

Gallivanter's Guide

OCT 1995 VOL.4 No.10

IDYLIC PLACES FOR DEDICATED TRAVELLERS

Published monthly in the UK by 'The Gallivanter's Guide', 14-16 Brewer St., London W1R 3FS. Fax: (0171) 437 3498.

EDITOR/PUBLISHER
LYN MIDDLEHURST

MANAGING DIRECTOR
DAVID MASLIN

IN THIS ISSUE

	Page
Owners vs Management	1
Warm Winter Wonderlands.	
Two unique Far Eastern hideaways provide the perfect escape.	
The Datai, Langkawi, Malaysia.	2
Regent Resort Chiang Mai, Thailand.	5
Chasing the Desert Muse.	
Loews Ventana Canyon Resort, Tucson, Arizona.	7
Gallivanter's Gossip.	8

Owners vs Management.

Every hotel group craves your loyalty, and since the days of Conrad Hilton, the trend has been for hotel groups to have properties in all the major destinations where their guests may venture, because the last thing they want is for you to try out a rival group and find that you like it better. Thus, the implication inherent in all hotel group advertising and promotional literature is that you can rely on the same high standards, no matter what the destination. So why does this admirable philosophy fail so consistently?

Well, apart from a few exceptions, hotel groups do not own the properties they manage. Most have minority equity and basically provide a management service, which, if they are lucky, begins before the hotel is completed, when their expertise can truly impact upon the workings of the hotel, ensuring, for instance, that the kitchens are suitably sited and configured.

The people who build and own hotels often have little or no idea about hotel-keeping, and the least successful hotels suffer from a continuous conflict between owner and management. If, however, there is a true bond; a sharing of vision if you will, then the hotel will operate like a well-oiled machine, flourishing in the process.

Of course, one of the major bones of contention is profit. No matter how good the management group is, the hotel owners ultimately seek a return on their investment. So when your favourite hotel suddenly changes its name, then it is usually because the owners have replaced the management group for one which promises tighter controls and fatter profits.

The newly refurbished Peninsula hotel in Hong Kong enjoys the best of both worlds. It is 100% owned by the visionary Kadoorie family and is managed by the parent group, Hong Kong and Shanghai Hotels Limited. This heaven-made partnership means that today, the Pen commands the highest average room rate in the territory, with an average occupancy of 71% for 1994. Unlike its competitors, The Peninsula Group has no desire to cover the world, but is content to aim for a maximum of 10-12 deluxe hotels.

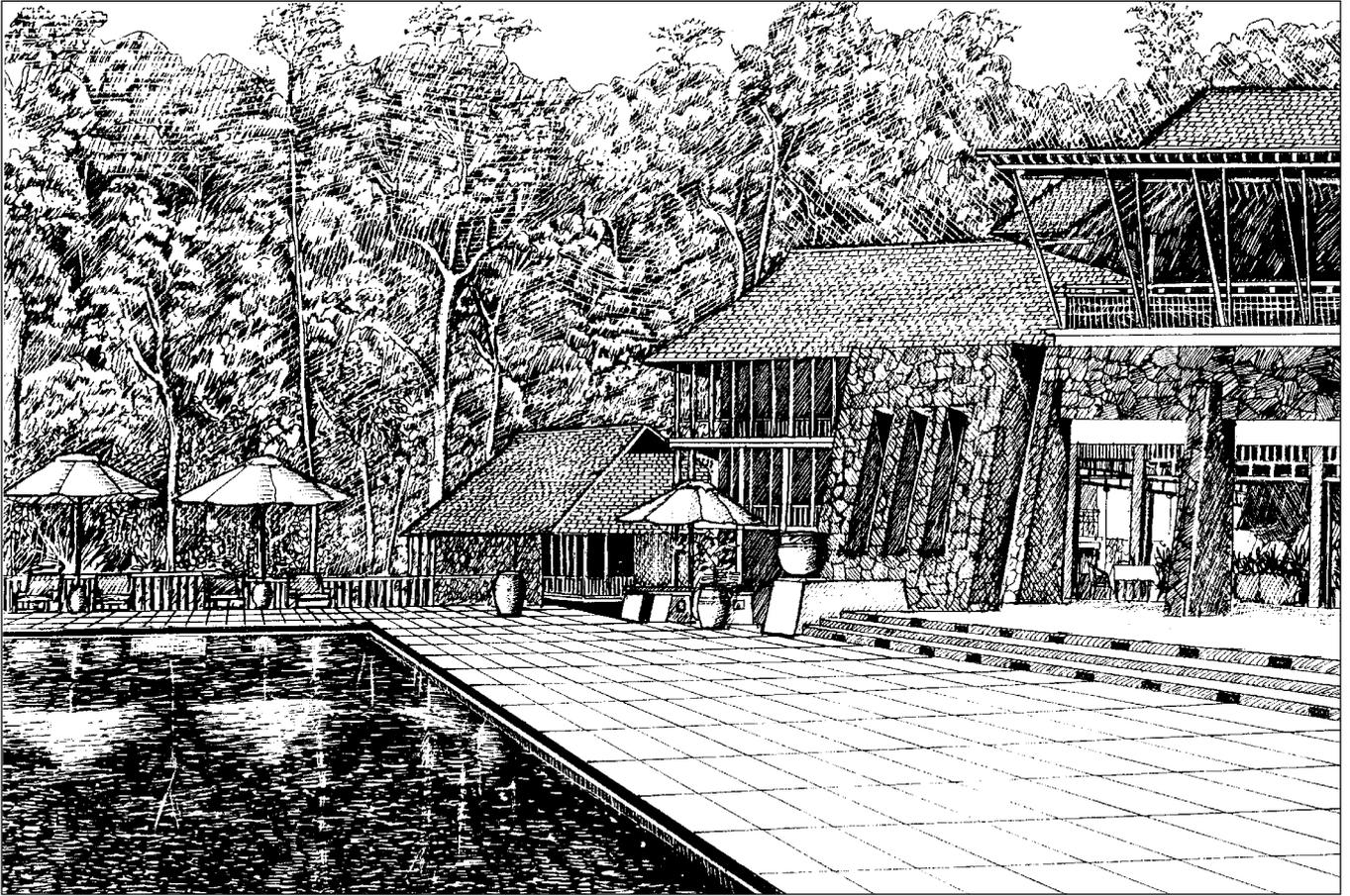
Rafael Hotels and Amanresorts, both small, deluxe groups, have similar philosophies, and invariably own a sizeable proportion of most of the properties they manage, thus ensuring a consistency of quality and service wherever they venture.

