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EASTERN & ORIENTAL HOTEL, PENANG : REVIEW BASED ON OUR EXPERIENCE

July 7, 2018

In Georgetown, Penang, we found the ideal hotel for our romantic getaway. This heritage hotel has existed since 1885 and was once the Sarkies' brothers pride. After seeing the Eastern & Oriental Hotel, or shortly known as the E&O Hotel, we could easily see why. As you know, we love heritage and authentic always wins over modern in our eyes, but at the E&O Hotel, we didn't have to choose. There we got the legit historical charm with modern necessities. Our reviews aren't just the description of our experience, but much more. [Here](#) you can read the history of this luxury heritage hotel. Why? Because you will understand the whole picture and meaning of this hotel. After all, hotels in which we are spending our time have some interesting stories that deserve to be told over and over again. Besides that, the guests contribute to the legacy as well and sometimes they can be even more interesting than a hotel itself. Keep on reading to find out if the E&O Hotel justified its reputation and enthralled us like it did many before. At the end is also a short summary if you are keen to jump to the conclusion.

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E&O Hotel from the air

What is the most important when you step into the heritage hotel?

For us, it is the feeling of respect and humbleness and the moment we entered this magnificent lobby featuring an echo-dome, we felt it. The 100 year old lift definitely added to the ambiance and the fact that it is still working is delightful. But there is more! On the left side is a magnificent staircase which could be a centerpiece by itself. The lobby will take your breath away and you can easily forget why you are here. Oh right, check in.



E&O hotel: Lobby is simply amazing

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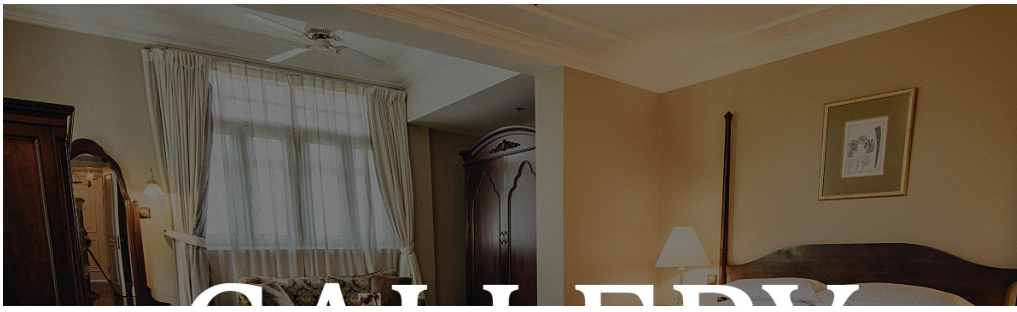


E&O hotel: Welcome drink and cold towels are top notches in a weather like this

The friendly staff at the reception helped us with our heavy bags and check in was quick and fluid. They had an answer to all our questions and we had no problems communicating, as everyone speaks great English. Before they showed us our room, we got a delicious mocktail and a lemongrass scented cold towel, both were very welcome in the hot tropical weather. The porter helped us with our luggage and took us to our room. We stayed in the heritage wing, which was built in 1885, and you can just feel all the history around you. Later on, we explored the hotel and found out that even the new building from 2007 has its charm. Rooms are sophisticatedly designed in colonial style, just like in the heritage wing. For a moment we forgot we weren't in the elegant heritage section but rather in the new addition. We liked the spacious hallways, the wooden decks and the great photographs of Penang on the walls. The designer deserves a praise on the job well done.

ROOM

In Heritage wing, we were staying in the Georgetown Suite. We will admit, the old rooms need minor renovation, but it isn't critical – after all, this is a patina and it goes great with this heritage building. We had a spacious master bedroom with an extra lounge and luxury bathroom in a nice colonial style. Furniture has elegance and a genuine feel with the cabinet that hides LCD TV, which is clever touch and quite convenient. The bathroom is nice, but we are among those who cry after notorious old legged bathtubs from the Sarkies times. The cleanliness of the room is adequate, it could be a bit better but is far from being obtrusive. The only downside was a welcoming fruit, it looked somewhat sad on the plate. It is completely different than the in-room tea and coffee selection. We loved our afternoon tea and coffee time before the happy hour at The Farquhar's Bar started.



FOOD AND BEVERAGE

The pitiful fruit we received as a welcome gift wasn't a sign of bad food in this hotel – quite to the contrary! They have six drink and dining options. Self-service breakfast was served in Sarkies: you enjoy your big meal on a nice airy terrace where you can watch the sea and enjoy morning delights. Even when the hotel was busy, breakfast ran smoothly in the relaxed atmosphere with great service. The waiter seated us and offered coffee or tea. We also got a quick introduction to the current offer and our mouth was already immediately salivating. The offer is huge, and you would be extremely picky if you couldn't find anything you like.



E&O Hotel: Noodles station

There was a station with Indian food, where you could even get freshly made Roti Canai by your preference and it was perfect with Dhal Curry. On the other side was a Japanese sushi with tuna carpaccio. There were a lot of cold cuts, which were great with their cheese selection as well as dried fruits and nuts. Of course, there was fresh fruit and freshly squeezed juices. We loved that we could mix fruit for the juice to our liking, but our favorite was pastries. There was more to it than delicious croissants and Danish rolls. Here we had the best butter pudding we ever tried. Yes, there was also a station for English breakfast. As this is an Asian hotel, it is typical to find a noodle station and congee with all the toppings. Even century eggs! The offer was extensive and we ended eating way too much and still not trying half of it. The only thing we were missing in a hotel like this is some homemade yogurt.



