kopjes, Lake Magadi and endless plains.

### SERENGETI MIGRATION CAMP

The spacious tents overlook the Grumeti River, with sun decks and pool all offering a prime vantage point of the Great Migration. A luxurious Out of Africa experience, this camp was named by *Condé Nast Traveler* as *no.13 for Best Resorts and Safari Camps in Africa* and also in the *Top 100 Hotels in the World*.





# NATURE’S PLAYGROUND JUST GOT BIGGER

TWICE AS PLAYFUL, TWICE AS BOLD AND TWICE THE FUN, FROM 6 METRES BELOW AT SUBSIX TO 6 METERS ABOVE AT NEST, NIYAMA HAS NEW RESTAURANTS, NEW ROOMS, AND NEW SPACES FOR ALL GENERATIONS. IT’S NOW ONE DESTINATION ACROSS TWO ISLANDS IN THE MALDIVES.

Take to the Maldivian skies with a mesmerising seaplane journey 45 minutes from Malé to the South Western Atoll of Dhaalu where the island resort NIYAMA balances tranquility with an edgy, trendy vibe and stimulating fun. Chill on the original island at Dune, offering tranquil pool time and adult escapes at the beach bar, or wander towards a more family ambience at BLU with ice cream parlour and kids pool.

Luxury that dares to be different, the current resort experience is complemented by a new range of playful leisure facilities, sensational restaurant concepts and room types catering for families or couples with a sense of adventure, without compromising on indulgence. New accommodation includes 14 One-Bedroom Beach Pool Suites and a Two-Bedroom Family Beach Pavilion boldly facing the lagoon. At the new Explorer’s Club, activities are designed to ignite youngsters’ imaginations as they become artists, inventors, explorers or chefs.

Dive, snorkel, kitesurf, jetski and fish to your heart’s

content, or come out of your shell with innovative treatments at LIME Spa. Unleash your inner-sailor aboard the Dream Dhoni sail boat and relax sipping champagne with a stunning sunset. Both NIYAMA’s islands mix it up with experiences designed for chilling out and playfulness. Dining venues from six metres underwater to six metres above ground tantalise the palate and stimulate the mind with African cuisine at Tribal, contemporary Asian cuisine at the tree house restaurant Nest, gourmet menus half a kilometre out to sea at Edge, as well as a day and nighttime underwater playground in the uniquely restyled Subsix setting.



# ANANTARA’S WINE GURUS

SHARING WORLD-CLASS EXPERTISE WITH PERSONAL PASSION

WHETHER YOU’RE A WINE CONNOISSEUR OR A NOVICE WITH AN APPETITE FOR KNOWLEDGE, ANANTARA’S WINE GURUS ARE THERE TO LEAD YOU ON A WORLD TOUR OF THE VINES. SHARE THE SECRETS BEHIND WHAT MAKES A GREAT WINE. OFFER EXCLUSIVE TASTING FLIGHTS AND RECOMMEND IDEAL FOOD PAIRINGS.

Anantara’s passion for gastronomy is brought to life by enriching concepts, such as our highly successful Wine Guru programme, which is exclusive to Anantara Hotels, Resorts & Spas and Anantara Vacation Club.

Anantara recognises that being an excellent Wine Guru is a role that requires creativity and artistry, which is why our Wine Gurus are chosen not only for their proven expertise, but also their ability to share insider knowledge and the stories behind the great wines, so that guests can relish an experience that is educational, passionate and richly engaging.

Intensive training programmes and courses of the highest industry standards are accompanied by opportunities to work with renowned wine suppliers, winemakers and guest speakers so that our Wine Gurus are kept up to date with the latest methods, industry developments and consumer trends. A focus on educational travel invites

Wine Gurus to visit premium vineyards and experience the wines they are serving on a grass-roots level. Cultivating friendly rivalry, Wine Gurus are encouraged to participate in sommelier competitions both nationally and internationally, with the number of prestigious awards received to date proving that our Wine Gurus are amongst the very best in the world.

Supporting their immense skills and talents, wine cellars are an integral part of the Anantara experiences. Well stocked cellars house extensive collections of carefully selected New and Old World wines, as well as rare and precious varieties, and also the brand’s private label - Anantara Art Wines from the Hua Hin Hills in Thailand, which is available in most locations worldwide. Much more than a storeroom, Anantara cellars often feature a dedicated tasting area and a dining table for exclusive private occasions. Attention to detail extends to the finest crystal glassware for both technical and

hedonistic purposes, with Wine Gurus selecting the perfect size and shape of glass to suit the bouquet, taste, balance and finish of each wine.

