



THE GALLIVANTER'S GUIDE[©]



12 page
Bonus
Issue

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SETTING THE BENCHMARK FOR HIGH-END TRAVELLERS

IT ONLY TOOK us a day to realise that this was not an hotel, not a resort, but an entire destination. After two days we had enough words and photographs for a coffee table book and after three days, we were still discovering more. We decided to devote an entire 8-page issue to our findings; then, after four days, we realised that 8 pages were not enough. It may seem excessive to produce a 12-page issue for a single property, but when an hotel group suddenly redefines the whole concept of a vacation, this deserves serious attention and, believe me, the Aman Sveti Stefan experience is so uniquely diverse that even this offering barely covers its attractions.

As with Amanpuri when it opened in Phuket, Thailand in 1988, Aman Sveti Stefan has entirely redefined the benchmark and it has achieved this in

Montenegro -
a country of high
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Adriatic coastline.

a tiny country called Montenegro that many people have to look up on a map to locate. It is, in fact, one of the most beautiful destinations on earth; a coun-

try of high green mountains and unique fjords that create endless inland seas along its warm Adriatic coastline.

Island and mountain monasteries bring forth hand-made unrefined sea salt, fragrant herbs, wines and powerful Rakija, which is as lethal as eau de vie. The Montenegrins are proud, hospitable people who cannot quite believe that this thing called Aman could bring to its shores the world's A list of guests. Yes, some remember the days when Sophia Loren, Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor hid away on the island of Sveti Stefan in its original hostelry, but few really understand what Aman is all about, so there have been some disgruntled locals complaining about the length of time it



The most
exciting destination this year-
Aman Sveti Stefan.

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has taken for the project to come to fruition. This, you understand; for as you drive from Dubrovnik, Croatia, along the exquisite coastline, most of the buildings you see are hastily and roughly constructed, whereas, as we all know, Aman is more concerned with quality than timing and for that, us guests are eternally grateful.



The lamps are lit at dusk along the walkways of Aman Sveti Stefan.

It is said that Montenegro was populated as early as 180,000 years ago and artifacts have been discovered that date back to the Illyrians in the early Iron Age. Over the centuries, the region has been fraught with conflicts; the Slavic tribes eventually taking over the area at the start of the 7th Century. One of the peoples that settled the Balkan Peninsula was the Montenegrins, but you will find that the cultural influences are considerably more diverse than this; the excellent local smoked hams, salamis and cheeses testifying to a distinct Italian influence, whilst the filo pastry of the delicious Montenegrin breakfast mushroom pie is decidedly Greek or Arabic in style.

Although you are unlikely to want to leave Sveti Stefan, Aman has, of course, devised some fascinating excursions to Montenegro's unique historic areas, such as Kotor, which encompasses 2,000 years of history, and Perast, where Baroque architecture and island-set monasteries create fairytale images. If history is less of a lure, then you can also spend the day cruising along the Boka Bay or shopping in the 5th Century town of Budva, where restaurants and boutiques jostle for your attention; but why leave? When you realise how extensive the Sveti Stefan estate is (79 acres encompassing three semi-private beaches, 2 km of coastline, several restaurants and two quite separate hotel locations) you start to think about splitting your stay between the 50-cottage 15th Century island of Sveti Stefan and the 8-suite beach-set Villa Milocer, which was once the summer residence of Queen Marija Karadordevic and is today enveloped by over 800 mature olive trees, cedars and pines.

It is a very tough choice, but for me, my heart went out to the unique island of Sveti Stefan; so utterly private and tranquil, as it is reached via a protected causeway, which is wonderful in itself, as the views as you stroll over to the island are of fishing boats, yachts, beaches and endless blue skies.



Verdant walkways at Aman Sveti Stefan.



Authentic village atmosphere at Sveti Stefan.

All photography by David Maslin©



View from the Sveti Stefan Beach of the entirely private island of Sveti Stefan, which is connected by a causeway to the mainland.

