

Take to the Skies FireFlyz

Official Firefly In-Flight Magazine
Issue 054, APRIL 2018



PATONG:
THE BEACH THAT
RARELY SLEEPS

INDONESIA:
NATION OF A
THOUSAND ISLANDS

FROM BEACHSIDE
TO MOUNTAINTOP

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Bone Joint & Pain Specialist Centre (Pusat Pakar Perubatan Dr Anwar) wholly owned by Dr Anwar Samsari B. Mat Arshad which is located at Pusat Bandar Seberang Jaya. Dr Anwar's Rheumatology Centre is one of the few Rheumatology Centre serving the Northern Region of Malaysia comprising three states Pulau Pinang, Kedah, Perlis.

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C O N T E

News & Updates

- 4 CEO's Note
- 6 Events
- 8 Buzz
- 10 Firefly News
- 70 Favourite Snapshot

Cover Story

- 12 Struck By Love's Arrow

Wander

- 26 Adventurous Selangor
- 28 Reel To Real Life

Getaways

- 32 Indonesia: Nation Of A Thousand Islands
- 36 Patong: The Beach That Rarely Sleeps

26



28



32



40



Savour

- 40 A Midwestern Odyssey
- 42 East Meets West

Personality

- 48 From LA To KL

Techie

- 50 Picture Perfect

N T S

Fab Five

54 A Treat For Globetrotters

Impromptu

58 Scheduling For Success

Tunes

60 More Than Just A Viral Sensation

Check In

63 By The Waves

Art Scene

64 Paper Creations

Wheels

66 Volvo S90 T8 Inscription Plus

54



66



71



Health

68 How To Ease Into Yoga

Keep It Reel

71 Movie Magic

68





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Ignatius Ong
Chief Executive Officer

For more updates on the network, visit www.fireflyz.com.my or follow us on Facebook (facebook.com/Firefly), Twitter (twitter.com/flyfirefly), and Instagram ([@FlyFirefly](https://www.instagram.com/FlyFirefly)).

DEAR guests,
Greetings from Firefly and welcome to the March issue of Fireflyz!

It's our birthday month! It makes me a proud CEO of Firefly Airlines as I announce that we have crossed yet another milestone in the history of our company. This month, our airline shall mark 11 years of its establishment. I take this occasion to thank each of you for being an earnest part of Firefly Airlines.

We are grateful to each and every one of you who have trusted us to provide immaculate services and products. I must say that your demands, challenges and feedbacks have pushed us to go further and improve vigorously. Everything that we do at Firefly is For You.

This milestone provides us an opportunity to both reflect on our past and to look forward towards our future. As we celebrate, we would like to say "Thank You" to all of our customers and co-workers, both past and present.

We plan to keep our business and bond growing with you and continue to provide you with nothing less than the best. With your support, we wish to explore new heights this year.

Once again, a huge thank you to all of you out there who have been with us throughout this exciting journey. We want you to have a memorable yet efficient experience from the time you arrive at our doorstep to the time you board our planes. Now, sit back, relax and have an amazing journey!

COVER

PICTURE:

The cover features the colourful Thai festival of Songkran whose origins date back centuries. Celebrated in April, the festival involves showering one another and elders with water for blessings and as a sign of respect. Turn to our cover story to find out more.

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April Happenings

Singapore International Jazz Festival 2018 April 6-8, Marina Bay Sands, Singapore

The eagerly anticipated fifth anniversary of the **Singapore International Jazz Festival (SING JAZZ) 2018** returns to the iconic Marina Bay Sands from April 6 to 8, and is all set to excite over 20,000 fans with a distinctively curated musical line-up. The three-night music extravaganza spans across multiple stages around the integrated resort to feature Jazz and all its affiliated genres, including Soul, Blues, Latin, Funk, R&B, Hip-Hop, World Music and Electro Swing.

The Main Stage and The Late Show combine with an impressive 30-hours of live music by 12 mega-acts across the entire weekend. Acts include Grammy Award winners, Soul II Soul, multi-Grammy winner and "American Boy" songstress, Estelle, five-time Grammy Award-winning soul singer Lalah Hathaway and legendary hip-hop and soul artist Ms. Lauryn Hill.



Shakespeare Demystified: Romeo & Juliet April 24-29, Kuala Lumpur Performing Arts Centre, Kuala Lumpur

This year, the theatre company, KL Shakespeare Players (KLSP) stages a more movement-and-body based **Shakespeare Demystified: Romeo & Juliet**. It is embracing, for its seventh production in seven years, the philosophies and practices of physical theatre.

This tale of starcrossed lovers will be depicted with a physical dynamism and visual treat that will allow the audience to feel not only the heat of the bloody feud between the Montagues and the Capulets but also the passion and danger of young people-Romeo and Juliet-in love.



Salung Luang Songkran Festival April 9-13, Khelang Nakorn Park, Tha Kraw Noi Rd, Mueang Lampang, Thailand

Salung Luang is the unique Songkran festival of Lampang, organised from April 9 to 13. The Salung Luang procession will be beautifully decorated ("salung" means "water bowl" and "luang" means "large"). The participants in the parade dress up in the ancient Lanna style and carry a giant silver bowl around the city to receive lustral water soaked with turmeric and acacia from the people to be poured onto the Phra Kaeo Don Tao, the revered Buddha image of the town enshrined at Wat Phrathat Lampang Luang.

There will be a merit-making ceremony at the temple, sand pagoda making, ceremony of pouring water onto the elderly, splashing of water, fairs and various forms of entertainment.



Standard Chartered KL Marathon 2018 April 7&8, Dataran Merdeka, Kuala Lumpur

SCKLM will mark its 10th edition and will be introducing a slew of new elements to make the 10th anniversary celebrations truly memorable! The marathon held its inaugural race in 2009 with 13,500 runners (in total) and in 2013, 33,000 runners registered. The marathon starts and finishes at Dataran Merdeka and is flagged off directly beneath the clock tower of the Sultan Abdul Samad building.

The marathon route passes several landmarks unique to KL namely, the iconic Twin Towers, the National Monument, the colourful Little India quarter, the majestic National Mosque, the King's Palace and the Parliament building. The route takes you on a unique journey of new and old.



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Buzzing This April

Launch Of Phase Two Marks A New Milestone For Mitsui Outlet Park KLIA Sepang

MFMA Development Sdn Bhd, a joint venture between Mitsui Fudosan Co, Ltd (Mitsui Fudosan) and Malaysia Airports Holdings Berhad (Malaysia Airports), has successfully launched Phase 2 of its planned expansion for Mitsui Outlet Park KLIA Sepang after the official opening in 2015. The launch of the expansion phase was officiated by the Minister of Transport, Dato' Sri Liow Tiong Lai.

The architectural concept for the new expansion phase also introduced three new concepts namely the River Walk and Sky Walk, which gives the image of wilderness paradise entering the inland from the Sea Resort; the Forest Walk corridor reflects a forest trail connecting the river and the sky, merging the three concepts into a complementary sensorial experience.



Dudalina Opens First Stand-alone Boutique At Great Eastern Mall

DUDALINA, the leading brand of high quality shirts and apparel in Brazil officially launched its first stand-alone boutique in Great Eastern Mall. This also marks the opening of its first boutique in Asia Pacific. This follows the opening of the Dudalina shop-in-shop concept in the Binwani's boutique at Aeon Mall Shah Alam.

A stylish addition to the Binwani's Fashion Group stable of brands, the group is poised to expand across Asia. Located strategically on the Ground Floor of Great Eastern Mall, the 750 sq ft store carries a mix of apparel for both men and women, Masculino and Feminino.



Second Wyndham Resort in Bali Opens Near Dreamland Beach

A second **Wyndham Hotels and Resorts®** flag has risen in Bali with the opening of Wyndham Dreamland Resort Bali. The upscale 177-room resort is located near Dreamland Beach, one of Bali's most idyllic hidden coves.

Living up to its name, Dreamland Beach is framed by dramatic limestone cliffs that hug the rugged coastline of the southern Bukit Peninsula. Characterised by glorious stretches of white sand, breathtaking sunsets and some of Bali's most iconic surf breaks, it is little wonder that this slice of heaven is now home to Wyndham Hotel Group's newest Bali resort.



Connecting Singapore's Art Scene With The World At M Social Singapore

Local artists and millennial travellers found a new meeting ground at **M Social Singapore** from March 2018. The award-winning lifestyle design boutique hotel, nestled along the Singapore River at Robertson Quay, introduced M Social Communities—an exciting experiential programme developed by Millennium Hotels and Resorts and supported by Singapore Tourism Board (STB) through its pilot Marketing Innovation Programme.

M Social Communities aims to incorporate Singapore's arts scene into the quintessential M Social experience by providing an experiential setting for local creatives and artisans who are deeply rooted in their communities, to share their craft with visitors from around the world.





SHOP TILL YOU DROP

A shopping destination with your favourite luxury brands, Johor Premium Outlets is home to 130 designer and brand name outlet stores which feature fantastic savings up to 65% off every day. The center is equipped with amenities such as a fully functional customer service centre, ATM machines, stroller rentals, wheelchairs as well as locker rentals.

Located an hour's drive from Singapore, three hours from Kuala Lumpur and just a short distance from Senai International Airport, Johor Premium Outlets ensures easy access for all shoppers. The center also serves as a hub between Resorts World Genting in Malaysia and Resorts World Sentosa in Singapore.

For more information, please visit: www.premiumoutlets.com.my

FY Is Not Just Our Flights' Code; Firefly Brings FY is For You

GOING back to basics such as people's needs, sustaining the business market and attracting mass and leisure audiences, Firefly Airlines has rolled out a concentrated campaign running throughout 2018. The airline has always been about convenience and seamless service in short-haul air travel. The travel experience is simple and aims to set the standard for service with commitment to deliver hassle-free regional connectivity to passengers in a True Malaysian style.

Traveling aside, Firefly is an airline that is all about being there for passengers. With that, FY is For You will be the main pillar and

marketing direction for 2018. This will carry substantial segment marketing such as FY Convenience, FY Benefit, FY Opportunity covering Business-To-Business (B2B) and FY Action, FY Enjoyment, FY Engagement, FY Info covering Business-To-Consumer (B2C).

B2B's main focus will be on aircraft advertising, C-wallet corporate packages, partnerships and collaborations. Whereas, B2C will focus on campaigns and promotions, value-added services, viral videos on social media, contests and media releases.

The main idea of FY is For You is to better serve the customers' needs, improve the airlines competitive position, increase sales, improve market share and to enhance

Firefly's image. As partnerships are key to providing the ultimate customer experience and satisfaction, there will also be a series of B2B for B2C such as a partnership between Firefly and another business for all consumers out there.

A series of B2B and B2C campaigns will be rolled out to keep all customers enticed, such as the 'Everyone Gets A Prize' campaign. This campaign left no one behind as every customer who booked a ticket via the Firefly website got a chance to click open a gift box and receive prizes like a one-way flight ticket, RM50 E-wallet voucher, RM50 Firefly online store voucher or a Firefly Holiday online voucher. This campaign was under FY Appreciates You.

Another segment which is

currently running is the FY Smart Traveller where Firefly has once again collaborated with Grab Malaysia (formerly known as MyTeksi) and passengers who purchase return flight tickets would get a FREE unique Grab voucher code valued at RM10 which can be used to and from domestic airports where Firefly operates at.

FY is For You is a priority to us as it amalgamates two key components that explain how important our customers are to us, beyond words. The two are: FY stands for "For You" and Firefly is always there For You. The airline anticipates to bring to light the simplest pleasures in life that makes each and every moment special when flying with Firefly.

Click On Firefly Airlines Virtual Gift Box And Receive Prizes

FIREFLY Airlines once again extended its greatest appreciation to passengers with not one, but four different prizes; this time by making sure everyone who made a booking with Firefly received a gift through the 'Everyone Gets A Prize' campaign.

"It's always a good time to appreciate our passengers. We want them to know that FY is always For You. We are not just about travelling, but we go beyond that to keep our passengers happy and we want them to look forward to new experiences when flying with Firefly. As I always say, we aim to provide a seamless travel experience throughout the journey; from booking, to

checking-in, to boarding the aircraft. We strive to make every journey more enjoyable and to help our passengers achieve their personal travel aspirations," said Ignatius Ong, Chief Executive Officer of Firefly Airlines.

The 'Everyone Gets A Prize' campaign left no one behind as every ticket purchase made by passengers via the Firefly website, allowed them a chance to randomly click open a virtual gift box and receive prizes such as a **FREE** one-way flight ticket, RM50 E-wallet voucher, RM50 Firefly online store voucher or a Firefly Holiday online voucher. Having just launched **FY is For You** on February 26 2018, this campaign falls under FY Appreciates You.



#truemalaysian Discovery

Rabbit Sweet

Apart from the creamy and milky taste, what's also unforgettable about this candy is the fascinating opaque wrapper that comes with it. The wrappers are actually made of edible rice cellophane that dissolves in your mouth. Why bother unwrapping when we can eat them all together?





Buckets Of Blessings

Dubbed ‘Thailand’s most famous festival’, Songkran marks the advent of the Thai New Year. Celebrated in mid-April, it is the time of the year where you will see locals and tourists alike on the streets, soaked with their hair plastered to their face, while smiling profusely. *Jamie Ow* gets soaked from head to toe and partakes in this joyous festival, drinking in the merriment at the Land of Smiles.

SONGKRAN comes from a Sanskrit word meaning ‘approaching’ or ‘pass into’. Signifying the birth of the new year, Siamese people—largely family-oriented—celebrate it by splashing buckets of water, which is an important

element in the celebration. It is also a time to value and appreciate family, and to spend time with loved ones. Devotees in the predominantly Buddhist country, pay their respects in various temples (Wat)s by pouring water on images of Buddha and the hands of Buddhist monks.



Depending on where you go, this grand and joyous celebration can last from three to ten days. Soaking in your surroundings, you'll be likely to spot fellow tourists shrieking with glee, saffron-clad monks with darkened robes from sprays of scented water; drenched store owners wandering into the crossfire of water guns, the elderly joining the high-spirited throng, and zealous devotees paying their respects at numerous temples. The air is filled with a sweet, flowery scent, while the cement roads and buildings are drenched in water, staving off the heat during the country's hottest season.

Colours are added to the mélange; truly a spectacle that cannot be missed. You would do well to bring a rain sleeve for your camera or a Ziploc bag, should you decide to capture the magic of the festival. Magical and awe-inspiring moments define one's travel experience, enkindling passion and forging unforgettable memories.

Origins

Some time ago, much like today's practices, the Siamese people would visit local monasteries and provide offerings of food to the monks who resided there. Scented water would also be poured over monks as a way of holy cleansing, which would then be collected and poured over one another as the water was believed to be blessed. Do not be surprised if you are doused with a bucket full of chalky, colourful water or receive a faceful of colourful paste. This is seen as a mark of blessing, likely picked up from the Buddhist rituals of using chalk to mark blessings.

However, one would have to ask, what's so significant about throwing water? As of most of the Southeast Asian region, water is an indispensable element in many societies. Many civilisations were founded in river valleys; ancient Mesopotamia formed in the valleys of the Tigris and the Euphrates, ancient China on the Yangtze River and Indus on the flood plains of the Indus River. ▶

Water skirmishes continue well into the evening.



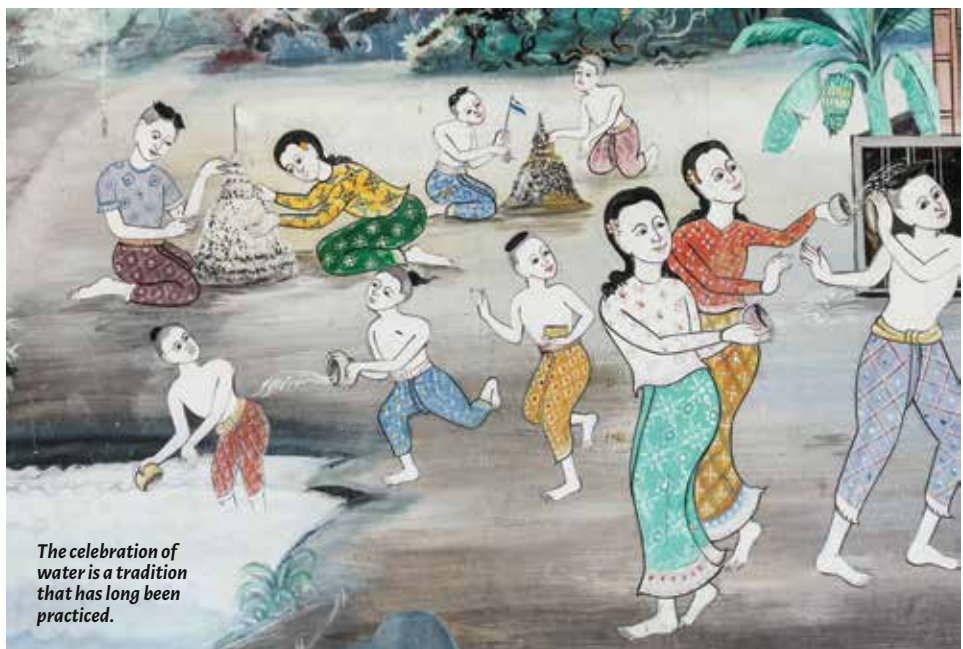


Devotees would crutch Bodhi trees as a sign of respect.

▶ Since rice is the traditional agricultural lifeblood in Thailand and requires much water to cultivate, it is no wonder that water—to the Siamese people—merits a celebration.

This festival of rejuvenation and renewal is said to originate from the ancient Indian festival of Makara Sankranti or Maghi, a festival dated in the Hindu calendar and observed in January to worship the deity Surya. There is even a Hindu myth tied to the origins of Songkran: it depicts a young man, Dhammaban, whose bizarre intelligence enabled him to understand the language of birds. One day, Brahma (a Hindu God) decided to test his intelligence by asking him “Where is the aura of a male in the morning, afternoon and night?”

If he was unable to answer, his head would be chopped



The celebration of water is a tradition that has long been practiced.

off, though if he answered correctly, Brahma would decapitate Himself. Pressured to seek the answer, the young man was fortunate enough to overhear a conversation between two birds, one of

which knew the right answer to the question. Then, he sought Brahma and told him:

In the morning, the glory of man was on his face because a man has to wash his face every morning.

In the afternoon, the glory of man would be on his chest or body since one bathes.

In the evening, the glory of man is on the feet as a man must wash his feet before going to bed.



Splashing or pouring water on Buddha statues is part of the ritual.

Brahma was bound by word to cut off His own head but knew if His head rolled on the earth, it would summon an inferno. Therefore, he instructed his seven daughters to transport it to Mount Kailash, the abode of the god Shiva. Once a year, each of the daughters take turns to carry the head in procession around the mountain, with several gods and goddesses in attendance as a celebration of prosperity and joy of humans.

In Search Of The Best

The nationwide celebration is no doubt a cause to visit. Once there, why not go for the loudest, craziest and most colourful celebration? Chiang Mai, a city in the mountainous northern region of Thailand, is perhaps your best bet to enjoy the biggest and longest running celebration—six days—in the country. Kicking off the celebration at Thapae Gate, you will be able to witness



Scented water that has been blessed for use in religious processions.

yet another traditional ritual, the building of sand castles. The tradition of carrying sand and building sand castles is to honour Buddhism to ward off bad karma.

There is also a procession of crutching the Bodhi tree, called Mai-Khum Saree, using long pieces of wood. According to the Buddhist scriptures, Buddha achieved enlightenment under the Bodhi tree. Seen as sacred and as a symbol of longevity, devotees believe that supporting the tree is a sign of respect. Head towards Naowarat Bridge and join in the procession, where dozens of Buddha images are carried around the old city.

