



## Staying Singapore

Forget overseas. Stay here. Amanda Tan and Natasha Ann Zachariah pack their overnight bags and check-in at boutique hotels.

## HEALTHY LIVING

Naumi Hotel  
41, Seah Street  
Tel: 6403 6000

### CHECK-IN

From personalised welcome notes in the room to helping guests run a bath, Naumi puts its touch on everything.

For instance, small cards with "Naumi says..." are placed around the room (and hotel), urging guests to spare a thought for the environment or to help themselves to drinks.

Hidden in a lane near the National Library, this posh hotel is easily overlooked. It is often mistaken for an executive lounge or cafe as its reception area is small.

But step inside and it is not long before you feel pampered. Naumi prides itself as supporting a healthy lifestyle, and has various exercise facilities for doing weights, cardio

and yoga.

In addition, Sunday mornings are dedicated to yoga classes by the poolside.

The morning breakfast spread even includes vitamin pills.

"We want to show people that we are serious about healthy eating," said Ms Adeline Quek, Marketing Manager of the hotel.

The highlight was the king-sized bed.

The plush quilt and 300 thread count sheets allowed me to sink into sleep, literally. However, the pillows were a tad too light for me so I had to stack up two pillows to avoid an aching neck.

Perhaps apt for a business traveller used to such luxuries, I found it a bit too posh to be comfortable. State-of-art was the keyword, from the shower system to the coffee maker, which made me feel slightly awkward. I did not know where I should start being impressed.

That said, you can count on comfort and top-notch service. Adjustable lighting, velvety floor-rugs and a rotatable television set show how much thought has gone into the rooms

### NOT TO BE MISSED

Pay extra for a room with a bathtub. Dim the lights and relax in the warm water. If you're worried about wasting water, the rain bath attached to every bathroom, would be a better choice instead

The infinity pool on the top floor of the hotel gives swimmers a view of the Marina Bay skyline.

With the cool weather and tall, cosmopolitan buildings around me, I really felt like I had the world at my feet.

### PRICES

There are six different rooms with room rates starting from \$370. There are festive packages on offer to help you celebrate in luxury and style.

## CULTURAL SCENE

Link Hotel  
50 Tiong Bahru Road  
Tel: 6622 8585



### CHECK-IN

NESTLED among residential blocks in Tiong Bahru, you might expect the relatively new Link Hotel to stand out against the backdrop of the old estate. But its facade is minimal and modest, which allows it to blend in.

The excellent service that greeted me upon my arrival redeemed my reservations.

The rooms are unique with each carefully designed to fit with a Chinese, Malay, Indian or Modern theme.

The Chinese-themed room where I spent the night had lantern-like lampshades and traditional paintings of teapots on the wall. Although the room did evoke a quaint Chinese feel, I felt that it was insufficient.

According to Duty Manager Mr Irwan Tommy, plans are underway to improve the design of the rooms. After all, Link Hotel is a year old.

Nevertheless, the simplicity made me feel comfortable and right at home.

## RUSTIC RELAXATION

Rider's Lodge  
108, Turf Road  
Tel: 6465 4828

### CHECK-IN

DAY breaks, the sound of birds chirping and dogs yapping fill the air, as the mating calls of the bullfrogs die down. The horses and ponies are saddled, awaiting the steady stream of children, who stare in wide-eyed wonder at the gentle animals. I sat on the porch and took it all in, among luscious greenery

and a healthy dose of fresh air.

Common enough in the countryside, but in Singapore? Spend a night at the Rider's Lodge and you too, would be forgiven for forgetting that you are still here.

This colonial-style lodge is steeped in the horse racing history of Singapore. It has 40 rooms, designed with rodeo-inspired pictures and artefacts, and opened in March 2008.

Small, yet cosy describes the way the different sized rooms are designed. It is hardly extravagant - there are no monogrammed soap

bars, huge bathtub to lounge in nor designer chocolates left on the bed - but it oozed comfort and a homely feel. The bed made for a good night's sleep and I was rested when I left the Lodge.