You reach the guest-only island and are, inevitably, welcomed by Aman's young, caring staff, so you feel as though you are coming home. This is reinforced by the village ambience of the island, which has been



View of the public beach, across the water from the island of Sveti Stefan.

immaculately restored to reflect its original 15th Century fortress architecture of steep, winding stone steps and alleys, and the later, more domestic aspects of fragrant herb-filled kitchen gardens. The central Piazza and 50 entirely different cottages of all shapes and sizes are today rather more salubrious than those of the original fortress and early 19th Century fishing village that once supported 400 inhabitants.

What is so remarkable is that architect and designer, Jean-Michel Gathy, has retained the historic aspects of the island to perfection but has also managed to create a series of exceptionally comfortable and stylish accommodations. There are numerous touches that remind you that this was once a fishing village. For instance, there are hurricane lamps that hang by the win-

dows which, at night, are moved to a hook within the window niche, so as to shed light upon the waters and provide safe passage for homecoming boats. From land, this serves to illuminate every window and creates a fairytale castle feel to the island.

Perhaps the best way to describe Sveti Stefan is to imagine Eze Village on the Côte d'Azur, stripped of its bright boutiques and tourists, privatised and honed to its medieval roots, then perfectly enhanced with Aman style and comforts. The result is entirely unique.

The furniture was designed especially to suit the rustic island nature of Sveti Stefan, including black wrought iron door latches, clean whitewashed walls and no art whatsoever, for who needs it when every window frames a natural masterpiece?

Today's 'luxury' is all about providing somewhere that is impossible to find elsewhere and that is why Aman succeeds where so many others fail. However, it is not merely the unique location of Sveti Stefan that singles it out; it is the clever use of existing structures that makes your jaw drop with admiration. There are, for instance, three small, carefully renovated churches on the island and ten individual spa cottages, so that at least one will be close to where you 'live'. These are delightful spa-

suite havens, replete with twin massage tables, reception chairs, shower, tub and loo; the essence of 21st Century spa privacy. Treatments include the classic Aman reflexology and consummate massages, utilising Aman's new premium quality chemical-free skincare. For fitness, just walk up and down all those stone steps, or if you must, drink in the stunning sea vistas from the Gymnasium on the southern tip of the island, which was not finished when we stayed last month. Above this is an amaz-



Endless sea and mountain views from Sveti Stefan.



The central area of the Piazza on the island of Sveti Stefan is served by five different 'village' outlets, including the Enoteca and Taverna.

ing terrace which encompasses the preserved foundations of yet another ancient church, together with an indoor/outdoor lap pool that sucks in the views. Above this pool will be the Aman Restaurant, which intends to offer a contemporary take on Montenegrin cuisine. There will also be Pool and Terrace Bars in this soaring battlement on the southern tip of the island and two large suites; the final stage of this awe-inspiring project.

Meanwhile, we fell in love with The Piazza, which is shaded by pines and olive trees and edged by wild strawberries, oregano, lavender and other fragrant herbs. The Piazza is served by the Taverna, the Pasticceria bakery, the Antipasti Bar and

the delightful cellar-like Enoteca with its sea-facing outdoor terraces. I could have spent all day here, devouring the smell of just-ground coffee beneath the pines, sur-



Local wine at sunset on one of the terraces of the Enoteca at Aman Sveti Stefan.

rounded by pomegranate trees and kitchen herbs. The wood oven filled the air with the perfume of olive and eucalyptus wood, culled from the island's endless trees, as rosemary-sprinkled pizza bread arrived hot

and crisp at our table, or a fine Montenegrin breakfast of local smoked hams and salamis, mushroom pies and herb-filled omelettes made us linger far too long.

The cuisine here is so good that there is little temptation to leave. You could, for instance, spend the morning by the Cliff Pool and Bar, or sit on one of the high Enoteca terraces with a glass of excellent local wine and watch the sun fill the sky with impossible orange flames.

