

KOH SAMUI TUSCANY KERALA MADAGASCAR VIETNAM

DestinAsian

FROM ASIA TO THE WORLD

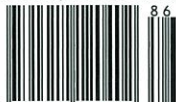


The
LUXE LIST
2015

OUR PICK
OF THE
BEST
NEW
HOTELS
IN THE
ASIA-
PACIFIC
REGION



OCTOBER / NOVEMBER 2015



9 771412 120402
S\$8 IDR60,000 HK\$60 THB250
RM25 PHP325 NT\$225

HOTELS UNLOCK THE BEST

From Delhi's latest pleasure palace to a cliff-side resort in Sri Lanka, our reviewers have scoured the region to pull together this year's roster of the top hotel openings. Read on to discover which new properties stood out from the rest in terms of service, setting, and a singular sense of style.

ITC Grand Bharat

GURGAON, INDIA

➔ Nestled amid sweeping yellow mustard fields at the edge of the Aravalli mountain range, the ITC Grand Bharat provides an opulent respite from New Delhi, a 45-kilometer drive away. Part of Starwood's Luxury Collection, the multi-domed hotel is an homage to India's rich architectural heritage, taking its cues from Mughal and Maratha palaces, the ghats of Varanasi, and the temples of Odisha, among other inspirations. The result is a stunning amalgam of styles that works just as well in the 100 suites (which come either with plunge pools or private terraces) and four presidential villas, all of which strike just the right note between old-world and contemporary. Food is a highlight, with four restaurants including the poolside Apas Promenade for local Mewati food and the more formal India Room with a menu of nouvelle European dishes such as eggplant-stuffed tortellini and Gouda soufflé. And adding to the retreat's credentials as a destination hotel are a 3,200-square-meter spa with beautifully carved *neem*-wood massage tables and an exotic treatment menu; a 27-hole Jack Nicklaus golf course; and a gamut of activities ranging from Zorbing and yoga classes to day treks and rock climbing in the surrounding hills.

—91-1267/285-500; itc-hotels.com;
doubles from US\$760



Loke Thye Kee Residences

GEORGE TOWN, MALAYSIA

Converted shophouses may not be a revelation among accommodations in Penang's George Town, but Loke Thye Kee Residences is raising the benchmark. Under the direction of local development group 1919 Global, Singaporean architecture firm Ministry of Design took five shophouses that date back to the 1870s and massaged them into loft-like suites best described as "George Town Modern." Their original shells of brick walls, wood floors, and soaring ceilings have been finessed and filled with contemporary white furnishings, glossy glass vanities, works from local artist Ch'ng Kiah Kiean, and kitchenette areas stocked with all the obligatory local snacks. Large windows overlook bustling Penang Road; in the back, each has its own charming garden area and patio. More rooms are additionally set to come as part of the larger development project 1919 Global is carrying out in the area, including the restoration of the Straits-Chinese black-and-white Majestic Theatre and the adjacent namesake Loke Thye Kee building, whose restaurant is remembered by an older generation as the requisite spot for matchmaking teas. Now, it serves some of the best Hainanese food around.
—60-4/264-1919; lokethyekee.com; doubles from US\$205

Aman Tokyo

JAPAN

➔ In a city where luxury hotels abound, the newest Aman property, set high in the Otemachi Tower not far from Tokyo Station, is hard to fault. Australian architect Kerry Hill (who also designed the Amans in Sri Lanka and Bhutan) has managed to capture a sense of place from the moment you step into Aman Tokyo's 33rd-floor lobby. Centered on a raised rock garden and crowned by a soaring ceiling feature of backlit *washi*-paper designed to resemble a huge traditional lantern, the space is immediately welcoming, thanks in part to kimono-clad staff who seem to float around the room pouring tea and arranging cherry blossoms in the tradition of *ikebana*. Traditional materials are used throughout, from sliding *shoji* screens to *furo* soaking tubs, elegant *yukata* robes in the wardrobe and black cotton slippers waiting for you by the door to your lodgings. Views from the 84 rooms and suites take in the Imperial Palace gardens and Tokyo Skytree, but the best vista in the house is from the 34th-floor infinity pool. Here, the water has been set at a level to block out Tokyo's sprawling cityscape, allowing swimmers to bliss out while gazing at Mount Fuji on the horizon.

—81-3/5224-3333; aman.com;
doubles from US\$870

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Overnight Sensations

Opposite, clockwise from top: Indian opulence at the ITC Grand Bharat; Aman Tokyo's 34th-floor swimming pool; the reception area at Loke Thye Kee Residences.

