



# A ROOM WITH MORE THAN JUST A VIEW

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Flying with Bangkok Airways to Samui is always a comfortable experience. Checking into the Boutique Lounge I was automatically given my wifi password now had time for quality grazing and last minute e-mails before boarding the aircraft. I find this the best domestic flying experience in Thailand.

Transfer from the airport took just 10 minutes. From the lobby I was guided up bamboo pole lined concrete staircase to my ocean facing room on the second floor. The door opens Access by electronic touch card.

My room was 50 sqm, sub-divided into three zones offering a wash, sleep relax experience. In the wet area

the floors are polished concrete with a spaciously comfortable walk in shower is framed by floor to ceiling columns filled with beaded screened glass panels. There is the choice of a ceiling mounted rain shower or a more traditional shower. The floor is black slate stone tiled platform surrounded by a low sunken moat for water to flow away.

Moving into the sleeping zone the floor surface changes from polished concrete to teak planking . A snugly comfortable king size bed faces the 50" wall mounted LCD TV. Walking through the sliding panels to the decked terrace lounge are. A large rocking chair,

low circular coffee table and an over hanging sofa set in the wall facing the wall. The earth tone walls of the outside corridor reappear in this section of the fan. In the ceiling a circular rotating fan. Within minutes of stepping into the room I could feel I was breathing slower and the relaxation process was kicking in.

Resort dining isn't dictated by the watch rather the stomach and when eating just feels the right thing to do. Having unpacked and accustomed myself with how the room works I felt like a bite to eat so I wandered down to H Bistro and took a seat in the open sided with and uninterrupted view of the collection of yachts anchored off shore. There are those who may be willing to dismiss burgers as just fast food but not here, the Hansar Cheese Burger is a comfort gastro delight. It was styled with a de-constructed presentation The Wagyu



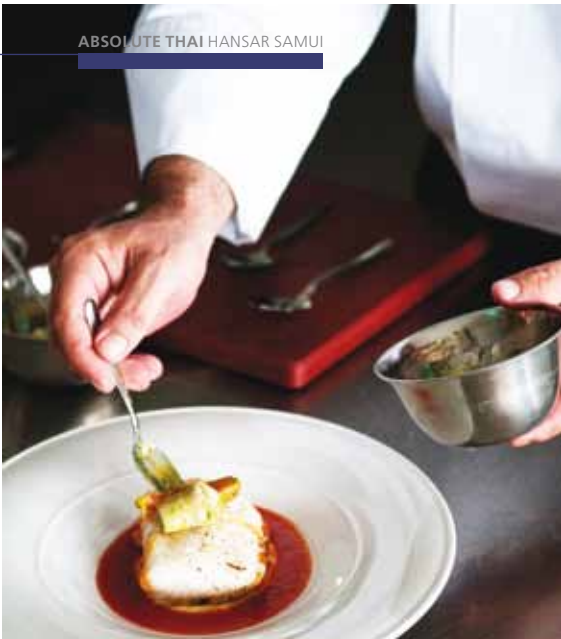
MY ROOM WAS 50 SQM, SUB-DIVIDED INTO THREE ZONES OFFERING A WASH, SLEEP RELAX EXPERIENCE. IN THE WET AREA THE FLOORS ARE POLISHED CONCRETE WITH A SPACIOUSLY COMFORTABLE WALK IN SHOWER IS FRAMED BY FLOOR TO CEILING COLUMNS FILLED WITH BEADED SCREENED GLASS PANELS.

beef patty thick and juicy was perfectly cooked topped with melted cheeses and crispy bacon on the lower half of the toasted sesame seed bun. On another section of the plate a freestanding pile of crunchy crisp iceberg lettuce, slice of tomato and raw onion rings. Generously cut french fries, a dish of ketchup and another of sour vegetable relish. All the burger elements were on the plate the presentation made eating it easier rather than the traditional stack.

I took the tropically light pistachio creme brûlée with chocolate biscotti and strawberry coulis.

