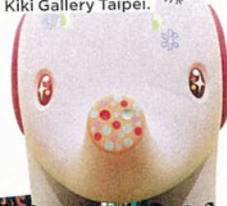


special T+L PICKS

Artwork at the Kaikai Kiki Gallery Taipei.

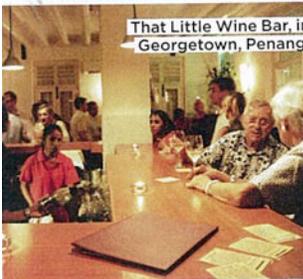


Wanderlust hotel, in Singapore.

The Mandarin Gallery, on Orchard Road.



At the Disgruntled Chef, in Singapore.



That Little Wine Bar, in Georgetown, Penang.

Ave. corner of Paseo de Roxas, Makati; 63-2/408-1852; dinner and drinks for two P2,000), delivers French chef Patrice Freuslon's Asian-inflected creations—green-asparagus tempura with poached egg and Hollandaise; ginger *crème brûlée*—in a swish dining room, but the real draw here is the bar-lounge, where Manila's beautiful set let their hair down from 11 P.M. On Fridays, don't miss DJ Elian Habayeb's legendary Groove Sanctuary nights.

► **STAY** Escorted in leafy Salcedo Village, the **Picasso Boutique Serviced Residences** (119 L.P. Leviste St., Salcedo Village, Makati; 63-2/828-4774; picassomakati.com; doubles from P8,560) stands out for its chic, spacious rooms—the smallest, the Malaga Studio, starts at 45 square meters—as well as its in-house contemporary art gallery showing exhibitions curated by Art Cabinet Philippines.

► **SHOP** The capital's most creative denizens congregate at **The Collective** (7274 Malugay St., San Antonio Village, Makati), a former garage turned independent arts-and-design hub: check out **Vinyl on Vinyl** for old-school records, **Sundae** for flirty dresses and galoshes with bold graphic prints, **Crazy Eddie's Shirts, Slacks & Wonder Emporium** for hip menswear (think skinny ties and vintage specs), **Ritual** for affordable gourmet goodies with an earth-friendly twist, and, after-hours, **B-Side**, for funky beats and an *au courant* crowd.

SINGAPORE

► **EAT** Looking more like a punk rocker than the accomplished chef she is, Apasara Navarojanasakul transforms Thai standards with great finesse at **Soht & Baay** (#04-11 Ion Orchard, 2 Orchard Turn; 65/6509-6058; dinner for two S\$120). Highlights include a pomelo salad lashed with palm sugar syrup, creamy otak, and coffee-scented sticky rice and mango.

The Disgruntled Chef (26B Dempsey Rd.; 65/6476-5305; dinner for two S\$130) is Daniel Sia's debut turn as chef-owner. Here the conceit is tapas-style dining, though this alone doesn't explain the taste rush you get from garlic bread with baked bone marrow, or a slow-cooked veal cheek served with Yorkshire pudding.

► **DRINK** In Singapore, the word du jour is "view," which explains the flurry of new rooftop bars. Framed by greenery and a vertiginous infinity pool, **Ku Dé Ta** (Skypark at Marina Bay

Sands North Tower, 1 Bayfront Ave.; 65/6688-7688; kudeta.com.sg) offers a stunning panorama of Singapore's skyscrapers from its 57th-floor perch. Across the bay, **1-Altitude** (One Raffles Place; 65/6438-0410; 1-altitude.com) claims the title of the world's tallest alfresco bar—it's on the 63rd floor—as it reels in tipplers with Indian and Japanese malt whiskies.

► **STAY** While the towering **Marina Bay Sands** (1 Bayfront Ave.; 65/6688-8888; marinabaysands.com; doubles from S\$359) rolls out a brashly overloaded menu of designer shops, glitzy casino and celebrity chefs like Guy Savoy and Tetsuya, those preferring a quieter and more intimate setting should hightail it to the elegant **Fullerton Bay Hotel** (80 Collyer Quay; 65/6333-8388; fullertonbayhotel.com; doubles from S\$480), where every room boasts perfect views of the bay and city. Over in Little India, **Wanderlust** (2 Dickson Rd.; 65/6396-3322; wanderlusthotel.com; doubles from S\$180) tempts with a mix of glam backpacker grunge and quirky design.

► **SHOP** It's easy to lose an entire afternoon wandering concept store **ALT** (#01-01 The Heeren, 260 Orchard Rd.; 65/6732-6677; alt-style.com.sg). On offer is a dizzying variety of grooming products, pet accessories and regional and international labels like Thai cosmetic range BSC Panadda and Shanghaiese fashionista favorite Broadcast. Across the road, the four-story **Mandarin Gallery** (333a Orchard Rd.; 65/6831-6363; mandarinalgallery.com.sg) boasts a savvy mix of fashion, Japanese homeware and eateries headlined by the likes of Just Cavalli, Marc by Marc Jacobs, Bathing Ape, Jones the Grocer, Vertu and Henry Cotton's.

