

BUZZ

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The Top parties in Penang

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One of a kind ... the idyllic Haven Resort Hotel

Luxury at an affordable price

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(above, and right) The relaxing resort ambiance of The Haven. – THE HAVEN

A slice of Haven in Ipoh

➤ Resort living without breaking the bank

BY ADELINE LEONG

As soon as we strolled into the lobby of The Haven Resort Hotel in Ipoh, we were immediately mesmerised by the stunning, unspoiled lake just behind the hotel. The doorman had to scramble and pick up our bags when we dropped everything to rush over to admire the view. Our eyes were drawn to the 280-million-year-old limestone boulder overlooking the lake. I thought to myself: Imagine seeing this amazing view every morning!

Upon checking in, we were pleasantly surprised to find that our suite had three spacious bedrooms, two-and-a-half bathrooms and a large living hall with balcony. The suite came complete with a fully functioning kitchen area as well.

I could see that these spacious suites would be great for large groups and families because they can interact, play games or watch television together during their stay.

One would assume that such luxury space would be exceedingly expensive and out of reach for the majority of visitors, but The Haven prides itself

on its affordable family-friendly prices which is indeed true considering the spaciousness of the suites, impeccable service and facilities provided for guests.

I also appreciated that the resort considered the needs of the disabled and the elderly by providing wheelchair-friendly ramps all over the property.

Foodie's Haven

After admiring the view from our rooms, we headed down to the hotel restaurant, aptly named The Cuisines for the variety of food that it offers. There, we were treated to The Haven's signature welcome drink, made from all-natural ingredients like lemongrass, ginger, cinnamon, lime and wild chrysanthemum.

Only fresh and natural ingredients are served in Cuisines. The chefs diligently shop for fresh produce from the nearby market themselves. I was happy to find out that they use grouper instead of the more common dory in their fish n' chips, which turned out to be one of the best I've ever had.

You can also order the must-have Ipoh chicken rice at the restaurant as well. Other signature dishes include halal BBQ chicken, fried beef kuey teow and Singapore laksa.

We especially loved

the lamb rack, which was lovingly cooked till tender.

The hotel also provides tours around town and will take guests to notable spots and eateries which Ipoh is famous for. During our short stay, we managed to visit the famous Perak Cave Temple, took a walk around Concubine Lane, and visited a popular pomelo farm.

A paradise for all

For fitness buffs, the resort is a lovely place to workout and wind down. The tranquillity of the place and the crisp fresh air provided by the century-old plants at the hillside of the natural forest is a rarity in the world today.

The beautifully-landscaped track around the lake, which leads to a shaded meditation pavilion in the garden, is perfect for jogging, while the amphitheatre facing the lake and the meditation deck behind the ancient boulder are serene spots to practice yoga.

Nature lovers can take a leisurely stroll around the lake while admiring the abundant flora and fauna in the vicinity. There are fragrant flowers near the swimming pool, and you can see beautiful Cat's Whiskers growing near the restaurant.

For selfie lovers, the hotel has convenient signage to mark out Instagram-worthy spots. There are even special smartphone stands to help guests get the best