Cigar smokers can hide away in the Cigar Room above the Taverna, or you can retire to your beautiful cottage as the hurricane

lamps are lit and the purple sky winks to life with bright white stars.

Eventually, there will be Aman boutiques dotted about the island, hopefully becoming retail ambassadors for some of



Extraordinary sunsets paint the mainland with golden light, at Aman Sveti Stefan.



Cottage, #20, although only one level up from the basic accommodation on Sveti Stefan, is remarkably spacious. Notice the signature hurricane lamp at the window.

Montenegro's unique produce, so a little pre-dinner retail therapy will be in order, but meanwhile, the sheer peacefulness of this place urges you to forget such frivolity and to simply sit and stare.

Although there are five accommodation categories on the island of Sveti Stefan, they really cannot be categorised, as each cottage is unique in its size, aspect and configuration. They start with a Village Room, but you should start with a Cottage, which as the second lowest option is remarkably spacious. #19, for instance has a separate sitting room and bedroom, with both sea and village views, whilst #20 is a big wood-floored junior-suite-sized space that I actually preferred as I loved its sleek design. Upstairs in #21, there are also wooden floors, but it is slightly smaller, yet nonetheless covetable. #39 has a private terrace with striking sea views, but its small bathroom only has a shower.

Deluxe Cottages are even more special. #40, for instance, is small, but with an am-

azing private terrace overlooking the sea. #38 has no real view from its little terrace, but from the other side of the cottage there is a striking seaside panorama of Villa Milocer from a second, larger terrace.

cannot face climbing too many steps. It has its own gated courtyard, replete with breakfast table, and can extend to encompass a second smaller, two-storey cottage within its grounds. The views from the



Another unique bathroom, this time in Deluxe Cottage, #38, on Sveti Stefan island.

Although only a couple of Grand Suites were open last month, they were both breathtaking. #1, which is the first cottage you reach when you enter the island, would be very good for those of you who

master cottage are of the public beach, so are not as evocative as some. Equally, the configuration is, necessarily, somewhat quirky, with a sitting room and tub-only bathroom downstairs and a really lovely



At Aman Sveti Stefan, the sitting room of Grand Suite, #41, can connect via its staircase to Cottage #39 below.



Bathroom of Deluxe Cottage, #40, where you can see the signature free-standing makeup mirror.

bedroom upstairs, with in-room twin vanities and separate loo and shower room. The views from here are splendid.

The most astounding Grand Suite we saw was #41; a massive space with its own sitting room, dining room, guest loo, big bathroom with its own terrace, and extraordinary sea vistas. You could take the whole house here, as #39 connects via an internal staircase and next door there is the delightful #40; a perfect option for a family. Ultimately, there will be 6 Grand Suites; all entirely different.

At the very top end, there is the Sveti Stefan Suite, #22; the only accommodation with its own private pool and, within its gardens, a small Spa Cottage, reached via a stone staircase. This is a marvellous detached 'house', set on two storeys and with a big garden and terrace edging the sea, plus a high sundowner platform ready for cocktails. The entrance lobby has a proper butler's pantry to the right and beyond is a work area, with free WiFi, naturally, and a discrete set of sockets built into the desk. There is also a spacious guest loo on this

floor, replete with steam shower room. Then there is the main salon, equipped with a wood-burning fireplace, plenty of seating and a separate dining area. This leads onto the garden and heated pool, which is classic black-tiled Aman with an



The viewsome terrace of Deluxe Cottage, #40, at Aman Sveti Stefan.

integral whirlpool.

Upstairs there is a cosy landing with shelves of books and a rocking chair and beyond, a spacious bedroom with a sitting area that leads into a dressing room and two-stage bathroom, with twin vanities, a

deep tub, separate shower room and loo and, charmingly, another rocking chair by the bath tub. Other thoughtful features include natural handmade soaps from a local convent and rustic makeup mirrors set on high freestanding pedestals.

