

Pearl of the ORIENT

For the epic Spring/Summer '13 collections shoot, BAZAAR catwalked into Penang, staying at both the iconic Eastern & Oriental Hotel and the captivating Lone Pine Hotel. By Cai Mei Khoo.

The poolside terrace at the Victory Annexe



The room was filled with racks of clothes, the sitting area strewn with row upon row of shoes from Dior to Roger Vivier, not forgetting accessories such as that amazing Alexander McQueen beekeeper's hat. Thankfully, we were staying at the Eastern & Oriental Hotel, the guest rooms of which were large enough to occupy the tonne of looks brought in for the collections shoot that ran in our 10th anniversary issue last April. Such a milestone issue deserved only the best, and in Penang, the Eastern & Oriental hotel, or the E&O as it's more fondly known, was the obvious choice.

The grand dame of all hotels in Penang, the E&O has a rich, illustrious past. Established by the Armenien Sarkies brothers, the E&O started life as The Eastern in 1884, catering to the well-heeled

traveller. Due to its popularity, the brothers then added another hotel, The Oriental, a year later on an adjacent piece of land that faced the Andaman Sea. Combined, the hotel was thereafter known as the Eastern & Oriental Hotel and became the largest hotel in Penang, boasting a seafront lawn acknowledged as the world's longest at 842 feet.

Once, renowned writers, playwrights, and famous actors the likes of Rudyard Kipling, Sir Noël Coward, and Mary Pickford arrived in Penang, the Pearl of the Orient, via steamship. Fast forward to 2013 and half the BAZAAR fashion team drove up from KL while the other half flew in from Singapore, large suitcases in tow, all in preparation for the shoot.

Located in George Town, the hotel's cool, quiet interior is a welcome respite from the humid, balmy Penang weather.



We were immediately given cold towels and a welcome drink upon arrival, while waiting to be checked in.

Positioning itself as an all-suite hotel, the rooms are delightfully spacious – our room in the Heritage Wing had a huge walk-in wardrobe – and as well-appointed as you would expect from a hotel of this standard and reputation. The genteel, refined atmosphere is further enhanced by the presence of an army of butlers smartly dressed in white suits, who are on-call 24 hours, should your dress require immediate pressing or if you would like your shoes