Since the ancient city is surrounded by a square-shaped moat, no one is safe from getting drenched. The tuk-tuks and pickup trucks play another role during this day. Aside from ferrying people, they act as refill stations, carrying barrels of water around the city. Constant supply of ammunition ensures water skirmishes continue well into the evening. You can go around on your moped, join the throng on foot, or hop on a vehicle and do a water drive-by, the choice is yours!

The locals would also throw foam into the mix. You are likely to find large machines spewing clouds of bubbles onto the street. Just remember to keep your mouth closed—a near impossible feat as you will be having so much fun—or risk falling sick. You can't be certain whether the water is clean or contaminated. Don't let that put a dent in your celebration though, form a team or be a lone wolf and snipe anyone with your water blaster without remorse. Just use your judgement to avoid being disrespectful and you will likely have the time of your life! **F**



Pains Of A Blazing Heart

When the heart aches, it is never good news. Perhaps less painful than a broken heart but equally debilitating would be heartburn, a painful, burning sensation in the chest and throat. *Fireflyz* looks at some home remedies to prevent and relieve the discomfort.

THERE are plenty of foods out there that can fuel a burning heart. Aside from medication, spicy food, chocolate, onions, alcohol, coffee, tomatoes and dishes high in fat and oil are common culprits. However, where is the enjoyment in savouring food if we are unable to enjoy what we love? Luckily, there are a few home remedies you can resort to to ensure you keep acid from surging up your oesophagus.

Pineapple Juice

One would wonder why an acidic fruit—with pH levels of 3.2 to 4.1—is even on this list. While it is indeed acidic, it contains the enzyme Bromelain, which is said to help reduce hyperacidity and symptoms of heartburn. It is said to have an alkalising effect as well as the ability to reduce inflammation in the gut. Take it with a pinch of salt though, as while it may contain Bromelain, its concentration in pineapples is limited. If you have heartburn, it is best to pair it up with food of neutral pH to allow this 'pineapple enzyme' to work its magic. Avoid it if you have stomach ulcers.





Potato Juice

Juice a raw potato and mix it with water or other fruit juices (avoid citrus fruits) and it will remedy your heartburn in a jiffy. It not only neutralises the acid in your gut but also heals the oesophagus. Thus, if you have esophageal ulcers, this should be your go-to home remedy. Drink immediately after blending for best results.

Chamomile Tea

An excellent stress reliever with the propensity to reduce inflammation, Chamomile tea is yet another one that is good for heartburn. Drink this right after having a meal and you just might notice

the difference. The flower is a member of the Asteraceae family—alongside chrysanthemums and sunflowers. It also has apigenin (a colourful compound in plants), which has antioxidant and cancer combating properties.

Ginger

A central ingredient in Chinese medicine, this proven remedy for heartburn has been used for ages! Containing phenolic compounds, it is said to lessen gastric contractions and reduce gastrointestinal irritation. In addition, it can also reduce swelling and nausea. Make yourself a heartburn-reducing, fat-burning, spiced



tea combo that would instantly rejuvenate by combining ginger, cinnamon, star anise and a little honey. Boil them for 20 minutes.

Others

Celery, cabbages and apples have high dietary fibre which are digested faster, reducing bloating and the chance of acid reflux. Contrary to popular belief, lower levels of stomach acid can also cause acid reflux and heartburn, as digestive enzymes require sufficient amounts to perform their task efficiently. Eating an apple helps regulate this as well as stimulate the production of more saliva in the mouth. **F**



Squiffy Shapeshifters

The Tanukis – also known as raccoon dogs – are tipsy tricksters with shapeshifting scrotums. Yes, we kid you not; at least, according to Japanese folklore. *Fireflyz* shakes paws with the mischievous yet delightfully adorable canid that is now seen as an icon of luck and fortune in Japan.

THE raccoon dog, or *tanuki*, is often confused with a raccoon yet they are not at all the same. Known to the scientific community as *Nyctereutes procyonoides*, tanukis are indigenous to China, Korea, parts of Siberia, and Japan. While it is called a “raccoon dog”, it is neither a raccoon nor a dog! They do not bark and they are do not have the same striped tail that is a characteristic of the raccoon.

They Love To Sleep When It's Cold!

Unlike their cousins – foxes and wolves – tanukis hunker down in their burrows when temperatures plunge to wait out the winter cold. Preferring to snuggle with their companion, tanukis pack on the fat and decrease their metabolism by as much as 25% to prepare for the long hibernation. If it did not manage to pack enough fat, it will awaken to forage for food.

Loving and sociable, the tanukis prefer to live in a closely-knit community or in a pair. The males would often be seen bringing home the bacon and looking after their pregnant mates. Both the male and female play active roles in parenting, ensuring their pups grow healthily and are treated with utmost care and compassion. This goes on until the fourth month, when the pups are old enough to take care of themselves.



They Are Shape-shifting Spirits
Tanukis have another name, *Bake-danuki*. Commonly found in Japanese myths and legends, they are considered as *yōkai* – a supernatural being – portrayed as a mischievous spirit with shapeshifting abilities and sporting a large, magical scrotum. Though it shares the same abilities as the kitsune, the tanuki is unique to Japan (unlike the kitsune which has its roots in China).

Tales of its mystical prowess are handed down through generations. Often exaggerated, tales of the Danzaburou-tanuki of Sado Island, Shibaemon-tanuki of Awaji Island and Yashima no Hage-

tanuki of Kagawa have been committed to memory. Just like the story of the *Three Blind Mice* or *Three Little Pigs*, the Japanese have their three famous tanukis. There is even a Japanese children song that goes something like “Tan-tan, the Tanuki’s testicles ring; the wind has stopped blowing; but still they swing-swing”.

Symbols Of Fortune

Their oversized scrotum – or testicles – has nothing to do with virility but instead, represent sacks of money and symbolises good monetary fortune. Most businesses would have a few tanuki statues placed in front of restaurants or stores. These statues are made from a type of ceramic in the Shiga Prefecture, often with a cheerful and goofy expression and holding a flask of sake.

The tanukis have even appeared in numerous animated films, such as Studio Ghibli’s *Pom Poko*, which features tanukis using their gigantic scrotums to oppose human developers intent on razing their forests. With its scrotum capable of shapeshifting into an umbrella, drums, fans and weapons – or whatever that is needed – it is no wonder the tanukis are a subject of intrigue in Japan. **F**



Bulbous bellied, sake-wielding, goofy tanukis with smiles on their faces, promising mischief.

How to Live A Life Free of Regret

Ever heard of the saying that you should live life to the fullest? Elders would attest to this and with good reasons as well. Fireflyz dishes out some tips on how to live a life free of regret.

Putting Into Perspective

“Do it or don't do it—you will regret both.” These are the wise words of Søren Kierkegaard, Danish philosopher and poet, who aptly puts the subject of regret into a more neutral perspective. Despite the negative trail that follows most of life's mistakes, it's impossible to live without remorse—no matter how hard you try. However, psychology also tells us that it's one of life's greatest lessons.

It's a known fact that human beings often take things for granted until it's too late. And while there are adequate philosophies on regret that have prompted us to appreciate life better, that nagging thought of regret still creeps in during moments of emergencies such as when we lose someone we love or when it feels like we're reaching the end of our lives.

Learn To Forgive

Just like many of our other complex emotions, regret can be helpful in refocusing our minds into a mindset of corrective action. But the reason why regret is mostly seen as a negative cognitive emotion is because when presented under minimal to no control, it can have long-term effects on our wellbeing.

Regret brings in a pattern of rumination that can cause mental health issues like depression. To break the cycle, it's important for us to understand that regret is simply a necessary emotion for survival. Let regret lead the way to self-improvement and kindness towards yourself and others. If your regret stems from grief however, understand that there's nothing you can do to change the situation.

Just Do it!

We will either regret doing it, or regret not doing it. Research has proven that people are more likely to regret actions not taken after a long period of time, which is why the elderly community stresses on the importance of spending time with your loved ones and putting work aside for leisure. Missed opportunities are one of the lead causes of regret in old age, so make it a habit to express love and do things you enjoy before it's too late. The good thing about regret is that if you feel it today, then tomorrow is another day to chase what you've missed.

Take Risks

Steve Jobs was a famous advocate of

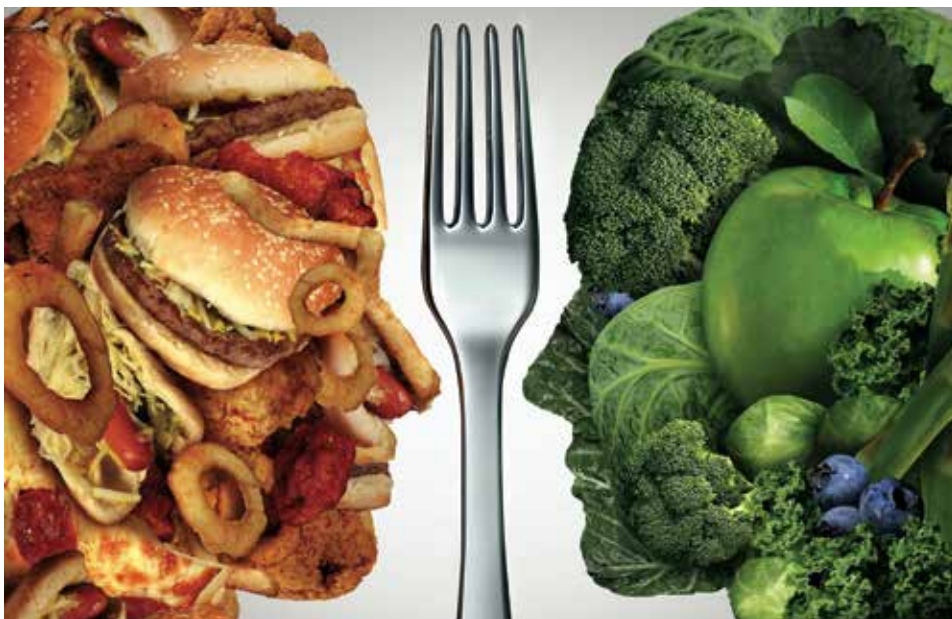
living unapologetically. He used to say, “Remembering that you are going to die is the best way I know to avoid the trap of thinking you have something to lose.” This is also why risk-takers learn the most in life. So give yourself permission to fail, lose something or someone and even do something you're not good at as long as you learn something about yourself. If life was meant to be under control at all times, then you probably wouldn't know how to do a lot of the things you now know. If regret ever comes knocking on your door, just let it in and weigh your options; but don't ever choose to blame yourself.

Chill Out And Relax

Life is a series of ups and downs and though there are times when you have to get serious, one should always remember to relax and take it easy. Find something that brings you happiness, however small it may be and try to incorporate it into your daily life. Once you do this, you will start to enjoy and look forward to each day of your life, breaking away from the perception of life being a dull routine. Ultimately, regrets would fade if you make everyday count. **F**

All About Balance

As we get older, our bodies change. At different points in life, our body will require different amounts of nutrients. However, if we have a bad diet when young, it could come back to haunt us in our later years. *Fireflyz* serves up an ultimate guide on how to lead a balanced diet.



Eat A Rainbow

All meat and no vegetables makes Jack not a dull boy, but a rather unhealthy one. Nature has provided a treasure trove of wonderful fruits and vegetables for us to utilise and we need to do them justice.

As our primary source of vitamins and minerals, it is recommended that every meal is accompanied with a serving of fruits and vegetables of all shapes and colours. The reason behind this is that different colours have different nutrient profiles. Having a mix of them maximises the benefits.

Red coloured fruits and vegetables are said to contain high amounts of antioxidants such as lycopene and anthocyanin; yellow and orange indicate presence of beta-carotene, a precursor of

Vitamin A, which is needed by the body to improve vision, skin, bones and teeth; green is linked to high vitamin K, C and E content, which may reduce risks of cardiovascular diseases; blue and purple contain a bunch of nutrients which range from anthocyanins, flavonoids and ellagic acid; finally, white contains large amounts of dietary fiber along with flavonoids and may reduce the risk of stroke.

Be A Harsh Critic

If you are not fully on board with the idea of living healthy, then this is a pointless venture. Always be ready to keep your head in the game and monitor your eating habits. If you do not actively enforce your conviction for change, no one else will.

If you haven't been eating healthily for a while, it is only natural that the initial change would be a challenge. With each passing day, your new diet plan will start to grow on you – slowly becoming a routine. Switch up your meals by mixing in different combinations of meat and vegetables to add an element of fun to your meals.

Sugar Me Not

Too much of a good thing is a bad thing, and sugar is high on that list. Most of us have a sweet tooth that craves a sugary treat every so often. Linked to obesity and type 2 diabetes, this in itself is good reason to lay off sugar.

Natural sugars from fruits are just right in meeting your body's daily sugar

requirements for healthy living. What's more, it is said that reduced intake of sugar may lead to clearer skin, better mood, and sleep improvement.

An Eye On Budget

Budget is always a consideration when it comes to food and is also probably why people have the misconception that all healthy food is of a higher price range. While this may be true to a certain degree – such is the case of organic food – there are still many leafy greens and fruits that are within our daily budget as long as we know how to organise it well.

Local produce from the marketplace are generally more affordable than supermarkets. Look up fruit seasons for certain fruits as their price might be lower. Poultry such as chicken are able to fulfill your protein needs compared to beef and pork, which are usually more pricey. Carrots, salads, capsicum, garlic and onions are just some of the local produce that won't have you paying too much.

Red Meat Vs White Meat

Protein is the building blocks of our bodies but the decision between red meat and white meat is important towards a healthy diet. Red meat typically consist of beef, veal, lamb, and mutton; while white meat consists of chicken and turkey.

There are significant differences between the two. The first being that white meat contains less fat content compared to red meat. Second is that red meat is said to be linked to cancer, according to the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC). Additionally, avoid eating too much barbecued or processed meat as both have carcinogenic compounds as well. **F**

Seven Fun Facts About Sweden

From being the first in the world to uphold press freedom, embracing the fika (coffee break) as part of national culture, to gifting us with Spotify and Skype, Sweden is a nation that has helped changed our world for the better. Here are seven intriguing facts that might compel you to plan your holidays there.



Get Paid To Attend School

School is a place of learning and discovery, yet we all know the primary reason we go to school – to make, meet and enjoy the company of friends. There are days when laziness rear its ugly head; by now, we might be familiar with common excuses given by students to skip school. Yet in Sweden, there is an added incentive to attend: they pay students US\$187 every month just to attend high school, in order to improve literacy and raise the quality of life.

Punished With Coffee

King Gustav III of Sweden believed that coffee was bad for health. Unlike most rulers who would downright ban the beverage, he ordered a scientific experiment to be conducted on identical twins who were condemned to

death for their crimes. Their death sentence was commuted to life imprisonment, under one condition: one of the twins had to drink three pots of coffee, while the other, three pots of tea everyday for the rest of their lives. The king died before discovering the results and coffee later became a staple.

Jimmy Neutrons Everywhere

Thanks to their emphasis on higher education, Sweden has birthed a society of intellectuals. Even to the extent of disregarding safety: a man was arrested back in 2011, for splitting an atom in his kitchen!

Social Media-Savvy

Maintaining a social media profile is everything these days. Sweden makes things interesting by having their

official Twitter account, @Sweden, managed by a randomly chosen citizen every week.

A Lottery For Law Abiding Citizens


Once, Sweden came up with a “Speed Camera Lottery”, automatically enlisting speed limit-abiding citizens into a drawing. The prize pool was funded by fines paid by speeders. This worked like a charm and added an element of fun into abiding the law.

Obsession With Donald Duck

The Swedish people have openly proclaimed their love for Donald Duck. The cartoon character, while being American, has been the staple of Swedish Christmas for quite some time. There is even a phenomenon known as the “Donald Duck Effect”,

which sees a drop in calls to emergency services (as much as 20%) whenever the cartoon is played on television. Locals have even voted for the Donald Duck Party as a nonexistent political candidate, until the change of voting laws in 2006.

Founding Fathers

Many would peg vikings as barbarians. However, the Swedish Vikings were the ones who founded the Kievan Rus’ (a feudal state that was the precursor to Russia), which was a loose federation of Slavic tribes. They founded the first few Russian states of Novgorod Republic and the Kiev polity. Interestingly, every tsar of Russia, was related to or was of Swedish Viking descent, as detailed in 12th-century manuscripts found in Ukraine monasteries. 

Up, Up And Away

Fireflyz soars to new heights when exploring a festival with rockets that transport your prayers to the open sky!



BOUN BANG FAI, or more commonly known as the Rocket Festival is one of the unique festivals in Laos. Staying true to the name, rockets are the centre of the attraction and it's carried out on the sixth month of the lunar calendar every year, right before the rainy season. The celebration typically lasts for two to three days, with the

purpose of sending self-made rockets skywards to ask the God of Rain "Hang" to help nature with a good harvest, while staying free from floods and drought. It is a practice performed since the pre-Buddhist times, even some regions of Eastern Thailand follow suit.

This festival occurs on the outskirts of Vientiane and neighbouring villages of Nason, Nathan, Thong-mang and Kern. You'll also find men

dressed in colourful women's clothing since the festival also celebrates fertility. In fact, some rockets are made in phallic symbols, adding a dose of humour to the overall merriment and atmosphere. However, the most anticipated element of the festival is the rocket competition participated by teams representing different villages. Scores are based on three criteria - the rocket's height of travel, decorations and the entertainment performance of the team members.

Apart from the fun-filled vibes, part of the reason why contestants take this competition seriously is a the punishment that comes with it. If the rocket fails to launch or falls back to the ground, the team leader has to jump into a pool of mud or drink a muddy rice whiskey called Satho. What's harder than being a leader is, of course, designing a successful rocket. Earlier days, rockets were solely made of bamboo and gunpowder, yet today, other materials such as metal pipes, glass and modern lightings have joined the bandwagon.

Following the sacred ceremonies, the bamboo rockets are carried to the communal launch pad and separated into categories based on size. Large wooden ladders are placed at the scene and the rockets are laid vertically. While the adults are fixing their final touches, children running around with excitement, also set off a scaled-down version of rockets, which is fun to watch. Unlike the actual competition, these little ones have a league of their own and winners are decided by themselves, based on their cheeky criteria.

Just like any famous festivals in Laos, the area is filled with street processions, dance and music performances which serve as a convivial form of prayer to call for rain. A sight to behold in recent times is the involvement of tourists too, who are equally engaged in such a rare festival. Rockets are launched to the applause and cheers of the crowd, turning the clear sky into solid clouds of smoke. Successful scientists erupt in euphoria, while team leaders who were let down, look upon a mud treatment.

The festival commonly wraps up before dusk, hence the spectators can catch sights of the orange sun sinking behind Vang Vieng's iconic limestone formations right after. Perhaps, a charming climax that symbolically highlights that all prayers are well accepted. **F**

Standing Up For Mother Earth

The world is moving at a very rapid pace and with a higher population and more developments, it takes a heavy toll on Mother Earth. As inhabitants of this world, humans are tasked with being its caretakers and have a duty to ensure that the environment is well protected. *Fireflyz* goes green this April and uncovers the origins of Earth Day, a day dedicated to the big blue planet we call home.



ON April 22 each year, Earth Day is celebrated

by countless people across the globe where people are reminded of the role they need to play in caring for the environment. The rise of deforestation, forest fires, global warming and pollution have pushed a percentage of the animal kingdom to near extinction. What's more, the rate of humans suffering from ailments and illnesses have skyrocketed over the years despite the developments of cutting edge medical science.

In the past, generations of humans were not aware of the state of the environment and thus did not give it much thought. Before the 1900's,

you would hardly ever find any environmental concerns hitting the front pages of newspapers. Factories would spew immeasurable clouds of toxic smoke into the air without any form of penalty.