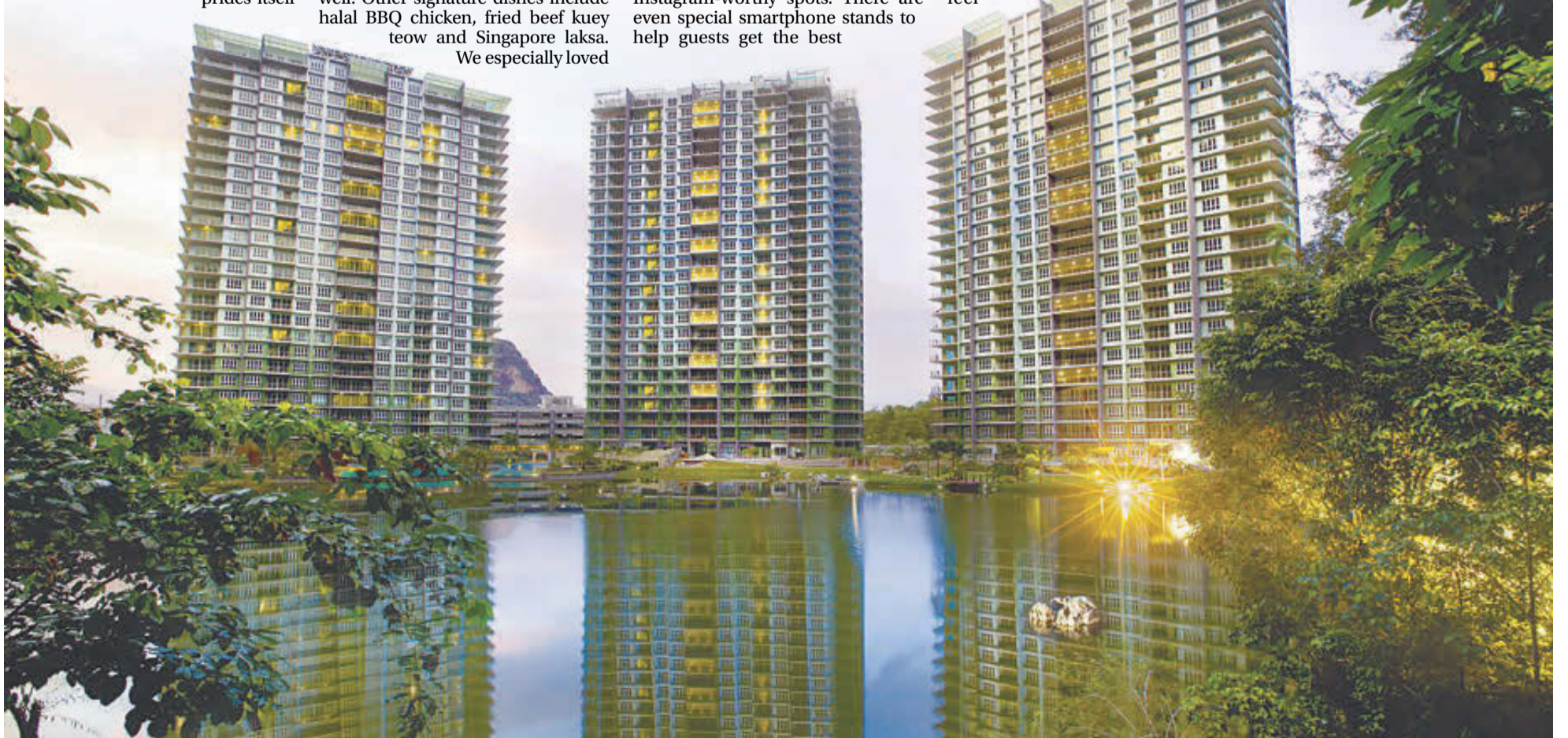
The spacious family suite. – THE HAVEN

selfies and wefies.

Guests do not need to worry about mosquitoes, thanks to the surrounding lemongrass plants which act as a natural repellent. I truly enjoyed walking around the lake and spent much time admiring the garden. It was a paradise for me!

For those looking to sweat it out after all the delicious food at Cuisines, the well-equipped gym will meet all your fitness needs. If you ever feel

tired while exercising, all you have to do is to take a look out of the window. The view of the lake is sure to rejuvenate your spirit.





At The Cuisines ... (from far left) fish n' chips; Ipoh chicken rice and halal BBQ chicken are signature dishes at the resort. – **AMIRUL SYAFIQ & ASHRAF SHAMSUL/THE SUN**

There are indoor and outdoor facilities where guests can play ball games such as tennis, basketball, squash, badminton and table tennis. Over the weekends, they can also try their hand at paintball and archery as well.

Children will love the hotel's playground and the amazing seahorse-shaped swimming pool, which we understand is the developer's own creation. The amazing swimming pool is separated into sections such as the wading pool and a kids' pool with a slide, a lap pool, an infinity pool and a heated jacuzzi.

Click here to view our video



Fully pampered

As part of its limited-time promotion, guests of The Haven Resort are given a complimentary massage (1 session for 1 person per suite) at the hotel spa during their stay, of which I took full advantage. After a good 45-minute full body massage with natural essential oils, the tightness in my shoulders disappeared and I felt totally relaxed.

For a full pampering session, guests should try the other treatments offered on the menu such as facials, body scrubs, body wraps and reflexology.

Highly Recommended

The Haven Resort certainly

exceeds expectations, and I would recommend everyone to experience it for yourself the next time you spend a few days in Ipoh.

With the amount of care given to The Haven Resort Hotel guests, I'm definitely looking forward to its upcoming project of the same name in Bintan, an island off Singapore.