Interestingly, one of the Amanresorts properties that is managed but not owned by the group is Carcosa Seri Negara in Kuala Lumpur, which, unlike the rest, would benefit from a little extra investment. The fault, of course, lies with the tiresome bureaucracy of its government owners, rather than with Amanresorts.

Ultimately, the guests, like the management companies, are at the mercy of hotel owners, which means that you can rarely, if ever, guarantee consistency from one group hotel to another.

My advice? Choose your hotels by reputation rather than by affiliation.

Editor/Publisher



From the main pool at The Datai, the jungle encroaches from every side and the striking, though unobtrusive architecture blends perfectly in this natural setting.

WARM WINTER WONDERLANDS

Two unique Far Eastern hideaways provide the perfect escape

There are a myriad of destinations in this world that I do not review because, as yet, there are no acceptable hotels there. So it is always a pleasure when an enlightened hotel group creates a sympathetic resort in a hitherto barren location.

Two such resorts are The Datai in Langkawi, Malaysia, and The Regent Chiang Mai in northern Thailand. Both have avoided the 'concrete block' syndrome so beloved of the Sheratons and Hiltons of this world, who continue to despoil idyllic beaches and forests across the globe in the name of tourism. Let us hope that our increasingly ecologically

aware hotel industry will learn and prosper from these two inspired examples.

The Datai (Langkawi, Malaysia)

We fly from Kuala Lumpur to the island of Langkawi, where, with traditional touristic optimism, they are expanding the airport buildings; the noise of hammer drills deafening us as we wait at the single carousel for our bags to arrive.

Straight away, we see a white-clad man holding aloft a carefully printed 'Datai' sign, and are led to a shiny new BMW 735i, where the airconditioned cool

enfolds us for the picturesque 30 minute drive.

After the shanty sprawl of backpacker huts and local low-rise hotels, the landscape reverts to pristine rainforest, a typically good Malaysian road cutting a single grey swathe to the northwestern tip of Langkawi, as we pass rubber plantations, dense vine-clad jungle and the occasional monkeys who, sitting at the side of the road, note our passage like hitchhikers.

Finally, we spot the discrete hotel sign, set into a polished rock by the roadside, and we plunge headlong into the jungle; the lush green mountains towering above

us as the jungle chatter rises to a chainsaw screech of cicadas, birds and monkeys; gossamer butterflies, the size of my hand, fluttering through the steamy air.

Although The Datai is not an Amanresort, it is managed by General Hotel Management, in which the omnipresent Adrian Zecha holds equity of obviously influential proportions; for, in every respect, apart from its greater size, The Datai proffers that unique ecological sensitivity and provocative architectural style that typifies the Amanresorts' style.

The Lobby is a masterpiece of understatement, guarded by two giant carved horses and centrepiced by a large reflecting lotus pool, which is flanked, amusingly, by the occasional lifelike stone frog.

Beyond, an open, sunken bar pavilion with deep celadon-hued chairs and Colonial-style rattan, takes in the magical vista beyond; the two low-built accommodation wings designed like Nepalese hill stations, with carved bleached wood walkways and balconies, quietly roofed by traditional hardwood tiles that merge seamlessly into the dark

green jungle.

Lit like an art gallery, each precious object, each ancient tree, each pristine

Utterly unique, The Datai is easily the best resort in Malaysia

orchid, springs from the verdant shadows like a rare masterpiece; the vast glassy pool on the lower level lined by cream parasols; the elegant dining room enclosed in weathered grey stone; its walls and stairways angled like a Luxor temple.