Guided by these highly trained Wine Gurus, Anantara guests enjoy a plethora of inspirational experiences. Wine Gurus are on hand to recommend the ideal wines and champagnes to complement the flavours of each meal, with Anantara’s tailored Dining by Design journeys offering the ideal opportunity to enlist an in-house Wine Guru for an expert food pairing recommendation, and even a personalised wine tasting journey. Indeed, at Anantara hotels, resorts & spas all around the world, wine flights have proven to be one of the most exciting and popular experiences. Offering riveting guided journeys, Wine Gurus share their technical knowledge and the tale behind each wine, and are delighted to host blind wine tasting sessions for an added dimension of intrigue and fun.





## ANANTARA VACATION CLUB REVEALS HIGH TECH REVAMP OF PHUKET PREVIEW CENTRE

DISCOVER THE LUXURIOUS LIFESTYLE OF A CLUB OWNER AT THE INNOVATIVE PHUKET PREVIEW CENTRE, WHERE A WALK-THROUGH GALLERY TAKES VISITORS ON A 360 DEGREE VIRTUAL TOUR OF ANANTARA VACATION CLUB RESORTS.

## EXECUTIVE CHEFS

### SERVING SUBLIME CUISINE IN EXTRAORDINARY SETTINGS

FOR ELEWANA GUESTS, DINING IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE AUTHENTIC AFRICAN TRAVEL EXPERIENCE. SATISFYING DISCERNING PALATES IS A MUST AND THIS RESPONSIBILITY IS NOT TAKEN LIGHTLY. WITH CULINARY TEAMS PULLING OUT ALL THE STOPS TO IMPRESS, EVEN IN THE REMOTEST LOCATIONS.



Elewana's Director of Operations, Heath Dhana, explains - "Freshly prepared food of the highest quality is Elewana's mantra, and on this we will never compromise. Even in the most remote environments, we ensure that our guests receive the very best from our award-winning chefs. Elewana has maintained its high culinary standards through the development of a Chefs' Training Academy; something that has not only helped nurture new and aspiring talent, but has also become a magnet for rising stars within the industry. We continue to excel in the eyes of our most discerning critics - that of our guests - and for that we are most grateful."

Demonstrating Elewana's aspirational culinary mantra with great flair, Jeromy Joubert is Executive Chef of Arusha Coffee Lodge. "The life of an Executive Chef can be shrouded in mystique", explains Jeromy. Although still young in years, this culinary veteran of the luxury hotel industry commenced his career in an unlikely setting - a mobile cooking unit in the South African Army, and has since graced the kitchens of renowned five-star hotels in exotic destinations such as Fiji, Thailand and South Africa.

As Executive Chef, Jeromy calls out yet another order to his culinary team within the domain of his clinically-clean

kitchen, pots and pans immediately emerge and clatter together in chaotic harmony. "I sometimes feel like the conductor of an orchestra playing a symphony that I have composed", he says with a charming grin. "The day in the life of an Executive Chef is far from the glamorous image portrayed on television. There are a lot of early mornings and late nights, meetings with suppliers, and certainly a lot of attention focused on quality control. Then there are the inspirational moments - crafting dishes that we hope our guests will enjoy just as much as we take pleasure in creating." As Jeromy completes his sentence, another order of succulent dinners is whisked away to a table of eager diners at the Lodge's gourmet restaurant 'Bacchus'.



Anantara Vacation Club, Asia's leading luxury shared ownership concept for discerning travellers, is pleased to announce its newly renovated state-of-the-art Preview Centre at Anantara Vacation Club Phuket Mai Khao, Thailand. With technological innovation at the core of the revamp, the thoughtfully designed expanded space provides a more in-depth experience of the Anantara brand and its products than ever before.

To enhance guest experience and comfort, a new lounge, reception area, gallery, private offices and expanded kids' club have been created. The guest lounge features a cutting edge multi-screen LED display, which offers a striking visual introduction to the brands and properties of Minor International - Anantara's parent company. A walk-through gallery has been designed for guests to explore the full scope of Anantara Vacation Club's membership, benefits and usage options, and also includes an industry-first 360 degree immersive virtual tour, thanks to an iPad-controlled theatre with surround video, through which guests are seemingly transported through their choice of Anantara Vacation Club Resorts, from Bali to Thailand and China, with an authentic 360 degree impression of the accommodations, local experiences and activities offered.