After my late lunch I took a stroll along the narrow tarmac road that divides the resort from the beach to explore the Fisherman's Village. It sits in the middle of Bophut beach between the Big Buddha and Maenam beach overlooking Koh Pha Ngan Here the streets are lined with old wooded Chinese shophouses interspersed with a few modern buildings. This is one of the best preserved areas on the island with a distinctly Mediterranean feel which is mostly due to this area having been the island's French outpost for many years. Every Friday night all transportation is banned as it becomes a walking street. Speed boats leave from to Koh Pha Ngan for the monthly Full Moon Parties.





FOR DINNER CANADIAN BORN EXECUTIVE CHEF STEPHEN DION WHO DESCRIBES HIS COOKING STYLE AS FRENCH MEDITERRANEAN, INDULGED ME WITH HIS MONTHLY CHANGING CHEF'S DINNER SPECIAL.



When got back to the room I felt in need of a naughty indulgence so i raided the Dean & Deluca milk chocolate malt balls from the minibar. Truly delicious and tottaly addictive, whoever came up with the idea that indulgence is a sin needs to get a life.

As the sunset the passage of day to night is recognised by the silent ceremony of lighting of the oil burning lamps on the sea facing border of the resort.

For dinner Canadian born Executive Chef Stephen Dion who describes his cooking style as French Mediterranean, indulged me with his monthly changing Chef's Dinner Special. A typical menu would start with imported seafood, on this occasion he served grilled Hokkaido Octopus and seared Alaskan scallops. This was followed by a fish course of was a duo of Scottish sea trout. From there I moved onto "Rusticello" white winter truffle flavoured risotto with Iberico pork loin. Unless the customer is vegetarian the main course is a choice between fish and lamb. With this menu fish course was pan seared Dover sole filet with the meat alternative being slow cooked stockyard wayu tenderloin with a marble score in excess of nine.

After dinner Stephen joined me for coffee to explain so of the other culinary pampering they offer. "We can arrange a sunset cruise for a minimum of four people.," he says, "we charter a 30 foot yacht and stock it with Champagne, oysters and Dean & Deluca chocolates. We have tent like cabanas on the beach where we serve a candlelight dinner. I will discuss with the couple what they would like and its served by their very own barefoot butler.

When I got back to my room I found the bed had been turned down and on my pillow a plate with for chocolates and single, a romantic sleeping experience for one.

After a blissful nights sleep my batteries fully charged for the start of the new day. I took my morning tea out onto the terrace balcony. From here I had an unspoilt view of the mirror like infinity pool below, the colour identical to the slightly texture surface of the sea beyond. Total tranquility , furred sun umbrella were stand furred ready for the start of their days duty as the leaves of the palm trees gently sway too and grow.

I wondered down for breakfast where all the tables had been laid for couples but when staff discovered I was dining alone the second place was cleared.





eggs Benedict with generous coating of rich creamy textured Hollandaise sauce dusted with chopped chives. Sausages (I was given a choice of pork or chicken) taste of real meat, crispy bacon. Quality, tasty and simple. Western & Asian buffet available extensive selection of juices and fresh fruit.

The hotel has rented a half acre piece of waste land and converted it into a aquaponic fish and vegetable farm to grow chemical free herbs, fruits and vegetables for guests and staff. "We are currently growing are herbs ( 3 different varieties of ginger, galangal, turmeric, lemongrass, rosemary, holy basil, thyme, tarragon, Italian basil – vegetables: morning glory, chinese kale, several varieties of lettuce, green cabbage, bunching onions and green pai tsai . Fruits: Sweet potatoes, sweet corn, baby corn, pea eggplant, cucumber, round egg plant, seedless yellow water melon, seedless red watermelon, Tomatoes ( cherry varieties: yellow, black, purple), bell peppers, chilies, papaya. Other varieties will be added at a later date. Dried leaves and refuse are used for compost and harvested back into the ground. This will become a key feature for their cooking classes as guest will be able to pick the ingredients they are going to cook with." 🌱



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