

SINGAPORE MANILA SIEM REAP BALL LUANG PRABANG

OCTOBER 2022



Keeping it local

A NOTE FROM THE TEAM

ow that cross-border travel restrictions have become a thing of the past, we're sure you're as delighted as we are by **the** return of the weekend getaway. Short trips over the weekend bring a particular joy – a chance to unplug at the end of a work week, a nourishing change of scene and at least a couple of days of fresh inspiration. Extolling the virtues of two- to three-day escapes can sound like preaching to the choir, but in case anyone needs reminding, weekends away are less of a commitment time-wise and wonderfully easy to plan. Not sure where to go for the weekend? We've got some great ideas for a quick hop.

Flying solo? Sign up for art workshops in **Bali** and come back from your holiday with the ultimate souvenir: something you created with your own hands. Or perhaps you're keen on taking the whole family for a romp around **Singapore**? If you're looking for a weekend of indulgence, consider eating and drinking around **Siem Reap** after a visit to the majestic Angkor temples. If a big-city break is more your style, enjoy a weekend of dining and shopping in **Manila** in between stops at the metro's heritage sites.

But if you're indeed looking to forget the world for a couple of blissful days, there's no better way to stop time than with a visit to **Luang Prabang**. The options are endless. Cheers to the weekend, wherever you decide to go. ◆



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EDITORIAL

Launch Editor Tara FT Sering Digital Editor Parisa Pichitmarn Art Director Marlon Espino

SALES

Commercial Head Lynn Ashlee lynn.ashlee@ink-global.com



Chief Executive Officers Michael Keating, Simon Leslie

Chief Operating and Financial Officer Jim Campbell

Managing Director, APAC Ric Stockfis Creative Director, APAC Alexandra Karplus

www.ink-global.com

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FOR ART LOVERS

Make something beautiful in UBUD, BALI

Looking to refine your artistic skills or pick up new ones? Myriad opportunities to don a smock and do something with your hands await in one of Indonesia's most artsy destinations

BY JULIA WINTERFLOOD



rom the moss-speckled statues and intricate Hindu offerings to the carved flourishes on wooden furniture, artistry abounds in Ubud. Once a collection of quiet villages with an eclectic creative scene that drew painters, writers and filmmakers from faraway lands, it was established as a cultural center in the 1930s. Almost a century later, multiple museums house vast collections of works by the island's most influential artists, while traditional dance and music are performed nightly. But although Ubud is world renowned for its customary arts, a kaleidoscopic array of contemporary creations is produced by locals and foreigners who call the town home. Luckily,

visitors can take active part in that creative vibe. Here's where to nurture your artistic side.









Black Hand Gang

Indonesia's best-equipped printmaking facility runs a number of workshops including cyanotype, photo intaglio, and Japanese embroidery. At its architecturally unique "Temple of Print" — a Javanese joglo perched

atop six shipping containers — you'll find signed, numbered, hand-pulled reproductions of works by some of the nation's most prominent contemporary artists, such as Agus Suwage and Bali's own Kuncir Sathya Viku. *Jalan Raya Mas, Br. Abianseka Desa Mas*



Threads of Life

At the more traditional end of the spectrum, breathe in the botanical, earthy scent of natural dyes at Threads of Life, which offers hands-on batik-making classes that delve deep into indigo

dying and the astonishingly rich textile traditions of the archipelago. The enterprise supports over a thousand women across 12 Indonesian islands and encourages communities to preserve indigenous weaving and natural dyeing techniques. *Jalan Kajeng, No 24*

OCTOBER IN UBUD

Time your visit to coincide with these two big events



From October 14-15 2022, the inaugural **Ubud Open Studios** from creative events agency Elami and Co. Productions will throw open the doors of 50 private studios, where painters, illustrators, interior designers, photographers, ceramicists, glass blowers, leatherworkers, weavers, costume makers, carvers and more will reveal their techniques, processes and philosophies. This innovative event

will be Ubud's biggest and most diverse celebration of contemporary art to date, with discussions, demonstrations, workshops and exhibitions from which you can tailor your experience according to your creative tastes.





After two years of online and hybrid programming due to the pandemic, this month also heralds the return of one of Southeast Asia's leading literature and arts events. In its 19th year, **Ubud Writers and Readers Festival** will bring together over 100 writers, artists, activists and performers from across Indonesia and the world from October 27-30.