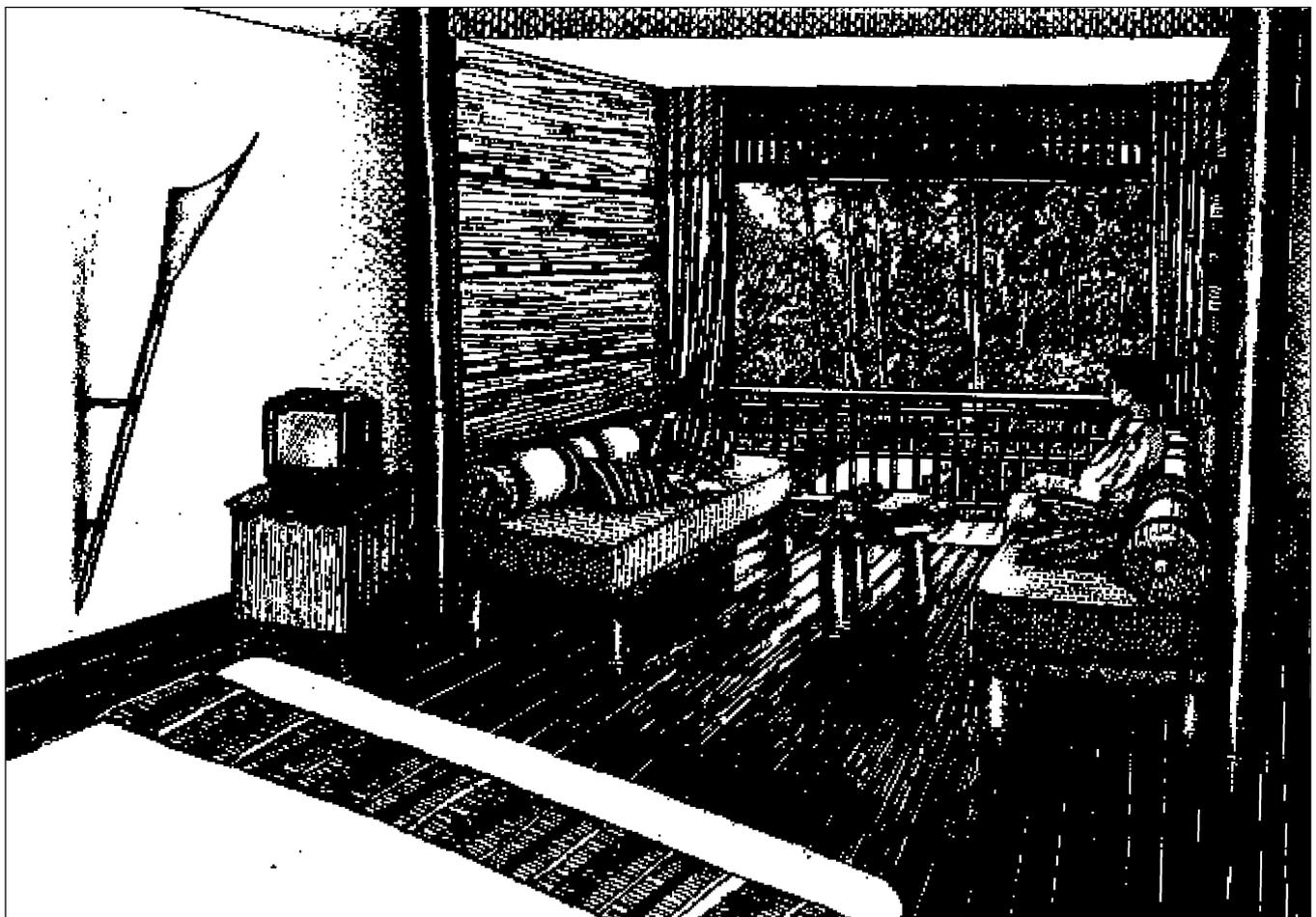
There is so much space here that we never feel overlooked, and when we discover that this is just the beginning of this extraordinary place, then we are instantly in awe of the accomplishment; for The Datai unfolds itself like a vast exotic blossom, tumbling down and down the hillside to the distant private beach facing the calm Andaman Sea; each

terraced level offering new visions to tempt one further into its depths.

The staff are delightful, and as we arrive, our luggage is dispatched and we are led down to the bar, deposited in deep rattan chairs overlooking the pool, and served orchid-rimmed glasses of cool tropical fruit juice, and ice-cold towels, whilst the necessary details of check-in are gently accomplished.

Our room, #205, is a Deluxe Double in the East wing, and I could not wish for better. There are 54 Deluxe Rooms and 14 suites in the two Nepalese style wings, and 40 small Villas flanking the east side of the property in the heart of the rainforest. Personally, I do not like the Villas, which are dark and rather musty, lacking the magical views afforded by the hilltop rooms, and with interior design that appears somewhat higgledy piggledy. They are no bigger than the Deluxe Doubles, and if anything, feel smaller, despite their cathedral ceilings.

