



And Anyways...

the rambles of a hungry writer

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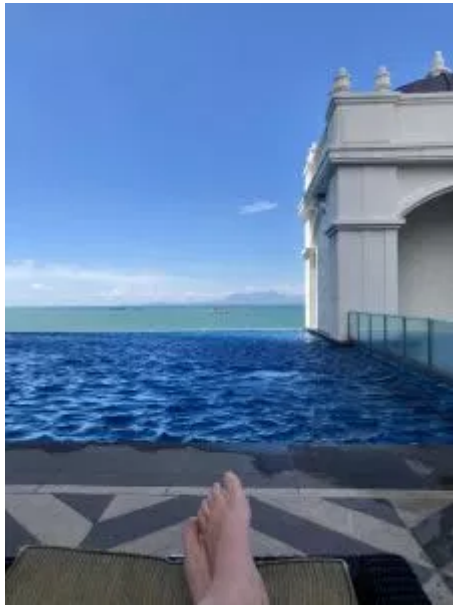
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EASTERN & ORIENTAL HOTEL

1 Comment

Posted on May 14, 2019 by Jo



The last time that we were in Penang was in January 2008. That trip we stayed right on the beach up in Batu Ferringhi. I recall walking into our hotel room and crying. Rather than the refurbished family room we'd requested and paid for the three of us were cramped into a small room that was last updated sometime in the early 80s – or maybe even earlier, judging by the amount of brown on offer. (We've since found out that the room we had was one of the only ones not to have been refurbished at that time).

The resort we were in was fabulous with amazing facilities, a couple of great restaurants and a hawker market right across the road, but that room, not so. The air-conditioning made weird clunking noises all day and night and we were facing the bar which meant we had the resort singers singing all the schmoozy songs from the same era as the interior until the early hours of each morning.

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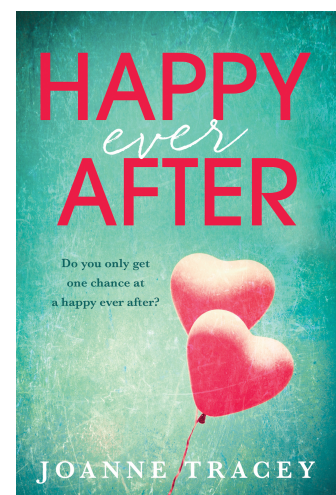
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OUT NOW

I'm a bad sleeper at the best of times and there were nights where I lathered myself in mozzie spray and attempted to sleep for a few hours on the pool lounges where, although I could still hear the music, I didn't have the clunking of the ancient air-conditioner.

That was the last time that I ever booked accommodation through a travel agent.

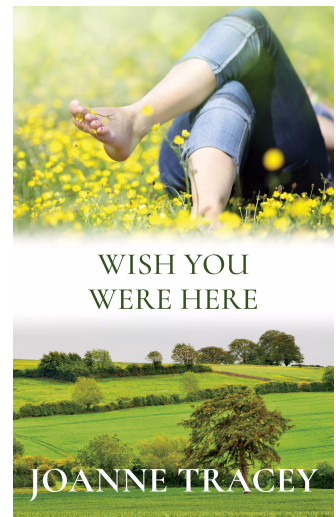
One morning we caught the resort shuttle into Georgetown and drove past the Eastern & Oriental Hotel. It looked like what I imagined colonial Malaysia to look like, it looked like Raffles in Singapore. I immediately announced that it was going straight onto my hotel bucket list – yes, I do have one and Raffles is also on it.

Moving forward eleven years and we've just come back from the best part of a week in Penang. This time, though, we stayed in Georgetown, ducking up to Batu Ferringhi one night for dinner. And this time I absolutely didn't cry when we walked into our hotel room.



Sunset at Batu Ferringhi

Eastern & Oriental Hotel



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History

The history of the E&O, as it's known, marries with the rich history of Penang itself.

Already established as a trading port and having attracted merchants from around the world, in the late 1880s 4 Armenian brothers, the Sarkies, saw an opportunity for luxury accommodation. One of these took over the lease of an old accommodation house in 1884 and from this came what we now know as the E&O. The brothers went on to found other luxury hotels – notably Raffles in Singapore but had lost control of their hotel empire by the 1930s. Their name still lives on in the restaurant.

At one point the E&O was known as “the premier hotel East of Suez” with the longest sea-front of any hotel in the world. At that time hot and cold running water and adjacent bathrooms were considered the height of luxury. Thankfully we’ve moved on from there, but the hotel still retains it’s luxuriously elegant feel whilst still giving a nod to its heyday. These days the hotel is still

JOANNE TRACEY -
AUTHOR

full of art and other heritage touches, and a photo gallery on the ground floor tells it's history.



In the lounge



In the lounge



Our room

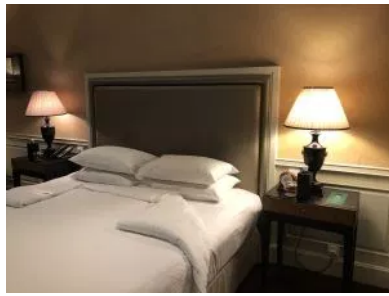
One wing of the hotel is currently closed for a refurb (as, coincidentally, is Raffles), but our room, with a balcony overlooking the sea and mainland Malaysia, was fabulous.