ART WALK

Explore Bali's creative heart one step at a time



One of the best ways to get to know a place is to walk its streets, which makes joining a walking tour led by **Ubud Story Walks** one of the best ways to get to know Ubud. Starting in the cool of the early morning, the mile-long meander takes in Bali's oldest art museum and the home of its most revered artist, I Gusti Nyoman Lempad. A prolific stone sculptor, architect and painter who is said to have died at the age of 116, many of Ubud's most distinctive landmarks and the artistic styles of younger generations across the island echo his enduring legacy. ◆

Dive into a creative weekend in Ubud, Bali. Read the full story at <u>Sawasdee.thaiairways.com</u>

FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

Create fun memories with the whole family in

SINGAPORE

There's always something fun for the whole family in this dynamic island. Here's a peek at some of the newly launched familycentric activities, events and attractions in the Little Red Dot

BY JOY FANG





Meet Le Le, Singapore's first baby panda

dorable baby panda Le Le was born in August last year to parents Kai Kai and Jia Jia, two giant pandas on loan from China. The birth sent all of Singapore

into a frenzy. It's hard to blame them. Within months, the tiny pink cub grew to a hefty 33kg bear and made his public debut in March 2022. Le Le celebrated his first birthday in August to

much fanfare, receiving, among others, a threetier ice cake stuffed with treats. Visit the River Wonders' Giant Panda Forest exhibit to catch a glimpse of the adorable cub, who is often seen playing with his mom, tumbling about the enclosure, or napping.



Visit new attractions at the Singapore Botanic Gardens

Take time to explore the new additions to Singapore Botanic Gardens, the only tropical garden, to be honored as a Unesco World Heritage Site. Begin at the Tropical Montane Orchidetum, a dreamy new area located at National Orchid Garden opened in April 2021. Three display houses showcase over 1,150 species of orchids and plants from a mid- to high-elevation montane forest,

hence its name. The highlight is the Sembcorp Cool House which has been expanded four times its original size and boasts a chilly temperature of between 16 to 23 degrees Celsius. You'll feel like you've been whisked away to a cloud forest, half the world away.



Check out the latest at the

ArtScience Museum

You can always rely on the Moshe Safdiedesigned ArtScience Museum — that gravitydefying, lotus-inspired architectural marvel along Marina Bay Sands — to stage a riveting exhibition. *FutureWorld: Where Art Meets Science* is a visual delight designed to astound its visitors through a collection of digital interactive installations, cleverly leveraging art, lights and technology for an immersive experience. The kids will love the City of Garden segment which allows them to slide through a "fruit field". Over at the Sketch Aquarium, they can color a sea creature and watch it come to life in the aquarium.

Ready for a fun-filled family weekend in Singapore? Check out more attractions at Sawasdee.thaiairways.com



Eat your way around SIEM REAP

If you've never thought of this Cambodian city as a great dining destination, you're in for quite a surprise. Here's an amuse bouche: a short list of must-try restaurants for great Khmer food in temple town

BY TARA FT SERING





The Sugar Palm

wher and chef Kethana Dunnet is a leading figure in the effort to revive the cooking traditions that had all but disappeared under the Khmer Rouge. At The Sugar Palm, she serves the dishes she enjoyed

throughout her childhood. House specialties include recipes Kethana learned from her mother and grandmother. Try The Sugar Palm's fish amok, a velvety soufflé of mashed snakehead fish, prahok (fermented fish paste) and coconut cream, in a shallow palm-leaf tub. Street 27



Jomno – Modern Khmer Cuisine

Chef Chomnab Seiha of Jomno serves inventive and elevated takes on beloved Cambodian street food. Everything on the menu sounds divine, and if you can't quite decide on what to have, start with the sharing platters which feature bite-sized servings of skewers, sausages and spring rolls. Among the most ordered mains are the Battambang sausages (charcoalgrilled homemade pork and beef, served with a side salad of thin banana heart coils), Jomno's soupy version of fish amok, and the restaurant's mouth-wateringly delicious smoked duck. *Wat Damnak Market Road*



Pou Restaurant

From its new location in Maison 557's garden, chef Mengly Mork serves photogenic plates of reimagined street food and Khmer family-style dishes. The menu includes the family recipe for *num ban chok,* a breakfast staple of curry and rice noodles, using local crab meat instead of the usual river fish, stewed in coconut milk and

prahok. Another must-try is the catfish with tamarind sauce, chunks of fileted then deep-fried catfish from the Tonle Sap, drizzled with a bright and tangy tamarind sauce. It's served in a bowl of springy rice noodles and fresh wildflowers. *Wat Bo Road*