E&O Hotel: Pasteries were delicious here

If you are a more discrete person and you don't like too much commotion in the morning, you can have your breakfast in The Planters Lounge (the new building aka Victory Annexe) or in a privacy of your room. At Planters Lounge the breakfast is simpler but still offers enough choices for affluent guests. Here you can take your plate to the pool terrace and enjoy the morning peace with a great view.



E&O Hotel: Would you like your breakfast by the pool?

You can have lunch and dinner at Sarkies corner like we did. For lunch, we had Mushroom Cappuccino and Thai Seafood Bisque. First had rich mushroom taste and creamy texture with roasted eggplant tartine, while the second had the sweet-sour-spicy combination. Asam Laksa and Chicken Curry Kapitan were our main dishes. Laksa is a specialty in this city and those food stalls that have only this soup on their menu have perfected it. But even there we couldn't decide which one we liked the most. For sure this one won the beauty title and even the taste was better than we expected. The Kapiran's chicken was nicely done, if the gravy would be more intense it would be even better, on the side was pandan flavored rice which came with nice additions the pickles and crunchy tortilla. Our desserts were nice looking and tasty. Pecan brownie had vibrant decoration and rich chocolate flavor while Coconut Gula Melaka had nice creamy mousse on top with coconut biscuit at the bottom.



E&O Hotel: You can have your breakfast at charming Sharkies



E&O Hotel: Or in outstanding The Planters Lounge



E&O Hotel: The Planters Lounge

Another option is Sarkies for the best buffet in town, the international buffet, available for lunch and dinner. If you are looking for haute cuisine the restaurant 1885 is the right place. In this graceful part of the hotel, we had the traditional afternoon tea. Tea time was right on the spot, the attractive restaurant and the ocean view from behind the palm trees was the first thing that kept us occupied, but then the tea set came to our attention. It was one of the best afternoon teas ever, the tea selection was sizable and the bites were celestial. And we don't mean just a bite or two, but more detailed review you can read [here](#).

The Farquhar's Bar which exudes an exclusive private club room atmosphere is on cue for an afternoon drink. There we found great signature cocktails right beside all times classics. The ambiance here is nice, it's a colonial bar with long dark wood chairs and a massive bar. No problem if this is not your thing, as you can be served also outside by the pool in the beautiful garden.



E&O Hotel: Farquhar's Bar

To conclude, we would like to point out a thing or two. Regarding the food, we can say that it is tasty with a lot of choices and in the great price range. So if you are in a city just for errands or are afraid to eat on the street, E&O

brought some street food like Asam Laksa into their menu. It won't be the best laksa in Penang, but still a full-flavored one.



The only downside is Sarkies Corner, even though it gets a vintage look from the old tiles and massive dark tables.

Back in the days, the huge dining room was perfect, the place was full of tables and it worked like a charm, but nowadays, there are fewer tables and dining room looks odd.



E&O Hotel: Sharkies Corner needs some renovation and also downsizing. But luckily you will still get great food here!

FACILITIES AND AMENITIES

We had everything we needed for our pleasurable stay there at the E&O Hotel. The complimentary toiletries were pleasant and we appreciated the small sewing travel pack. When we were packing for this trip, the thought of taking a sewing needle with us didn't cross our minds, so you can imagine that after few months traveling we were more than happy to finally repair the ripped tripod bag. The mini-bar in the room was well equipped and drinking water was always available. With our work and running around we didn't watch TV, but as we checked there were some main programs in the English language. All the facilities at the hotel were great, especially their Panpuri Spa where we had a [relaxing massage](#) after a workout in their well-equipped gym. Vivi wrote a special post about this [massage](#), so you can get a feel of why we liked it so much by clicking here. In the Victory Annexe, we found one of the nicest boutiques for souvenirs, accessories and books we have seen so far. This shop was well stocked and nicely organized. There are also a boutique tailor shop, a small museum of the E&O Hotel, where you can get insight into the rich history of this building, and the Ernest Zacharevic Gallery. Ernest Zacharevic is a famous artist who is well known for the street art we can see all over the George town.



VERDICT

The management of the E&O Hotel is doing a great job! They are well aware of the meaning of this hotel and their move to keep hotel classy and luxurious is well repaid. Happy guests, especially those like us – tradition and heritage lovers, who appreciate the preservation of history. On the other side, this hotel will please the most demanding guests and gourmand like us.

PROS: heritage feeling, nicely preserved building, airy and bright rooms, great facilities, good food, great service, good amenities, outstanding PANPURI ORGANIC SPA, tidy outer areas, they are cleaning the shore all the time and keeping their plants in great shape.

CONS: the hotel rooms could be tidier, some furniture in the room needs restoration, Sarkies could be a nicer place. It has too much of empty space.

This review is written on our experience in E&O Hotel and it wasn't sponsored or paid in any way.

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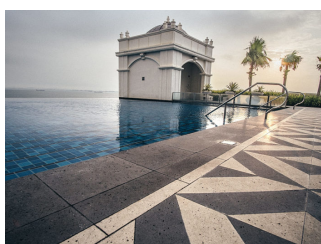
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