Floors are polished granite topped with sisal area rugs; the colours white, oatmeal and cream. Dimmers and nightlights pervade and vases are filled with island rosemary, lavender and eugenia.

The comfort factor of Sveti Stefan is very high indeed. The beds are by the Greek company, Coco-Mat, who make the most wonderful organic mattresses that ensure a really good night's sleep. Linens are fine white cotton, topped with mushroom honeycomb blankets. Robes are short, loose, unbleached linen and there is a classic black

woven beach bag that is instantly covetable. Flat-screen TVs are, thankfully, carefully concealed in bedroom armoires. Fruit bowls are filled with an abundance of fresh local produce, whilst turndown gifts include hand-sewn white cotton bags of



Part of the private garden and pool of the two-storey, 1-bedroom Sveti Stefan Suite, #22, which is an idyllic retreat with stunning sea views.



The bedroom, with sitting area, of the Sveti Stefan Suite, #22.

lavender picked from the island, and various histories of Montenegro. Laundry is super fast and easy to accomplish. In the usual Aman fashion, you just throw everything into a wicker basket each day.

Dining out is a real joy at Aman Sveti Stefan, for apart from the island-set restaurants, you also have a whole estate at your feet, dotted with superb culinary options.

On the mainland, there is a delightful Beach Café overlooking Milocer Beach, with terraced dry-stone walls, canopies of olive and cypress trees and lazy views of the Adriatic. This is the place for a simple snack or a light meal between getting your toes wet in the gentle surf.

My favourite casual lunchtime and dinner option is The Olive Tree, an alfresco

brasserie overlooking Sveti Stefan Beach and an easy stroll from the island. Here there is a double wood-fired grill and an olive-wood-fired rotisserie that produces

superb modern take on Montenegrin fare. The service here, under charming Restaurant Manager, Tamara Zlatkovic, demands that you return.



A room service snack of local cold cuts, in the sitting room of the Sveti Stefan Suite, #22.

delicious seafood or meat Brochettes. As with all Amans, you can also ask the chef to prepare a special dinner; ours being a

Right at the end of the estate, you will discover the dinner-only restaurant, Queen's Chair, named after the mythical legend of



Even the bathroom of the Sveti Stefan Suite, #22, has windows onto the sea beyond.



The Cliff Pool and Bar is one of the many small, intimate locations that you discover at Aman Sveti Stefan.

an ancient Queen who sat high on this rocky pinnacle awaiting the return of her lover. Be aware that once your Aman car has dropped you off at the foot of the mountain (it is a very long walk from the

array of vintages from all over the region. The Red Vranac Reserve, Plantaze, Cemovsko Polje from Montenegro was another fine discovery. My only problem was remembering and pronouncing the names, but



island), there is a steep climb to the apogee. The view, however, is well worth it. Go early to watch the incredible sunset over the Bay of Budva and dine on Italian-inspired cuisine accompanied by an excellent wine list. I was especially taken with the Croatian white Grgic Korcula wine, made from the Posip grape, which was recommended to us. Indeed, this area of the world is rich in extraordinary wines that most of us have never heard of. At Aman Sveti Stefan's restaurants, you will discover a masterful



Views, Brocettas and the charming Tamara at The Olive Tree, overlooking Sveti Stefan Beach.

luckily, the Aman staff soon knew our favourites. You will find, however, that the local wines are relatively expensive, in the same way that Californian wines are pricey even when bought in the State. However, the quality is exceptional, so do accept staff recommendations.

The third beach on the estate is the very private cove known as Queen's Beach; an idyllic Aman hide-away shielded by cliffs



Incredible views from Queen's Chair, at Aman Sveti Stefan.

and with a small beverage bar tucked away to service its guests. The sand on all the beaches is coral-coloured and grainy, so beach shoes may be in order, but the waters are incredibly warm and gentle and



Entrance to one of Aman Sveti Stefan's Spa Cottages.

as you can walk out into the sea for several yards, it is also very safe.