Hats off to the developer for its vision in incorporating and enhancing the natural beauty of the land to provide guests with a truly unique and inexpensive getaway experience. The low-density concept and utilisation of the development has contributed enormously to the desirability and value of this resort. It

is only a matter of time before Malaysia and the world takes notice of this rare gem and the treasures that it offers.

We shall certainly be on the lookout for the launch of The Haven in Bintan next year.

To find out more, visit thehavenbintan.com.



Enjoy a poolside dinner under the stars. – **THE HAVEN**

MENTION Ipoh and food inevitably comes into the conversation. Well known as a foodie heaven, those visiting Ipoh will already have done their research on what and where to eat so we will not be doing that ... instead, we will focus on some of the most popular and delicious foods out-of-townners pack when they leave Ipoh.

AUN KHENG LIM SALTED CHICKEN

WHERE?

24, Jalan Theatre, Taman Jubilee, 30300 Ipoh, Perak
Famous for its kampung chicken seasoned with herbs, wrapped in paper before being buried in rock salt and baked to perfection. This is a must-try for those visiting Ipoh.

SIN ENG HEONG

WHERE?

64, Jalan Mustapha Al-Bakri,

Visit, Eat, Tar Pau ■ BY **PAUL NG**

Taman Jubilee,
30300 Ipoh, Perak
Famous for its melt-in-your-mouth kaya puffs, mini mooncakes, kwai far goe (like mochi), wife biscuits and other delicacies. This is an ideal place to stock up on Ipoh snacks as gifts for family and friends before leaving town.

CHOY KEE EGG TART

WHERE?

37, Persiaran Bercham Timur 1, Taman Bercham Baru, 31400 Ipoh, Negeri Perak
Choy Kee is famous for its super yummy egg tarts. Baked fresh daily, they're definitely worth getting while you're in town.

LANGKAP PAU @ GOLDEN POINT FOOD COURT

WHERE?

1, Jalan Ng Soon Teik, Taman Pertama, 30100 Ipoh, Perak
With over twenty varieties of pau to choose from, pau lovers will feel like they're in heaven. A wonderful pit stop for a snack during your Ipoh walkabout session and one of the best snack foods to 'tar pau' back for friends and family when leaving town.

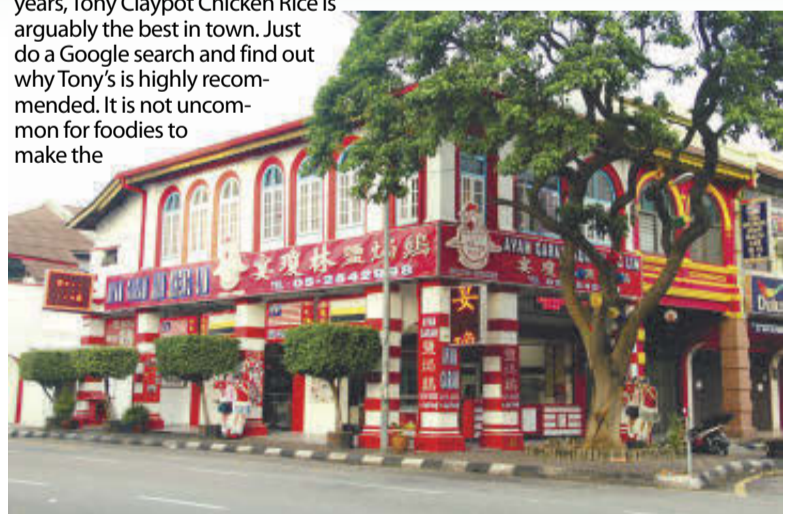
TONY CLAYPOT CHICKEN RICE

WHERE?

Aneka Selera Restaurant Kam Wan, Taman Canning, 31400 Ipoh, Perak
Aneka Selera Kam Wan (or better known as Glutton Square to locals) is an institution of good food and Tony Claypot Chicken Rice is one of the pil-

lars that continues to make this venue a paradise for foodies. With a glowing reputation built over 20 years, Tony Claypot Chicken Rice is arguably the best in town. Just do a Google search and find out why Tony's is highly recommended. It is not uncommon for foodies to make the

trip to Ipoh just to eat there and pack a week-long supply before heading home.



Aun Kheng Lim Salty Chicken.



Sin Eng Heong.



Choy Kee Egg Tart.



Langkap Pau @ Golden Point Food Court.



Tony Claypot Chicken Rice.