

An exclusive journey

Building on its position as a portal to the world's most desirable destination experiences, The Luxury Collection brand of hotels and resorts has launching a series of expertly curated itineraries aimed at giving guests the most authentic, enriching, and personal encounters within sought-after global destinations.

The Luxury Collection has joined forces with specialty tour operator AuthentEscapes to bring these exceptional experiences to guests' fingertips by connecting them with personal guides, genuine discoveries, and exclusive access within each destination.

For each Journeys by The Luxury Collection experience, a property within The Luxury Collection portfolio will provide a home base that offers magnificent décor, spectacular settings, impeccable service and the latest modern conveniences.

"Our guests already trust The Luxury Collection for exceptional and highly personal luxury travel experiences," said Paul James, global brand leader for The Luxury Collection at Starwood Hotels and Resorts Worldwide. "With Journeys, we're building on that relationship to enhance their sense of discovery and inspiration from The Luxury Collection destinations."

Seven unforgettable itineraries launch the Journeys by The Luxury Collection portfolio, with each coloured by interests including Family, Safari, Food & Wine, Romance, Beach, and Adventure. Ten more Journeys are planned for 2011, with more to roll out the following year. Journeys by The Luxury Collection itineraries are completely customizable, and offered with optional recommended excursions:

- The Treasures of Greece: Traverse through a magnificent history Homer once chronicled and discover a mythic world of unrivaled architecture set amongst picture-perfect beaches. Accommodations: Hotel Grand Bretagne, Athens; Vedema Resort, Santorini Island; Santa Marina Resort and Villas, Mykonos
- La Dolce Vita: Experience a once-in-a-lifetime journey through private galleries and grand estates as you traverse an unrivaled art, architecture and culinary trail. Accommodations: Grand Hotel, Florence; Hotel Gritti Palace, Venice; Hotel Danieli, Venice
- An Iberian Escape: In Spain's Basque Region, be welcomed to a dynamic culture where



cobblestone neighborhoods lie alongside contemporary art destinations in a breathtaking and celebratory environment. Accommodations: Hotel Maria Cristina, San Sebastian; Hotel Marquis de Riscal, Elciego; Hotel Alfonso XIII, Seville

- An Idyllic Paradise of Natural Wonders: Be connected to the history of Thai civilization as you cruise along the stunning Chao Praya, the River of Kings and its myriad of canals... Then explore sparkling white-sand beaches and dramatic emerald green waters on remote islands and sail through a timeless paradise. Accommodations: Sheraton Grande Sukhumvit, Bangkok; Sheraton Grande Laguna, Phuket
- An Argentinean Adventure: Embrace adventure in the Paris of South America and its surrounding countryside, where a celebratory culture of fine dining, tango dancing and unforgettable viticulture awaits. Accommodations: Sheraton Park Tower, Buenos Aires; Patios de Cafayate, Cafayate

- A Majestic Venture Through India: Venture across India from New Delhi to Mumbai. Be inspired by a wealth of captivating architecture. Encounter the warm spirit of the Indian people. Accommodations: The Maurya, New Delhi The Mughal, Agra; The Sonar, Kolkata; The Kakatiya, Hyderabad; The Windsor, Bengaluru; ITC Royal Gardenia, Bengaluru; ITC Grand Central, Mumbai; ITC Maratha, Mumbai

- Inside the Crush with Dick Vermeil: Be welcomed to Napa's annual fall harvest, known as "The Crush," with an insider's tour of celebrated area wineries. Each day, you will visit a selection of Napa's finest estates for exclusive



private tours and tastings. Accommodations: The Palace Hotel, San Francisco

- An Arabian Adventure: Become inspired by Dubai, the City of Gold, with its incredible architectural monuments, enchanting

moonlight cruises, golden sand dunes and thrilling desert safaris. Accommodations: Grosvenor House, Dubai.

If you are looking for the ultimate curated travel experience; this might be the perfect place to start.

Luxury superyacht builder targets Asia's billionaires

Asia's leading superyacht builder Ruea Yachts has unveiled an exclusive new design for a 60-metre luxury yacht ahead of officially releasing it at the prestigious Monaco Yacht Show later this month.