It was only in 1970 with the publication of *Silent Spring*, a New York Times bestseller by Rachel Carson, that the veil over the minds of people was lifted and they began to see the link between their actions and the environment as well as the importance of saving it. The book put forth a simple yet powerful thought: if humans were to keep destroying nature, it would come back full circle and we would be the ones facing destruction. Like a wave, a movement rose from all four corners of the globe and environmental concerns

were thrust into the spotlight. Like a bear awakening from hibernation, people started seeing the pressing issues for what they were: a global threat.

Later that year, Senator Gaylord Nelson, a strong advocate for environmental awareness, drew inspiration from anti-war movements and founded Earth Day. His plan was an effective one, whereby he announced on air a national "teach-in on the environment day" and selected April 22nd as the date. On that day, roughly 20 million Americans from all walks of life held a nation-wide demonstration at open areas with the goal of having the idea of a healthy environment and environmental sustainability heard! This led to the establishment of the United

States Environmental Protection Agency and Clean Water Act, Air Act and Endangered Species Act.

In 1990, the same thing happened but this time on a global scale, with citizens across borders banding together as the beacon of hope for a better tomorrow. This movement led to the historic United Nations Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. Each year that followed showed more efforts being put into environmental concerns and now, it has become commonplace in company culture for businesses across the world. 2020 will mark the 50th anniversary of Earth Day and the world may celebrate the golden jubilee of when humanity stood up for Mother Earth! **F**



A French-style village frozen in time.

From Beachside To Mountaintop

The sunny beachside city of Da Nang is a magnet for tourists, and for good reason too. Alluring foodscapes, creatively designed bridges overlooking the majestic Han River, and of course, Ba Na Hills. *Darren Timothy* gets bitten by the travel bug and ascends to new heights on a visit to this mysterious hill and discovers what lies at the top!

VERY much a holiday destination, Da Nang has come up in the world over the years, with the city developing at a very rapid pace. Fast forward years later, Da Nang is now one of the most popular seaside destinations in Vietnam. What's more, it is strategically located near popular travel sites such as the quiet seaside town of Hoi An and the Hue

— the country's former royal capital.

Having been here once before, I decided to move away from the beaches and embrace the cold. For that, my travels took me to Ba Na Hills, or better known as the "Climate Pearl" of Vietnam.

Architectural Genius

The journey from my lodgings in Da Nang city to the hills took me roughly under an hour. Atop this majestic moun-

tain at 1,487 meters above sea level, sits a beautifully built French colonial village and the Ba Na Hills Mountain Resort. Designed and constructed by the French in 1919, the Mountain Resort also serves as a Hill Station that operates an impressive cable car system, which is also the only way to get to the top.

The mountain resort saw a boom in popularity after 2000, and in March 2009, the cable car system enabled ease of

access up the mountain which cemented its position as a tourist destination. Breaking not one, but two Guinness World Records, the cable car system was the longest and highest non-stop cable car system in the world for several years.

When you arrive at the foothill, you will see several gardens adorned with flowers. The warm weather is a stark contrast to what I was to experience at the top. Board-



The flower arrangements in the Garden's were a hit amongst couples seeking a romantic evening.

ing the gondola, I immersed myself in taking in the scenic views of the picturesque forest spread all around.

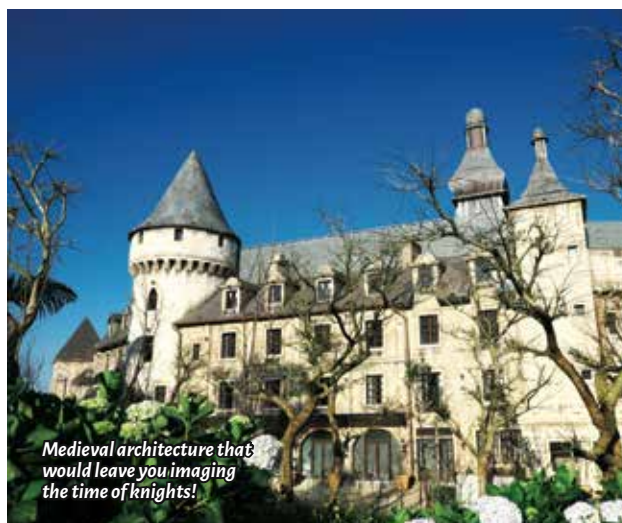
With all four sides of the gondola designed primarily from glass, it is clear enough to even see birds and primates moving about in the jungle below. Selfie sticks are seen making an appearance in each gondola, with tourists capitalising on the backdrop for some insta-worthy pictures. A drop in temperature and the blanket of mist surrounding the gondola is sign that your drop-off zone is fast approaching.

Window To France

If you are in the mood for love, then the *Le Jardin D'Amour* should be your first pitstop. Nine unique gardens rolled into a stunning expanse, each offering different vibes. My favourite, in particular, was the Love Garden which had an array of flowers in various arrangements which together formed a kaleidoscope of colours. A sweet scent hung in the air, which coupled with the cool, crisp air, was very refreshing. From the gardens, you can easily catch a glimpse of the towering white Buddha statue in the distance.



Fantastic bird eye view of the surrounding landscape.



Medieval architecture that would leave you imagining the time of knights!

Moving on to the highlight of my trip (apart from the cable cars), I made my way to the French Village. Looking somewhat out of place, yet exuding a charming and mysterious atmosphere which was brought on by the mist, it felt like I was in the very heart of Europe. Fascinating architecture, street designs and pathways were a replica of a time long gone.

Standing as the centrepiece of the town is a grand cathedral which overlooks a paved courtyard. The silence is gripping, and a little eerie but it gives more character to the place. In the yonder, a castle-like structure, a throwback to medieval times, is another major attraction - the Fantasy Park.

The park's construction was influenced by two iconic books, *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* and *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*, and was built as an entertainment hub of Ba Na Hills. For those with an adventurous bone, the 21-meter climbing wall dares you to take it on. Up for the challenge, it was physically demanding but also quite the experience given the fact that I was doing it atop a mountain.

Unleashing my inner child, I enjoyed the bumper cars and even found myself mesmerised by the dinosaur display at *Back to the Jura*. Thrillseekers could opt for the tower drop which allows for fantastic views and gets your blood pumping. Small funfair booths are also set up around the area, and the nearby mirror maze is sure to mind boggle visitors, just as I was.

A day trip worth taking, Ba Na Hills offers a little something for everyone. I discovered one surprise after another at the top of the hill, but don't just take my word for it, discover it for yourself! 📍

Adventurous Selangor

All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy, which is precisely why Selangor is the ideal destination to get your adrenaline pumping. *Fireflyz* takes a look at some of the exciting activities one can experience in the region.

SELANGOR has always been a favourite tourist spot due to its rapid development, unique cultures and presents a perfect getaway for some much-needed rest and relaxation. Besides its charming sceneries and well-developed cities, Selangor is also a favourite spot for sports lovers as it houses several extreme parks.

Nature's Touch

A great way to reset your biological clock and get in touch with nature would be to explore some of Selangor's famous hiking grounds. Some of these include Broga Hills at Semenyih, Jugra Hill, Kiara Hill park, and Nuang Mountain at Hulu Langat. Each of these locations is accessible by both seasoned hikers and beginners. Not only does



Adrenaline pumping obstacle course in the jungle.

hiking keep you fit, but it is also a great social activity that can be carried out with family and friends.

If hiking is not your cup of tea, why not explore the jungle's wonders from the treetline. Skytrex Adventure is one of the top attractions at Taman Botanical Shah Alam, which allows visitors to navigate through several aerial obstacle courses which are suspended along the forest canopy. It is split into three different categories of difficulty – Big Thrill, Extreme Challenge and Little Adventure. Taman Botanical Shah Alam also has an Animal Park, Four-Season Temperate House, and even a Tropical Fruit Garden. With so much to see and do, Selangor is a region filled with non-stop entertainment and excitement. It's good to get your heart racing and blood pumping now and then.

Broga Hill is one of Selangor's famous hiking grounds.

Catch a bird's eye view of the land by parasailing at Bukit Jugra.

Adrenaline Pumping Adventures

Set in our very own backyard, these extreme parks are fast becoming one of Malaysia's leading outdoor activity hubs. One of the closest attractions to the city would be the Shah Alam Extreme Park. Designed

by professional roller skater Tim Altic, the park serves as a skatepark and is well equipped with all the facilities a skater could ask for. The hit global sport has always had a large following even in Malaysia; hence the park is the ideal hangout spot for them.

If you are looking for something more family-oriented, a trip to Sunway Lagoon Theme Park is what you'd want. A pride of Selangor since way back, the park caters to visitors both local and abroad. While the theme park is still the most popular attraction, Sunway Lagoon Extreme Park is fast becoming a choice for families seeking a more thrilling time. With activities like jet-skiing, wakeboarding, fly-fishing, paintball, futsal, scuba diving, angling, go-karting and even dirt karts, there's fun for the whole family. If you are daring enough, and not faint of heart, there is even bungee jumping available.

The Sky's The Limit

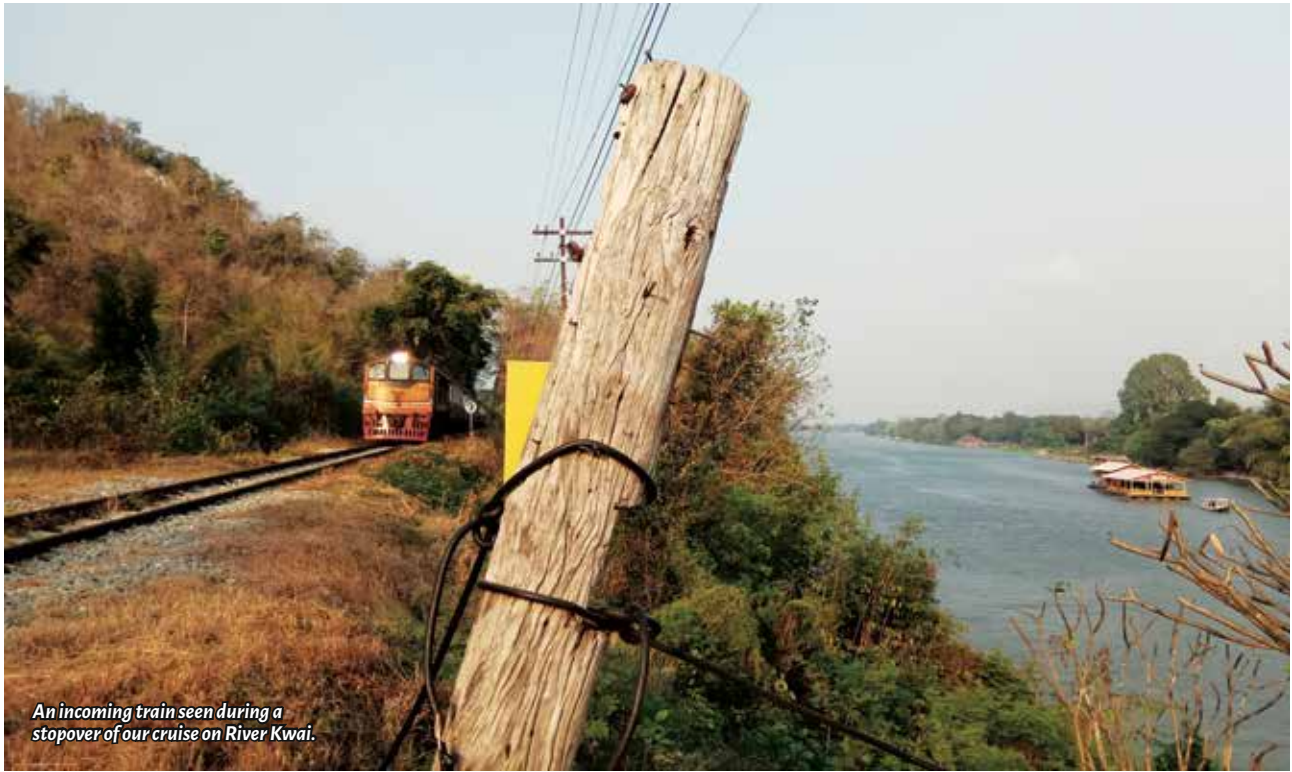
Everyone wants to reach new heights and when you visit Bukit Jugra in Banting, you literally can do so.

Operated by the Malaysian Paragliding and Hand Gliding Association, an unforgettable experience awaits those ready to take on the sport of paragliding. Feel your heart race as you soar through the sky. Once considered an extreme sport, paragliding is now acknowledged as one of the safest airborne activities, thanks to continuous improvement by experts.

With its base located at Bukit Jugra's lighthouse, those heading to Banting from the Klang Valley will need to head south along the coastal road from Klang – which should take 40 to 60 minutes. For those driving from KLIA or Putrajaya, it is a half hour drive going north on the coastal road past Morib.

Motorised paragliding is a step up from its traditional non-powered self as it is easier to learn and wind conditions become less of a factor. This activity not only allows you to glide amongst the clouds, but it also gives you a bird's-eye view of the world below. Tandem paragliding is also very popular here as you may take that Insta-worthy selfie while a professional controls the glider. **P**





An incoming train seen during a stopover of our cruise on River Kwai.

Reel To Real Life

Inspired by David Lean's award-winning film, *Tan Hee Hui* checks out the bridge on River Kwai in Kanchanaburi, Thailand and discovers more than meets the eye.

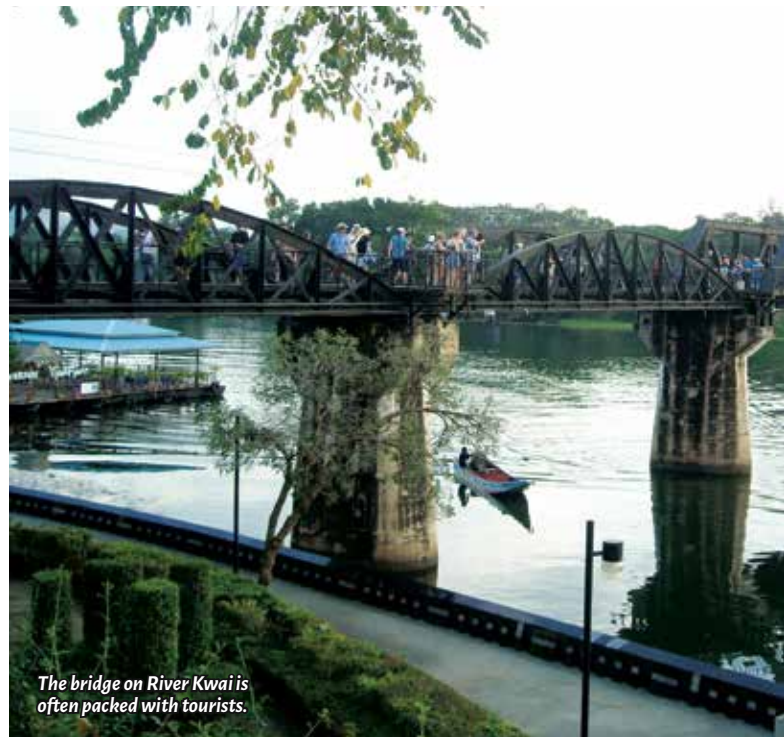
MY trip to the historical WWII site in Kanchanaburi, Thailand was a revelation involving planes, trains, automobiles and more. The highlight was a train ride, which evoked the romance of old-world travels and provided me with unique sights of the countryside.

After arriving at Don Mueang International Airport in Bangkok, I began my journey by taking a public bus to Khao San Road, followed by a boat ride along the Chao Phraya River to Sathorn pier. Then I took a short walk to Thonburi railway station on the busy southern line, arriving in good time to take the

first of two train rides to my final destination: River Kwai Bridge station in Kanchanaburi, West Thailand.

For a comfortable journey, I opted for third-class seats — clean, cosy and often not crowded. It also has a rustic charm to it, brought on by gazing out the window at lush landscapes, small townships, village settlements, workers tending to farms, and railway crossings — where a railway line and a road meet, not separated by a bridge or a tunnel.

Occasionally, we popped our heads out of the windows for the fun of it while the train regularly blared its horn for safety reasons. During the three-hour journey, vendors came onboard at certain sta-



The bridge on River Kwai is often packed with tourists.



A breathtaking view seen during our train journey from Nam Tok to Kanchanaburi.



tions to sell local food, drinks and fruits to passengers – talk about old-world charm.

During WWII, the Japanese used Allied Prisoners of War (PoW) to build a railway from Thailand to Burma to supply their army, avoiding the dangers of doing so by sea. The rail line is known as the “Death Railway” after many prisoners died under appalling conditions. David Lean’s renowned 1957 film *The Bridge on the River Kwai* highlights the bridge across the Kwai Yai river, a great engineering feat back then. Despite the film being shot in Sri Lanka, the bridge on River Kwai actually exists, with regular train services running from Bangkok to Nam Tok.

For insights into the area’s history, start at the bridge on River Kwai, of course, before exploring other parts of Kanchanaburi, surrounded by cafes, shops, small museums and two steam locomotives prominently displayed. You

can walk across the bridge on the wooden planks, but move aside when the passenger trains come along at a 10km per hour speed restriction.

PoW’s built the two bridges here – the first wooden bridge was completed in February 1943, and the steel bridge a few months later. The curved steel bridge spans were sourced from Java by the Japanese. The two straight-sided spans from Japan were installed after the war to replace the spans destroyed by allied bombings in 1945.

More attractions are located outside of the town, and I recommend these hotspots for you to check out.

Hellfire Pass (Konyu Cutting)

Hellfire Pass, also known as Konyu Cutting, is 80 km north of Kanchanaburi on the disused rail line beyond Nam Tok. The Australian government has cleared 7 km of the old track as a memorial

to 13,000 allied prisoners and 80,000 Asian labourers who died building the railway.

However, only 4 km of the stretch is open to the public. This includes Konyu Cutting; the PoWs called it “Hellfire Pass” for how the place looked in the evenings when illuminated by torchlights. I took a leisurely walk, starting at the visitors centre, towards an area where memorabilia were placed on cliff faces in tribute to the PoWs.

Further ahead is the Kwae Noi Valley Lookout. You can look across the valley, west towards Burma and at the centre right is the wartime Konyu River camp, where supplies and rations landed and were often carried on men’s backs, to the work camps surrounding the Konyu-Hintok area.

Hire a taxi driver to take you here for a half-day visit, and tell the driver to drop you at Nam Tok to take a train back to Kanchanaburi – this journey itself is memorable. ►



Memorabilia placed on a cliff face in tribute to PoWs at Hellfire Pass.

► Erawan National Park

Make sure to spend at least half a day exploring this 550-sq-km park, where the main highlights are the seven-tiered cascades, forming cerulean pools with large fish. We enjoyed dipping our feet in some of them—a great

respite from the enervating humidity.

Reaching the first three tiers is easy; thereafter, walking shoes and endurance are required. On level four, there is a natural rock slide for added fun and level six has the least amount of fish in

the waters. Bring a swimming outfit; however, bikinis and skimpy trunks are not allowed. If you're carrying bottles of drinking water, you must register the bottles and leave a 20 Thai baht deposit. This is to prevent littering.