The best options, in my view, are either a second or third floor Deluxe Double or one of the eleven super spacious End Suites, especially those in the west wing,



With the windows to the balcony folded back, the jungle vista of The Datai fills one's room.

with their large lounge-clad terraces, big kingsize bedrooms, two exquisite bathrooms and stunning views. There is also the larger Datai Suite which is perfect if one is travelling as two couples or with children.

Our room is pure Amanresorts in style, with its polished teakwood floors and fittings, large white-clad kingsize plumped with the softest feather pillows; twin celadon-hued day beds, spot-lit orchids and a spacious dressing area that meanders through to white marbled vanities, a sunken marble bath and a powerful step-in shower and separate loo, with elegant doors of etched glass.

The wall lights are shaped like giant wooden torches, one being around five feet in height, with parchment cones giving forth a soft amber light.

The mini-bar is contained in what appears to be a small rattan altar, and the minimalist desk holds a collectible custom-designed stationery box.

Large bottles of Floris toiletries, thick cotton Celadon robes, cream calico laundry bags, useful adaptor plugs, torches, non-chemical insect repellent, airconditioning, ceiling fans, television, tropical fruit bowls refreshed daily, excellent dry cleaning and laundry, superb

housekeeping; all these things are of the Amanresorts standard, despite the relative modesty of the room rates.

The Datai unfolds itself like a vast exotic blossom

During the day, the French windows concertina back, opening up the seating area to a small bleached wood balcony that encompasses the view. First class 24-hour room service makes one happy to stay here, but for the lure of the jungle, which insists on further exploration.

That night, as the sun slowly dims to a star-speckled sky and the distant coastal islands of Thailand fade into shades of misty grey, we walk by the main pool and descend the steps; a shimmer of lights pointing a path through the jungle.

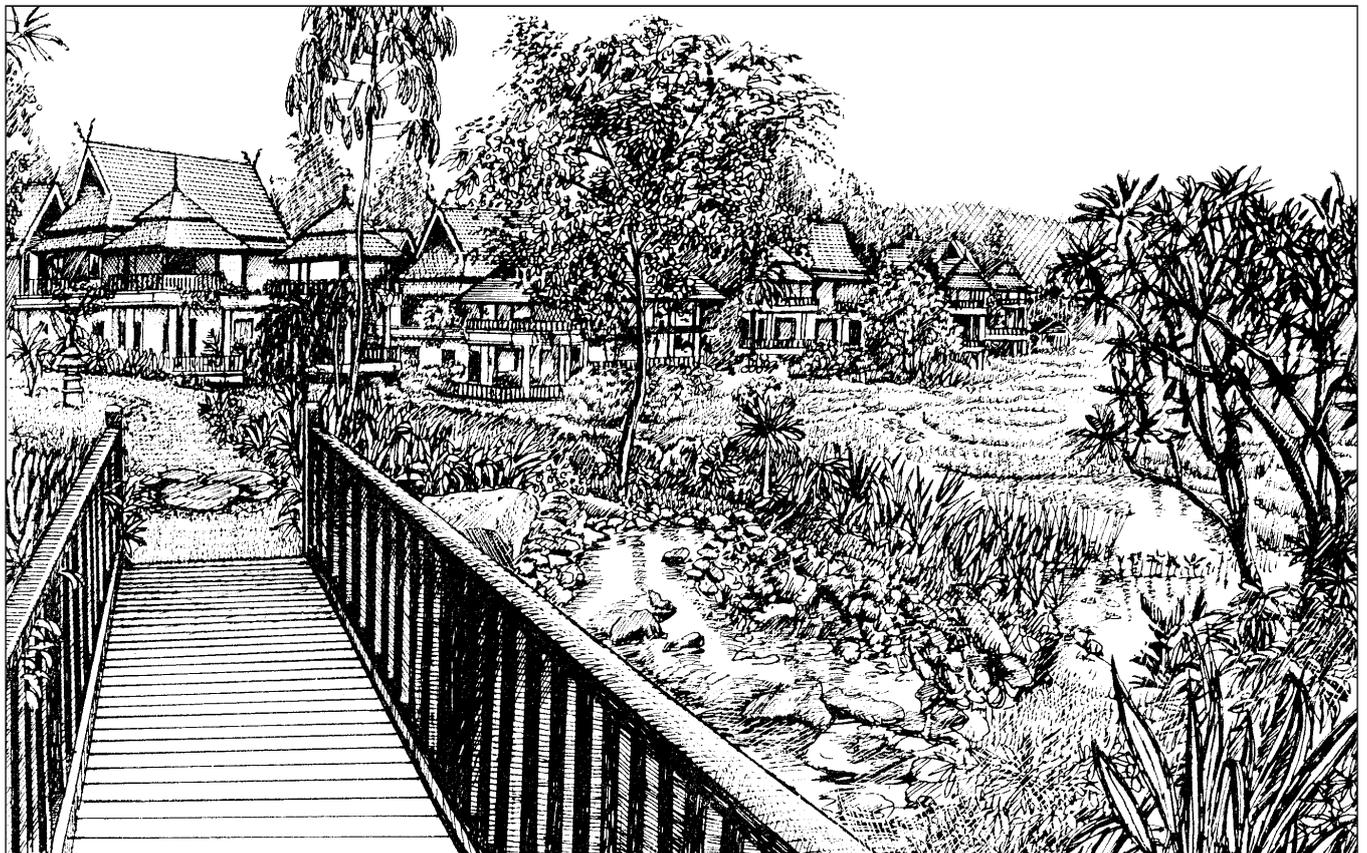
We pass the Thai restaurant, set high on stilts and jutting out into the teeming bush; the flying squirrels gliding like paper planes between the trees. More steps lead us down and down into the