"We are thrilled to introduce Anantara Vacation Club's new world-class Phuket Preview Centre to guests and prospective owners", smiles Martin Tolan, Senior Vice President of Sales and Marketing. "The space was carefully designed to cater to our guests and make them feel at home and comfortable. It provides a technologically advanced and service oriented experience that closely mimics our resorts, so that guests can fully experience what it's like to be an owner with Anantara Vacation Club."



Recently, my family and I enjoyed two precious and memorable holidays together - first at Anantara Vacation Club Phuket Mai Khao, and then at Anantara Golden Triangle in Chiang Rai. Both were wonderful experiences.

In Phuket, all 8½ of us (another little girl on the way) enjoyed the resort together, with all of its many holiday options. My wife and I took our one-year-old daughter for bike rides around the Vacation Club property and along the beach. My parents enjoyed early morning swimming in their private pool villa. My siblings and I used the suite's kitchen area to eat late-night snacks and watch movies. It was a wonderful retreat from our typically busy schedule and reflective of what we've come to expect from vacationing with Anantara.

We just returned from Anantara Golden Triangle - our first time to Chiang Rai - and loved every moment of it. The resort offered everything we needed: serenity, adventure and a unique northern jungle atmosphere, all of which made it so easy for us to accommodate our toddler's needs. We enjoyed riding elephants, biking around the sprawling grounds, and just relaxing in the fresh air with such breathtaking views. Each restaurant's offerings were excellent and the all-inclusive package made the whole experience exciting and stress-free. Although it's only been a month since we waved goodbye, we're already planning our next trip back to Anantara Golden Triangle when our kids are a bit older because it's such an ideal place to experience as a family.

ARTHIT EKTRAKUL & FAMILY, OWNERS SINCE APRIL 2012



© 2014 Satta Photography



# TRAVEL TIPS

TURNING EXPECTATIONS INTO MEMORIES OF QUALITY SERVICE AND UNIQUE EXPERIENCES.  
OUR MANAGEMENT TEAMS AT EACH OF THE LOCATIONS ARE READY TO ASSIST  
IN ANY WAY TO MAKE YOUR STAY WITH US AS MEMORABLE AS POSSIBLE.



## SAVOUR A MICHELIN STAR CHEF'S DESSERT, MOCKTAIL AND COCKTAIL CREATIONS AT ANANTARA CHIANG MAI

Anantara Chiang Mai Resort & Spa recently held an exclusive molecular dessert cooking class, hosted by award-winning Chef Roger van Damme, owner and chef of Michelin Star restaurant Het Gebaar in Belgium, TV celebrity and author.

Renowned as one of the world's greatest patissiers and the godfather of molecular desserts, Chef Roger revealed the secrets behind four of his new Thai inspired signature creations, crafted from infusion, emulsification and molecular cuisine techniques.

The Gluten Free Chocolate Brownie with Caramel Sauce has already been added to the resort's Afternoon Tea and High Tea experiences, while three more molecular dessert, mocktail and cocktail masterpieces will be served at Anantara Chiang Mai's new Asian restaurant and bar which will open in early 2015. For more detail please visit [chiang-mai.anantara.com](http://chiang-mai.anantara.com)

## DUBAI'S POLO SEASON KICKS OFF AT DESERT PALM

With its convenient location only 20 minutes from downtown Dubai in the tranquil setting of a private polo estate, Desert Palm, a Per AQUUM Retreat is saddling up for the upcoming polo season.

With matches played every Monday, Wednesday and Saturday until the end of April 2015, this year's polo season will see the return of the two most established tournaments at Desert Palm - The Royal Salute Nations Cup from 25 - 29 January 2015 and the hotly anticipated Cartier International Dubai Polo Challenge from 18 - 21 February 2015.

Between tournaments guests can experience Desert Palm's extensive riding and stable facilities for over 300 horses, as well as the luxury of 38 designer suites, LIME Spa, a stunning infinity pool and award-winning restaurants offering unique experiences such as the Jewel Afternoon Tea. Plan your polo season at [desertpalm.ae](http://desertpalm.ae)



## OAKS PARTNERS WITH AUSTRALIA ZOO TO SUPPORT KOALA CONSERVATION

Oaks is thrilled to announce a five year partnership with Australia Zoo, which is renowned for promoting conservation through exciting education. The partnership will bolster Australia Zoo Wildlife Warriors' koala conservation work, which includes the Australia Zoo Wildlife Hospital, which treats over 900 koalas a year.