Named after Erawan, a

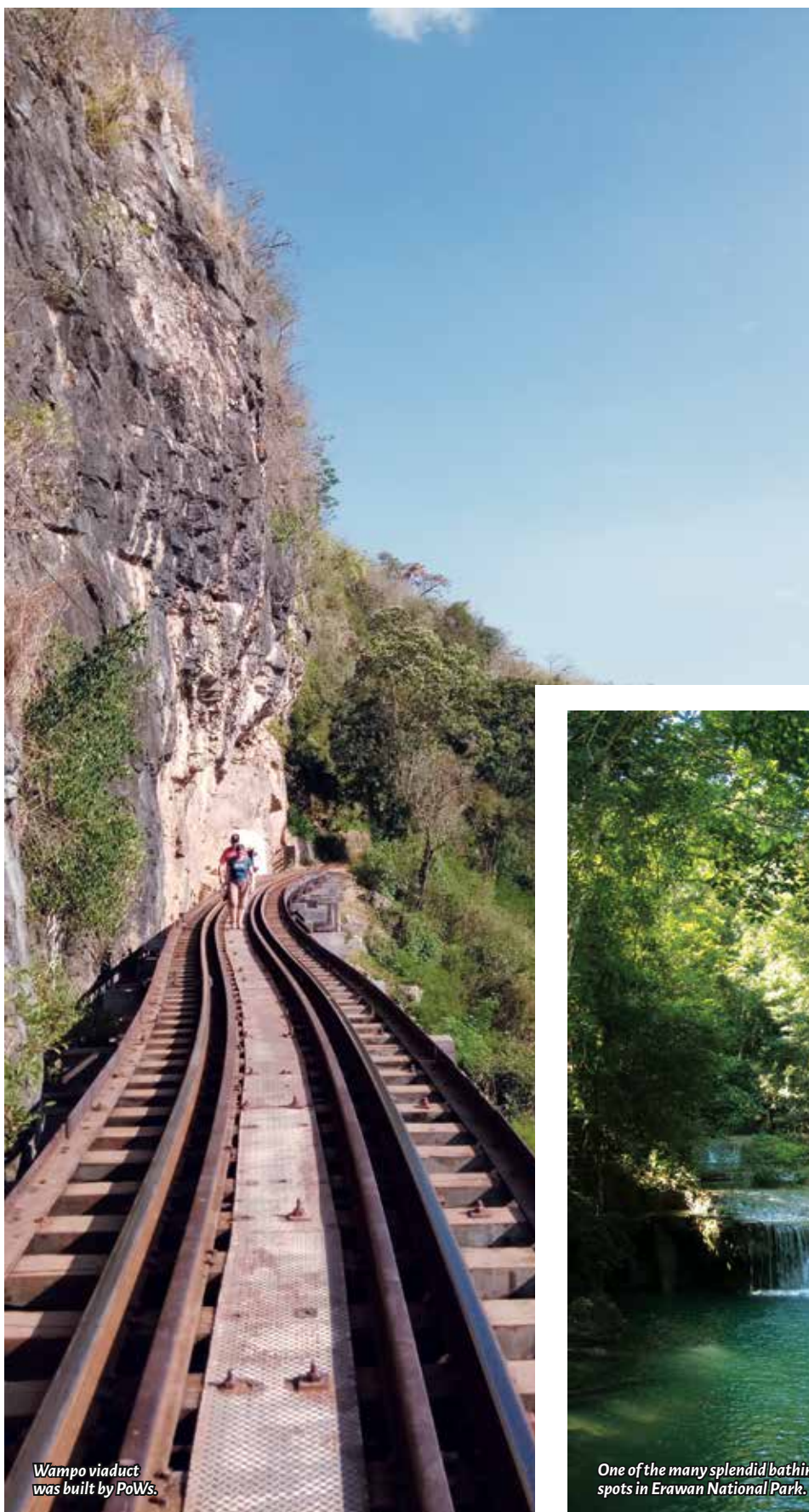
three-headed elephant in Hindu mythology (the top tier is said to resemble it), a mixed deciduous forest covers over 80 percent of the park. Dry evergreen and dry dipterocarp forests as well as bamboo trees form the remainder of the park. The wildlife consists of tigers, elephants, sambar deer, gibbons, red giant flying squirrels, king cobras and hornbills, among others, but it is difficult to spot them along the park's limited trails.

Srinagarind Dam

After leaving Erawan National Park, make sure to visit the Srinagarind Dam, an embankment dam on the River Kwai at Si Sawat in Kanchanaburi. Built in 1974 and completed in 1980, the dam's main purpose is river regulation and hydroelectric power generation. At the top of the dam, you will enjoy panoramas of mountainous terrains in the distance and lush valleys below. Make sure to take lots of pictures.



The awe-inspiring Srinagarind Dam.



Wampo viaduct
was built by POWs.

Wampo Viaduct (Wang Po)

Regular passenger trains still use this viaduct, built by POWs. Besides crossing the famous bridge on River Kwai, the trains slowly run along the beautifully scenic River Kwai, over the unique Wampo Viaduct with wooden trestles nestled against the cliff side. You can also explore the viaduct on foot to enjoy some pretty breathtaking views.

With memories and experiences that instilled a sense of wonder and awe, I believe that this journey has opened my eyes to the remnants of the past and its faint echo in the present. Truly, you would have to not just see the sights, but experience it firsthand, to fully understand its lure and beauty, so book your next flight ticket here! [F](#)



One of the many splendid bathing
spots in Erawan National Park.

Indonesia:

Nation Of A Thousand Islands

B EING a country rich in culture and tradition, Indonesia is well known for its islands such as Bali and Lombok. However, many are not familiar with various other secret attractions which Indonesia has kept away from prying eyes unless they take the roads less travelled. This tropical country boasts natural treasures in every corner, from perfect white sandy beaches to active volcanoes and even ancient temples.

Royal Reign

Away from the hustle and bustle of the city, congested traffic and hectic lifestyles, another hidden gem with a perfect surrounding and wonders to keep you in awe is Raja Ampat, the island regency in West Papua Province. Legend has it that its name was derived due to a woman being found with seven eggs, where four hatched and soon after became the kings of the four main islands while the other three became a woman, a ghost and a stone.

Being a home to a fascinating marine ecosystem, this

little island is a place to admire a variety of sea creatures while obtaining the ultimate sea-life experience. Besides its fascinating natural attractions, tourists can choose to experience unique traditions and observe the daily life of natives.

A Glimpse Of Heaven

For the lovers of nature who still can't get enough of the Weeping Rocks, you can always head to Indonesia's Green Canyon, also known as Cukang Taneuh, Pangandaran. Upon arriving at the main entrance, a row of wooden boats better known as 'Ketinting', will be lined up by the river. These boats will take you on a ride which lets you lay eyes on thick bushes and green trees of the Pangandaran forests along the banks.

Known to the locals as a 'piece of heaven on earth', this picturesque attraction will steal your heart away. Feeling adventurous? You can choose to jump from a 4-meter-tall stone called 'batu payung' by the locals. If you don't feel like getting yourself wet, you can always take ample pictures while exploring the place a little bit more. ▶



Raja Ampat, the island regency in West Papua Province is home to a fascinating marine ecosystem.



One of the residents of Komodo National Park.

► Tranquil Abode

Another place to fully experience the Indonesian culture and lifestyle is definitely at Batu Karas. Located at West Java, this idyllic fishing village is one of the quietest and calmest places to relax and unwind. Despite experiencing routine-like days as long as you stay here, a sense of serenity will fill your soul from the simplicity this little village and its people brings you.

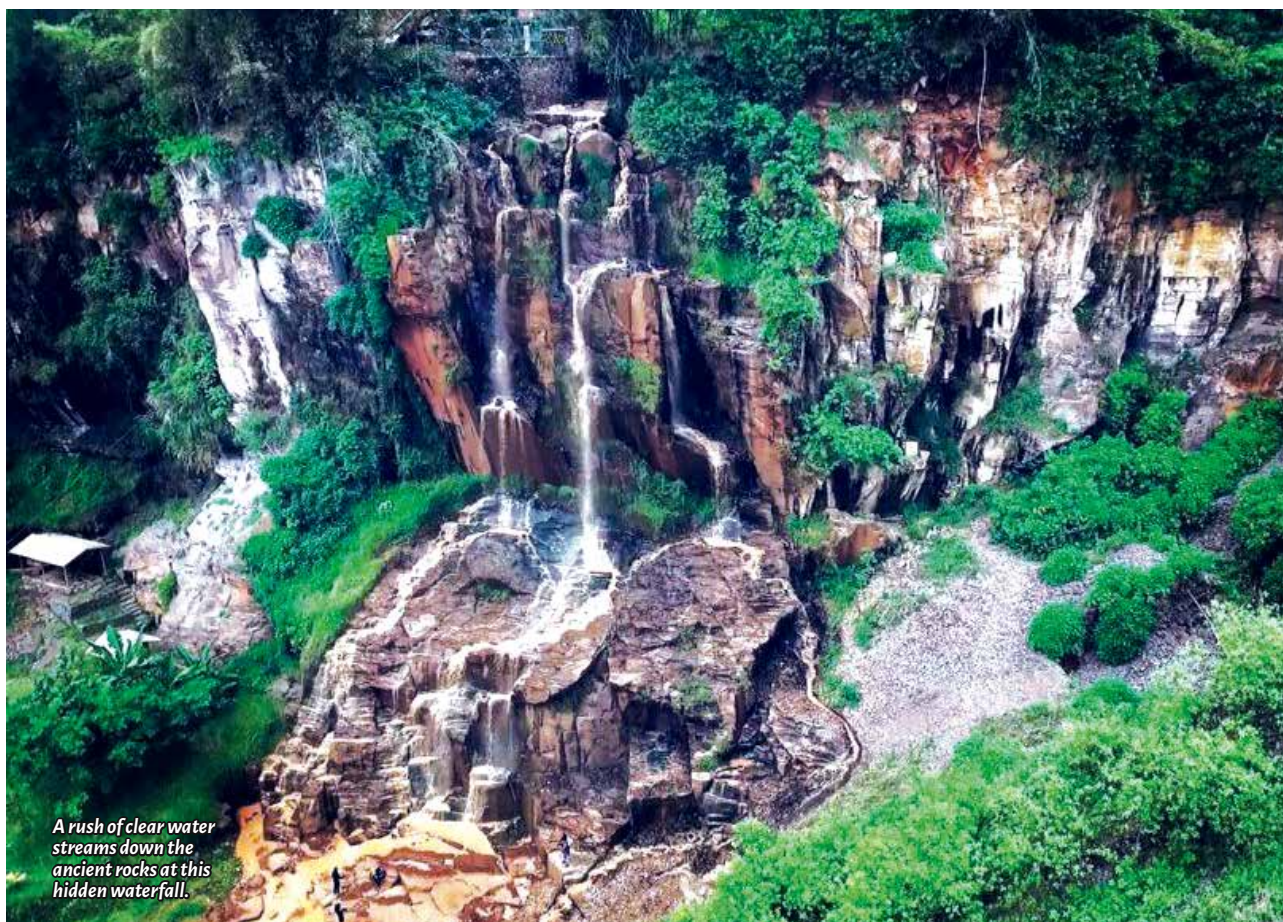
A usual day at this village consists of waking up before sunrise and enjoying chocolate-banana pancakes with lemon juice at a stall nearby. Afternoons include nap time on the hammock and waking up to the sound of waves, followed by a satisfying end to the night with a few cans of local beer with barbequed fishes.

Rocky Beau

Situated in a secluded corner in Bandung, the Weeping Rocks of Curug Batu Templek will take you by surprise as the rare geological phenomenon will make you gasp at its natural



A stunning view of the entire National Park which is also part of the Coral Triangle.



A rush of clear water streams down the ancient rocks at this hidden waterfall.



beauty. Located near quarries, the Curug Batu Templek is formed by tectonic movements and is found on a small part of the Earth's plate. This results in the toffee-coloured streams 'magically' gushing out from the cracks on to the rocks. Unlike many places, the curug is best visited during the rainy season as the water flow is high and forms a pretty, light brown shade—a perfect hue to compliment the darker shades of those rocks.

A Land Of Dragons

Amongst the hidden treasures which will take your breath away is Komodo Dragon Island, situated in Flores, Indonesia. It is a small island that has the power to captivate your soul with its pristine and exotic surroundings. No one ever comes here to party as the only ones who will party with

you are the famous residents, the Komodo Dragons at the Komodo National Park.

Tourists can visit this intriguing place by taking a ferry from Labuan Bajo, though you are advised to steer clear of these lizards and not provoke them as the ones here are known to be the most ferocious creatures in the world. Discovered over a century ago, these 'dragons' have actually existed for millions of years. While their bite is no doubt excruciating, it is their potent mix of bacteria (about 50 different types) that is deadly, leading to blood poisoning in their prey.

Living On The Edge

Indonesia feeds every type of soul out there, even the adrenaline junkies. Take a hike up Tebing Citatah, Padalarang and find out if you're as courageous as you claim to be. Once

you're up there, the view would dispel all tiredness. Consisting of about 25 climbing routes with different difficulty levels, many tourists make their mark here and conquer their fears.

Thrill-seeking beginners usually begin their adventure at an intermediate level, Citatah 48 limestone cliff (around 40 to 50m in height). Complete this and you will be rewarded with the sight of the 'Belati' knife monument. The intensity and danger level of Citatah 90 and Citatah 125 has been reserved for expert climbers as it is not for everyone.

There's never a time when you will run out of hidden treasures to see and visit in Indonesia. At the end of the day, it boils down to how well you discover and explore the unknown areas to find various wonders that will take your breath away. **F**

Firefly flies to
Phuket from Ipoh.
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found at
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Patong:

The Beach That Rarely Sleeps

The glitz and glam of Phuket's famed Patong Beach beckons *David Bowden* to visit and he discovers what truly makes this tourist hub tick.



Tourists and
locals having fun
in the sun.

It is an hour's journey from Phuket International Airport to the island's bustling Patong Beach. First-time visitors to Phuket's best known and main beach will probably be surprised as to just how crowded, congested and cosmopolitan Patong is, but for those seeking the bright lights, action and entertainment, this is the only place to be.

Of all the Thai resort destinations, Phuket is the most acclaimed tourist playground in the Kingdom. With an abundance of white sandy beaches, excellent resorts, spicy seafood and round-the-clock entertainment, it is easy to see why its lustre shines brightest for many visitors.

Patong has much more to offer than its long beachfront; however, visitors who want to do nothing but relax can be excused for staying close to the beach or by their resort pool.

Like many Thai seaside resorts, Patong was a sleepy town—a few decades ago—before it was discovered by jet-setting travellers.

Bountiful Beach

The best beaches are located on Phuket's west coast with Patong being the most developed. This compact but lively beach town is wrapped around a three-kilometre long stretch



Sunset Patong Beach.

of white sand and what was formerly a banana plantation has morphed into a bustling holiday destination that is always packed, especially when the sun shines.

High-rise hotels set back from the beachfront and a multitude of smaller, budget inns ensure extensive TripAdvisor listings. Much of the pavement is occupied by vendors hawking anything and everything that tourists would want as well as many things they probably don't want.

If it is Patong fridge magnets, t-shirts, Thai straw sun hats, colourful soaps, elephant keyrings and even Botox treatments, look no further than the busy streets that radiate back from the tree-lined beachfront.

Not surprisingly, Patong has an extensive range of water



Colourful carved soap at the markets.

sports and associated facilities including diving, windsurfing, water-skiing, parasailing, jet skis, sailing and beachside massages.

It is a busy scene with vendors also offering tickets to Thai kickboxing events, posing with tigers and island hopping trips. Patong is the departure point for journeys into the neighbouring waters with the Koh Phi Phi Group just an hour to the east of the island, Phang Nga Bay to the north and the Similans several hours to the northwest.

Roads are full of nervous tourists on motorbikes, business-like local bikers scooting in between traffic and buses ferrying in recently-arrived, boggle-eyed tourists. Big, busy and brash sum it up but the streets bustle with global tourists soaking crowding it. ►

► Streets are lined with cafés, fish spas, medical centres, souvenir shops, currency exchanges, global coffee concepts and shops selling selfie sticks to capture every Instagrammable moment.

Walking Streets And Streets For Walking

Parts of the downtown area are sealed off in the evening as pedestrians take to walking on roads normally busy with daytime traffic. Bangla Walk-

ing Street is taken back by the people in the evening and during the day, who simply take to walking the streets.

For those who like more conventional shopping, the expansive Jung Ceylon on the centrally-located Rat-U-Thid Road is popular. Shop for exclusive Thai silk products from Jim Thompson and other uniquely Thai merchandise in the basement where there is also a Dee's frozen durian on a stick outlet in the Food Bazaar.



Interior of Naughty Nuri's Patong.



Jung Ceylon Shopping Mall is a shoppers paradise.

Downtown Patong is a maze of retail and entertainment possibilities and a great place to head off on foot to simply wander, and with a grid of urban blocks makes it almost impossible to get lost. This is my favourite way of discovering a new destination – set off on foot with no specific plan in mind to see what unfolds.

One-way roads along Rat-U-Thid Road, the main road into the town and Thaweewong Road (Patong Beach Road), the main road out of town, make it easy to orient the town.

In no specific order, these were some of the sights, sounds and details that captured my attention on my recent Patong ramble.

Rosco's Restaurant and Bar is typical of many Patong outlets in offering Thai and European food from an open-fronted bench-top bar where patrons sit to watch the passing parade while enjoying a cool beverage.

There are many similar bars which especially appeal to single males who enjoy the friendly company and the



Dining Beyond Night Market Patong.

inevitable live sports action beamed in on large television monitors. If this is for you, also seek out Moon Bar, The Black House, Aussie Bar, Smiley Sunset Bar, Kangaroo Bar, Moonshine, and Moulin Rouge.

Other creative streetside vendors like The Hangover@Phuket deliver awesome cocktails at very affordable prices in atmospheric surroundings. Close by, Murphy's Irish Bar is evidence that Irish hospitality, ales and stouts have as much appeal in Patong as they do in Dublin.

While Starbucks and Coffee Club provide a sanitised setting (and the all-important complimentary Wi-Fi) there are lesser-known local concepts where the brews are

just as good with the service being gracious as only the Thais know.

Beachside Banquet

In the evening, most activities gravitate around the numerous bars, cafés, clubs and restaurants. Patong has many restaurants that mostly specialise in Thai seafood but an international buffet of styles caters to hordes of global travellers who descend upon Patong. Menus are now commonly printed in English, Mandarin and Russian and there are many unusual food pairings – Indian and Turkish, Lebanese and Thai, German and Thai – you name it; it is on offer.

Halal diners are catered to with the Kuwait Restaurant

(tabbouleh, rocket and pomegranate and cucumber with yoghurt), Acca Lebanese Restaurant (kebabs and mezze) and Waleed Oriental Restaurant which serves Arabic cuisine with reputedly the best biryani rice in town.

Naughty Nuri's has just opened an expansive two-storey outlet in central Patong to offer hungry diners 'possibly the world's best ribs', delicious cool beverages, fun service and live band entertainment later in the evening. This Balinese-driven concept delivers its signature barbecued spare ribs with special sauce. Just shortly after its establishment, it has already attained TripAdvisor's top Patong restaurant and the fourth best in Phuket.

Restful Resorts

Places to stay in Patong include Novotel Vintage Park Resort, Amari Coral Beach Resort, Impiana Phuket Cabana and Patong Bay Garden Resort.

While the Impiana has immediate beachfront access, the Novotel is set back but is home to Thailand's most innovative spa treatments. Its In Balance Spa was just recognised for offering Thailand's most innovative spa treatment called Pearl Miracle based upon locally-sourced pearl powder products.

When To Travel

Phuket's monsoon season from May to October often restricts some outdoor activities and the rolling seas may affect the enjoyment of a Phuket holiday. The peak tourist season is from November to February.

One of the big attractions of Phuket for tourists is that it is easily accessible to Malaysians on Firefly which flies from both Subang and Penang several times per week.

Patong retains its lustre and lives up to the claims of most tourist brochures in offering action, beach, sun and great food for travellers of all budgets. **F**



Relaxing ambience perfect
for chatting and dining.

Betty's Midwest Kitchen

A-G-40, Jalan PJU 1/43,
Aman Suria Damansara,
47301 Petaling Jaya, Selangor.
Phone: +603 7880 0196

Email: reserve@midwestkitchen.com.my
Tues to Sun (Closed on Mon)

Lunch: 11:30 am - 3:00 pm; 5:30 pm - 9:45 pm

A Midwestern Odyssey

Bobbing his head to *Have You Ever Seen The Rain* playing loudly through his earphones, a twist of fate brought *Jamie Ow* to the doorstep of Betty's Midwest Kitchen. Looking to get 'schnookered' (intoxicated) by gravy and cheese, he was made to feel right at home and served a meal he would not soon forget.

