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Penang Power: The Eastern & Oriental Hotel Re-Opens Heritage Wing

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PENANG, MALAYSIA – The historic Eastern & Oriental (E&O) Hotel's Heritage Wing has embarked on an extensive refurbishment since March 2019, ready to refresh it to present an all-new luxury experience for guests when refurbishment is set to complete by year end.

As one of the few historical hotels around the globe, the management has placed great emphasis to preserve elements of the hotel's 134-year old history – the iconic Java tree, the manual lift, the dome and cannons. Planted even before the

E&O hotel was built, the Java tree is the only constant among the changes the hotel has undergone throughout the years – from the initial establishment of the Oriental Hotel in 1885 to its merger with the Eastern Hotel; an earlier venture by the Sarkies Brothers, into the E&O it is today.



The Java tree has also stood witness to many marriages as couples held their garden weddings in the attendance of their closest friends and family under its shade, creating many happy memories in its presence. Loke Poh Lin, a frequent visitor to the hotel, said she was first introduced to the tree as though it was part of the E&O family and ever since then she would always bring visitors to pay their respect to it. Says Loke: “Each encounter I have with the tree is special as it is like the guardian of the E&O Hotel, a constant in its evolving timeline of history.”



Besides the Java tree, the E&O is also home to one of the first Otis lifts installed in Malaysia during the 1920s. The manually controlled Waygood Otis lift with a sliding grill was featured in the Hollywood film *Crazy Rich Asians* (<https://bakchormeeboy.com/2018/08/22/review-crazy-rich-asians-dir-jon-m-chu/>), and has been well maintained although no longer in use. Three decommissioned cannons from Fort Cornwallis will also continue to remain in place along the seafront facing the

Andaman Sea as they symbolise not only the history of the E&O and Penang but also the history of its guests. Guests throughout the years have returned to the hotel and recall the times where they played around the steel cannons or climbed upon them as children and took pictures with them when they came to visit with their friends and family.



In addition, there is the iconic echo dome in the Heritage Wing lobby which is an original structure from the time of the Sarkies management and will remain as part of the hotel in the future. The echo dome got its name from the way it projects even the softest of sounds made beneath it, from people whispering to one another to the clicking of heels against the polished marble floor. It has borne witness to many conversations throughout its history and has had many prominent figures like Somerset Maugham and Charlie Chaplin to the more recent late Lee Kuan Yew and Datuk Michelle Yeoh pass below it during their stay at the hotel.



Hotel general manager Alison Fraser said it is of utmost importance for the hotel to conserve these elements of history as it is part of the hotel's identity and a treasured legacy for the future generations. Says Fraser: "The E&O Hotel will not be the same without these icons as we can no longer call ourselves a historical hotel without these key pieces of history."





Once refurbishment is complete, the entire hotel is set to be even more glorious than before, with the experience already beginning at the airport with a personal meet and greet from hotel staff there before getting a transfer to the hotel. Once you reach the hotel, you'll have a personal butler to welcome you as you check-in to your suite. Luxury services provided include laundry and pressing services, hot breakfast at The Cornwallis or the Sarkies, and exclusive use of the Heritage Wing pool. In particular, The Cornwallis is exclusive to Heritage Wing and Corner Suite guests, and is designed to reflect that with its lux, hotel club feel. With floor to ceiling windows, the Cornwallis offers up superb views of the Penang coastline.



Meanwhile, other exciting developments include the Palm Court, where guests can go enjoy afternoon tea or single origin coffees, with plenty of Chinese, European, Indian and Nyonya recipes to accompany; the Java Tree and Rattan Room, a relaxed lounge offering up classic heritage cuisine and an opportunity for private dining experiences; the al fresco Verandah offering specialised cocktails by the E&O bartenders to enjoy against the backdrop of the Penang coast while fresh sea breezes roll in; vintage cocktail bar Farquhar's Bar with time-honoured staples and classic cocktails.





The Heritage Wing of the hotel has now re-opened and is ready to welcome guests again, as of last weekend. The hotel is certainly set to enter a new era of lux and class, and if anything, a stay there would make for an experience in itself to remember in an unforgettable trip to Penang.

Photos courtesy of the E&O

The Eastern and Oriental Hotel is located at 10 Lebuhraya, 10200 Penang, Malaysia. For more information and booking, visit their website here

(<https://www.easternandoriental.com/>)

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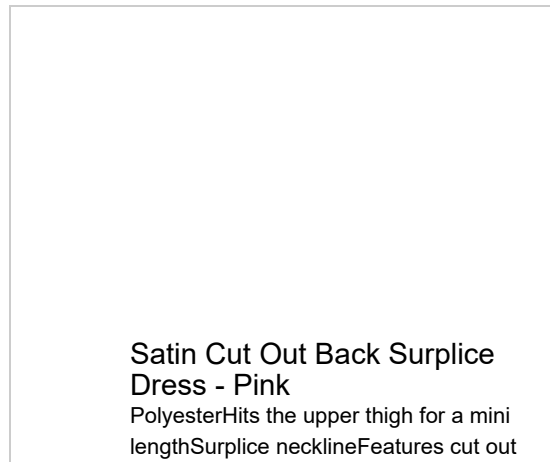


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