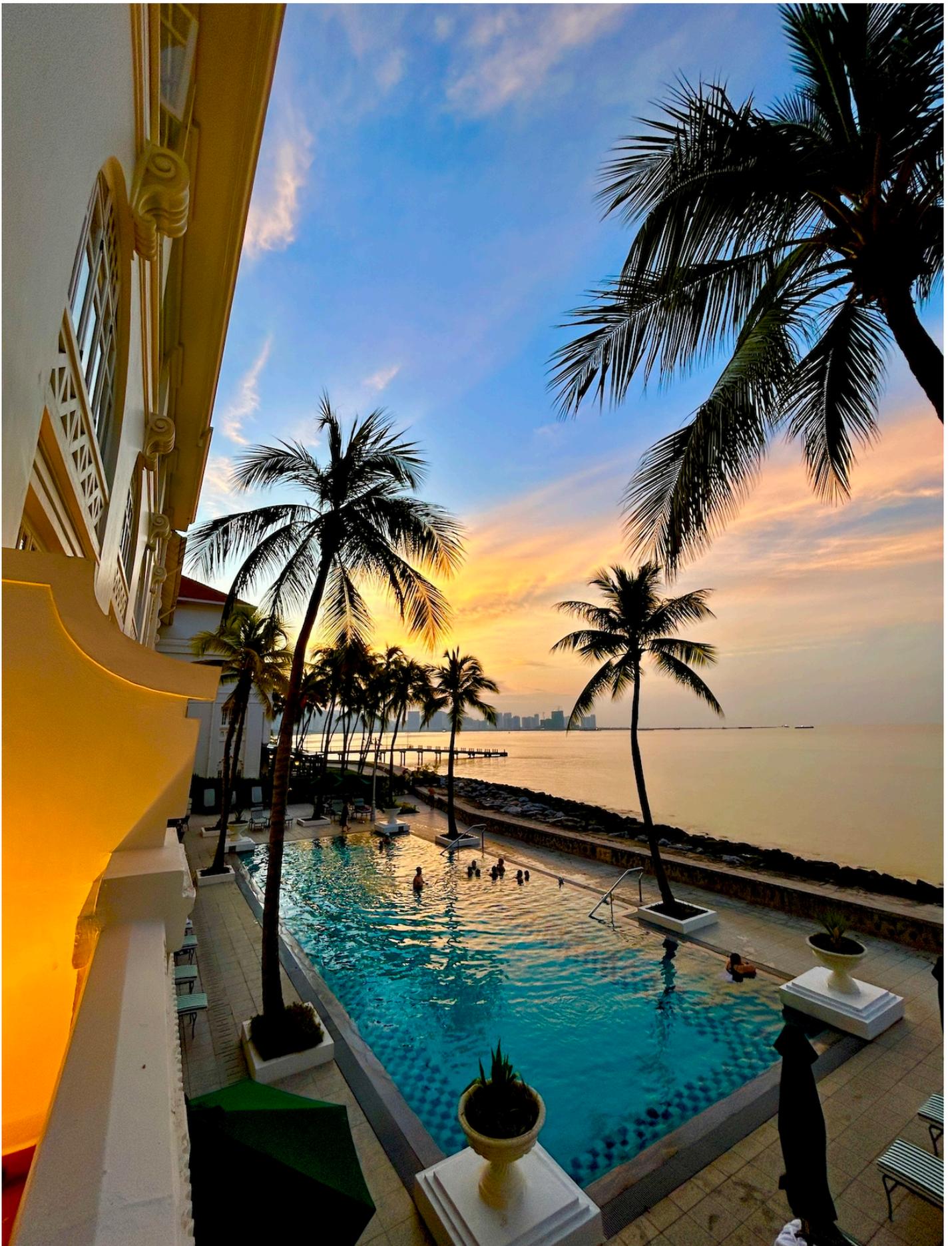


Here we go at the E&O

By **Chris Parry** - 27/11/2024

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'This is a brief life, but in its brevity it offers us some splendid moments, some meaningful adventures.'

~ Rudyard Kipling

What a wonderful quote by an author whose books were often influenced by the time he spent in India. He also spent time at the E&O Penang, a hotel on the island of Penang, as famed for its guests as it is for its heritage and luxury.

Rudyard Kipling, Noel Coward, Douglas Fairbanks, Charlie Chaplin, Joseph Conrad and many others have stayed at the E&O and most of them accepted the invitation by guests to stand under the dome in the lobby and recite a poem or story.



I stood under the dome and told the story of why I love the E&O experience. There was no one listening so I'm writing the story for you.

This story begins at the E&O Residences in Kuala Lumpur. So close to Bukit Bintang that you can smell the satays sizzling at the nearby Jalan Alor markets. I've stayed at E&O before and second time around is just as good as the first. E&O Residences in KL is part of a group of apartment towers that has friendly but alert security to access the grounds, which include a large pool area.