Taking proactive steps to increase koala conservation awareness, Oaks has been appointed as an official accommodation partner of Australia Zoo, with the special Oaks accommodation packages offering guests tickets to Australia Zoo, as well as sneak peek passes to the Australia Zoo Wildlife Hospital. While to celebrate this partnership, Australia Zoo has named a tiny nine month old koala joey "Oasis" after the popular family friendly Oaks Oasis resort in Caloundra along the Sunshine Coast.

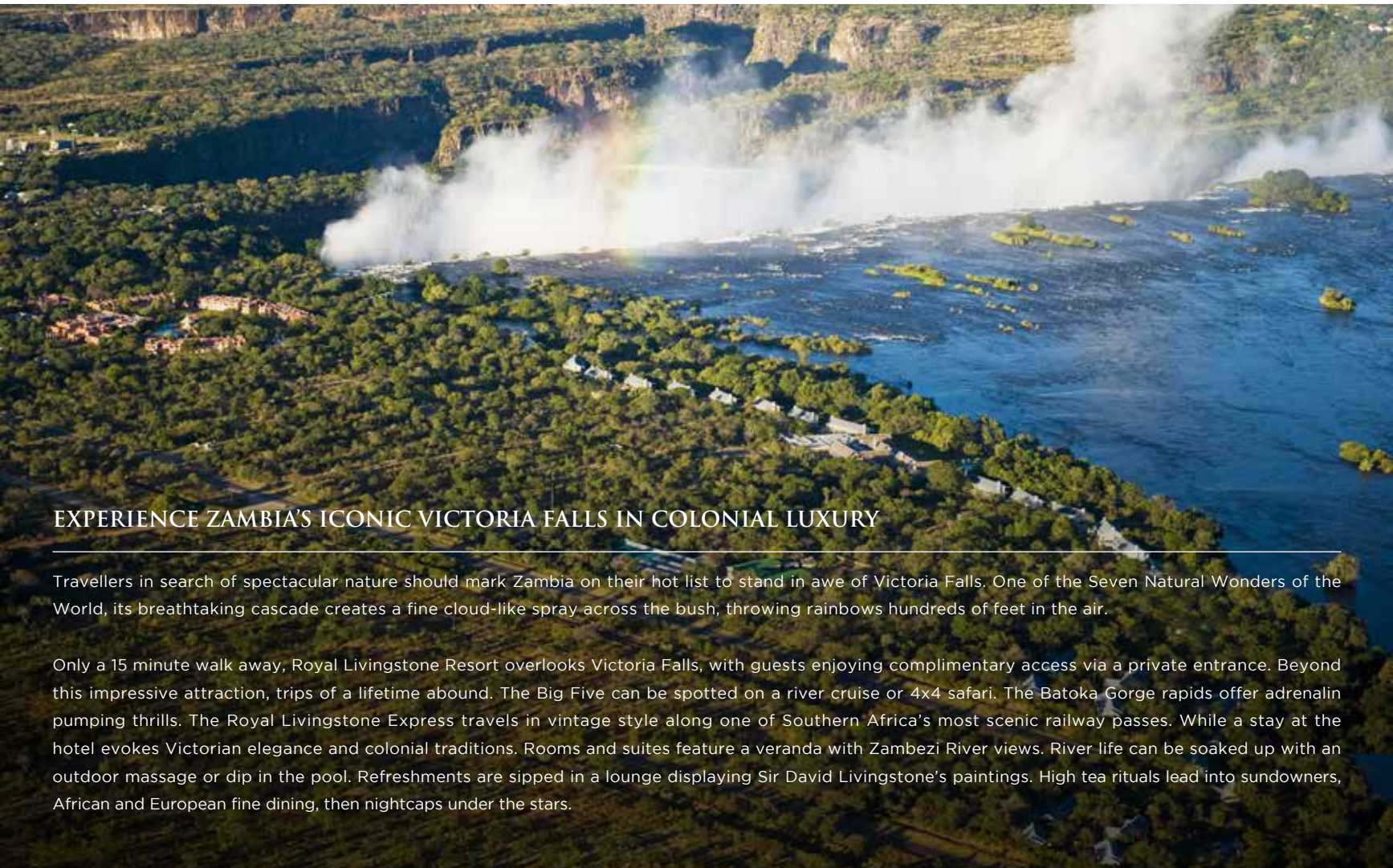


## WATCH ANANTARA GOLDEN TRIANGLE'S LIVE ELEPHANT WEBCAM ONLINE

Anantara Golden Triangle Elephant Camp & Resort is famed for its onsite Elephant Camp, which works alongside the Golden Triangle Asian Elephant Foundation to perform street rescues, provide employment and a comfortable lifestyle for the elephants and their entire mahout families, as well as participating in projects to help all of Thailand's elephants.