blackness until we reach a winding sandy path; the sound of water trickling from jungle streams; the shriek of monkeys filling the air. Then we come to a wooden bridge that crosses the river, and suddenly the lights lead us to a second place of magic; The Datai's beautiful Beach Club, edged by its own private sandy beach and encompassed by two headlands.

Here, torches and lamps light the elegant tables as diners pile their plates from the nightly buffet and barbecue; rich satays, succulent meats, fresh fish and shellfish, salads and curries; the coolly immaculate staff hurrying to pour one's wine and clear one's plates.

A spot-lit, teak-covered sala bar glimmers in amber light, and in the second pool, which is somewhat smaller than the main one, a young couple swim in the turquoise shimmering light.

The walk back proves rather more taxing, and fortifying ourselves with a drink from the bar, we stride through the jungle to dinner in the elegant air-conditioned main dining room that overlooks the larger pool. Here, excellent buffet breakfasts are served, offering everything from three types of freshly baked brioche to delicious tropical juices, Malaysian dishes, fruits, and even eggs and bacon.



Rice paddies and landscaped gardens awash with tropical blooms create a magical setting at The Regent Resort in Chiang Mai, Thailand.



At the Regent Resort, Chiang Mai, I relax in the airconditioned cool of our Pavilion Suite, #1501, a plate of waxy Chom-poo apples awaiting my pleasure.

Lunches and dinners, which offer European and Asian fare, are equally good, although the wine list proves a little unadventurous for our taste; something that Jamie Case, the resort's amiable Canadian General Manager, is apparently in the process of expanding.

The Thai restaurant is less formal and rather more boisterous in style, providing authentic Thai fare with supremely fresh fish, and altogether the choice of dining is superb.

Days may be spent browsing through the library, buying gifts and such from the large and fascinating boutique; unwinding or exercising in the Health Club, playing tennis, indulging in a raft of watersports, deep sea fishing and sailing; or one can charter a boat for island hopping, one's own delicious picnic prepared by the Datai chefs.

Alternatively, one could explore the island on one of the hotel's mountain bikes, trek through the jungle or just experience this mystical, unspoilt island of mountains, lakes, caves and waterfalls via a car rental or hotel limo.

Do, however, get up early one morning and accompany Naturalist, Irshad Mubarak on the Nature Walk, where you will learn

the secrets of the trees and plants in this ancient virgin rainforest.

Utterly unique, The Datai is easily the best resort in Malaysia and will provide you with an unforgettable winter sun experience.

The Regent Resort (Chiang Mai, northern Thailand)

Today, art-directed like a still life in a green leaf-shaped dish, I find three waxy Chom-poo Apples. Yesterday there were clusters of beige-skinned grape-like fruits, sweet to the taste like lichee.

The details are wonderful here; like the four bottles of toiletries housed in four printed boxes that, when positioned correctly in a line, reveal an ancient Thai painting.

Arriving in Chiang Mai from Bangkok, we are whisked by an hotel Volvo through the bustling night, into the green foothills of the Mae Sa Valley, where most hoteliers have yet to venture, and are greeted with fragrant garlands of tuberose; our bags and us driven in a buggy from the soaring teak pavilion lobby along lush, spot-lit lanes to our Pavilion Suite, #1501.

There are just 64 identical suites here,

built in units of four; two up, two down. The nicest, I think, are on the top floors, for they, like the lobby and restaurant, have teak cathedral ceilings and mystical views of the distant mountains; the manicured rice-paddies weaving between stepping-stone walkways in the hotel grounds.

There is even a resident buffalo here, led to the paddies by blue-clad farmers in wide straw hats, who harvest the rice and hang it out to dry in picturesque bundles from each pavilion's stilts.

It is hard to create a deluxe hotel in these remote parts, which is why it has taken Regent International so long to open, and even now they are finding it difficult to hire good housekeeping staff; so although the smiling Lanna-costumed staff are typically caring in nature, their willingness is occasionally blurred by naivety, which is utterly forgivable in this magical place.

Our spacious Pavilion Suite is supremely comfortable; its gleaming teak floors sporting natural cream woven rugs, a vast comfortable kingsize with a light duvet and plump feather pillows; a good desk and breakfast table; silk-cushioned armchairs; a carved teak amenity and

mini-bar cabinet, and a thoroughly collectable antique-style Thai armoire, which conceals the TV and sound system, and is gloriously stippled with turquoise and gold and crowned by a spot-lit celadon plate.

