


ESCAPE

As featured on **Escape Magazine**

DESTINATION  MALAYSIA

AT FULL STEAM

Refresh, refuel and recharge at a new Kuala Lumpur hotel

MERCEDES MAGUIRE

You wouldn't want to be caught out on the street when it hits. But watching a tropical thunderstorm roll over the hills into Kuala Lumpur from a city rooftop in the centre of town is worth the soaking. The Malaysian capital is hot and humid year round, with average temperatures between 29 and 35C, but a downpour is the best way to cool those conditions a little.

The typically Malaysian weather phenomenon can be a little off-putting – a week-long forecast of thunderstorms is not uncommon for this city – but they generally only occur in the late afternoon and last about 10 minutes.

After a thorough drenching and a loud rumble in the skies, the clouds part, the sun shines and, if you hadn't seen it, you would be none the wiser.

The bustle of the city streets can be oppressive in Kuala Lumpur (not to mention the humidity), so it's a welcome relief to check in at our refuge, Oasia Suites.

It may be walking distance from the frenetic city centre, but once inside, you may as well be a million miles away.

Oasia Suites is Far East Hospitality's first foray into Malaysia.

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PETRONAS TOWERS

The iconic twin spires of the Petronas Towers.

PICTURE: ISTOCK

DESTINATION ♦ MALAYSIA

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It opened in early 2016 after a major conversion of an old corporate building, which means every room is a slightly different shape and configuration. But one thing is the same in every room of the all-suite hotel – they all come with a fully self-contained kitchenette, so travellers have the option of preparing food if they want to. There are laundry facilities too.

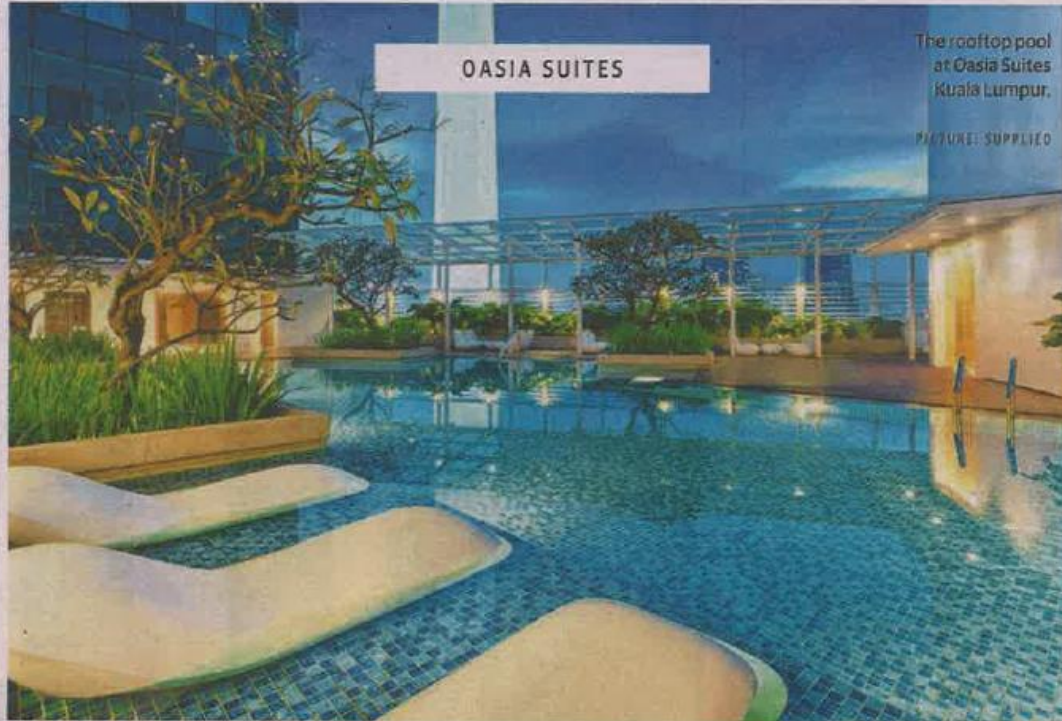
The hotel has a “refresh, refuel and recharge” mantra, visible in subtle ways throughout the hotel. The “refresh” element is obvious on level 24, where you’ll find an indulgent landscaped rooftop pool with sun lounges recessed in the water.

If you want to take a holiday from kitchen duties, the ground floor restaurant offers a good mix of traditional Malaysian cuisine and Western favourites, taking care of the “refuel” part of the mantra.

It’s not difficult to find where the “recharge” element comes in. The shining crown of the huge rooms are the comfy, oversized beds alongside floor-to-ceiling windows, which allow for bedside views of the city.

Powerful showers (some with floor-to-ceiling wraparound windows) tick off another hotel room must-have.

A five-minute walk from the hotel is Eco Park, which gives KL the distinction of being the only city in the world with a natural rainforest right in its CBD. Nicknamed Pineapple Hill for the fact a castle was once perched on this spot with



OASIA SUITES

The rooftop pool at Oasia Suites Kuala Lumpur.

PICTURE: SUPPLIED

pineapple plants to protect it, today a 220m canopy allows you to enjoy aerial views of the treetops and surrounding city skyline from nine observation decks.

The best part is it’s free, although you will need a ticket to enter, and you can even camp for free at a designated camping site within the forest, giving budget city accommodation new meaning.

Another close neighbour to the

hotel is KL Tower, a 420m tall spire that provides a view right across the city in every direction on a clear day. You can have lunch, dinner or high tea in the revolving restaurant. Or, if you’re limited for time, take the lift to the observation deck 276m up.

If you have the stomach for it, climb a little further to 300m and step out on to the clear-bottom Sky Box, which juts out from the side of the tower over the city below. The fearless take home

amazing photos of themselves lying face down over the city.

The other skyscrapers worth a visit are the Petronas Towers. The 88-storey twin spires are connected by a skybridge and you can take a 45-minute tour of one of them.

On our visit, we enjoy the view of the twin towers not from inside but from next door at the ultra-luxe sky bar on level 57 of Petronas Tower 3.

Marini’s on 57 is the highest rooftop

ESCAPE ROUTE

MALAYSIA

GETTING THERE

Air Asia and Malaysian Airlines fly direct from Sydney to Kuala Lumpur. A range of other airlines fly indirect routes to Kuala Lumpur from Sydney, including Jetstar, Scoot, Virgin Australia, Cathay Pacific and Emirates.

STAYING THERE

Oasia Suites Kuala Lumpur, 10 Lorong P Ramlee, Kuala Lumpur.
stayfareast.com

WEATHER

Kuala Lumpur is hot and humid all year round, with temperatures peaking in February and March. There are two rainy seasons; from March to April and from September to November.

bar in KL. The floor-to-ceiling windows and glass roof are a perfect city-viewing platform.

The Petronas Towers are a bit further away from the hotel, but still walkable if you don’t mind a 20-minute stroll. After all, back in your hotel, you can indulge in the Oasia Suites mantra of refresh, refuel and recharge.

THE WRITER WAS A GUEST OF FAR EAST HOSPITALITY.