'M convinced that food-obsessed individuals make good cooks. Betty's Midwest Kitchen (Betty's) is the brainchild of a dynamic mother and son duo – Betty and Kevin. Recounting his travels to me, one thing that was clear from the very beginning was how much Kevin loved Midwestern food. Speaking with an impassioned tone, he describes the culinary

scene there as unassuming, akin to the 'mamak' of America, yet with large portions and extremely tasty!

"I visited a pancake place in Saint Paul. There was a caravan set next to a church. The scene looked like something out of an animated movie. I had one of the best pancakes I've ever tasted! In that moment, I had an epiphany – why not bring our love for Midwestern food back

home?"

Inspired by his travels and time spent there, Kevin firmly believes that innovating is the way forward. The synergy between him and his mother birthed numerous creative combinations that now fill the menu, giving customers a choice of pastas, burgers, and other American favourites. One of which is amusingly named 'Dog Food', a dish I had great pleasure in gorging on.

Pride Of The Midwest

Looking synonymous to the poutine – a crowd favourite originating from Quebec, Canada – the dish is a gooey mess of goodness. Hot oven-baked fries generously slathered with country gravy and topped with cheese, decorum was the only thing stopping me from licking the bottom of the platter. Kevin, who takes it upon himself to saunter from one table to



A hearty soup that warms the body and soothes the spirit.



Words cannot describe my feelings for the 'Dog Food', except perhaps "Waiter, one more please!"



I had trouble pacing myself as I greedily wolf down the delicious meatloaf.



Wrapping up the meal on a sweet note.

another to entertain customers, assured me that he has had customers doing just that! When asked what made him name it such, he jovially said it was his dad's initial reaction to it; 'Dog Food' looks like a mess but to judge it from its looks alone is to deprive oneself of a treat.

The place is homey; filled with music that segues from soft to lively, and warm lighting that is easy on the eyes. Canvas prints and framed pictures line the wall, depicting tales from the Midwest. Not one element of the decor was out of place and kept true to the theme. I could see why Betty's—having been around for nine years now—have garnered a loyal following, with regular clientele patronising the place for its food and ambience.

Though successful, they are not one to rest on their laurels; Betty and Kevin regularly conduct tasting rounds in the morning to ensure the quality of food served is good and consistent. Commendably, they would serve specials on a weekly basis which would be promoted to the regular menu, if deemed popular. Speaking of which, I had the privilege to try their 'Soup of the Week', which was essentially chicken and vegetable soup.

Simple as it sounds, the chicken broth became a staple in the US by the 1990s. Its rise to fame was perhaps accidental—if one were to dig deeper—yet something as convenient and comforting as this is hard to fault. The soup was not overpowering; coupled with onion relish,

crunchy cabbage, and almost-liquefied tomato, there was a pleasant tartness which I enjoyed. Great for city slickers, the soup was a reminiscence of granny's old recipe.

The next gastronomic delight was the 'Classic Meatloaf'. For those who have spent time in the Midwest, this is guaranteed to bring back a slew of memories. An ensemble of colours was placed before me—moist meatloaf that was soft yet firm with carrot chunks for added texture; mashed potatoes that were smooth and not too salty (which is usually the case in an effort to make it tastier) and fresh, bright green peas. I was never a fan of peas, often getting those thawed peas that tastes like Play Doh. But these were delightful and I surprised myself by eating

them all. The dish also came with a beer-based dip which I took the liberty of glazing the meatloaf with.

A Sweet Ending

I was tempted to order more but I knew my stomach would rebel. To soothe its dissent, I appeased it with apple crumble and two scoops of vanilla ice cream. Its doughy and crunchy bits blended well with the velvety texture of the ice cream, which was a much-needed epilogue to the heavy meal. Feeling the post-dinner food coma creeping into my consciousness, I thanked Kevin for his hospitality and left, promising myself to return—next time, with family and friends—to taste their bestsellers, the 'Juicy Lucy' burger and the 'Baby Back Ribs'. **F**



Whitewashed walls and modern decor gives it a hygienic and pristine look.

East Meets West

Fireflyz takes a stroll to SukaSucre Bistro, which gives local dishes tasteful hints of European flavour complete with French dining experience.

STEPPING into SukaSucre Bistro through its sliding door, one could not help but feel right at home, thanks to its cosy, inviting atmosphere. There are delightful cakes and pastries in a glass display at one end of the space, with pretty light fixtures setting a soothing ambience. The entire bistro is decorated with knick-knacks that instantly remind you of some cafes in Paris that you might have seen in movies. The furniture is modern and comfortable while the staff are courteous and accommodating.

Located in Wisma Ryu, Taman Pertama, Cheras, SukaSucre Bistro is owned by the acclaimed singer, actor and chef, Fazley Yaakob. After years in the local entertainment industry, Fazley decided to take a short break to attend

a culinary degree course at the prestigious Le Cordon Bleu Paris. With the skills that he acquired, he then returned and went on to win Celebrity MasterChef Malaysia Season 1 back in 2012.

"I was raised in Negeri Sembilan and studied in Paris, at Le Cordon Bleu. I wanted to bring these two worlds together with SukaSucre Bistro which is why I decided to go with the theme 'From Rembau to Paris'. To be able to create beautiful food for those that love eating it is a dream come true for me," explained Fazley.

From Rembau To Paris

The menu has a very wide selection of dishes, mostly originating from Negeri Sembilan but elevated with haute cuisine touches. The appetiser selections for instance, consist of fried chicken wings with spicy Minang-style dip

(Balado Wings), meatballs with French-style tomato sauce (Bakso with Ratatouille Sauce) and fern shoot salad with dried soft-shell crab (Soft-shell Crab Pucuk Paku) among others.

The *Soft Shell Crab Pucuk Paku* is Fazley's grandmother's original recipe. The salad is made with a flavourful mixture of red chillies, belacan (shrimp paste), lime juice, sugar and salt. It is served with soft shell crabs, lemongrass croutons and wild mushroom cream. The unusual combination of soft-shell crab and fern shoots work surprisingly well together, giving the dish a crunchy texture while the sauce adds spiciness to the dish.

On The Menu

The pasta menus are mostly revamps of local dishes like *rendang* and *sambal*. The aglio olio pasta is served with



The Pavlova is a crowd favourite.



The Crème Brûlée is a work of art.

original 'sambal Minang' and smoked beef. There is also a local traditional soup dish called *soto* that has its original rice cube replaced with spaghetti. But the most highly recommended pasta dish at SukaSucre Bistro has got to be the spaghetti with smoked beef and creamy turmeric sauce (Pasta Daging Salai Lemak Cili Api). The yellow turmeric sauce is aplenty, as the spaghetti is drenched in it. The colour might throw you off at first but you will forget all about it once you give it a taste. Just like most of other Negeri Sembilan dishes, the SukaSucre's remake of this traditional favourite is quite spicy but you can request for milder flavours.

Aside from the pastas, the menu also includes pizza selection such as the *Rendang Pizza* and *Heavy Duty Meat Pizza* along with rice dishes like *nasi lemak* and *French butter rice*. All the cakes and desserts that you immediately see as you enter the restaurant are all available from the menu as well. From *Crème Brûlée* and

Panna Cotta to *macaron* and cakes, a delightful dessert is a must after savouring all the spicy dishes earlier on. The *Fleur de Pavlova* is highly recommended. The pavlova is served with sweet and sour strawberry and mango sauce along with cold ice-cream.

It is perfect for sharing or you can just have all of it to yourself.

For those from the other side of the city, you are in luck because Fazley is working on a second SukaSucre Bistro outlet in Sri Hartamas Kuala Lumpur. While waiting for

it to open, there is always the main outlet in Cheras that you can visit. The long drive and braving the heavy traffic is totally worth it once you've tried the tastefully crafted dishes that marry both international and local flavours. **F**



The Pasta Daging Salai Lemak Cili Api is flavourful and aesthetically pleasing.



Spring Tidings

The ephemeral beauty of the sakura flower has inspired hundreds of poems and haiku (Japanese poems), each depicting the delicate beauty of springtime. We look eastward to Japan to join in the revelry of Hanami, a festival centered around the act of viewing cherry blossoms.

AS one journeys across the Land of the Rising Sun, its vast canvas of yellow, white and pink is truly a visual feast. Called Hanami, the festival is celebrated across the country – which has been a part of the Japanese culture for thousands of years. Tourists vie for the best spots to snap a photo and the locals sing praises of the sights, marvelling at Mother Nature's wonderful gift.

Elia Michael's *Cherry Blossom* manages to capture its beauty in words:

*The cherry blossoms have begun their bloom.
The sun was lighting the tops of the trees
And though the streets were in shade, any gloom
Was gone, as pink flowers waved in the breeze.*

*The morning sun was still low in the sky.
Where it did light the grass, it was lime green.
I thought it had a newly painted dye
But it was a trick of light, this lime sheen.*

*A cluster of yolky yellow crocus
And some purple clumps of winter heather
Were presented as a garden's focus
And thriving in the sunny spring weather.*

*The sky, the sky was a deep and clear blue.
I looked up and saw some pigeons flying
And I envied their freedom as they flew
And all I could do was take to sighing.*

Rings And Roses

Being part of a generation who focuses on making their dreams come true, couples planning to tie the knot often choose destination weddings rather than a wedding held at a chapel down the road or a banquet hall. After all, who doesn't get excited at the prospect of going somewhere gorgeous and unique to exchange vows? *Fireflyz* takes a look at several reasons why destination weddings are the in-thing!



Intimate And Meaningful

For many brides and grooms-to-be, the idea of a destination wedding is more appealing as they are able to have an intimate wedding in the presence of their loved ones at a secluded place. Grand weddings with hundreds of guests (some of which you probably don't know too well) are missing that intimacy and often burn a huge hole in the pocket. As many people these days are concerned about beautiful pictures, destination weddings are ideal as couples are able to take perfect pictures to last them a lifetime.

Momentous Memories

A destination wedding has become the ideal wedding plan for many couples despite it having flaws such as travel difficulties, since many couples find pleasure in making their wedding a memorable one at a significant place close to their hearts. Despite many saying you can always create memories wherever you are, no wedding would feel perfect if it is not held at the place your heart falls in

love with. Since weddings are considered the most important day of someone's life, couples tend to spend more so they can exchange vows at their dream location.

Being Different


Everyone wants to have a wedding that will forever be etched in both their hearts and the hearts of their loved ones. For this sole reason, many choose to go against mainstream ideas and think out of the box. The emotions obtained from embracing a new environment is always satisfying, especially if it is for an occasion that you want to cherish for the rest of your life. There is a certain sense of excitement and thrill that comes from being away from home and its comforts, but knowing that you are with your significant other.

Cost-Effective

Statistics from various hotels and restaurants have shown the average number of guests at a traditional wedding is around 300 people, but the advantage of organising a destination wedding

gives the couple the benefit of inviting just their immediate family members and extremely close friends. Instead of a grand reception, many couples these days look forward to a small, cosy ceremony to celebrate their love for each other. In addition, the idea of a cost-effective wedding dinner is always an option many couples would prefer.

Precious Times

It is rare to see the soon-to-be husband and wife having time off on their wedding day as traditionally they would be always on the move. Since destination weddings are also about having fun and relaxing, the couple, their family and close friends will have ample time after the wedding day to catch up. Having a destination wedding also means both the guests and the couple are able to enjoy a holiday as soon as the wedding is over. What's there to not love about this especially if it is a week long destination holiday! It would be one wedding your guests won't be forgetting anytime soon. 



The Root Of Hair Loss

Hair has and always will be an essential part of our physical identity, and it is no wonder we try to ensure it consistently looks at its best. **Dr Wan Syazli Rodzaian Wan Ahmad Kamal**, Consultant Plastic & Aesthetic Surgeon of UiTM Private Specialist Centre (UPSC) talks about the underlying issues of hair loss and ways to combat it.

FROM ancient Greeks to the regal Egyptians, a crown of full hair has remained a symbol of wealth and prosperity. However, excessive hair loss and various hair conditions remain common issues that plague the population, until today. Thankfully, modern treatments are able provide answers to the problem. However, before one can start on the topic of procedures, it is vital to understand the root cause of hair loss.

The Cycle Of Life

It is imperative to first understand the cycle of hair growth before assessing hair conditions. Humans have two types of hair; terminal hair

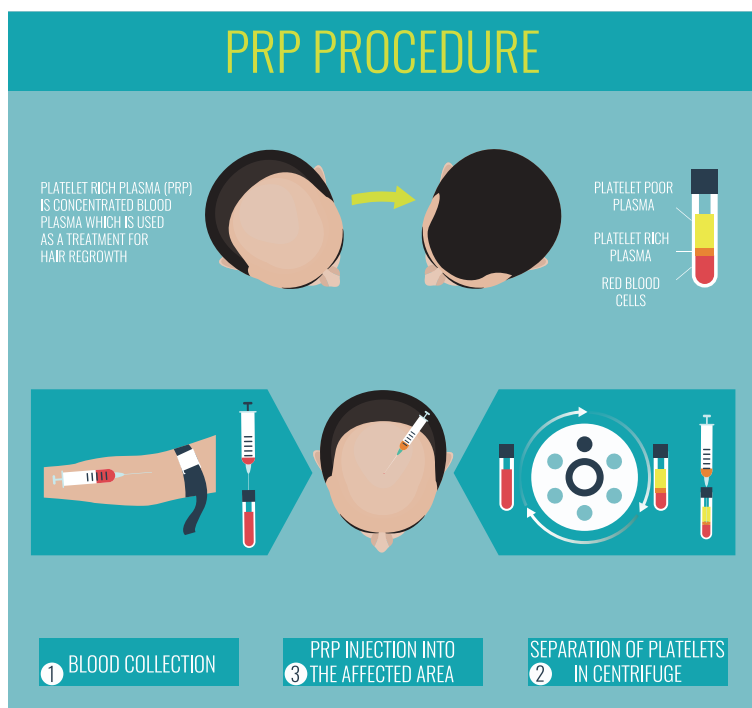
found on the scalp, which is longer and thicker in appearance, and vellus hair found on the rest of the body. They are essentially of the same origin but in different hair growth phases.

There are three phases of hair growth. It begins at the Anagen Phase where hair grows for at least three to five years. Nearing the end of the Anagen Phase, hair then enters the Catagen Phase which lasts for roughly ten days and finally moves on to the last stage, the Telogen Phase, whereby natural hair fall occurs. It is important to note that every hair follicle undergoes this cycle at different times hence why hair fall occurs on a daily basis. Anything that interferes with this process could also lead to hair conditions.

Breaking It Down

Hair loss can be purely due to our body's physiological processes or it can be caused by certain diseases. Different treatments would be prescribed depending on the type and degree of hair loss. Regarding the physiological process, in most cases, the body can resolve the issue by itself. The two most common causes of physiological hair loss are stress and hormone fluctuations (during pregnancy or puberty).

According to Dr Syazli, diseases that can cause hair loss are broken down into Psychological diseases and Organic diseases. "For example, Trichotillomania is an irresistible urge to pull out hair, usually from the scalp, the eyebrows



and eyelashes. This is when a person becomes agitated or depressed. This is a psychological entity under the diagnostic criteria for a psychiatric problem (DSM)."

One common organic disease experienced by women is *alopecia areata*, an autoimmune disorder in which the body's immune system attacks hair follicles. The symptoms typically manifest in the form of patches of hair loss. To put an end to the patches, surgeons at UPSC would typically inject steroids into the specific affected area. Cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy could also experience hair loss due to the potency of the drugs used.

Patients with congenital problems such as cleft lips would often find gaps when trying to grow a moustache due to the absence of hair follicles along the repaired cleft site. Finally, there is *androgenetic alopecia*, also known as the male-pattern baldness. This disorder occurs in both male and female; however, the difference in the balding patterns depend on the gender. Hair loss for women starts from the crown or the occiput (back of the head) but their hairline is retained, while for men, it begins to recede from the hairline.

Assessment And Modalities

"We would first assess patients before recommending hair transplantation. Some of our recommendations include changes to their daily diet, increased water intake,

getting quality sleep, avoid tying hair in a ponytail to prevent strain to hair roots, and staying away from hair products containing harmful chemicals. If all of the above failed to yield any results, then further treatment would be considered, comprising of modalities which include both surgical and non-surgical means," explained Dr Syazli.

Minoxidil is often prescribed to help treat hair conditions as a topical application as it acts on the receptor for the hormone Dihydrotestosterone (DHT). In the case of *androgenetic alopecia*, terminal hair on the scalp regresses to become vellus hair. UPSC surgeons would prescribe *minoxidil* to help in the growth of vellus hair back towards becoming terminal hair once more.

Though its effects are not permanent, surgeons would then be able to identify if there are functioning follicles available. Once this is determined, surgeons would then start the patient on Platelet-Rich Plasma (PRP) treatment whereby enzymes from the platelets are injected into the scalp to stimulate the growth of hair follicles. PRP hair restoration is deemed a natural treatment using the patient's own blood which is packed with growth factors.

In the case that there are no functioning hair follicles, hair transplant is the next best option. The procedure begins with a patient having part of their hair shaved,



Dr. Wan Syazli Rodzaian Wan Ahmad Kamal
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followed by extraction of follicles one by one, a technique more popularly known as Follicular Unit Extraction or FUE. Once done, UPSC surgeons would prepare several grafts, and create incisions using a scalpel and carefully transplant grafts at the target area. Through this delicate technique, the recovery of the donor areas of the graft is faster while optimising the outcome of the recipient areas.

The entire process can be done under Local Anaesthesia (LA) as an outpatient procedure and requires a team of people. The number of personnel vary between two to five people, depending on the number of hairs being transplanted.

To improve success rates, the procedure is accompanied by several other modalities such as using pre-medicated shampoo and UV Light therapy. Hair restoration and transplant is not limited to the scalp but also the eyebrows and moustache. Patients are able to recreate their eyebrows and moustache line using the same treatment but tailored differently.

Ultimately the aim of the hair restoration procedure is to enable the patient to have a better quality of life both from physical and physiological perspectives. Dr Syazli who is a committee member of the Malaysian Society of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery (MSPRS) encourages patients to get as much information as possible before undergoing any procedures in order to receive the best possible outcome.



From LA To KL

Fireflyz talks to Malaysia's very own SFX (special effects) makeup artist, Zaff on translating everything he learnt in Los Angeles to the local entertainment scene.



THE entertainment industry in Malaysia has been blessed with so much young talent who are able to bring something new and exciting to the table. Zaff is one of them. This young SFX makeup artist has been working diligently, establishing 'street cred', so to speak, by giving local cinema and television the world class touch that they have been missing.

Tell me a little bit about yourself.

My full name is Asyraf Bin Zai Zahari. I was born in Seremban and graduated from one of the top makeup schools in Los Angeles. Currently,



Zaff enjoys dabbling in projects involving the horror genre.

I'm a freelance SFX makeup artist for local production of television and film.

Have you always been into makeup?

Yes. I discovered my passion in the artistry of makeup when I was still in primary school. I was fascinated by the blend of colours of the drawings that I took from my mom's makeup



collection and started to create ghost-like faces with it. Growing up as the only son in the family, I have also gained much inspiration from my three sisters and my mother, who are all very conscious about their appearances. I found that the combination of colours and beauty was truly inspiring. Thus, I discovered my passion for makeup when I began experimenting with it.

What made you choose LA?

When I was 15, I did some research on Google about makeup schools abroad and found a school in Los Angeles that really caught my eye. I told my mom about it and she refused to listen to me until I turned 18. I travelled alone from Malaysia, all the way to Los Angeles and did everything on my own, from arranging



Zaff is very passionate about his work.