Ruea Yachts' new luxury superyacht design is aimed at enticing interest from high-net worth individuals who are fast showing a desire to own luxury lifestyle yachts. The concept characterises the high-tech luxury styling that Ruea Yachts can produce at very competitive costs, due to its base in Thailand. These original designs can be further customised to the exact specifications and preferences of owners.

Prospective clients "will discover not only a stunning yacht, but one that is extremely affordable when compared to western yards without compromising on quality," according to Ruea Yachts' Managing Director Gareth Twist. "We are combining European design with



the renowned finishing skills of our team of Thai craftsmen at a highly competitive price which we believe is a strong proposition to investors and individuals that can be found nowhere else in the region. Asia has increasingly become the focus of the marine industry globally, with a lot of interest from Hong Kong, Singapore and Thailand and more recently from India and China, and we are able to offer Lloyds classed and MCA LY2 coded custom luxury yachts of world-class standard."

Aston International Announces First Hotel in Malaysia

Aston International, building on their already impressive growth in Indonesia, recently announced that they have secured a management contract for its smart select service favehotel brand in Langkawi, Malaysia.

The favehotel Cenang Berach, Langkawi will be a 100 room two star hotel within walking distance to Langkawi's famed Cenang Beach making it an ideal value proposition for travelers seeking quality budget accommodations in an otherwise high cost resort destination.

To enhance the new favehotels resort character the hotel will feature facilities that are usually not associated with select service hotels such as an outdoor swimming pool and an eclectic and trendy café shop.

Aston International's Vice President of Sales & Marketing, Mr. Norbert Vas, said "Aston is very grateful to have been awarded this management contract. The site is extremely



promising as it enjoys a privilege location right of the beach and within walking distance of Cenang's many restaurants and boutiques. We are confident that the new hotel will be one of Langkawi's most convenient and popular hotels."

The favehotel Cenang Beach, Langkawi will be the Aston groups first favehotel outside Indonesia. Aston opened its first favehotel in Denpasar, Bali in 2009 and new fave hotels will soon be opening in Seminyak (pictured above), Legian Jakarta, Solo, Surabaya and Banjarmasin.

Mediterranean... The Taj Mahal of food

In a rather unusual move, the entire food style of the Mediterranean region is about to be on the World Heritage List by UNESCO.

It will join the list of castles, cathedrals, monuments and natural wonders considered by the United Nations as worth protecting. So, a table of tapas, a plate of pasta and a side of salad will become world heritage items.

The award is probably due more to the health aspects of the Mediterranean diet than its visual appeal, although a vision of a good minestrone or Greek calamari or a French bouillabaisse do tend to make the mouth water – more even than the glorious Taj.

Rolando Manfredini, from the Italian farmers' lobby group Col-diretti is delighted with the news: "it makes perfect sense. Our diet means Italian men live to an average age of 78.6, and women to 84.1, far above the European average, and anyone sticking to the diet was less likely to suffer from diseases such as Alzheimer's".



With its mix of fresh fruit and vegetables, healthy portions of carbs, grilled fish and oodles of olive oil, the food from France, Italy, Greece and Spain will join UNESCO's lesser-known list of "intangible" cultural heritage, covering oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals and festivals.

So (before you forget!) organise a plate of pasta and wash it down with nice Chianti. It is now up there on a UNESCO pedestal with things like the tango and Croatian lacemaking.

Final confirmation by UNESCO is due in November.

Chefs With Altitude 2010

This year's Chefs With Altitude in Singapore will see gourmets treated to a grand experience melding Swiss pride and heritage with a gastronomic repertoire that will ascend the heights of culinary excellence. The event will run from the 10th-16th of October at the Equinox Complex, at the Swissotel the Stamford.

