

# Business Traveller

ASIA-PACIFIC

**INSIDE**  
 GREEN TAIWAN  
 STUTTART  
 LUXURY MACAU  
 GOLFING IN  
 SAN FRANCISCO  
 FASHION HOTELS

## THE CHOSEN ONES

READER POLL RESULTS 2011



Bangladesh	Tk130.00	India	Rs270.00	Malaysia	Rm18.00	Sri Lanka (VAT inc)	Rs180.00
Brunei	BS10.00	Indonesia (VAT inc)	Rp48,000	Pakistan	Rs450.00	Taiwan	NT\$180.00
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Hong Kong	HKS40.00	Korea	₩10,000	Singapore	S\$15.00	Others	US\$12.00



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## TRAVELS

## ED NG &amp; TERENCE NGAN

Ed Ng and Terence Ngan from Hong Kong-based AB Concept + Interior Design were the artistic force behind the W Retreat & Spa Bali – Seminyak. They have recently won The International Hotel & Property Awards by UK-based *design et al* magazine, in the category of “hotels over 200 rooms”. Hazel Ho talks to them about global standards in luxury.

## WHAT'S MOST SPECIAL ABOUT W RETREAT &amp; SPA BALI – SEMINYAK?

**Terence:** The three-bedroom villa.

**Ed:** Yes, the three-bedroom villa adopts a very modern approach. People usually think that a Bali hotel should use a lot of wood or volcanic stone and we didn't. We didn't do this just to be different we did it as were trying to reinterpret the concept of “indoor” and “outdoor”.

## HOW DO YOU MAKE A HOTEL FEEL LIKE HOME AWAY FROM HOME?

**E:** The style. We work with a lot of hotel groups that are luxury brands. The problem is they try very hard to tell you they are luxury – in the way that they present a lot of things just to impress you.

**T:** Just to show off.

**E:** Yes, they are just showing off. Most of the time, when we design we focus on comfort. We think on the basis of practicality first, and aesthetics come after that. Terence received training in architecture, so he

is concerned more with the proportions, while I focus more on look and feel, the atmosphere. Of course both of these factors are vital. Thus, the hotels that we design are both appealing and practical. You won't feel that the bedroom or bathroom is oversized.

## WHAT ITEMS DO YOU NEVER LEAVE ON A TRIP WITHOUT?

**E:** iPhone. It is way too important. When I want to visit a restaurant, instead of asking the concierge turn left or right, I would rather use my iPhone to check and walk like a local. And when you are in Paris, for example, you will have to translate...

**T:** Yes, iPhone, for sure.

## DO YOU MIX WORK WITH LEISURE WHEN TRAVELLING?

**E:** It depends. Shopping and eating make me happy. If I am visiting some cultural destinations, such as New York or London, I will visit museums and go to musicals.

**T:** Museums are top of my list.

**E:** If Terence and I have a free weekend, we try to go to art galleries. We love spending time appreciating local artists' work. This is very important.

## WHICH CITY INSPIRES YOU MOST?

**E:** Paris, for sure. All you need to do in Paris is relax, walk on the street, have fun, sit down at a café and look at the people. And if you walk around, you will just come across so many museums and art galleries everywhere you go. Not many cities can offer you such a great combination of shopping and art.

**T:** It has to be Paris for me as well.

## WHAT DO YOU LOVE – AND HATE – ABOUT TRAVEL?

**E:** I hate packing so much. I get pissed off every time when I pack. It is so stressful because I don't want to miss anything, especially those electronic gadgets. Why can't things be easier? Why can't things be more universal? The European Union just introduced the micro USB but they should have done it since day one. These kinds of trivial matters make me so stressed; for example, I have to make sure my pocket square matches my shoes and socks. I have to run through the whole trip in my mind when I pack. What I love about travel is I keep discovering new things. Design is all about inspiration. We have to be inspired so we need to find inspiration all around us.

**T:** Same as Ed...but I have less gadgets. ■

## GREAT READS

OIL AND FINANCE:  
THE EPIC CORRUPTION  
RAYMOND J LEARSY  
IUNIVERSE

I remember, as an idealistic and somewhat naive university student, marching down to Trafalgar Square in London with thousands of others demanding for troops to be withdrawn from Iraq.

That public anger only escalated as particulars about the war were revealed to indicate that the entire mission was somewhat of a deception and the occupation unnecessarily long.

However, *Oil and Finance: The Epic Corruption* sheds light on one of the many reasons the West took so long to leave: Saudi Arabia had insisted troops stay in Iraq, using their oil supplies as leverage. Learsy sprinkles his book with similarly shocking nuggets of information.

Through a series of essays in *The Huffington Post* between 2006 and 2010 chronicling oil price fluctuations, he reveals the crooked ways of the oil industry and draws connections with a variety of issues, such as national security, economic stability, global politics and environmental concerns.

He highlights the fact that the oil industry doesn't work according to free market principles and is instead artificially manipulated by its largest suppliers, leaving importers, industries and individuals vulnerable to sudden changes.

Not only does he look abroad at the role of the OPEC cartel, which pulls most of the strings in determining oil prices, he looks inwards too at slimy multinational oil companies, all the while consistently calling for greater oil self-reliance and adoption of green energy sources.

Looking back through collated real-time coverage provides much needed hindsight and clarification of the oil industry. However as most of the book is his own strong opinion it can become hard to view the issue through impartially.

Alisha Haridasani

