

# Esquire

SINGAPORE

MAN AT HIS BEST  
esquiresingapore.com

SEPTEMBER 2015

## HENRY CAVILL

**IS THE MAN**

THE UNLUCKIEST MAN IN HOLLYWOOD  
TALKS ABOUT HOW HE WENT FROM  
A STRUGGLING BARMAN TO A  
SUPERMAN AND A MAN FROM UNCLE



**THE FALL FASHION ISSUE**

ALL ABOUT STYLE AND SUBSTANCE

**PRISCILLA  
SHUNMUGAM**

IS A WOMENSWEAR DESIGNER WE LOVE

**BACKSTAGE:  
AN ALL  
ACCESS PASS**

GO BEHIND THE SCENES OF  
A FASHION SHOW



**PLUS**

HEDI SLIMANE  
JOHN RAY  
TOMMY HILFIGER  
GIORGIO ARMANI  
JAMES FERRAGAMO  
RICHARD NICOLL  
AND A GUY NAMED BOEY

**AND**

LIFE CYCLE OF A TREND  
POVERTY AND STYLE IN CONGO  
STAY IN FASHION CITIES  
BASEL REPORT



MPAS INDUSTRY AWARDS 2015 • COVER OF THE YEAR • MEN'S MEDIA OF THE YEAR • LIFESTYLE/ENTERTAINMENT MEDIA OF THE YEAR

## WANDERLUST: WELCOME TO THE SALON

Vagabond Hotel.

Words by Lestari Hairul

**THAT'S SALON, WITH ONE "O".** Less bar brawls and wenching, more intellectual pontificating, and men and women in powdered wigs. Or so it was in the women-led salons of the Enlightenment Age, at least. Taking the spirit, minus the wigs and the philosophies of crusty, old white men, newly opened Vagabond Hotel too has a Salon.

Step into the hotel and you're immediately ensconced in the plush environment of the Salon—tomato-red sofas line the farthest walls and dot the 5,000SQFT main floor. As envisioned by acclaimed French designer Jacques Garcia for his first hotel concept in Asia, the place is all luxe Parisian chic, with moody lighting including floor-to-ceiling gold Banyan tree pillars with eye-commanding brass foliage. A rhino greets you at the reception, but hold on, not up to your room just yet. Lured by the smells emanating from the 5th Quarter, the food establishment set up in collaboration with Unlisted Collection and headed by Executive Chef Andrew Nocente, you'll while away your Salon evenings with platters of exquisite meats of the cured and grilled variety.

It wouldn't be a stretch to imagine a vixen by the bar, just by the gigantic brass monkey nestled in the wall of bottled liquor, enticing you further into the Salon. Here, indulge in classic drinks reworked with added theatricality and flair by the gentlemen of Proof & Company. The barkeep is Mexican transplant Mauricio Allende and he'll keep the drinks flowing (inclusive of some rare coffees and teas for the teetotalers among you), as



Top  
An artist's impression of  
the Vagabond Hotel.

the six o'clock Artist Cocktail Hour rolls in.

Unique to the Vagabond, an Artist in Residence programme with an ever-changing list of painters, sculptors, writers, photographers and thinkers will be the main draw of the Salon. Just like the salons of the Paris of yore, the artist of the season will hold court with exhibitions, performances or simply mingle with guests. It's meant to be a gathering point and a reflection of Singaporean society and the kind of cultural mixes that crupt into new ideas, conventions and initiatives or simply spark of entertaining ingenuity. Could we perhaps dare envision an evening of burlesque behind the red velvet curtains? The setting certainly demands it.

With the partying dwindling as the night winds down, head up to your room via the brass pachyderm-flanked lifts. Garcia's hand in the rooms, all 42 of them, including two Artist Ateliers to house the rotating Artists in Residence, is evident in the tasteful art adorning the walls, and even in the curated selection of in-room films. And in fact, true to the spirit of the hotel, art is everywhere to be found in this restored '50s Art Deco property, personally sourced and commissioned by founder Satinder Garcha himself.

You're well insulated from the heat and the crowds of nearby Little India. But you won't need to venture far for a taste of real-world Singapore outside of the fantastic experience of the Salon. A Chinese temple attached to the side of the Vagabond continues to co-exist harmoniously with the hotel, their decades-old altars and accoutrements refurbished to flow seamlessly into its design. Testament too to this nation's multiculturalism is a small Hindu shrine that sits within the same compound, catering to worshippers never hindered by racial lines.

Whether for a staycation or an evening of merriment, the Vagabond has it all to fulfil your artistic, intellectual and hedonistic desires. Now if you'll excuse us, we have some libations to attend to at the Bar. 🍸

Hotel Vagabond is located at 39 Syed Aliwi Road. Visit [hotelvagabondsingapore.com](http://hotelvagabondsingapore.com) for reservations.