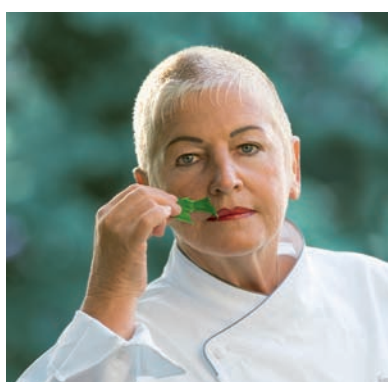
This year at JAAN Restaurant, newly-arrived Swedish Chef de Cuisine Ebbe Vollmer is set to debut his signature style of 'Essentialist Cuisine' – a compelling ethos honed by modern Scandinavian sensibilities and the creative freedom to reap clear flavours and flawless textures from a superlative selection of seasonal, artisanal ingredients. A 5th generation chef from Sweden, Chef Ebbe arrives at JAAN via London where he was most recently second-in-command at Gordon Ramsay's eponymous three-Michelin-star signature restaurant on Chelsea's Royal Hospital Road.

In a homage to the great culinary traditions of Europe, Chef Ebbe's Chefs With Altitude repertoire will breathe a modern perspective into authentic, ageless recipes first given life by some of history's greatest epicurean legends, including the exalted Auguste Escoffier. For connoisseurs looking to savour rapid creations which channel the classicism of comfort food with the modern edge of Essentialist Cuisine, Chef Ebbe's creations this Chefs With Altitude will satiate your appetite with an elegant flourish.

Scaling the heights of Equinox Restaurant, once again is the iconic 'Swiss Miss' Chef Irma Dütsch, who gained fame as her country's first-ever female chef awarded with a star by the highly-discerning



Ebbe Vollmer



Irma Dütsch

Michelin Guide. Chef Irma's first guest chef showcase at Chefs With Altitude 2008 was a raving success amongst diners, who appreciated her cooking style interlacing Swiss comfort food with refined culinary techniques. Chef Irma will showcase a striking collection of signature dishes at Chefs With Altitude, including Venison Tartar with Poached Egg and Valais Air-dried Meat, Sweetbread Parfait Rolled in



Leek as well as the rare Swiss Sander Fish Scented with Mund Saffron.

Cocktail connoisseurs, visiting Introbar, City Space and New Asia, can expect to be sparked by a buzz that will take their appreciation for the art of mixology beyond just imbibing in a well-made drink, as award-winning Cocktail Architect Richard Gillam shakes up a trio of bespoke libations specially for Chefs With Altitude.

Looking to the Alps for inspiration, Richard's Swiss Smash cocktail will tickle your tastebuds with elderflower liqueur and spiced icing sugar, seasoned with a squeeze of fresh lemon juice. For a 'breath of minty,

fresh air', you can try Richard's peppermint and spearmint-laced Alpine Frappe, whipped up with a potent mix of Russian Standard vodka, Absinthe and Bols Crème de Cacao. And, last but not least, Richard's one-way ticket to cloud 9 – Berry Cloud, a molecular concoction of spiced cranberry juice, blueberries and a dose of premium Russian Standard vodka.

This is definitely a date that should be put in your culinary calendar, but given the Equinox Complex is situated on levels 69-72 of the Swissotel the Stamford we recommend you leave your acrophobia at home.

UP IN THE AIR

Airline food

Australian chef Shannon Bennett has started a war in the skies over what he has called the 'crappy' food served by airlines.

"I am very frustrated by the 'stale, soggy meals' on just about every flight I take."

Bennett (award winning owner of the Vue de Monde group in Melbourne and now with an operation in Singapore) has taken it a step further and plans to set up his own café at Melbourne Airport to sell 'top-end takeaway food boxes' for people to take on board their flights.

"I've been wanting to take on airline food for years," says Bennett. "So, now, if they won't make good, fresh food for passengers, then I will."

Bennett's airport café will open in October as part of Melbourne's Terminal Two upgrade, its first since the 1960s.

So far, there has been no outcry



from the airlines but Bennett says he is 'ready for a fight if they try to stop people taking his food on board.'

Simple solution if the airlines are unhappy, according to Viva Asia: employ Bennett as an in-flight food consultant.

Hospitality is contributed by Viva Asia Travel & Food magazine. To subscribe to Viva Asia Travel & Food magazine call 021 52921638. An annual subscription to Viva Asia Travel & Food magazine costs Rp 250,000. Viva Asia donates Rp 100,000 from each annual subscription to Yayasan Kita Anak Kanker Indonesia.

For the latest Travel & Food news from Indonesia, the region and beyond visit www.vivaasiamagazine.com follow us twitter.com/vivaasia