Instagram: @azzfxstudio



Some of Zaff's special effects make up creations.

my accommodation to registrations at the school. I was there for about a year.

I experienced the industry in LA first-hand, which is saturated with top SFX makeup artists such as Rick Baker, Ve Neill and the late Dick Smith. I was also given the opportunity to lend a hand to other students to showcase their artwork at IMATS (International Makeup Artist Trade Show), Los Angeles. Aside from that, I was fortunate enough to attend the Oscars, supporting the nominees for makeup and styling categories.

What were your expectations (or plans) when you returned to Malaysia?

My plan was to be a SFX makeup artist in Malaysia and to get involved in the Malaysian industry.

How is special effects makeup different from beauty makeup?

Basically, they are two polar opposites. SFX makeup artists aim to deceive by making the look seem as realistic as possible. Skill is the key to achieve it. On the other hand, beauty makeup artists carry the responsibility to enhance the client's natural beauty.

Is it challenging to go from creating a scary monster to highlighting the best features of a beautiful model? What does it take to be able to do both?

Honestly, it depends on what character you are trying to create. It may require different procedures, from lifecasting, sculpting to molding and run foam. It is quite challenging to do.



Any upcoming projects for 2018?

I've just finished doing makeup for the TV series, 'Seram Selebriti 2', directed by Izuan Mokhtar and am awaiting filming to begin for a movie by a well-known local producer. Also, I will soon find out if I have been shortlisted to join and showcase my artwork at Monsterpalooza.

Monsterpalooza is an American multi-genre convention focusing on horror, terrifying creatures and SFX makeup work, that will be held in Pasadena Convention Center in Los Angeles.

Is Malaysia on the same level with the rest of the world in terms of special effects makeup?

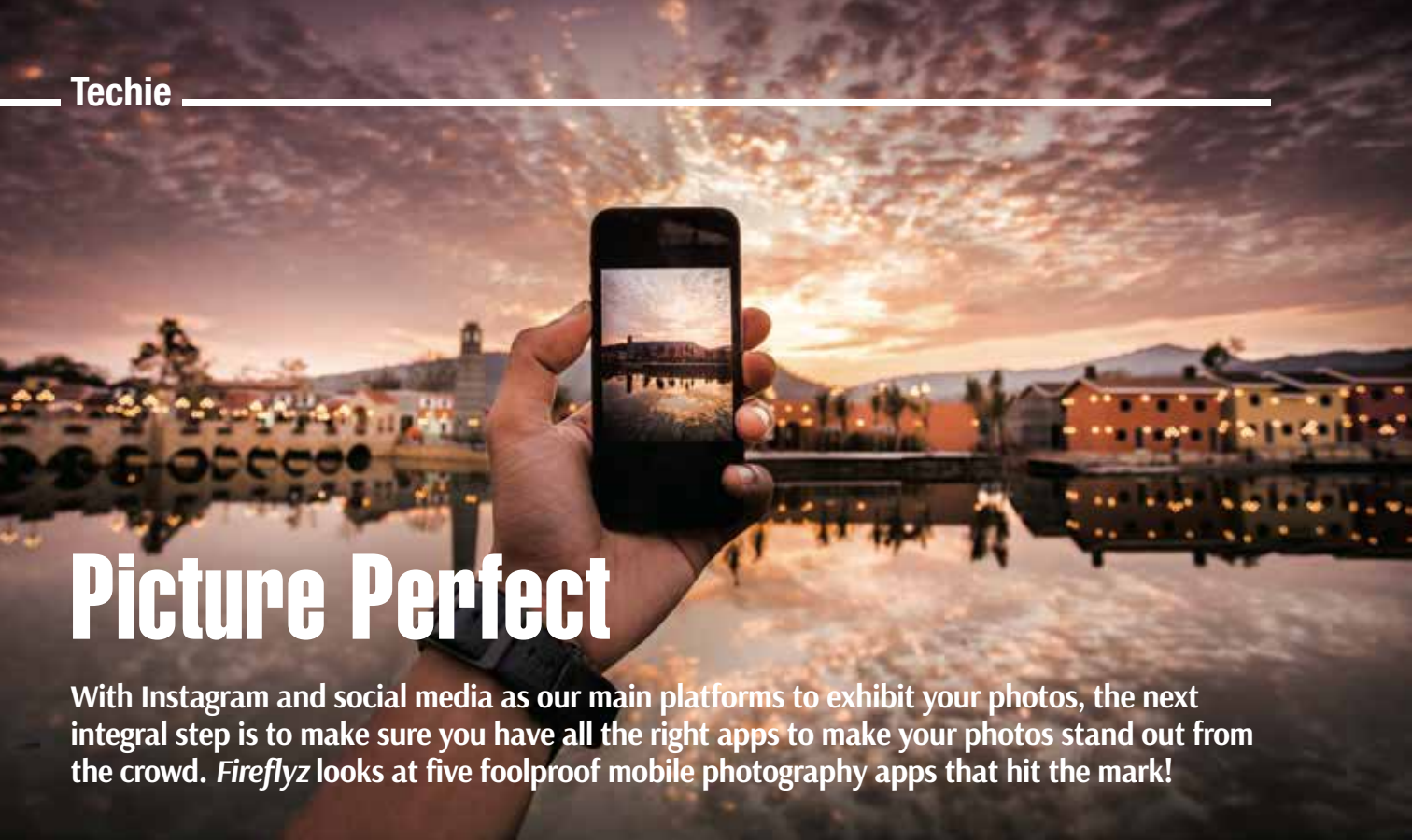
To be honest, not really. The Malaysian industry is not gutsy enough to do a big budget film or drama like Hollywood does. There is too much politics involved in the industry. The best that we can do is to revamp and stop producing unnecessary movies or dramas.

What is your advice to those eager to try their hands at this profession?

Just be yourself and be proud of your artwork. Do not copy the work of others and claim it is yours. It is really disrespectful. Keep going, keep practicing and always think outside the box.

What will be your next step?

My aim is to join one of the established makeup companies in New Zealand that has been involved in many blockbuster movies like *The Hobbit* and *Lord of the Rings*. After my experience there, I aim to return to Malaysia to teach the younger generation who are interested to learn and love SFX makeup. 



Picture Perfect

With Instagram and social media as our main platforms to exhibit your photos, the next integral step is to make sure you have all the right apps to make your photos stand out from the crowd. *Fireflyz* looks at five foolproof mobile photography apps that hit the mark!

Huji Cam

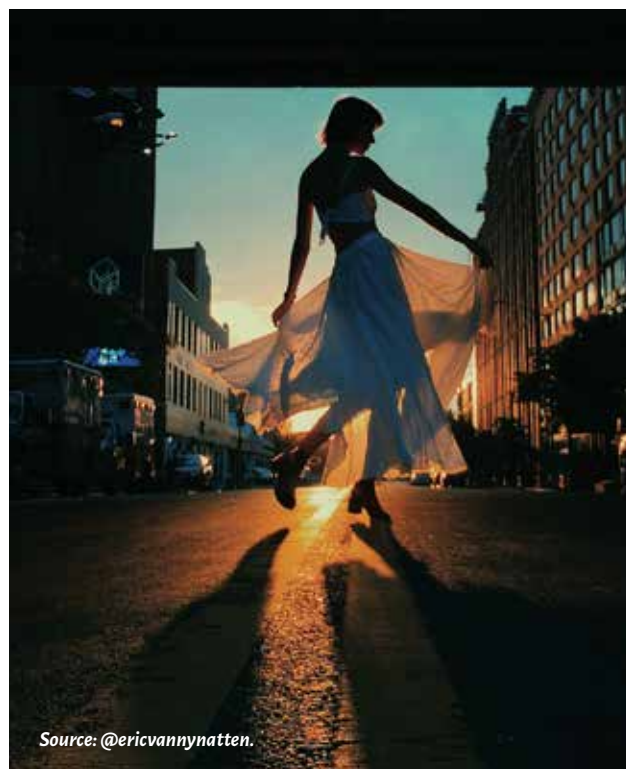
Film cameras are all the rage nowadays; neither does it come cheap. Huji Cam lets you recreate the vintage look of a 35mm film camera without the processing time, and also without the hefty printing cost. For a free download, Huji Cam puts forward vibrant tones, flat blacks, and pretty light leaks. If you're aiming for organic shots that are simple but timeless, this is one of the best film photography apps out there.



Source: iTunes App Store.

VSCO

A common find in almost every smartphone, VSCO can be considered a staple when it comes to mobile photography editing thanks to its easy-to-use presets, downloadable filters, and basic edit buttons that gives you immense control over the brightness or contrast of your photos. There's also an entire social space in the app that lets you display your creativity and connect with like-minded people.



Source: @ericvannynatten.

ColorStory

The name is self-explanatory. So if you ever find yourself adoring vibrant photographs online, chances are you can get replicate the exact same effect with ColorStory. The trick with this app is to make sure the photo you're editing is already colourful since the tools and filters are merely there to liven up the tones in your existing photo.



Prisma

Ever taken a landscape photo and wish to interpret it in a more artistic way? Prisma can do exactly that and more with its AI technique that converts still images and videos into works of art. Not just that, the style that Prisma utilises might be familiar to fans of artists like Van Gogh, Picasso, Levitan, and more. Voted as app of the year 2016 on both Apps Store and Google Play, that's more than enough reason to try out Prisma.

Filterloop

Photography should be kept fun, and that's what this app is all about. Unlike VSCO, which requires a bit of practice, Filterloop allows users to add in effects like grains and light flairs, while adjusting the basics to get fuss-free, visually stunning images. Most of the filters are mostly free, a bonus if you're not the type to spend for the sake of aesthetics.



Read All About It

Discover the horrifying truth behind an orphan's past, crack the case behind a poisoning, or follow FBI agent Jane Hawk's quest to take down a secret cabal in this month's book selections

A Long Way from Home

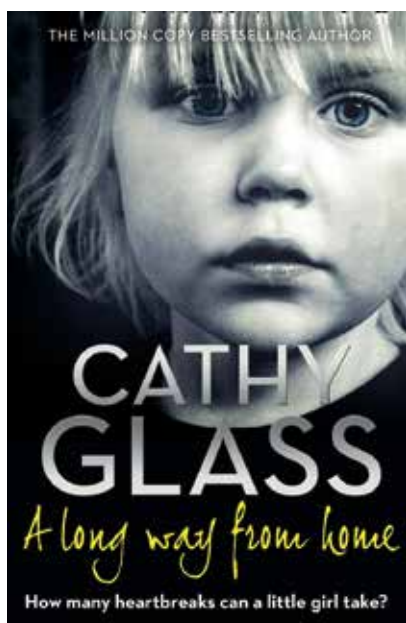
Cathy Glass

The true story of two year-old Anna, abandoned by her natural parents, left alone in a neglected orphanage.

Elaine and Ian had travelled halfway round the world to adopt little Anna. She couldn't have been more wanted, loved and cherished. So why was she now in foster care and living with me? It didn't make sense.

Until I learned what had happened...

Dressed only in nappies and ragged T-shirts, the children were incarcerated in their cots. Their large eyes stared out blankly from emaciated faces. Some were obviously disabled, others not, but all were badly undernourished. Flies circled around the broken ceiling fans and buzzed against the grids covering the windows. The only toys were a few balls and a handful of building bricks, but no child played with them. The silence was deafening and unnatural. Not one of the thirty or so infants cried, let alone spoke.



Rory Branagan (Detective): Rory Branagan Book 1

Andrew Clover

Meet RORY BRANAGAN—he eats bad guys for breakfast. Well, not ACTUALLY. But he IS the best detective in town.

Hello. I am Rory Branagan. I am actually a detective.

People always say, 'How do you become a detective?'

And I say, 'Ahhhh... you don't just FIND YOURSELF suddenly sneaking up on baddies, or diving out of the way as they shoot, or hurtling from an plane towards the ground! You have to want it.'

And what made ME want it? I needed to find out what happened to my dad...

There are seven books in the RORY BRANAGAN (DETECTIVE) series and this is the first, in which you meet Rory and his accomplice Cassidy as they investigate the poisoning of Rory's next door neighbour. Rory's adventures are all highly illustrated so you can see everything he gets up to in glorious black and white.

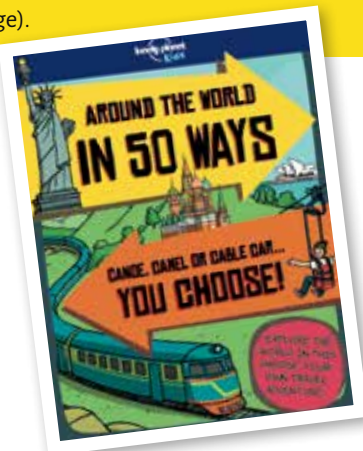
First in a hilarious seven-book, comedy-crime series for readers of 8+ (General fiction (Children's - Teen-age)).

Around the World in 50 Ways

Lonely Planet Kids

Set off from London and travel across the globe. Then try to make it back! In Lonely Planet Kids' Around the World in 50 Ways, kids choose their favourite routes and transportation, from tuk-tuks and sleds, to steamboats and hot-air balloons. They'll visit famous cities and exotic, far-flung places - and learn amazing facts about each destination along the way. But they'll need to be careful: not every path will take them where they want to go!

Welcome to the Tower of London! That's the starting point of this amazing adventure. But what's the next leg of the journey? That depends on the transportation chosen. Once aboard, kids can discover



all about these amazing machines and how they work. Then, upon arriving at their next destination, they'll get to explore the local area and see what makes it so interesting and unique.

With over 20 possible routes, who knows where they'll end up?

The Whispering Room

Dean Koontz

It's either fight, or die...

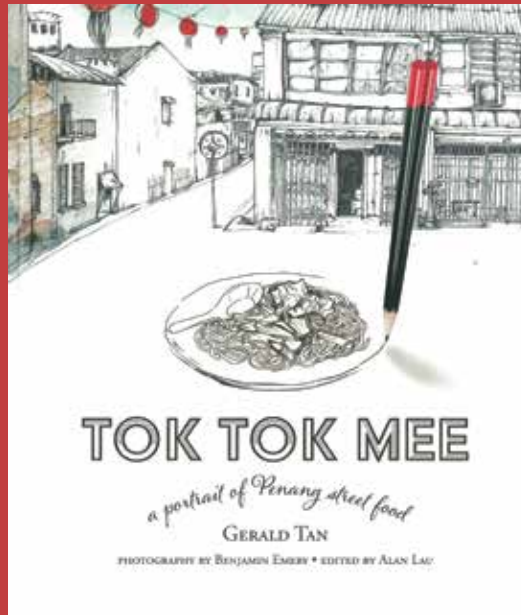
The second gripping thriller in an exciting new series featuring FBI agent Jane Hawk, from the master of suspense and New York Times No.1 bestselling author.

'Do what you were born to do'

These are the words that ring in the mind of a beloved teacher as she drives a car full of burning gasoline into a hotel. The police believe she was insane, but rogue FBI agent Jane Hawk knows the truth.

In the wake of many similar inexplicable suicides, including that of her husband, Jane picks up the trail of a secret cabal of formidable players who are bent on obtaining world power.

Now Jane has become an unstoppable predator. Those she is hunting will have nowhere to run when her shadow falls across them.



Tok Tok Mee - A portrait of Penang street food

Gerald Tan

Street food in Penang is fast and cheap. Flavours are bold, presentation often forgotten and the locations

less than glamorous. Penang-born TV producer and food writer Gerald Tan unveils childhood stories and historical anecdotes about dishes which have made their mark around the world. Tan, together with Sydney-based award-winning cinematographer and photographer Benjamin Emery, have dished up charcoal-kissed char koay teow and sar hor fun to the briny broths of Hokkien mee and asam laksa in 192

pages of this hardcover book.

Coffee-table book Tok Tok Mee: A Portrait of Penang Street Food is an intimate portrayal of the people, places and practices that give Penang street food its endearing and vivid personality.

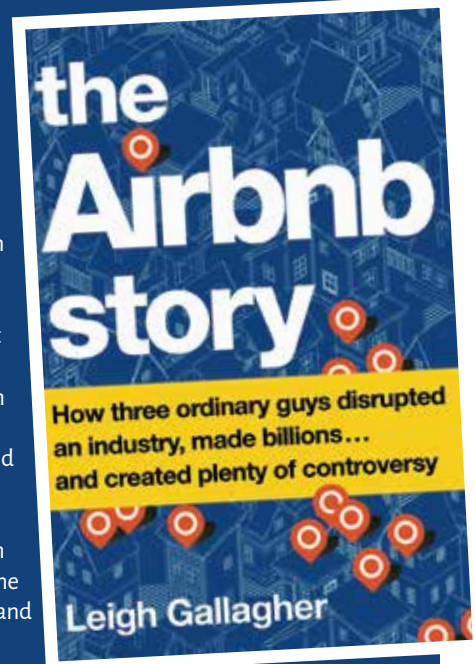
The Airbnb Story

Leigh Gallagher

An investigative look into a beloved, disruptive, and notorious startup.

This is the remarkable behind-the-scenes story of the creation and growth of Airbnb, the online lodging platform that is now the largest provider of accommodations in the world. At first just the wacky idea of co founders Brian Chesky, Joe Gebbia, and Nathan Blecharczyk, Airbnb has become indispensable to millions of hosts and travelers around the world.

Fortune editor Leigh Gallagher presents the first nuanced, in-depth look at the Airbnb phenomenon - the successes and controversies alike - and takes us behind the scenes as the company's young CEO steers into increasingly uncharted waters.



A Treat For Globetrotters

What's the purpose of working nine hours a day, slaving away at your desk on OT and hustling to earn some side income? To travel the world of course (not forgetting paying bills, giving our old folks some pocket money and paying off loans)! Here are a few destinations to consider packing your bags, setting the 'away from office' autoresponder on your email, and jumping on the next flight out of the country.

Zhangjiajie National Forest, China

Who could forget scenes from Avatar (the one with the blue people; not the incredible adventures of the beloved airbender, Aang), one being the awe-inspiring floating mountain. Known as the 'Hallelujah Mountains' in the movie, it was based off the gorgeous quartz-sandstone pillars of Zhangjiajie. Formed by millions of years of erosion, you can roughly make out bizarre shapes that are a boon for natural landscape photographers.