Through carved teak sliding doors, the large dressing and bathing area opens out, finished in intricate teak panelling and grey and peach terrazzo, with pale terracotta glazed tiles; a deep tub framed by a bay of seamless glass, and flanked by an etched glass step-in shower and separate loo.

Huge, soft crested towels and collectable terracotta, black and celadon patterned coarse-weave robes with matching slippers, complete the bathing experience.

Windows are draped with sheer Japanese blinds, overhung by a second layer of beige which can be pulled down at night; and a rear door opens onto an angled walkway which leads to one's private teak-roofed sitting and dining sala, replete with shading blinds, a traditional Thai sofa and a proper table with four comfortable dining chairs.

Breakfast here is a delight, and David, who is a toast and marmalade man, is pleased to find that a toaster is provided to ensure that the choice of three different freshly baked breads are crisped to perfection.

The landscaping is miraculous. One strolls through the 20 acres of grounds along little grey stone paths; fine grass defining each slab. Then suddenly there are stepping stones across a purple lily pond; a little bleached wood bridge traversing a cascading waterfall; a curve of bright red-leaved tropical plants defining a corner, and then the beautiful *infinity edge* pool with its dark turquoise tiles, merging, it seems, with the rice paddies beyond. Yes, the inspiration is surely Amandari in Bali, but then, what isn't these days?

Comfortable loungers, cold towels and constantly refilled glasses of mineral water make the pool a truly civilised experience, and as the sun begins to set over the purple hills, a bubbling sala-roofed jacuzzi awaits to soothe one's muscles.

I feel the urge to exercise, but, sitting quietly, it soon passes, and instead we have soothing aromatic massages in the

Spa, skirting the spacious hi-tech exercise room where a large, lone traveller pays painful penance for his lifestyle.

Built by the hotels' owner, and encircling one side of the property, are a series of extraordinarily fanciful residences, which remind me of Burmese temples.

Most will be sold as millionaire summer homes; but three apartments, we are told, will soon be available as Lanna Suites for hotel guests. I am agog at the sheer size and spaciousness of them.

Each building houses two immense, fabulously designed apartments; the upper ones being duplex residences of palatial

What is truly extraordinary about this newly opened hotel is the quality of the cuisine..

proportions, which are perfect for discerning families.

They add a certain exotic splendour to the skyline, although personally, I would have limited their number, as the look is a little cluttered from certain aspects of the hotel property.

What is truly extraordinary, however, about this newly opened hotel is the quality of the cuisine.

Lunch in the open-sided Pool Terrace is a revelation, beginning with a series of home-baked breads and Italian grissini served with four moreish dips, from a Mexican-style salsa to a creamy tapenade.

David, who is not a great pizza fan, raves over the juicy wholemeal variety served here, which brims over with succulent artichoke hearts and asparagus. Meanwhile, I enjoy superb Chicken Satay, creatively served with two different sauces.

The Sala Mae Rim, which is the main restaurant, is a more sophisticated dining option, and here one may choose from northern Thai and innovative western-style fare; everything being utterly marvellous, from perfect Angel Hair Pasta with Tomato and Basil, to a glorious sun-dried Garoupa; the Thai food appealing to every

taste, from mild to hell-fire hot. There is even a decent wine list, including a good Rosé by the glass.

Spend four or five nights here so that you can fit in your trips to the elephant training camps, shop for excellent local handicrafts and still make time for a little gentle up-country relaxation.

Take a moment to watch the sun set from The Elephant Bar. Dine on your private sala to the sound of the jungle; the bright flames of the braziers by the pool piercing the star-filled night.

Discover a special ancient artifact in the resort's small but intriguing boutique. Trace a path through the bright green rice paddies. Play tennis with the mountains as your backdrop. Take a car into Chiang Mai and marvel at its ancient fortifications, or, if needs must, spend a day at one of the two nearby championship golf courses; but above all, let this magical 700-year old kingdom set the pace.

One senses a sure hand here from General Manager Simon Hirst, the charming English ex number two of the Mandarin Oriental Hong Kong; and although still in its infancy, I expect wonderful things from The Regent Chiang Mai. Go there soon and feel the magic.

AT A GLANCE

THE DATAI.

Address: Jalan Teluk Datai, 07000 Pulau Langkawi, Kedah Darul Aman, Malaysia. **Tel:** (604) 959 2500. **Fax:** (604) 959 2600. **Affiliation:** Prima Hotels. (UK toll-free) 0800-181-535. (USA toll-free) 1-800-447-7462. **Rooms:** 108. **Approx Rates:** *Deluxe Doubles:* £137. *Villas:* £183. *Corner Suites:* £229. *End Suites:* £283. *Datai Suite (2 bedroom):* £648, plus 10% service.

REGENT RESORT, CHIANG MAI.

