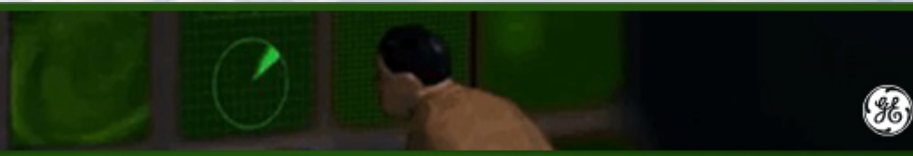


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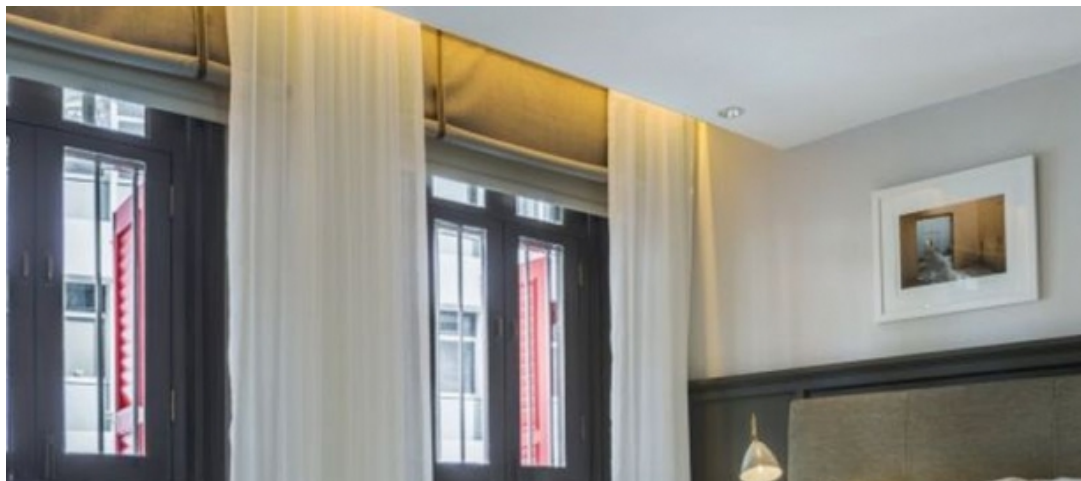
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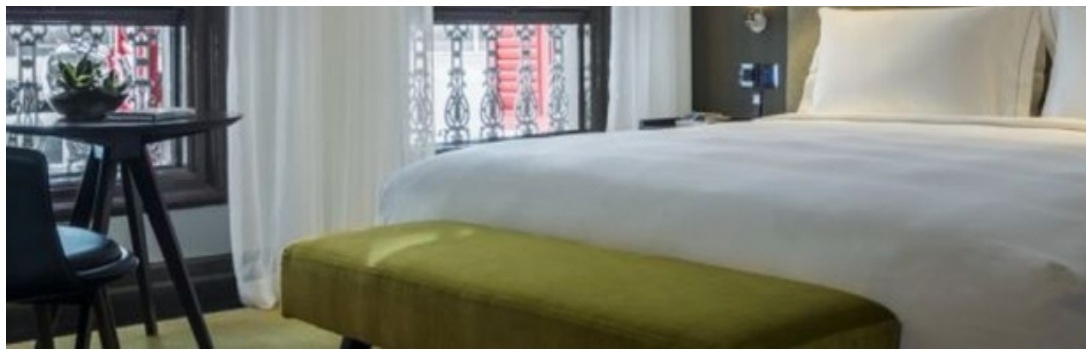
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The rooms at The Club now exude a warmer, more intimate feel compared to its previous incarnation. — Today pic

SINGAPORE, Aug 20 — Singaporeans love food. And Singaporeans love staycations. It makes perfect sense to combine the two so you will never need to step out of your hotel during a cosy weekend staycation whenever you want something delicious. We are not talking about your regular room service menus — three new hotels have come up with a mind-boggling array of food options, gourmet offerings and innovative tipples that put the “stay” in staycation.

Eating art

Could Hotel Vagabond at Syed Alwi Road, which opens next month, be the Hotel Costes of Singapore? After all, it is the first hotel project in Asia by the famed French architect Jacques Garcia, who was behind the legendary Parisian hotel, as well as NoMad in New York. Besides roping in Garcia, hotelier Satinder Garcha has spared no expense to do up this 41-room art-themed luxury boutique hotel, with elaborate sculptures and video-art installations. Guests can also hobnob with artists, writers and photographers when the hotel runs Singapore’s first artist-in-residence programme.