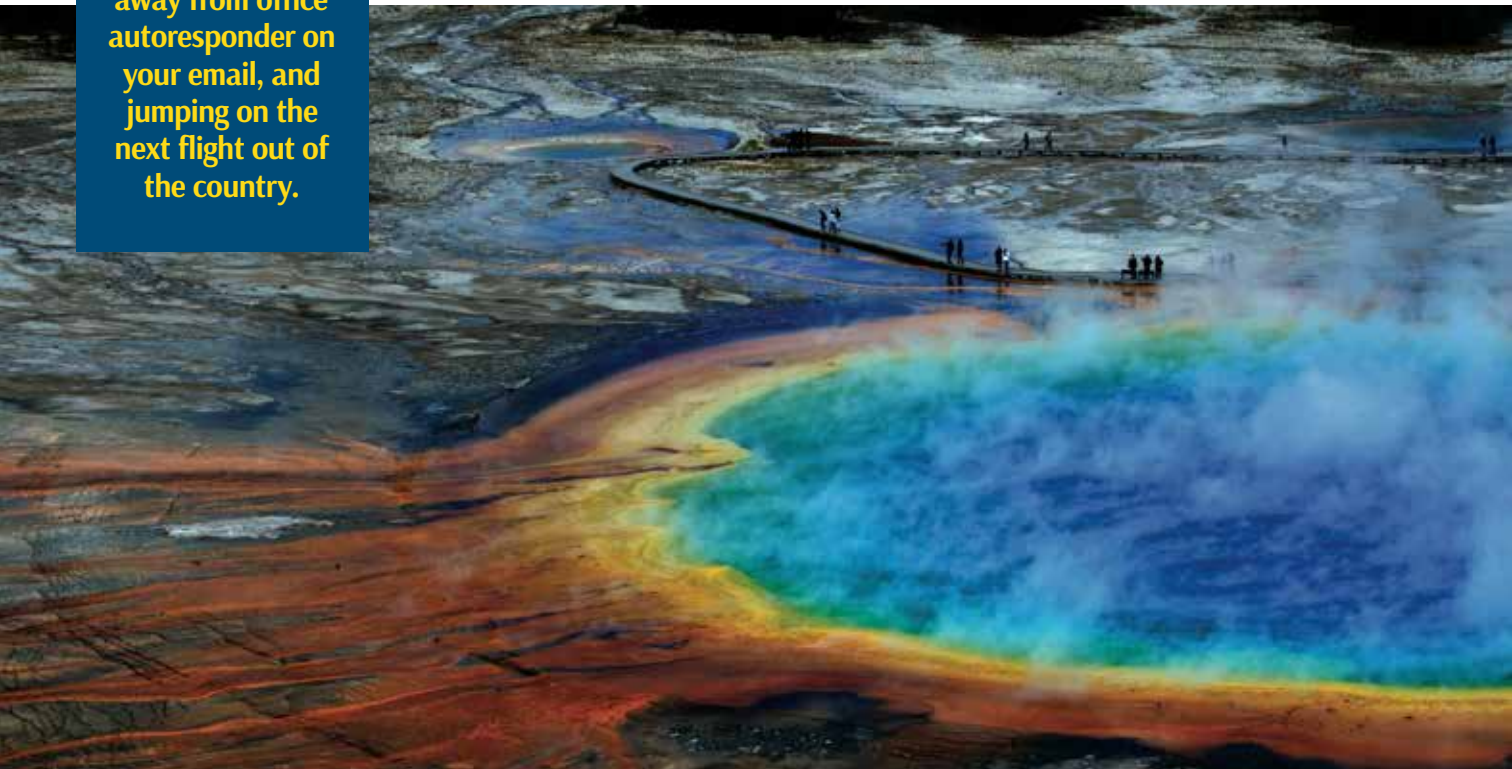


Grand Prismatic Spring, USA

Truly one of the most colourful views in the world, the Grand Prismatic Spring in Wyoming, Yellowstone National Park, is a thermal spring that is sourced

from 121 feet below the surface. What gives it a kaleidoscope of colours? Thermophile (heat-loving) bacterias with photosynthetic pigments, living around the edges of the pool, give it its rainbow hues.

Going further than just making the pool more photogenic, these bacterias have helped scientists in the sequencing of human genome and played a major part in other scientific advances.



Northern Lights, Greenland

During the day, you'd be traipsing down snaking paths of Nuuk (the capital of Greenland), in the bitter Arctic cold, moving past rows of colourful houses fringing the waterfront. As night descends, the otherworldly lumens dance across the sky, illuminating the Sermitsiaq mountain. Visit the small city anytime between September and April and you will be rewarded with nature's multicoloured light show – with a glass of champagne in your hand, perhaps?



Arashiyama Bamboo Forest, Japan

Like something out of a HD desktop wallpaper website, the Arashiyama bamboo grove is as real as you and me. This ethereal setting is perhaps the most photographed site in Kyoto, and with good reason. Located slightly north of the Tenryu-ji Temple, words cannot describe the feeling of being in the midst of towering bamboo, which is often paired with a visit to the temple.

Waitomo Caves, New Zealand

The Waitomo Caves seems like a scene pulled from a dream – a beautiful one at that. At the Glowworm Grotto along the Waitomo River of New Zealand's North Island, lies a tourist attraction that is so beautiful, it would be sung by travelling bards back in the days. Larval fungus gnats, found only in certain areas around Australasia (namely Australia and New Zealand) are responsible for its incomparable beauty.





A Healthier Brew

One of the main reasons to get out of bed in the morning is the promise of a warm, steamy cup of coffee. For some of us, it doesn't stop with a single serving, which somewhat draws a line of guilt. Fret not, it's time to up your coffee game by making it tastier and healthier with 10 daily ingredients you can find in your pantry.

Cinnamon

Hitting the sweet spot between a spice and a medicine, a dash of cinnamon to your cup of joe can go a long way in terms of flavours and of course, health benefits. Doing so offers pungent, aromatic traces in every sip and at the same time, regulates blood glucose and cholesterol levels.

Butter

Coffee and butter have been making waves lately. But it's not all about the Instagram-

craze as many health and wellness gurus are appreciating this unique combo since it improves brain functionality and aids in weight loss. Stick to the healthy script by using unsalted, grass-fed butter. Also, to ensure you don't sip on globs of butter, it's best to mix them well with a hand-held blender.

Maple Syrup

A famous pancake topping that makes no mistake when squeezed into your coffee. This naturally-occurring sweetener supplies vital vitamins and minerals as well as prevents infection-causing bacteria. Most importantly, your palate sees no sacrifice in taste.

Cocoa Powder

This helps when you can't decide between a hot chocolate and a coffee. Do use organic, unsweetened cocoa which comes with wellness





Almond Milk.

perks such as balancing cholesterol, lowering the risks of heart disease and cancer, and is loaded with minerals and vitamins. Just remember not to go overboard, a single teaspoon is good enough.

Salt

One of the healthiest ways to consume your coffee is, of course, black but the bitter punch makes it a daunting

task. Add a pinch of salt to soften the bitterness and it also helps to bring out the natural sweetness in the coffee grounds. These days, it's becoming a familiar component of cold coffee.

Dates

A rare ingredient but a recurring winner for those familiar. Don't drop them straight into your brew because you've got



Cocoa Powder.



Cardamom.



Vanilla Beans.

to turn the fruit into a paste first, and it's pretty simple. Soak the dates in water for an hour, then blend them together with tablespoons of water. A fruit-flavoured coffee with natural sugar, fibre, magnesium, iron and calcium? Yes, please!

Almond Milk

For those of you who are a vegan or allergic to dairy, swapping to almond milk is the best bet. Apart from its creamy texture and nutty taste, almond milk is 50% lower in calories compared to cow's milk, making it a solid option for weight-watchers. It also takes good care of your ticker.

Vanilla Extract / Vanilla Beans

Yes, the baker's favourite can make coffee purists happy too. Keep away from vanilla fla-

voured creamers since you can enjoy vanilla in its purest form. Adding a few drops makes your coffee sweet naturally, not forgetting its comforting aroma and pleasant flavour.

Honey

Mixing honey into a cup of hot tea is a common norm. Why not coffee as well? Known for its abundance of antioxidants and nutritious value, natural honey is definitely a healthier upgrade to white refined sugar.

Cardamom

If you've been to the Middle East or certain regions in India, this combination is a daily fixture. And it's easy to emulate in your kitchen. Simply sprinkle grounded cardamom into your serving of brew for an exotic twist of flavour and take in the variety of healthy rewards. 🍵

Scheduling For Success

The aviation industry is comprised of many moving parts, each of which contribute towards the overall success of an airlines. One of these parts includes the flight crews that alternate between various destinations across the flight routes. *Fireflyz* speaks to Nadeera bt Yusoff, a Crew Planning & Monitoring Executive at Firefly Airlines, who ensures that each flight is adequately staffed and running smoothly.



What are your responsibilities as a Crew Planning & Monitoring Executive?

My job involves analysing the aircraft rotation plan, by which I will be able to design a flight pattern. Once this is done, I will hand over the flight pattern to the rostering team who will then come up with a crew roster. It also falls to me to ensure full compliance with Flight Time Limitations in accordance to Department of Civil Aviation (DCA) requirements and Company Network & Scheduling planning.

Nadeera spending time with some feathered friends.

Overseeing annual leaves and crew mutual are also part of my job scope.

Can you tell us a little more about yourself?

I was born in Melaka and raised in Subang. I graduated with a Diploma in Electronic Engineering (Communica-

tion), from Politeknik Shah Alam and a Bachelor's Degree in Industrial Electronic Engineering Technology, from University Malaysia Perlis.

What sort of skills and knowledge are needed for your position?

The ability to function well in a high-stress environment.

What were you doing prior to being appointed a Crew Planning & Monitoring Executive?

I joined Firefly in February 2009 as a Crewing Officer, and was then appointed as Rostering Officer after two months. I held that position for three years and then assumed the role of Rostering Associate until 2015, where I was appointed as a Crew Planning & Monitoring Executive.

How much has your previous experience helped you in your current role?

When I started working at Firefly as a Crewing Officer, I learnt and familiarised myself with the daily patterns and crew rotation and also learnt the monthly patterns and crew rotations when I was appointed a Rostering Officer. The knowledge in both areas combined, helped me in optimising flight programmes into pairings when taking into account crew availability, thus producing a roster which maximises crew productivity whilst balancing operational costs.

Family time is one of her top priorities.





All dressed up and enjoying the company of loved ones.

What is a typical day for a Crew Planning & Monitoring Executive like yourself?

I am in the office as early as 8:30 AM, and start my day by responding to urgent emails such as leave applications, mutual and also tracking latest Schedule Change Notice

(SCN) from the Networking & Schedule team.

What do you like the most about your job?

I really enjoy the learning process that I have undergone in recent years, one of which is the importance of time management. During the

planning stages, I always set a deadline for myself in order to stay ahead of the game and make things easier for my staff members. This journey of growth is something I value immensely.

What is the most challenging part of your job?

I would say that it is the demanding nature of the job, whereby tasks need to be carried out urgently and efficiently, with limited time at hand and balancing the crew roster at the same time. It requires a lot of multitasking and the ability to prioritise.

How do you manage to achieve a work-life balance?

I always ensured that my assigned tasks are completed well before any deadlines so as to avoid rushing at the last minute. My family will always be my top priority, which is why

I also make it a point to spend time with them as much as I can.

If you were not the Crew Planning & Monitoring Executive for Firefly, what would you probably be?

I would probably have ended up being an engineer or teacher perhaps.

Do you have any parting words of wisdom to share for those who wish to work in your industry?

Never stop learning. Do not give up and always stay positive.

Have you travelled to any Firefly destinations? Do share with us one of your memorable travel experiences either with friends or family.

Yes, I have. I mostly travel to Langkawi. As Subang Airport is conveniently located near my house, this makes things much easier. **F**



Ready to feast on some amazing food.

More Than Just A Viral Sensation

Chaleeda proves that she is more than just a pretty face. Posting her covers on YouTube, this talented individual is now a star with an international recording contract. She has also gifted us with a catchy song to bob our heads to.



It is not difficult to garner views and gain a following these days. We see everyday people becoming overnight sensations because of their many talents, all thanks to the power of social media. Upload a silly video on YouTube and suddenly, it goes viral and a social media star is born. Pose like a model and upload the photo to Instagram, and just like that, a social media influencer is born.

Thai-British singer Chaleeda got discovered on YouTube when a video of her singing Justin Bieber's *Love Yourself* gained 1.2 million views in just

five days. Her video caught the attention of Malaysia's Rocketfuel Entertainment representative which offered to sign the 16-year-old singer as the label's first ever international artist. Chaleeda proves that she is more than just a viral sensation with the release of her first ever English single *Mind Over Matter* composed by award-winning Malaysian rapper-songwriter, SonaOne.

Chaleeda Gilbert had already been dabbling in the music industry since the tender age of 11 and was part of a famous all-girl tween pop group called Tweenie 90's in Thailand. She was discovered

at the age of nine at an audition held at a shopping mall in Phuket, where she sang an impressive rendition of Beyonce's *Listen* in front of judges. "I was going to get KFC. When I saw the singing audition at the mall, I thought I should give it a go. So, I went home, changed my clothes and went for the audition," says Chaleeda.

It was that audition that led to her move to Bangkok to pursue her singing career. As part of the girl group Tweenie 90's, Chaleeda has performed on local television shows and even released a single entitled *Witches*. The group disbanded in 2015 and it was around that time that Chaleeda began posting videos of her singing covers of songs. "Singers like Drake, Rihanna, August Alsina and Melanie Martinez have a lot of influence on my career," says Chaleeda.

Mind Over Matter

Prior to *Mind Over Matter*, Chaleeda had already released a single in Thai entitled *Ready For Love* with famous Thai rapper, actor and producer, Twopee. The video for the song gained over 1.5 million views in just a matter of days after its release on YouTube.

"It is more of an introductory for me as a newcomer and a solo artist. Furthermore, it also

represented a coming-of-age process from my previous image which was very child-like, and in *Mind Over Matter*, I just wanted to showcase the slightly grown up side of me. I believe that love knows no boundaries and while some may say that we are too young to fall in love, at the end of the day, it is all about what we know and feel, and what is best for our hearts and minds, hence the song title *Mind Over Matter*," explains Chaleeda.

On top of that, Chaleeda



is also very ecstatic over the fact that she is the first ever international artist signed under her current label. "In the past, I have tried many times to find a home-based record label that understands the type of music I want to explore and would like to showcase. This however, did not come to fruition, so when Rocketfuel Entertainment approached me, it was like an opportunity of a lifetime that I just could not resist."

The teen singer enjoyed her

time in Kuala Lumpur when she was here for a showcase at a popular local venue. In fact, Malaysia already feels like a second home to her. "I really hope that my fans, especially here in Malaysia, will love my new single as much as I do and that the whole world gets to hear it because this is my first ever English song and I cannot express how proud I am. If the music video hits over 10 million views, it would be a dream come true!" says Chaleeda. 



Chaleeda all glammed up.



Chaleeda is also very ecstatic over the fact that she is the first ever international artist signed under her current label.



Collision Course

Unlike what we have been shown in films, asteroid belts are not as packed as we are led to believe. *Fireflyz* looks to the stars to find out more about how often asteroids collide with each other.

REMEMBER that asteroid chase scene in *The Empire Strikes Back*?

Well, forget about that, as the asteroid belt is actually quite empty. You could be standing on one asteroid and not even be able to see another nearby.

That, however, does not mean that they do not bump into each other. And it is quite dramatic when they do.

In 2010, the Hubble Space Telescope spotted something mysterious in the asteroid belt. There was an X-shaped object with a tail that looked like a comet.

The tail turned out to be asteroid dust, believed to have been released when a 122m wide asteroid collided with a smaller asteroid, striking it with a velocity of 17,700kph. Astronomers believe that impacts like this

could happen between minor asteroidal bodies in the asteroid belt on an average of once a year.

Most asteroid families populate the main asteroid belt. Collisions can send asteroids hurling towards the earth, which could endanger all life on the planet. Thankfully, we have the means to deflect it with kinetic impactor probes and gravity tractors! **F**



Ombak Dive Resort.

By The Waves

Brianne Jasmin Aeria takes a trip to escape the hectic city life and shares her 'home' for the weekend.

THE Perhentian Islands comprise of two main islands, Perhentian

Besar and Perhentian Kecil.

Both are located in Besut and have seen its fair share of tourists over the years. Featuring the timeless golden combination of sandy beaches, crystal clear waters and warm sun rays, Ombak Dive Resort is a popular accommodation in the area.

This family-run business was launched in 2012 by Ng Yen Yen and is split into three main sections; Ombak Lodge, Ombak Cafe and Ombak Divers.

The name, "Ombak Dive Resort" came about as large waves usually batter the shore during the monsoon season. Furthermore, the name "ombak" which translates to "wave" in English, was something the family hoped would stick

in their international guests' minds, with the pride of knowing at least one word in the native language.

Ombak Lodge

A large signage at the entrance of Ombak Dive Resort greets guests upon arrival, and as you walk into the reception area, it feels rather exclusive and posh. On the whole, the resort contains 25 rooms ranging from single to twin, triple and quadruple sharing rooms. The resort even caters to honeymooners by providing exclusive suites for them to indulge in. A fun fact was that all rooms were named after inhabitants of the sea.

With a Nusantara theme in mind, the whole resort is decked in wood aesthetics with 'kerawang' as one of its main features. Every room comes with a bed and an attached bathroom. Back to basics, all the rooms have high

ceilings to allow for better air ventilation and relies on generators to provide 24 hour electricity to all rooms. The rooms are pretty basic and come equipped with shelves, a study table, a clothes rack and WiFi.

Ombak Cafe

The cafe led by Chef Jogie serves a variety of food ranging from Chinese, Indian, Italian, Thailand and even barbeque. Enjoy your dinner under the stars as you dine at the open-air cafe.

Ombak Divers

At the Ombak Dive Resort, as the name suggests, diving is the number one activity to partake in. There are various diving courses for

different levels and in multiple languages. Ombak Divers is a certified PADI Dive Resort. An exciting course which you can take would be the Rebreather course, which is a new trend in diving.

For those who are not into diving, the resort is also able to arrange for other activities such as snorkelling and hiking. If you wish to explore on your own, you can take a short stroll to the Long Beach. There are signages that will lead you there, so it's hard to miss.

You can feel the passion and dedication from the family in running the business. The staff are very accommodating and friendly too. They made me feel right at home, and I'm looking forward to returning here once more. **F**



Cosy rooms to rest and relax.

Paper Creations

Rae Elizabeth Lim enlightens **Darren Timothy** regarding her career as a paper artist and how she became known as Paper In My Attic.



THE art of paper folding, or more commonly known as its Japanese translation “Origami”, has always had strong roots in Japanese culture. Though it was discovered and used by many cultures in the past, it was the Japanese who truly brought out its potential to the fullest as a form of art that has grown to become a

global hit. As paper became more affordable, its possibilities as a medium for artworks became accessible to the public.

Origami has evolved significantly across the years, and various artists are now adding new and creative spins to the paper folding art. Rae Elizabeth Lim, a born and raised Singaporean, is one such artist and aims to push the envelope on the art.

Passion For Paper

Having no formal education in arts and crafts, Rae initially considered paper crafting and origami as a hobby to fill time. However, as she learned more about the art and started to explore creative new ways to fold paper, it evolved into a passion.

“Now when I think back, I believe the reason why I took up Origami as a hobby was actually due to my



grandmother. When I was a child, she used to make little Origami toys for me to play with. One of my favourite was the paper sampan boats she used to fold, whereby I would then race the boat down the drain. It was great fun indeed and I have fond memories about it. So when I took it up as a hobby, I wanted to explore what else I could create with the medium” said Rae.

Pushing The Envelope

Rae’s career in the paper art actually started out from humble origins as favours for friends and family. This would normally take the form of wedding bouquets, decorations for events, door gifts, and home display pieces to name a few. Her first big opportunity into the field was in 2016 when she was invited to participate in an exhibition by K+ (a gallery space) where they were collaborating with RJ Paper to launch a new paper range called Colorplan. According to Rae, she wanted to use the opportunity to showcase the limitless possibilities of paper and the shapes and forms it could create. An immediate success, it opened up new windows to commercial opportunities and collaborations, giving birth to “Paper In My Attic”, the name she now uses.



Mesmerising origami pieces.

One such collaboration was with her husband, a graphic designer and mural by trade. "We both worked on a commissioned wall mural piece for MACA, a restaurant with a Japanese-Asian-European fusion menu, in which we incorporated elements of all three cultures into our creative process. The simple structured ornamental origami shapes were based

on the Asanoha Japanese pattern, which symbolises growth and good health. The free form strokes and paint drips were expressions of synthesis and unification. It unexpectedly worked really well whilst inspiring us to push for mural jobs that allowed us to offer both our expertise."

This young aspiring artist also had the opportunity

to collaborate with Binary Styles x Isetan for Singapore's National Day 2017. She used elements of the brand's latest item, a scarf specially designed for the celebration, and incorporated it into the design of her art piece which showcased Singapore's national flower, the Orchid.