The apartments are often leased to workers who will be in Kuala Lumpur for several months and they can bring their family. Everything about the apartments is big and luxurious. There is a big fridge, big

television, big sofas, big balcony, big bedrooms, big bathrooms and even rooms you can use as a study.

Being a few minutes walk to a host of restaurants and cafes is good to know but if you're looking for the shopping and food of Bukit Bintang it's about ten minutes walk away or about five minutes by monorail which is close by.

E&O Residences was a great way to kick off my adventure to E&O Penang. Arriving in KL there was a need to shop and eat before catching the train to Penang and E&O Residences ticks all the boxes on my list for quick check-in, luxury accommodation and close to the heart of KL.



It's a different reason that you stay at E&O Residences compared to E&O Penang. E&O Residences is beautifully appointed and perfectly located in one of the best cities in the world for exploring shops and food.

E&O Penang is one of those hotel experiences where it's with of regret that you leave the lobby to experience Penang. You just want to stay in the hotel and indulge in all the great things in life worth indulging in; sip drinks in bars with model wooden ships, wander corridors with black and white tiles and

potted palms, look at the photos of famous guests that are hung on the walls, listen to pianists and watch from your balcony as all sorts of watercraft come and go in the Straits of Malacca.

So, Rudyard Kipling's quote to begin this story mentions splendid moments and meaningful adventures. This is what E&O Penang gives you. This is an immersive level of luxury. Immersive because of the heritage and history. Interestingly, the hotel is known in Penang as the grand old dame, and it does remind me of visiting my grandmother. I feel so wonderfully cared for and at the same time I'm learning without the effort of learning at school or university. I'm absorbing the history of Penang and of course the history of the Sarki brothers who built the E&O Penang and then went down to Singapore and built the Raffles.

The Sarki brothers were of Armenian ethnicity and just loved building hotels in South East Asia.

From the late 1700s until the early 1800s, Penang was the most important trading and administrative port in the Malacca Strait until Singapore was founded by Stamford Raffles. It was in George Town, Penang's capital that the Sarki Brothers chose to build a hotel in a style better than most accommodation available across Asia at that time.

Jumping forward to the twentieth century, Penang's capital George Town was already renown for being one of Malaysia's oldest settlements and then in 2008 was awarded the status of World Heritage Site by UNESCO.

The E&O Penang shares this achievement and having been restored at the turn of the twentieth century and again at around the time that the Covid-19 struck the world, this is a hotel that immerses you in culture and history from a time that the Penang community are proud of and embrace you with from your room in the Heritage Wing of the E&O Penang to walking the streets of George Town which is one of the greatest you activities you undertake when you stay at the E&O Penang.

Just as E&O Residences in KL is close to the beating heart of KL, the E&O Penang is similarly close to streets that are full not only of culture and history but also late night live music, quirky antique shops and cafes and of course the famous mural trail that leads you through bustling streets and quiet laneways.



Back at the E&O Penang after a short or long walk it's time to enjoy the recently relaunched Heritage Wing and some of that timeless hospitality that this hotel is renowned for.

You can enjoy the luxury of travelling back through time with round-the-clock butler service and modern comforts in historical and heritage settings in keeping with the style of this Penang icon.

The Hotel's food and beverage outlets – Palm Court, Java Tree, Sarkies and Planters Lounge have a celebrated reputation with guests and Penang locals for serving an extensive menu ranging from Penang's heritage dishes to a traditional English afternoon tea and Sunday roast, whilst Farquhar's Bar is the place to be for time-honoured bar staples. I also had the opportunity during my visit to walk through E&O's stately Grand Ballroom which is booked out all year for Penang's finest events, including black-tie dinner dances.

Take the time to explore the many stories of guests in the E&O Gallery, within the Victory Annexe. This specially curated museum relates the story of Penang's social and cultural milestones as seen through

the eyes of the E&O Penang and its patrons. Maybe the experience of your stay will one day feature in the museum!

Today, the E&O stands as the grande dame of heritage hotels, its arches and facades form natural frames for the longest and most splendid seafront sweep of lawn ever to greet the Andaman Sea. With cannons from the original Fort Cornwallis, Penang's historical icon has stayed picture perfect since 1885.



If you're staying at the E&O in KL or Penang, take the time to spend time at the hotel. Create the splendid moments that Rudyard Kipling suggests you do in the quote that began this story. Also take the advice of the many travellers, not just the famous, for whom E&O hotels have become a sanctuary and, "A place where there is always enough time for the things that really matter".

To learn more or book your stay go to: www.eoresidenceskl.com and www.eohotels.com

For a cabaret show with a difference go to: Suzy Wongs (it's close to E&O Residences KL but you must find it yourself because that's half the fun!)

For the best coffee and cake in George Town go to: China House Penang, 153 Beach Street