<image>

Banlle

This popular vegetarian restaurant serves both traditional Khmer and Western dishes. Here, Swiss-trained Cambodian chef Pola Siv advocates for the planet through plant-based dining. Chemical-free vegetables and herbs are picked fresh from raised beds in the lush garden — a collaborative effort with sustainable agriculture NGO Agrisud International — that surrounds the light-filled restaurant. It's popular for its airy, relaxed vibe and for inventive dishes like the tomato tartare and the prahok ktis of fermented tofu instead of fish. *Street 26*



1932 at the Raffles Hote

The Raffles Grand Hotel D'Angkor's new finedining restaurant serves modern takes on Khmer recipes long in the keep of royal chefs and given to the hotel by royal decree. As a city landmark that first opened in 1932, the hotel has a rich history (just ask the resident historian) of hosting royalty, global celebrities and other VIPs, from Charlie Chaplin to Jackie Onassis to Nancy

Pelosi. That is to say, dinner here is a full sensory experience – from the swish dining room to the tableside service — delivered through a seamless choreography that's been refined over decades, by some of the world's most exacting palates. 1 Vithei, Charles De Gaulle



Cuisine Wat Damnak

For an extra special evening out, head over to this acclaimed restaurant by French chef Joannès Rivière. In 2015, Cuisine Wat Damnak became the first Cambodian restaurant to make the Asia's 50 Best Restaurants List, a feat it replicated the following year. After a two-year closure due to Covid, the restaurant is back to delight diners with a seasonal tasting menu of Cambodian dishes prepared French style. *Wat Damnak Market Road*



Lum Orng

Away from the city center and well into the countryside, Lum Orng by chef Sothea Seng is a farm-to-table affair with a fabulous view (come in time for sunset and pre-dinner cocktails). The Royal Khmer menu, one of two tasting menus, opens with the Lobster and Avocado Ceviche, a starter of poached lobster from the southern province of Takeo, garnished with avocado, pink pomelo and fresh homegrown vegetable in lemongrass and passion fruit dressing.

Thlok Andong Village ♦

Hungry? Read the full story at Sawasdee.thaiairways.com



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Learn something new at MANILA'S heritage spots

Metro Manila can seem a bit daunting

and a lot to take in, but a visit to a few choice historic spots provides an interesting way in to a story-filled weekend adventure

BY CHONX TIBAJIA



Take a morning stroll at Rizal Park

ormerly called Luneta Park, Rizal Park is a long promenade surrounded by lush greenery. The largest urban park in the Philippines, it was once a bustling social hub for Manila's upper class during the Spanish regime.

Today it draws a more diverse crowd, here for the wide, walking paths and the breathing space, as well as for photo-ops at the Rizal Monument, a shrine to national hero Dr. Jose Rizal. His writings and eventual death by firing squad execution at the park in 1896 helped spark a revolution that ended over three centuries of Spanish colonial rule. About 100 meters from the monument, lifesize statues on the exact spot of execution depict that pivotal scene in history.



Spend the afternoon in Escolta

In Binondo, the world's oldest Chinatown, walk along Escolta, one of the city's oldest and most storied streets. Escolta reached its peak during the American occupation, earning the nickname Wall Street of the Philippines, when it claimed many historic firsts for the country: the first building with an elevator (Burke Building, built 1919); the first building to have air-conditioning (The Crystal Arcade, completed in 1932); the first ice cream shop (Clarke's, opened in 1908).

Largely neglected for decades — the once groundbreaking buildings abandoned for more modern spaces in newer business districts like Makati — Escolta has been anointed by Manila's present-day cool crowd as the place to be. Discover Old Manila through historic buildings, shop for vintage items and unique finds or take a selfie with street art. Check out HUB: Make Lab — a creative space and retail lab selling local, artisan-made products, from apparel to homeware — at the First United Building,



Escolta reached its peak during the **American occupation, earning the nick**name Wall Street of the Philippines.



End the day in Poblacion

After dinner in Bonifacio Global City, one

of the metro's shinier new districts (the acclaimed Gallery by Chele is a fantastic bet), head over to Poblacion. Barangay Poblacion is Makati's first settlement and historic center, dating back centuries. But if your local host asks you to go on a Pob Crawl, they mean a fun and boozy tour of a particular part of Poblacion, one that was once a notorious red-light district but that's now been taken over by hole-in-the-wall restaurants, bars tucked away in garages, craft beer pubs, and amazing street food lanes. If you want to witness how creativity — not to mention some seriously good craft cocktails — can change a city, end your evening here. ◆



For the full history-themed Manila itinerary, visit <u>Sawasdee.thaiairways.com</u>

FOR A SLOW AND EASY WEEKEND

Relax and unwind in LUANG PRABANG

Few destinations are as chilled out as this Unesco World Heritagelisted town, where you can leave all the rest of the world behind and happily lose all sense of time