Not only was the room huge, but the bathroom was also bigger than most with 2 sinks, a claw foot bath, double shower and two wardrobes – meaning we

THE FINE-PRINT

Unless I say otherwise, all photos on this blog have come from my camera- or my phone. Likewise all text, unless I say otherwise, has come from my head. I'm happy for you to use it, but please give credit where due.

could unpack, put our bags out of sight and not have to trip over them or walk around them.



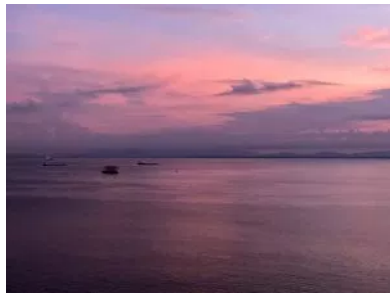
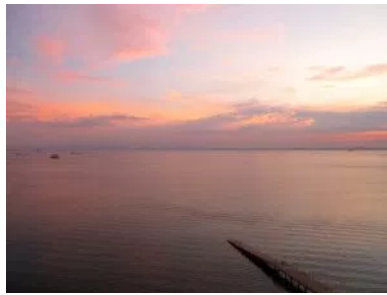
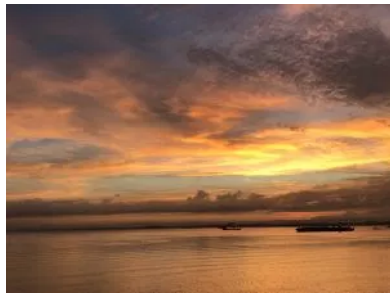
My favourite thing? This reading chair. Grant though loved the free soft drinks in the mini-bar.



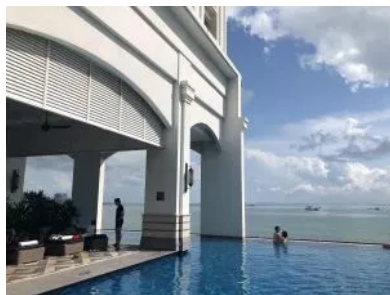
From our balcony, we could see across to mainland Malaysia and could hear the waves as they hit the seawall. I'd stand out there during the day and watch the ferries as they went to and from Langkawi, the cruise ships as they glided in and out of port, and all the assorted fishing vessels.



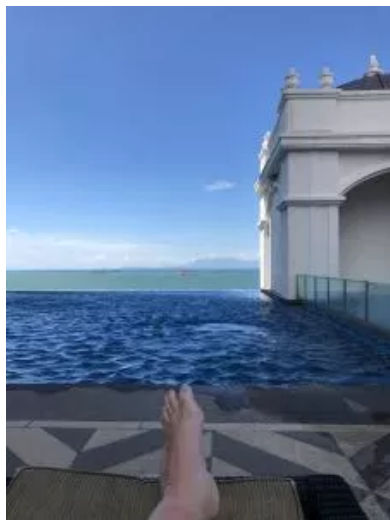
Plus we had a birds-eye view of the fabulous sunrises in the morning and the evening light show as the lightning sheeted across the night sky.



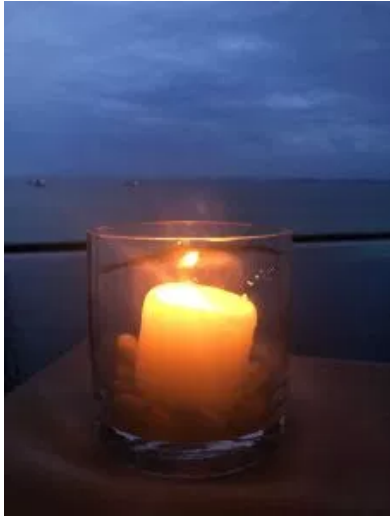
The Pool



Okay, Penang is hot and humid. On our balcony, on the seafront and by the pool, however, there was always a lovely breeze. You'd find me here every afternoon.



As a special treat to ourselves, we had dinner on the pool terrace by candlelight one night. It was all very romantic, but sadly the light was too poor for me to show you what we ate.



Location



Can you see Penang Bridge in the background & the Blue Mansion?

Located on the seafront in the colonial strip of Georgetown we were able to explore the heritage quarter easily from here. The Blue Mansion (more on that another time) was just a couple of blocks away as was the Red Garden night hawker market.



The verdict?

Stylish, elegant and because we booked so far ahead and got onto some specials while the refurb was going on relatively good value. In terms of the service, the breakfast (oh my goodness, the breakfasts!), the rooms, the cleanliness, the quality of the rooms, it was really difficult to fault. While some large hotels can, by their very nature, be lacking soul and character, this one really did have a personality. Plus it was a tick off my hotel bucket list.



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A row of eight small, square profile pictures of various users, including a cartoon character, a person on a beach, a person in a field, a person in a hat, a person in a blue shirt, a person in a white shirt, a person in a red shirt, and a person in a green shirt.

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Hi, Jo – You had me at the opening photo....and the remaining photos just kept on pulling me in further. Then to top it off with delicious breakfast talk!! Wish I was there! 😊

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