In keeping with the artistic spirit of the place, the focal point is a 5,000 sqf Parisian-styled Vagabond salon on the ground floor bookended by F&B industry stalwarts. Garcha is collaborating with restaurateur Loh Lik Peng to open 5th Quarter, inspired by Roman cuisine’s love affair with quinto quarto (offal). Naturally, the highlight of the menu is a selection of cuts such as rum-cured pork belly, and salt and pepper tripe. Chef Drew Nocente (formerly the executive chef of Skirt at W Sentosa Cove) is at the helm, so expect to see his house-made salami and lardo, as well as Josper-grilled premium meats. (If you would like to sample what 5th

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Quarter has to offer, it will have a pop-up at its neighbouring bar Fresh on August 23.)

Drinks at Hotel Vagabond are also well thought out. Cocktail and spirits specialist Proof & Company (the team behind 28 Hong Kong Street) is conceptualising Vagabond Bar. It is the first boutique hotel venture by the Proof team, who previously helped develop Manhattan Bar at Regent Hotel. Head-barman Mauricio Allende revealed that the menu will be eclectic, artistic and exotic. “We live and breathe art, so expect some cardamom, coconut, chamomile, hibiscus, rooibos, rice, charcoal, rhubarb, oolong, pistachio, blood orange and other ingredients,” he added.

Of course, that is if you are able to tear yourself away from the rooms, which will be stocked with “artisanal alcohol and eats”. Snacking on these will probably be the best way to spend time on the king-sized bed with Egyptian cotton and watching a selection of Jacques Garcia-curated films, no?

Clubbing all day and night

After an extensive nine-month revamp, The Club now boasts five restaurants and bars in a 20-room hotel, making it the first of its kind in a luxury boutique property. For starters, there is all-day dining at Mr and Mrs Maxwell, which has local dishes such as Wok Breath Wagyu Beef, and Nasi Goreng and Lamb Rendang. Over at the neighbouring Champagne Yard, guests partake of, well, champers and wines over nibbles such as baked camebert, sesame prawn toast and chilli crab dip.

Chef Daniel Sia of The Disgruntled Chef in Dempsey makes his foray into town with an outpost here, dishing up more sophisticated cuisine than at his original restaurant (think white asparagus confit with prosciutto and egg yolk). For an even more chi-chi evening, choose either to go down to the basement or up to the rooftop. Popular whisky bar B28 will return to its original spot with a new look; while rooftop bar Tiger’s Milk takes references from gastro destination of the moment, Peru — the dishes and cocktails include tiraditos, seabass ceviche and pisco verde.

The rooms make up the biggest change. There is more warmth, intimacy and

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luxury introduced through the use of colour and textures in the decor, as well as lavish touches in the forms of the Hypnos bed (endorsed by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, herself) and toiletries from luxury organic brand Bamford.

Meat treats

Photos of Park Hotel Alexandra's stunning 25m infinity pool have already caused a splash online. While it has an unlikely location — next to Ikea — foodies will relish what Park Hotel Alexandra really has going for it: The roast meat buffet. The inhouse restaurant The Carvery is where you will get plied with three to four types of premium roasted meats every day, such as Australian prime rib, herb-crusted US Black Angus tenderloin, spit roast chicken, roasted pork knuckle. There are also carvers stationed at the 3m-long carving stations to slice your preferred cuts for you.

There are premium salts (pink Himalayan and chilli-infused among them) and house-made truffled butter, as well as condiments to go along with your meats. Less carnivorous types can take a bite out of other dishes such as grilled fish, pizzas, polenta fries and pastas. Oysters are also featured for weekend buffet dinners.

The Carvery aside, Park Hotel Alexandra has a cafe The Coffee Belt and swim-up bar Aqua Luna, where cocktails and bites can be savoured while enjoying a sunset view. If that is not satisfying enough, the hotel is directly connected to Alexandra Central mall. That means even more food options such as Otoko Ramen, Toast Box, The Bakehouse by Carpenter & Cook, Korean barbecue outlet Gogi and 328 Katong Laksa. — Today



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