Elephant enthusiasts can now watch these gentle giants in their natural habitat, wherever they are in the world, thanks to Anantara Golden Triangle's live online webcam which reveals views of the forest and countryside where the elephants graze and socialise.

For up-close and personal encounters with these majestic elephants, visit Anantara's jungle hilltop resort in Northern Thailand to enjoy a wide range of inspirational experiences, from elephant trekking, river bath time and training to become a mahout, to learning about scientific elephant research projects, trying a unique elephant yoga experience, or the indulgence of a sunset trek with a picnic and Dining by Design at the baby elephant camp with a private chef and butler. Enjoy amazing life experiences at [goldentriangle.anantara.com](http://goldentriangle.anantara.com)



## EXPERIENCE ZAMBIA'S ICONIC VICTORIA FALLS IN COLONIAL LUXURY

Travellers in search of spectacular nature should mark Zambia on their hot list to stand in awe of Victoria Falls. One of the Seven Natural Wonders of the World, its breathtaking cascade creates a fine cloud-like spray across the bush, throwing rainbows hundreds of feet in the air.

Only a 15 minute walk away, Royal Livingstone Resort overlooks Victoria Falls, with guests enjoying complimentary access via a private entrance. Beyond this impressive attraction, trips of a lifetime abound. The Big Five can be spotted on a river cruise or 4x4 safari. The Batoka Gorge rapids offer adrenalin pumping thrills. The Royal Livingstone Express travels in vintage style along one of Southern Africa's most scenic railway passes. While a stay at the hotel evokes Victorian elegance and colonial traditions. Rooms and suites feature a veranda with Zambezi River views. River life can be soaked up with an outdoor massage or dip in the pool. Refreshments are sipped in a lounge displaying Sir David Livingstone's paintings. High tea rituals lead into sundowners, African and European fine dining, then nightcaps under the stars.

## ANANTARA'S E Gift CARDS OFFER PRESENTS OF INDULGENCE FOR EVERY OCCASION

Anantara inspires the freedom to pursue personal dreams and passions, with a choice of stunning hotels and resorts each offering unique destination experiences. Sharing the luxurious world of Anantara is exciting and easy with our online eGift Card concept, which offers the wonderful benefit of endless choice.

With beautiful card designs for every occasion, you can wish someone congratulations, happy birthday and seasonal greetings, spoil a loved one, reward your employees and thank business partners. Personalise your chosen card by adding a message and choose between voucher amounts ranging from US\$50 to US\$5,000. Then state your preferred delivery date, make a secure online payment and leave the rest to us, with no extra mailing costs.

Then wait to hear what amazing experience the recipient chooses to use their eGift Card for, with the options to spend it on luxury accommodation, spa bliss, dining and select activities at any Anantara Hotel, Resort & Spa they prefer. Share this amazing gift at [eGiftcard.anantara.com](http://eGiftcard.anantara.com)





# CONCIERGE

## WHERE IS YOUR NEXT DESTINATION?

MINOR HOTEL GROUP IS OPENING NEW HORIZONS IN EXCITING AND DEVELOPING DESTINATIONS IN 2015. HERE IS A SNEAK PREVIEW OF TRAVEL EXPERIENCES TO START PLANNING.

### CHINA



## 1 | Anantara Guiyang Resort & Spa

Beautifully located in Southwest China, Anantara Guiyang Resort & Spa is just 15 kilometres from Guiyang City, a 15 minute drive from Guiyang Longdongbao International Airport and the train station, and easily accessible by road. Known as the Forest City, Guiyang invites you to escape the heat and discover stunning landscapes, hot springs, waterfalls and scenic golf courses, as well as a rich ancient heritage and colourful ethnic cultures.

