

information

Mandarin Oriental, Kuala Lumpur
Kuala Lumpur City Centre, P.O. Box 10905, 50088 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Telephone (603) 2380 8888 Facsimile (603) 2380 8833
mandarinoriental.com



MANDARIN ORIENTAL, KUALA LUMPUR DESIGNED AS A DELUXE URBAN RESORT IN THE HEART OF THE CITY

Mandarin Oriental, Kuala Lumpur is an architectural landmark centrally positioned next to the renowned 88-storey PETRONAS Twin Towers - and part of the 100-acre Kuala Lumpur City Centre development (KLCC).

The 30-storey hotel, which opened in October 1998, was a carefully executed project of US architects Wimberly Allison Tong & Goo (WAT&G), in association with local architects, Group Design Partnership. The interior architecture was one of the last projects helmed by renowned designer, the late Howard Hirsch of Hirsch Bedner and Associates.

Working with Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group and KLCC Property Holdings, the architectural team sought to develop an urban resort in the heart of the city which upheld international standards, yet at the same time, reflecting the heritage and traditions of Malaysia.

The hotel fronts a lush 50-acre park and was designed with the needs of the business and leisure traveller in mind. The hotel has also achieved a harmonious balance of aesthetics and tradition, complemented by Mandarin Oriental's legendary service.

The Design Brief

The brief given to the architect was to design a building with a residential feel, which incorporated local aesthetics, yet had international appeal. As a result, the designers successfully created a building that did not compete with but complemented the majestic PETRONAS Twin Towers, maximising the KLCC park views from all angles.

This respect for harmony with surrounding buildings can even be seen from the roof of the hotel. The architects covered obtrusive external roof fittings with a "second roof" so that the building was attractive to its towering neighbour.

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In keeping with the ambience of all Mandarin Oriental hotels worldwide, a residential feel with a balance of sophistication and regional influence was incorporated into all aspects of the design. Local influences included custom-made copper external lanterns and Malay lattice grills for external louvres. Internally, Malaysian flavour is visible in the numerous local artefacts from custom-carved door handles in a traditional *Kris* design to antique *Nyonya* screens in gold leaf and a sword relief on the handrails.

Extensive research into Malaysian arts, crafts and history was undertaken to ensure an authentic result. A prominent feature is the colourful hotel artwork, with 297 original pieces displayed, which were created by local artists. Such examples include Malay dancing scenes and symbolic Islamic pieces.

Public Areas

All public areas within the hotel are spacious yet exude warmth and intimacy, placing a strong emphasis on natural light. The gracious marble lobby and its mirage effect, creates a lasting first impression. High ceilings, reaching a height of up to eight metres in the Grand Ballroom, and two-storey glass windows in the Lounge are features that lend a grand scale, whilst bespoke sofas and furnishings create a comforting contrast.

The Grand Ballroom which is one of the largest in the city and can seat up to 1,800 for a banquet, was an architectural challenge. As the scale was so large, lighting, carpet designs and artwork were over scaled in order to be in proportion to the room. Unique to the ballroom of this scale are the exterior windows allowing a stream of natural light.

The use of space even extends to the hotel's recreational areas, covering an area of 15,000 square metres. The expansive space includes a fitness centre, spa, Mind & Body Studio, outdoor pool, indoor golf centre and tennis courts.

Guest Rooms and Suites

Accommodation at Mandarin Oriental, Kuala Lumpur represents the epitome of luxury. The hotel features 629 guest rooms and suites which includes a Royal Suite on Level 29 that holds up to 440sqm space.

The Club concept, designed with the busy executive in mind, features seven club floors and a private spacious lounge, MO Club, located on the 24th floor of the hotel with panoramic views. The MO Club includes facilities such as in-room registration, complimentary breakfast, deli lunch, evening cocktails and hor d'oeuvres, butler service and a host of other facilities. Within the club lounge, the designers sought to incorporate elements of relaxation, including a TV room and library. There are also two private meeting rooms within the lounge.

Room interiors combine international yet local touches. Soft furnishings are warm and inviting, set against earthy tones. Again, an emphasis on natural light is evident with every guest room and is a noticeable point upon entry.

Restaurants and Bars

In keeping with the desired effect of the public areas to create a spacious yet inviting feel, all dining venues were designed with the intention of achieving maximum visibility from inside and outside the hotel.

Mosaic restaurant, situated in Lobby Level, illustrates Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group's "Sense of Place", where local history, culture and sensibility are incorporated into the design. Guests will be delighted with an array of local and international dishes from live cooking stations and a dessert bar.



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The Chinese restaurant, Lai Po Heen is an architectural shell reminiscent of Shanghai's heyday, with antique furnishings from Malacca. A wok cooking area, private dining rooms and a main dining room, contribute to the restaurant's aura. Upon entering the restaurant, one is almost taken back fifty years to a traditional home of Malaysia's gentry.

Mandarin Grill emerge with an elegant interior complete with inbuilt fireplace and notable glass wine cellar, exudes comfort and style, while the menu includes prime cuts, steaks and other classic mains to satisfy both local and international food connoisseurs. Opening alongside the Mandarin Grill is *MO Bar*, a perfect place for drinks at the end of a long working day. With a classic interior blending oak and dark wood, the cosy atmosphere is enhanced by the remarkable concave ceiling, which has been designed to improve the room's acoustics.

For a breath-taking view of the city's skyline, AQUA Restaurant & Bar is the place to be. The restaurant is a perfect place to unwind, whether it is for leisurely lunch, after-work drinks or dinner with friends. Offering global tapas, wood-fired pizzas, signature cocktails and an open kitchen concept, the outlet provides a great relaxing outdoor ambience.

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For further information, please contact:

Mandarin Oriental, Kuala Lumpur

Shem Wei Bel (weibels@mohg.com)

Director of Marketing Communications

Tel: +60(3) 2179 8660

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