The first stage of this huge project opened two years ago in the form of the fabulously restored Villa Milocer, with its 6 identical junior-suite style suites, and was followed by two larger suites in the Queen Marija building, just steps from the Villa.



Modern Montenegrin cuisine at The Olive Tree.

These suites are 125 sq metres each and feature separate sitting and dining rooms, bedrooms and bathrooms, each with a fireplace in both bedroom and sitting room. The first suite is on the ground floor, with the second above. However, even the up-

There are around 450 staff on the Aman Sveti Stefan estate, servicing some very fine restaurants and just 58 rooms and suites.

per level suite has quite limited sea views due to the abundance of trees that shroud this very private house. If, however, you were you split your stay between a Queen Marija Suite and, say, a Grand Suite on the island, then the balance would be perfect. It also means that you could, like us, transfer by boat from the island of Sveti Stefan



Transferring by boat from the island of Sveti Stefan to Villa Milocer, seen in the distance.

to a unique cave-set jetty on the Milocer Beach, which is a short but memorable experience and a great way to arrive at Villa Milocer.

Villa Milocer is a two-storey Art Deco structure, built between 1934 and 1936 and was the former summer house of Queen Marija Karadordevic. Here, architect and designer, Jean-Michel Gathy has employed a very different and wholly appropriate

style, using more luxurious materials, such as leather and wood, parquet floors, thick contemporary wool area rugs and, right in the centre of the room, a unique glass-enclosed fireplace that can be enjoyed from both the sitting and bedroom areas. The large flat-screen TV is above the fireplace in the bedroom section whilst the bathroom is behind the bed, with antico stone flooring, cosy Kashwera robes, twin vani-



Some of the Aman opening team on the island of Sveti Stefan, with Jean-Pierre Baratin on the far right.

ties directly behind the bed section, a central tub, and glass doors on either side that lead to a large shower room and the loo. My only problem with this was the open aspect of the loo. I would have preferred an etched door for a modicum of privacy.



The aristocratic Villa Milocer on the mainland.

Otherwise, these are very comfortable suites, although ideally, you should choose one of the three suites that face the sea. #3 has by far the best balustraded balcony. #4 has similar views, but with a smaller balcony, whilst #2 is L-shaped and corner-set and has very good aspects. The other three suites face the mountains.

The ground floor of the Villa is designed

Kudos must go to overall General Manager and Project Manager, Jean-Pierre Baratin...

to be an elegant home for its guests. There is a library, filled with treasured tomes, games and a couple of laptops. There is a sleek Living Room, which is a nice place in which to savour one of the regions' morish wines, and a formal dining room for when the weather prevents you from dining outdoors beneath the stunning wisteria-clad Loggia.

Under General Manager, Livio Ranza, the operating style of Villa Milocer is quite different from the island of Sveti Stefan. Here, you are made to feel like guests in an aristocratic private home and to this end, there are no menus, but you do have a superb brigade at your beck and call, headed by French Chefs of indubitable talent. What would you like for breakfast? You decide, and if you cannot think of a single thing,



The big lazy curve of Milocer Beach, with Villa Milocer in the background, enveloped by cypress and olive groves and fronted by formal gardens.

then the chefs will come and discuss what is fresh that day and what may be accomplished to suit your mood.

It is, perhaps, a little formal after the warm-hearted village feel of the island, where, it must be said, you can also order just about anything you please, but it is also a nice contrast, enhanced by a couple of waiters who have served Villa Milocer and its guests for, in one case, 40 years; yet having cared for the likes of Tito, Sophia Loren and even Sly Stallone, little fazes these charming characters. Indeed, I felt that the return of the glitterati was positively life-enhancing for them.