Address: Mae Rim-Samoeng Old Road, Chiang Mai **Tel:** (66) 53 298 181. **Fax:** (66) 53 298 190. **Affiliation:** Four Seasons Regent Hotels & Resorts. **Rooms:** 64 Pavilion Suites & 3 Lanna Suites. **Approx Rates:** *Superior Pavilion Garden View:* £162. *Deluxe Pavilion Mountain view:* £188, plus 10% service & 7% tax. *Lanna Suites:* Rates upon request.

As we step off the plane at Tucson, the dry desert air shimmers in a heat haze mirage on the tarmac. We hire a large, bouncy car, so softly sprung that it's like a baby's rocker, and drive the twenty or so miles to our hotel; the relentlessly flat landscape sprawling either side of arrow-straight roads; towering saguaro cactus, like proud sentinels guarding our passage.

As we approach our turning, the distant, brooding Catalina mountains grow dark and lightening slashes the sky with blue and purple, an impossibly vivid sunset reflected in the wing mirrors, and I sense the power and peace of the desert all around me, feeling my shoulders relax as the landscape strips me of stress.

**Loews Ventana Canyon Resort
(Tucson, Arizona)**

Even when an hotel tries its best to blend into the landscape, a 398-room low-rise cannot help but make its mark; but this soft rock-hued structure manages better than most resorts of its size, despite its rather unforgiving 1984 brutalist architecture.

Set in 39 acres of spectacular desert landscape, strewn with majestic 30 foot saguaro cacti and enfolded by dun-coloured hills, Loews Ventana Canyon is, despite its size, a haven of restful Southwestern hospitality.

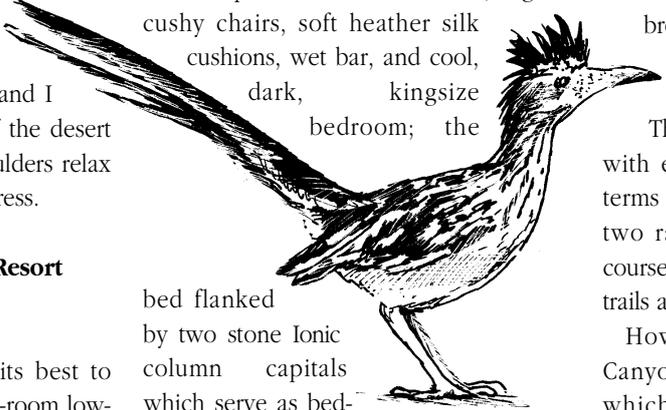
The staff are quietly enthusiastic in that relaxed Arizona way, and smiles are ever forthcoming, from check-in to room-service.

The first suite we are shown to disappoints, so we ask to see another. The price is the same, but the views and the configuration are not, and, although the bell boy obviously cannot figure out why we prefer one to the other, he is happy that we are happy.

Like most American resort hotels, the corridors here are just that; vast, soulless mushroom-coloured tunnels, dotted with ugly ice machines; hundreds of *en série* rooms spilling out tee-shirted children and room service trays. However, of the 398 rooms, the 26 Southwestern-style suites

CHASING THE DESERT MUSE

are eminently acceptable, and we soon settle down into our spacious suite, #3133, with its pastel desert-like decor, big cushy chairs, soft heather silk cushions, wet bar, and cool, dark, kingsize bedroom; the bed flanked by two stone Ionic column capitals which serve as bedside tables; both rooms replete with log fires, which we never need to light.



Designed so that one may walk around and through each room in a continuous circle, this is a suite one can live in; with a good-sized round dining table facing a small but magical vista of a saguaro-speckled hillside, that just demands to be viewed over a room-service breakfast.

The bathroom, with its big, cream plastic spa bath is less than inspired, despite the enthusiastic addition of a tiny black and white television, but generally, this is a very comfortable habitat and in the evenings, tired from our long journey, we make much use of the excellent room-service whilst catching up on the latest videos.

During the day, we lounge around one of the attractive, grotto-like pools, clad with desert flora and backdropped by an 80-foot thin-stream waterfall that cascades silently down the mountain, cutting a great swathe through the ancient rock, then spilling across the property into pools and rivulets.

Little bridges traverse streams brimming with fish and ducks, whilst chipmonks dart beneath the rocks; intricate pathways

and a 3-mile nature trail leading one upwards to explore the foothills that enfold the property.

At lunchtime, we gather around the barbecue, joining a comical roadrunner bird that begs for (and gets) filet steak, then rustles off into the bushes to feed her young.

Most evenings, after a drink in the cathedral-style, virtuoso lobby lounge, with its striking Native American artifacts, we

dine in one of the five rather good restaurants, sampling a raft of modern Southwestern fare, pleasantly tired from breathing the pure air and unearthing the ancient secrets of this desert landscape.

This is a wonderfully relaxed place, with everything one could wish for in terms of sports and activities, including two rather good Tom Fazio PGA golf courses, a tennis club, lakeside spa, fitness trails and even a croquet green.

However, situated as it is, Ventana Canyon is also the perfect place from which to explore the region, and I particularly recommend the spectacular drive up Mount Lemon, where one moves from the hot desert floor, through numerous diverse terrains to the cool rarefied heights of pine forests, replete with magical views.