Travellers often judge a place by the state of bathrooms, especially in smaller hotels. At the Rider's Lodge, they are simple yet provide towels and soap.

The relaxed feel does not stop there. Surrounding the lodge are activities for the guests. Horsecity, which manages the area, has pony feeding sessions at different times

of the day. The Lodge gives out free vouchers for horseriding in a quiet paddock nearby

Saddle-soreness can be swiftly dealt with at Sylvia's Secrets nearby, with services from massages to manicures and pedicures. Its earthy decor blends in with the lazy feel of the area and encourages holiday indulgence. Keeping with the atmosphere, Om Shiva Yoga centre has lessons at \$20 each for those who want to meditate or even learn something new.

### NOT TO BE MISSED

As there is no designated dining area - the Lodge only serves breakfast - walk on down to Picotin, a bistro-bar that serves up authentic European food. Sit outside on the patio and enjoy the cool breeze while biting into a piping hot pizza, cooked in a wood-burning oven.

Most people converge at the centre of Picotin, at its horse-shoe shaped bar, where happy hour starts at 12 noon, so it is easy to lose track of time as you sit sipping ice-cold beers and watching people go by.

The chill-out aura at the Rider's Lodge and the surrounding businesses draw people who want get away from the hustle and bustle of the city. Its remoteness is an attraction in itself, so be careful, you might never want to leave.

### PRICES

Deluxe rooms start at \$225 while it costs \$350 for a night in their suites. All guests receive complimentary breakfast. It is easier to make bookings through the Internet.



## GROOVY SEVENTIES

Hotel Re!  
175A Chin Swee Road  
Tel: 6821 8222

### CHECK-IN

THE 1970s was the era of groovy moves and psychedelic colours that were shocking yet bold. But many found the era gaudy and uncool, and soon the bellbottoms and tie-dyed clothes were stashed away, forgotten.

Come the 21st century, it seems that a revival of the 70s is underway, not only on the fashion scene but in interior designing as well. Hotel Re! brings the 70s back in style.

Formerly Pearl's Hill Primary School, it was converted into a 12-storey boutique hotel for the business crowd. Since it opened in March, it has seen a steady stream of walk-in tourists and online bookings.

Every part of Hotel Re! defies the rule book of hotel room decor. The colours are strident and vivid - a contrast to the usual calm, earthy hues of most hotels. Here, expect all your senses to be overwhelmed by clashing colours, geometric patterns and unusual materials like plastics and vinyl.

Step into the lobby and marvel at the neon pink, red, orange and

gold hues lavishly used to deck out wall panels and the reception desk. Relive classic 70s sci fi programmes like Space 1999 as you head up to your room in a silver lined elevator.

Each floor has a different colour theme of pink, red, yellow, green, purple and orange to compliment cultural icons of the era. Silhouettes of stars like John Travolta, Bruce Lee and Elvis Presley outline room walls with their famed poses.

The lobby and rooms are decorated with 70s furniture like egg-shaped swivel chairs. There are shag carpets and vinyl material lining the walls. It is definitely a throwback to that boisterous era.

There's no sweating it out at Hotel Re! - rejuvenate and get a massage instead. For \$25 for 40 minutes, a masseuse will knead out hard knots. Massages can also be done in the comfort of your room.

### NOT TO BE MISSED

If you have the extra cash to splurge, opt for one of the three different coloured suites. Choose from the trappings of gold, silver and bronze featuring different icons like James Bond, Charlie's Angels and The Saint.

The centrepiece of the rooms is the waterbed, a fad of the 70s that



lost its popularity over the years. It makes a shagadelic comeback in Hotel Re! so jump right in and experience floating on water, as you sleep soundly away.

Bathrooms in Suites have Jacuzzis which overlook the city, providing a panoramic view of the landscape as you soak up the romantic atmosphere with a loved one.

### PRICES

Rooms are priced starting at \$180++ for superior rooms on the weekdays. On the weekend, specials start at \$168++ and includes javanese massages and continental breakfast for two.