At dusk, looking over the wisteria from our balcony, the sun paints the sky with pink, the candles are lit along the Loggia; white Italian linen ready for dinner, whilst on the beach a line of seagulls waddles towards the surf; the sound relaxing the

mood and sharpening the appetite.

A wonderful, piping hot rainfall shower; the room clad in pale celadon glass mosaic, prepares us for the evening, as in the distance the island of Sveti Stefan twinkles

Sveti Stefan estate, servicing some very fine restaurants and just 58 rooms and suites. You look at it all and think, what wonderful madness is this. Who else but Aman could possibly pull it off?



A corner of the Library at Villa Milocer; the French doors leading to the Loggia.

with lights as a lone craft cuts through the Adriatic.

There are around 450 staff on the Aman

Is that all? Oh no. The next phase of this mammoth task is to build a full AmanSpa to the left of Villa Milocer, perfectly discrete



Milocer Sea View Suite, #3, has a large balcony overlooking the Loggia and sea beyond.



The idyllic Loggia, shaded by wisteria, at Villa Milocer.

in its location and style, of course, and, they say, maybe with another pool, which would be good, as currently the Milocer guests only have three beautiful beaches! By 2012, Aman hopes this will be a reality, and you think then how good this destination would be in the winter months. Villa Milocer, in fact, is an excellent option for

negro's wines, spirits and Rakijas and talks of the amazing products to be found in the region's many monasteries. He also waxes lyrical about The Secret Café; a place to discover on the island that roasts coffee from 5am each morning and provides that essential caffeine hit that only a perfect espresso can achieve. Meanwhile, Olmo's F&B mirror image from Montenegro, Boris

15 years or so, opened more Amans than most of us realise. As I write, his successors are getting ready to finesse this amazing project; the legendary Henry and Char Gray who are set to join Aman Sveti Stefan next month.

Do go; but remember there are only 58 suites in this entire Aman destination, so you had better book now, as we have a lot more than 58 readers!

Gallivanter's Rating: *★★★★★*



Elegant, market-fresh cuisine at Villa Milocer.

the cooler seasons as you do not have all those steps and outdoor areas of the island; rather a cosier, fireside feel. That said, even the island has plans for cooler evenings. Ex-Aman Delhi Food & Beverage Manager, Olmo Fernandez fizzes with excitement about a Winter Bar to showcase Monte-

The estate will offer no less than 15 Food & Beverage outlets...

Semsedinovic, smiles happily when guests rave about the country's local fare. It is an extraordinary balance of people and cultures, but it works brilliantly.

Eventually, they tell me, the estate will offer no less than 15 Food & Beverage outlets. It is an unprecedented challenge for such a high-end group, but somehow, you sense that over the next three years, it will flourish as only an Aman can.

Kudos must go to overall General Manager and Project Manager, Jean-Pierre Baratin, who has, very quietly over the past



The Living Room at Villa Milocer.

AT A GLANCE

AMAN SVETI STEFAN.

Tel: +382 33 420 000. **Internet:** www.amanresorts.com **Affiliation:** Aman-resorts. **Rooms:** 58 Rooms, Cottages and Suites. **Rack Rates, Sveti Stefan Island:** *Village Rooms:* E600-700. *Cottages:* E700-800. *Deluxe Cottages:* E800-900. *Grand Suites:* E1,200-1,500. *Sveti Stefan Suite (with pool):* E2,000-2,500. **Rack Rates, Villa Milocer:** *Milocer Garden View Suites:* E700-800. *Milocer Sea View Suites:* E800-900. *Queen Marija Suites:* E800-900, inc. 7% tax + 10% service + tourist tax/insurance of E1.50. per person per day. Complimentary round trip transfers from Tivat Airport (30 mins drive).