Changing Tides

As origami moves into the

21st century, people often wonder what the future holds for the art. For Rae, she feels that the vast amount of objects and designs a single piece of paper can take are immeasurable.

Rae believes that origami

will always have a place in this world as it has permeated several industries to date, particularly in packaging, architecture, fashion, science, space technology and even medical fields.

Speaking on the medical field, origami inspired engineering is in development as a result of its ability to fold and unfold.

"I'm no scientist or mathematician but I feel that origami will continue to be utilised and change the world! We have only just begun to scratch the surface of its possibilities."

After loads of scrunched up paper overloading the waste bin, a long journey in learning basic folds and terminologies, Rae is proud of how far she has come and all that she has achieved. She hopes to strike up more collaborations in the future, hold more workshops and share her love for the art with others. 



Structured ornamental origami shapes based on the Asanoha Japanese pattern.



Volvo S90 T8 Inscription Plus

Fireflyz shifts into high gear this April, and takes a look at the Volvo S90 T8 Inscription Plus.

The Car

It feels like a mouthful to say “Volvo S90 T8 Inscription Plus”, and that’s excluding mouthing the “Twin Engine” hype within it. All Volvo T8 variants come with the “Twin Engine” designation due to the dual powerplants i.e. an internal combustion engine and an electric motor moves this flagship plug-in hybrid sedan. “Inscription” is one of the trims Volvo dresses its line-up, and is the only trim available in locally-assembled S90s (other trims like “Momentum” and “R-Design” are available only in imported form), while “Plus” denotes the inclusion of a premium Bowers & Wilkins audio system, electronically-controlled adaptive dampers with rear air suspension and electronically-controlled boot lid closure.

The Looks

Volvo’s new design is a Nordic nod to simple elegance. The body lines look taut and decisive, and gives the car a long and low-slung appearance. You may say that Volvo makes straight lines cool again. The front features the striking Thor’s Hammer LED lights that gives the car a handsome, elegant vibe. However, this novelty might wear thin as Volvo fills up its model range with this face. Or it might not.

The Cabin

Volvo is keen to highlight its new interior design with aesthetically pleasing materials and style and while it does not shout luxury like some class rivals, there is Nappa leather and Walnut wood trim abound. The centre

console boasts a jewel-like Start-Stop twist knob and an illuminated crystal gear knob crafted by Orrefors, a well-known Swedish glassworks company.

The dashboard is nearly devoid of physical buttons and dominated by a tablet-like 9-inch touchscreen that holds nearly all the car’s functions, including folding the rear headrests. Volvo’s reason to use digital controls is that adjustments and improvements to firmware and software can be made almost instantly while it could take a model lifecycle to change physical controls. The meter cluster has also gone digital with a choice of three layouts. The downside to digitisation is the lack of tactile practicality hence it takes a while to get used to where the controls

are on the screen; you can however drag the tiles around to rearrange them to your preference. And if you are used to swiping around your smartphone or tablet, you will not have trouble here.

Legroom is a premium for rear passengers but the high centre floor and hard backrest makes it less comfortable for the rear centre passenger. The bulge in the floor houses the battery pack and this small sacrifice provides for a flat 500-litre boot. To keep it practical and safe, Volvo has two child booster seats built into the rear seats. More practicality comes from the slot in the front armrest to cradle your phone and the notches in the cup holders that fit the key fob.

The highlight of the Inscription Plus trim is the 1,400W 12-channel, 19-speaker Bowers & Wilkins premium sound system. The yellow Kevlar speakers and the Nautilus tweeter on the dashboard were designed during the development phase of the car to fully optimise the acoustic

Fast Facts

0 - 100 km/h : 4.8 seconds

Fuel Consumption : 2.5 litres / 100 km

Price : RM388,888 (on the road without insurance)

Extras : 5-year unlimited mileage warranty / 5-year Volvo On Call roadside assistance

quality of the cabin. This system has three settings - Studio, Individual and Concert Hall which mimics the acoustics of the Gothenburg Concert Hall.

The Drivetrain

The S90 T8 is powered by a 2-litre twin charged engine driving the front wheels and an electric motor driving the rear. When combined, they produce a total of 407hp and 640Nm and goes to the wheels via an 8-speed gearbox. This is good enough to get you from 0 to 100km/h in a speedy 4.8 seconds. With both powerplants active, the S90 becomes an all-wheel drive machine sans a centre prop shaft (which affords space for the battery).

The Drive

At full charge (a variable amperage charger is included with the car), Volvo claims its 10.4 kWh lithium-ion battery is capable of a 50km range in electric mode. But in the real world of heavy traffic and inclines, 30km is a more achievable figure. Likewise, Volvo's claimed average combined fuel consumption is 2 litres per 100km but realistically, it is higher. It is however, possible to come close to this number with



careful planning and driving.

On the 9-inch touchscreen are tiles that let you determine when to charge and when to use the battery. For example, if you are on a traffic-free road, you can get the car to save the battery for use later in heavy traffic. Similarly, if your battery is low, you can instruct the engine to charge it with enough juice to get you home in electric mode. After several days of urban testing, my best effort was 2.5 litres per 100km. This was done without using charging stations as the test car wasn't supplied with a portable charging cable. It isn't impossible to use less petrol as most urban commutes fall within 30km. But the temptation to put it in Sport mode and enjoy all that power is high.

The S90 is relatively quiet so wind and road noise become more apparent; but it isn't a big issue. The adaptive dampers and rear suspension irons out most of the bumps providing for quite a comfortable ride. And even though the chassis is stiff enough for some fun country-road driving, its bulk and stature isn't quite suitable. Overall, it does not trump any of its rivals in terms of comfort or handling but it is not far behind.

The Features

Typically Volvo, the S90 has a gamut of safety features placed in its IntelliSafe suite. Notable features include City Safety which includes features like pedestrian, cyclist and large animal detection, and auto

braking, cross traffic alert, Run-off Road Mitigation, hands-free assisted parking, 360° camera as well as Pilot Assist which is a semi-autonomous driving feature that works with the active cruise control.

Pilot Assist will keep the car within the lane and at a pre-set distance from the vehicle ahead. You don't have to steer (except at more acute bends or when lane markings disappear) but you are still required to be attentive with eyes on the road and hands on the steering. The objective of Pilot Assist is to aid driving and reduce the need for making small corrections frequently thus reducing fatigue.

Some people will enjoy these features but some might find it too intrusive e.g. Lane Keep Assist etc. But the S90 gives a teaser of what is to come for the automobile.

In Conclusion

It is natural that buyers often gravitate to the conventional brands but a brief look at the S90 product flyer will show it is well equipped, and in some cases better equipped than class rivals. And if you are not an audiophile, you can pick regular Inscription trim and save RM20k. Further, its handsome looks is obvious but not too showy. So anyone looking for something safe, spacious, speedy and to make a silent statement should not rule out the S90. **F**



Packing A Serious Punch

Approximately 23 million people eat curry regularly. Aside from its drool-inducing aroma and appetising taste, it has numerous benefits that might astound you. Most would discard curry leaves when found in dishes, but we would like to inform you that it is best consumed for its numerous benefits.



LET'S get one thing straight, there is no such thing as curry. There are specific dishes in Indian cuisine that sound like curry, *kadhi* and *kari*, both with gravy. But saying that those are "curries" is like walking into a Japanese restaurant and generalising all fish as "sushi". There is no such word as "curry" in India. So what about "curry powder"? That has got to be real right? Wrong. Curry powder is actually a miscellany of spices (cumin, coriander, ginger, turmeric, cloves and more). It is just a result of the proliferation of the word "curry".

However, the curry plant, belonging to the *Rutaceae* family, is the actual thing. It was first discovered in the region of Uttar Pradesh, India. The plant was then cultivated around the world, namely in Sri Lanka, Australia and countries in South Asia. It is jam-packed with essential nutrients and vitamins.

Protects The Eye

Curry leaves possess an incredible amount

of Vitamin A, containing carotenoids that help protect against damage to the cornea. Without Vitamin A, disorders of the eye such as loss of vision and night blindness may occur.

Strengthens Hair

Hair loss and dandruff can impact self-esteem and affect our confidence as we take pride in our appearances. Curry leaves can reduce hair fall and prevent dandruff. Furthermore, it can strengthen the roots of the hair and promote growth. Dandruff is often caused by a fungal scalp infection and since curry leaves have antifungal properties, applying a curry leaf hair tonic is an excellent home remedy to consider.

Fights Infection

When it comes to combating oxidative cell damage and infections, curry leaves show huge promise. Loaded with carbazole alkaloids, these compounds turn the spice into a cancer-fighting agent equipped with antioxidants, antibacterial

and anti-inflammatory properties. The flowery scent of curry leaves comes from the compound linalool, which can also kill bacteria and eliminate free radicals from the body.

Ease Side Effects Of Chemotherapy

Going through cancer treatment takes a toll on the body. Chemotherapy and radiotherapy have unwanted side effects like nausea, hair loss, fatigue and also makes you susceptible to infections. However, these side effects can be reduced with a regular intake of curry leaves. It is said to be able to protect chromosomes, prevent free radical production and shield the bone marrow from further damage.

DIY Medicine

Mahanimbine, a carbazole alkaloid found in curry leaves, helps to speed up the recovery of shallow wounds. It can also be used to relieve inflamed or itchy skin and mild burns. Just grind a few leaves to form a paste and apply it directly. Leave it on overnight for best results. **F**

How To Ease Into Yoga

With yoga being so deeply rooted in history, it can be daunting to begin without the right guidance and understanding. Formed by the Indus-Sarasvati civilisation thousands of years ago, yoga has endured the test of time, and has evolved into one of the most commonly practiced mind-body exercises in the world. To get started, *Fireflyz* looks into some easy steps to make sure you're headed in the right direction.

Understand The Goal

Unlike workout fads, yoga is a holistic practice that requires some mind-tuning in order to really appreciate the movements. That being said, it's not just about how flexible or how good you are at holding poses. In the words of yoga guru Rachel Brathen, the goal of yoga is "to appreciate your body and become aware of the mind and the noise it creates."

It should come as no surprise that mindfulness is part and parcel of yoga. This, together with the physically strengthening yoga poses help reduce anxiety, improve focus, and build gratitude. These are some of the many benefits you can gain in your personal, spiritual, and

professional life. So be sure to check in on your breath and your intentions, then the rest will follow.

Finding The Right Fit

While it is common to start an exercise to regain strength and stamina, there is more to explore in yoga than just that. Beginners who seek a stress-relieving workout can opt for *Hatha*, which involves a steady flow of gentle movements. If you're actively seeking a challenge, *Ashtanga* is perfect to test your endurance.

Fast-paced movements, together with a strong focus on breath intake are what makes *Vinyasa* the choice for those who want to shed some pounds. But if all of that still sounds physically demanding

to you, then *Iyengar* can help to relieve common soreness like back or neck pains, all with the use of props like blocks and straps.

Finding The Right Teacher

We are lucky to live in a day and age where yoga lessons are accessible on the internet. This gives us a solid reason to learn, and makes it easier to get started. However, there is also no reason to ignore the proper guidance of a professional yoga teacher who can help adjust your poses to avoid mishaps, especially when it's your first time. Many yogis benefited from personalised adjustments done by a professional. So unless you are confident

about your alignment, joining a yoga class or community is a great way to get started.

Making It A Routine

The hardest part of every activity is being consistent. Just like how a guitarist can never master the guitar without practice, a yogi can't call themselves a yogi without making yoga a part of their everyday life.

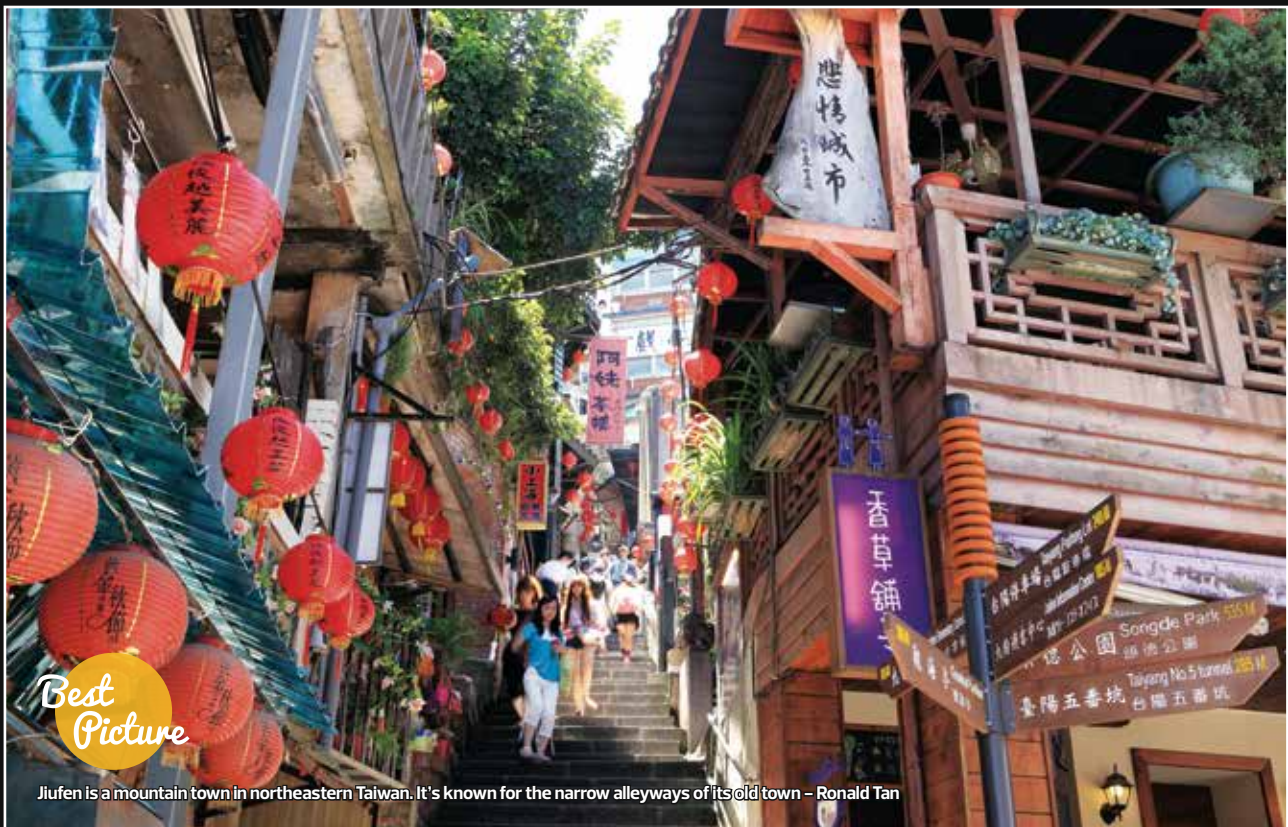
Ease into it by taking deep breaths and stretches in between work, break, and then slowly progress into a short or full hour routine. Depending on which style of yoga you prefer, a few minutes of it a day is still better than nothing. As mentioned before, the goal is to always be aware of the body and mind. **F**



Snapshot Of The Month!

Dorsett Grand Subang

Dorsett Grand Subang is an upscale urban resort nestled in the heart of Subang Jaya, Malaysia. The hotel features 478 opulent guestrooms and suites alongside 10 versatile function rooms and an impressive pillarless ballroom. Dining at Dorsett Grand Subang is an endless pleasurable affair with the vast international and local specialities available. The hotel's wide range of facilities and accommodation caters to business and leisure guests as well as walk-in diners and visitors.



Best
Picture

Jiufen is a mountain town in northeastern Taiwan. It's known for the narrow alleyways of its old town – Ronald Tan

CONTEST!

SNAP, WRITE AND WIN

FireFlyz is giving you the opportunity to tell us all about the most amazing trip or holiday that you have had in Malaysia. The lucky monthly winner will stand a chance to win an attractive prize as well as have your article published in the magazine.

What we need from you is an article of no more than 500 words as well as three to five high resolution pictures (2MB above) to compliment your article. Email the materials to info@wordlabs.com.my

Movie Magic

Join the Avengers as they band together to face Thanos where the fate of the world hangs in the balance; go head to head against rampaging monsters with Dwayne Johnson or embrace the silence with Emily Blunt, all in this month!



Avengers: Infinity War
Release Date: April 26
Language: English

Iron Man, Thor, the Hulk and the rest of the Avengers unite to battle their most powerful enemy yet – the evil Thanos. On a mission to collect all six Infinity Stones, Thanos plans to use the artefacts to inflict his twisted will on reality. The fate of the planet and existence itself has never been more uncertain as everything the Avengers have fought for has led up to this moment.

Gringo

Release Date: April 19
Language: English

A mild-mannered American businessman finds himself in over his head after travelling to Mexico. He soon crosses the line from citizen to criminal while tangling with shady colleagues, international mercenaries, drug lords and the DEA.



A Quiet Place
Release Date: April 5
Language: English

If they can't hear you, they can't hunt you. A family lives in fear of some supernatural forces that hunt using sound. A Quiet Place stars Emily Blunt and John Krasinski.



Rampage

Release Date: April 12
Language: English

Primatologist Davis Okoye (Dwayne Johnson), a man who keeps people at a distance, shares an unshakable bond with George, the extraordinarily intelligent, silverback gorilla who has been in his care since birth. But a rogue genetic experiment gone awry mutates this gentle ape into a raging creature of enormous size. To make matters worse, it's soon discovered there are other similarly altered animals. As these newly created alpha predators tear across North America, destroying everything in their path, Okoye teams with a discredited genetic engineer to secure an antidote, fighting his way through an ever-changing battlefield, not only to halt a global catastrophe but to save the fearsome creature that was once his friend.



SAFETY & SECURITY INFO



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Our check-in time counters close 30 minutes before departure. Please allow 45 minutes for immigration and security clearance. Boarding gates will close 10 minutes prior to departure and late passengers will not be accepted.

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Passenger and crew safety on board our flights is our highest priority. In compliance with the airline's policy and in observance of Occupational, Safety and Health Regulations, cabin crew are NOT required to stow passengers' hand luggage into the overhead stowage compartment. This is to minimise occupational hazard and ergonomic risks faced by the cabin crew in the aircraft. Cabin crew on duty will, however, assist passengers travelling alone, the elderly and passengers with reduced mobility. Passengers, who are fit and in good health must carry, stow and secure their own hand luggage on board. Hand luggage exceeding the 7kg weight limit are required to be checked in before boarding.

PORTABLE ELECTRONIC DEVICES (PED)

For safety reasons and in line with the Regulatory Guidelines, mobile phones and all PEDs must be SWITCHED OFF ONCE ON BOARD THE AIRCRAFT. Whilst in cruise, devices may be used only in the Flight Mode. The devices must again be switched off during the approach for landing until the aircraft is parked at the terminal building. Devices transmitting strong signals must remain switched off throughout the flight, until disembarkation. The Captain may prohibit the use of devices that can interfere with the aircraft's system.

LITHIUM BATTERIES

Lithium metal or lithium ion cells or batteries for portable electronic devices (PEDs), including medical devices must not exceed 2g for lithium metal batteries and 100Wh for lithium ion batteries. All spare batteries, including lithium metal or ion cells or batteries, for PEDs must be carried in passengers' carry-on baggage only. These batteries must be individually protected to prevent short circuit.

ELECTRONICS CIGARETTES

Electronic cigarettes must be carried on one's person or in carry-on baggage only. Recharging of the device in-flight is not permitted.

REFUSAL TO CARRY OR RESTRAINT OF PASSENGER ON BOARD

Firefly has the right to refuse to carry passengers that they consider to be a potential risk to the safety of its passenger and crew. We value courteousness. Any form of threat, verbal abuse or violence towards our staff will not be tolerated.

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Smoking, including the use of electronic cigarettes, is prohibited on all flights.

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Ipoh

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Operating Hours: Daily; 0900 - 1700
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Tel: +607 598 7488

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