[ANANTARA.COM](http://ANANTARA.COM)

### THAILAND

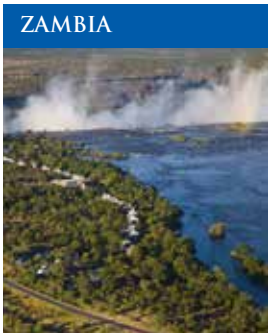


## 2 | AVANI Bangkok Riverside

Overlooking Bangkok's bustling Chao Phraya River, this 26-floor hotel tower seamlessly blends modern warmth with lifestyle essentials and is just right for any kind of visit - from a leisurely family break to an important business trip. Shuttle boat services to the BTS Skytrain and the central Saphan Taksin boat pier make connecting to the city's major commercial and entertainment districts comfortably effortless.

[AVANIHOTELS.COM](http://AVANIHOTELS.COM)

### ZAMBIA

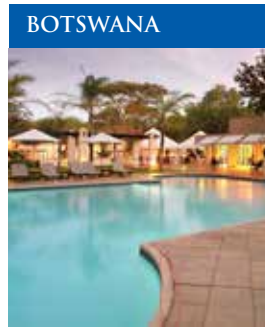


## 3 | Royal Livingstone Resort

An extraordinary destination with trips of a lifetime, Royal Livingstone Resort sits on the banks of the mighty Zambezi River overlooking the spectacular Victoria Falls. The property evokes Victorian elegance and colonial traditions in impeccable style, and offers unforgettable adventures. All luxury rooms and suites feature private verandas with river views to take in this natural wonder.

[ANANTARA.COM](http://ANANTARA.COM)

### BOTSWANA



## 4 | AVANI Gaborone Hotel & Casino

AVANI Gaborone Hotel & Casino sits in the heart of Botswana's vibrant capital, Gaborone, one of the fastest growing cities in the world. In this great location guests have easy access to the city's downtown scene, with art and culture nearby or travel to Game and Nature Reserves located just outside of the capital for a true African adventure.

[AVANIHOTELS.COM](http://AVANIHOTELS.COM)

### NAMIBIA



## 5 | AVANI Windhoek Hotel & Casino

AVANI Windhoek Hotel & Casino is located in the vibrant heart of Windhoek, Namibia's busy capital city. Conveniently situated on Independence Avenue, this central location offers 173 modern rooms, with great access to downtown shopping, restaurants and entertainment. The hotel itself features an in-house Casino and is adjacent to the Gustav Voigts Shopping Centre.

[AVANIHOTELS.COM](http://AVANIHOTELS.COM)

### ZAMBIA



## 6 | AVANI Victoria Falls Resort

AVANI Victoria Falls Resort is perfectly located to experience one of Zambia's most outstanding attractions. A convenient five minute walk to Victoria Falls. With 212 welcoming rooms and suites, guests can explore Zambia's best, from the powerful Zambezi River and the world-renowned Victoria falls, to Africa's famed wildlife and natural scenery.

[AVANIHOTELS.COM](http://AVANIHOTELS.COM)

### LESOTHO



## 7 | AVANI Maseru Hotel

AVANI Maseru Hotel sits in the heart of Maseru City, with 105 rooms and suites, offering easy access to Lesotho's growing capital as well as the adjacent Caledon River and nearby Maluti Mountains. Ideal for meetings and events with a large scale conference centre and close proximity to Maseru Airport.

[AVANIHOTELS.COM](http://AVANIHOTELS.COM)

### LESOTHO



## 8 | AVANI Lesotho Hotel & Casino

AVANI Lesotho Hotel & Casino offers the best of Lesotho. Designed with corporate and leisure travellers in mind, the 158 comfortable guest rooms and suites offer an easy stay for work and play. Conveniently located on Hilton Road in Lesotho's bustling capital, the hotel will offer a range of flexible meeting spaces as well as leisure facilities.

[AVANIHOTELS.COM](http://AVANIHOTELS.COM)

### CENTRAL RESERVATIONS OFFICE

With the rapid expansion of Minor Hotel Group, we are pleased to announce the extension of the Central Reservations Office in Thailand. With one number you can now book any Minor Hotel Group hotel or resort. The Central Reservations Office operates from 8:00 am - 10:00 pm (Bangkok Time) seven days a week for reservations in English, Mandarin and Thai.

Book your next vacation with one of our experienced reservations agents.

Call: +66 (0) 2365 9110

Email: [reservations@minorhotelgroup.com](mailto:reservations@minorhotelgroup.com)



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