Transfers from Dubrovnik, Croatia by private car are chargeable and take approximately 2 hours. British Airways flies non-stop to Dubrovnik via London Gatwick. Transfers from Podgorica Airport take just over 1 hour and are chargeable. Aman offers complimentary round-trip transfers from Tivat Airport, which is 30 mins drive. Airlines flying into Tivat, often via Belgrade, are JAT and Montenegro Airlines. Tivat also accepts private planes.

GALLIVANTER'S Gossip



AMAN GOSSIP THIS MONTH INCLUDES A STRONG RUMOUR that they will open an **Aman Venice** in Palazzo Papadopoli, in San Polo. Formerly known as Coccina-Tiepolo, the Palazzo was built in 1560 by Giangiacomo de'Grigi and has a well preserved hall of mirrors. Situated close to the Rialto Bridge on the Grand Canal, the Palazzo's Milanese owners very sensibly called in Aman. Can you imagine staying anywhere else in Venice if and when it opens?

GOOD NEWS FOR FANS of **Amangiri**. Opened in 2009 on 600 pristine acres in Southern Utah, Amangiri is now moving into phase 2 of its development, projecting the sale and completion of 28 Villas by 2013. However, ready by May 2011 will be the new **Aman Tents**; high-end luxe 2-bedroom tents, of course, but the perfect way to camp out in the desert, Aman-style and star gaze.

OPENING NEXT MONTH is **Canal House** in Amsterdam; the third hotel in 'A Curious Group of Hotels' portfolio (Cowley Manor, L'Hôtel). Given the paucity of good hotels in the city, let us hope that this 23-room hotel, close to Anne Frank House and the Nine Streets District, will change all that. www.curioushotels.com

GOING TO BUENOS AIRES? Take a look at the just-opened **Algodon Mansion** in the heart of the city; an all-suite 1912 Parisian-style landmark with gorgeous suites, bebies of butlers, a Spa, Cognac Bar with 30 private humidor boxes, and even a rooftop pool. www.algodonmansion.com

I REALLY LIKE THE LOOK OF the **Natal Ocean Club** in northeast Brazil's Rio Grande do Norte. Opening next month, its stylish suites and villas were designed by architect, David Bastos, with a cliff-top position at Cabo Caraubas, overlooking a 300 metre span of white sand beach. www.nataloceanclub.com

AFTER WHAT FEELS LIKE YEARS OF ANTICIPATION, GHM have finally broken ground on the development of **The Chedi Andermatt** in the Swiss Alps, scheduled for completion in 2013. Its 50 rooms, 64 apartments and 6 maisonette penthouses will all feature large balconies and fireplaces. A further 48 2-bedroom apartments and lofts will be available for purchase. www.ghmhotels.com

I AM LOOKING FORWARD WITH MUCH EXCITEMENT to the re-opening of **Four Seasons Hotel London at Park Lane** (its new moniker) this coming December. Details will include unusually natural bespoke guest amenities by Roja Dove, whilst in the rooftop Spa, the chemical-free option will be the respected British brand, The Organic Pharmacy. The Executive Chef is ex-Eden Rome, Adriano Cavagnini. www.fourseasons.com

IT APPEARS THAT **Raffles Le Royal Monceau Paris** thinks it is a lifestyle brand and therefore hired a lifestyle PR company to orchestrate its lavish launch this month of the 1928, 149-room Philippe Starck fashion statement, with guitars in every room. Ho hum. Sylvain Ercoli is General Manager.

THE CHARMING ex-Four Seasons Landaa Giraavaru Director of Rooms, **Yonatan Kachko** is now Camp Manager at Four Seasons Tented Camp at Golden Triangle. Good choice!

THIS MONTH'S ISSUE CONTAINS YOUR VOTING FORM for **The Gallivanter's Guide Awards for Excellence**. Please, please take the time to vote. The results, as always, will appear in our January 2011 issue. Meanwhile, you can follow me, with day to day hotel gossip, on **twitter** at <http://twitter.com/Gallivanter>, where you can read the latest hotel and spa news as I hear about it.

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