BY JONATHAN EVANS





tart the weekend by soaking up the laidback ambience of this utterly unspoilt town — which holds a dazzling range of world-class hotels — before venturing

further out. The pursuit of simple pleasures here yields rich dividends: a gentle ascent to the peak of Mount Phousi showcases all the key sights in one widescreen panorama, a dreamlike watercolor of old Indochina. Absorb the sweeping vision of the town's unparalleled Franco-Lao vernacular architecture, slotted in between dozens of ornate boutiques, pagodas and temples — all immaculately bookended by the sleepy Nam Khan

and Mekong rivers. Make time for the sublime 16th-century Wat Xieng Thong monastery a few blocks away, venue for many royal coronations in centuries past.





It's a short walk from Mount Phousi to one of Asia's biggest and best night markets. Every evening, vendors — largely from the sizeable Hmong ethnic group — line the principal thoroughfare named for a former king, Sisavangvong Road, to sell handicraft artefacts (textiles, ceramics, even ornaments recycled from "Secret War" bombs), as well as food staples such as fish and vegetables.

A calm atmosphere prevails despite the market's size, but even greater rewards await at the end of the street, where a plethora of locally run restaurants line up to tempt travelers' taste buds. In this gorgeously romantic setting, Lao favorites

often plant- and herb-based — are re-imagined

at casual-yet-classy diners like vegan-friendly

Bouang (Lao for "spoon"), whose dishes are as colorful and inventive as its interiors.

Round off your Laos weekend in style with Khopfa Mekong Cruise's sunset sailboat swansong. Here, you can take in the captivating scenery of downtown Luang Prabang at dusk along the wide-open river; weekend departures now last two hours, offering film screenings with cocktails and tapas. Embarking at the Belle Rive Boutique Hotel's boat pier, everything is set here for maximum comfort, from the viewing terraces to the lounges and massage armchairs.

Much like the rest of Luang Prabang – luxurious, stylish and intimate — Khopfa makes hospitality look easy, and this is one ex-royal capital that's welcomed the world yet lost none of its luster.

The pursuit of simple pleasures here yields rich dividends: a gentle ascent to the peak of Mount Phousi showcases...a dreamlike watercolor of old Indochina.



<image>

As the new day dawns, rise early and make for Ock Pop Tok Living Crafts Centre, with a breakfast view on a porch overlooking the Mekong. You'll see this all-women co-operative's name at chic boutiques all around town: it's the standard-bearer for the time-honored crafts of textile weaving and dyeing, and here you can meet the artisans, observe their delicate work happening in real time — producing unmistakably Lao garments with vivid patterns and colors and kick back in the tropical garden. ◆

For more chilled out activities beyond Luang Prabang's postcard-perfect city center, go to <u>Sawasdee.thaiairways.com.</u>





Spice up downtime at these new urban destinations not far from Bangkok

BY PARISA PICHITMARN

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Practice your swing at **Topgolf Megacity**

This golf and entertainment venue lets you enjoy the sport from the comfort of a temperature-controlled bay, perfect for balmy nights in Bangkok. A total of 102 bays can host up to a maximum of six players, so round up your favorite golf buddies for a night at the driving range. Use Topgolf's clubs or bring your own to have a go at the micro-chipped and high-tech golf balls that can track of your distance and accuracy score. The range of golf games featuring virtual driving ranges for players of all levels, as well as kooky options like Angry Birds, makes the experience like playing a computer game in real life. When you need

a rest from the driving, fuel up with lively music and Topgolf's offerings of food and drinks options right at your bay or at onsite eateries. 971, Bang Kaeo subdistrict, Bang Phli District, Samut Prakan



2 Hunt for delicious bites at Thonburi Market Place

When it comes to Thailand's most popular open-air markets, it's hard to top the legendary Chatuchak Weekend Market, but the dizzying choices for delicious street food and raw ingredients at the new Thonburi Market Place make it a

comparably worthwhile alternative. Clean, airy and decked out in gigantic chandeliers, this efficiently-run market makes shopping for food a very pleasant experience. Sprawled across a large area of 30 *rai* (approximately 48,000 square

meters), hundreds of brilliantly lit stalls

sell all sorts of mouthwatering dishes in the dining zone. You'll find anything from local *yentafo* noodles (there are old legendary names like Nai Uan), high-end croissants, to trendy Japanese eats such as salmon sushi cakes from Salmon All Day. The fresh market zone sells seafood, fresh meats, fruits and vegetables, and flowers. *58 Borommaratchachonnani Road, Sala Thammasop, Thawi Watthana*



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