TAIWAN

► **EAT** Taipei teppanyaki guru Danny Teng—billed by locals as the "godfather of steak"—has enlisted an A-list team of interior designers, dessert masters and sommeliers for his latest venture, **Danny & Company** (No. 33, Lane 52, Siwei Rd.; 886-2/2705-9911; dannycandcompany.com; lunch for two NT\$2,000). Try the prime dry-aged rib-eye cap steak and sous vide lamb rack, paired with wine from a 170-label collection. Taipei's gourmands are aflutter with the arrival of **L'Atelier de Joël Robuchon** (5th floor, Bellavita, 28 Songren Rd.; 886-2/8729-2628; joel-robuchon.net; tasting menus from NT\$2,680), the newest outpost of culinary titan Joël »

Special Promotion

and contemporary art throughout the hotel's public areas. Up top, the stylish rooftop bar **Lantern** is a great trendy spot to enjoy a glass of fine wine and gourmet snacks complemented by dreamy bay views.

For an alternative, try heading to the aptly named **1-Altitude Gallery & Bar**, which looms over the city from 282m above sea level. Here, you can unwind with a cocktail while ships pass in the night in the harbor below. Last – but definitely not least – in terms of recommended viewpoints is the verified world-record-breaker that is the 165m **Singapore Flyer** – the world's tallest observation wheel. The height of a 42-story building and some 30m higher than the London Eye, its half-hour rides flaunt 360-degree panoramas of numerous landmarks (from Marina Bay to the Singapore River, taking in Raffles Place, Merlion Park, Empress Place and the Padang).

Resorts World™ Sentosa (RWS) is another visually stunning complex – and home of Southeast Asia's only **Universal Studios®**, as well as different uniquely themed hotels including the **Hard Rock Hotel Singapore**, **Festive Hotel** and **Hotel Michael**. A virtual gallery for installation art, pieces decorating the vicinity include *Adam and Eve* by

Columbian artist **Fernando Botero** and, notably, *Space Elephant* – sculpted from one of legendary absurdist Salvador Dali's most famous paintings, *The Temptation of St Anthony* (1946).

Within the **FestiveWalk** retail esplanade at RWS is the world's first (and only) **Michael Graves Gallery**. Named after this complex's renowned American architect, the gallery presents products designed exclusively by the man himself, including original drawings, fine art posters, books, stationery, kitchen and home-ware – even fashion lines. **Hotel Michael** also offers rooms featuring his trademark furniture and circular, blue mosaic showers.

Back on the mainland, Singapore's diversity expresses itself via a new breed of niche hotels. Having established two such offerings, lawyer-turned-hotelier Loh Lik Peng characterizes the boutique spirit. After installing his ultramodern **New Majestic Hotel** in the heart of Chinatown, the entrepreneur transformed a former school in Little India into the glitzy 29-room **Wanderlust Hotel**.

The latter is so design-driven it features input from no less than four creative agencies. So, exactly what's fuelling Peng's

THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM BELOW: THE SINGAPORE FLYER; THE RWS CHIHULY GALLERY; HOTEL MICHAEL AT RWS; THE MOSAIC SHOWER AT HOTEL MICHAEL, A ROOM AT FESTIVE HOTEL RWS. OPPOSITE PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: THE LOBBY AT THE FULLERTON BAY HOTEL; HENDERSON WAVES; THE VIEW FROM 1-ALTITUDE BAR.





CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: THE CLUB; A ROOM AT WANDERLUST; THE WHIMSICAL TREE ROOM AT WANDERLUST; THE CLUB HOTEL LOBBY; QUINCY HOTEL; THE 'RISING FOREST ART INSTALLATION' AT MBS BY CHONGBIN ZHENG.

creative drive? "I've always liked beautiful and well designed things," he says, simply. "I like furniture especially and you know that fits perfectly with hotels."

While Peng's accommodations spruce up their surroundings, **The Club Hotel** is located in the historically rich conservation area of Club Street and Ann Siang Hill. Ministry of Design Director Colin Seah thus made cheeky references to Singapore's colonial past in the hotel's interior, "such as a larger-than-life statue of Raffles with his head in the clouds, as well as through furniture and artifacts."

When it comes to outstanding exteriors, however, all visitors should check out the 108-room **Quincy Hotel** on Orchard Road, framed in dark aluminum and tempered glass. The distinctive amalgam of materials makes the building almost leap out and meet you head-on. Behind the façade, a collection of individual spaces awaits, with each offering a different experience, encompassing elements drawn from architecture, interior design, landscape, project management and even graphic design.

In these ways – and the way it has historically and continuously updated and modernized the lay of the local

ESSENTIALS

The Jewel Box: 109 Mount Faber Road, Singapore 099203. www.mountfaber.com.sg

The Fullerton Bay Hotel: 80 Collyer Quay, Singapore 049178; www.fullertonbayhotel.com.

1-Altitude: OUB Centre, 1 Raffles Place, Singapore, www.1-altitude.com.

The Singapore Flyer: 30 Raffles Avenue, Singapore 039803, www.singaporeflyer.com.

Marina Bay Sands®: 10 Bayfront Avenue, Singapore 018956, www.marinabaysands.com.

Resorts World™ Sentosa: 39 Artillery Avenue, Sentosa, Singapore 099958, www.rwsentosa.com.

New Majestic Hotel: 31–37 Bukit Pasoh Road, www.newmajestichotel.com.

Wanderlust Hotel: 2 Dickson Road, www.wanderlusthotel.com.

The Club Hotel: 28 Ann Siang Road, www.theclub.com.sg.

Quincy Hotel: 22 Mount Elizabeth, Singapore 228517, www.quincy.com.sg.

land via innovation and inspiration – the transformative boutique concept almost seems to symbolize the spirit of Singapore itself. In fact, to experience the bold, brave new Singapore is to really be part of it.