Although Arizona is either warm or warmer all year, the climate is so dry that it is positively invigorating, and although one is advised to visit during the cooler months between November and April, we find September and October to be simply perfect.

AT A GLANCE

**LOEWS
VENTANA CANYON RESORT**

Address: 7000 N Resort Drive, Tucson 85715, Arizona. **Tel:** (520) 299-2020. **Fax:** (520) 299-6832. **Rooms:** 398. **Approx Rates:** *Mountain View Deluxe Doubles:* \$355. (High season winter rate). *Suites:* \$425-\$1400 (All-year rate), plus 9.5% tax. Standard rooms are not recommended. Room & Suite rates are 20%-60% lower out of season.

GALLIVANTER'S Gossip



AT LAST, GENERAL HOTEL MANAGEMENT, WHO RUN THE DATAI, Chedi and Serai Hotels have employed a UK representative who can not only give you information and brochures on all the GHM properties, but can also book them for you. Telephone **TRI Hotel Marketing** on (0181) 563 2100. Fax: (0181) 563 2300. Meanwhile, the Pansea Hotel, adjacent to Amanpuri in Phuket, Thailand, was taken over by GHM in May this year and has become the Chedi Phuket. Chedi Muscat is due next summer; Chedi Dubai later in 1996 and Chedi Siam Reap in Cambodia by early 1997. The Serai chain (which creates larger, and slightly less luxurious hotels than the intimate Chedi collection) plan to open the Serai Nha Trang in Vietnam in 1996 and the Serai Dubai in 1996. The Serai Cibogo in Bogor, West Java, plans to open in the next few weeks.

IF YOU ENJOY AUTHENTIC THAI CUISINE, then sample Vatcharin Bhumichitr's wonderful northern Thai menus at **The Chiang Mai Restaurant** in London's Frith Street. Do not let the simple, unpretentious decor and paper table cloths deter you, for the cuisine here is excellent. There is even a special vegetarian menu which would convert even the most ardent of carnivores! You can also purchase Vatcharin's Thai cookery books in the restaurant. The Chiang Mai Restaurant, 48 Frith Street, London W1V 5TE. Tel: (0171) 437-7444. Booking rarely necessary.

IN THE GREAT TRADITION OF THE BALI OBEROI, Oberoi Hotels are currently building a new hotel on Lombok Island, Indonesia, scheduled to open in 1996. Set on 210 hectares of land, **The Oberoi Lombok** will offer 30 lanai cottage rooms and 18 villas, 10 of which will sport private swimming pools. There will also be a two-bedroom pool villa and a presidential villa with pool and kitchen. Four restaurants, both formal and informal, will include a spectacular outdoor venue situated on Gili Air Island, which is 20 minutes by boat from the resort. Here, a 2.4 hectare dining site will form an integral part of the hotel's facilities. Expect the whitest of sand beaches and Oberoi's usual sensitively styled architecture. As Lombok currently only offers a few small tourist hotels, a Sheraton and The Seneggigi Beach Hotel, the new Oberoi will be the first deluxe property on the island.

FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO DO BUSINESS IN JAKARTA, we can now recommend the ideal address. The new **Regent Jakarta** opened on 17 August and is set on a 6 1/2 acre site on *Embassy Row*. Comprising 378 of the largest rooms and suites in the city, the hotel includes a spectacular atrium lobby, 24-hour health club, lush tropical landscaping, outdoor pool, tennis courts and four restaurants. Rates start at US\$265 for a double, plus 21% service and tax.

THE CURRENT TREND IN TAIWAN is for five-star hotels to be managed by their owners, who like to be rather more involved than most. **The Grand Hyatt**, however, which will open in 1996, will be the first five-star to be managed by an international chain.

The Gallivanter's Guide is a privately published monthly newsletter with the aim of unearthing idyllic places for the dedicated traveller. The selection of hotels and resorts included in this Guide is made on an entirely independent basis, and all opinions expressed are those of the Editor. Neither the Editor nor Publisher can be held responsible for any problems which may arise through the subscriber or reader's direct experience of any place, hotel or airline as recommended in this Guide. All information, including room rates, is published in good faith, and the Publishers cannot be held responsible for its accuracy. We recommend that you always double check all information with the hotels/authorities concerned.

UK SUBSCRIPTIONS £99 per annum for 12 issues.

REST OF EUROPE £125 per annum. ASIA/AFRICA £134 per annum.

Address these enquiries to 'Subscriptions', The Gallivanter's Guide,
PO Box 880, London SW12 8DJ, England. (Fax: (0171) 437-3498)

USA SUBSCRIPTIONS \$149 per annum for 12 issues.

Address these enquiries to 'Subscriptions', The Gallivanter's Guide,
PO Box 5864, Scottsdale, Arizona 85261-5864, USA.

© Copyright 1995 The Gallivanter's Guide. All rights reserved. Quotation, reproduction or transmission by any means is prohibited without written permission from the Publisher.