

Cognoscenti magazine

Because life is short

The M Hotel Singapore

Arriving at the **M Hotel**, visiting **Cognoscenti Magazine** editors were whisked to our 29th floor suite, where we completed our guest registration in complete privacy and comfort—it's the best possible way for any hotel to handle the check-in formalities.

The suite's décor is in the sleek and eminently functional style that's become increasingly popular at upper-range business hotels worldwide. Here expanses of light blond wood and sage green fabrics predominate. Circular shapes in the large work desk and sofa effectively soften the sterner effect of straighter edges elsewhere. Although the hotel lies at the heart of Singapore's bustling central business district, the views from this suite are panoramic, taking in Singapore's pretty Sentosa Island as well as its bustling cargo terminal and the glimmering turquoise waters of the tropical sea beyond.

The suite bristles with the latest electronics, including a surround-sound Bose stereo system, DVD player and 42" flat screen TV embedded in the wall. (Call us electronically handicapped, but we never did manage to master the complexities of playing a movie on it—a task involving several steps and two separate remote control units.)

Overall the marble bathroom is spacious enough, even if sink and countertop are smallish. We particularly liked the unusual connecting window that changed from frosted to see-through at the click of a button!



Rooms are sleek, functional and comfortable

Floors 26 to 29 are designated executive floors, and the suite of services available to "M Club" guests are impressive. They enjoy such benefits as the complimentary pressing of a suit, a choice of daily newspapers, and access to the **M Club Lounge**. With its comfortable armchairs, flat-screen TV and coffee-table magazine selections, the lounge is

reminiscent of an airport VIP lounge. It's a very comfortable place, offering panoramic views, nightly canapés, coffee, soft drinks or beers throughout the day and an open bar serving premium brand cocktails every evening.

Set on the ground floor, **Café 2000** is a casual dining venue that's popular with hotel guests and local business-folks alike. Here we sampled the Sunday "High Curry" Indian buffet by Chef Kanda—a tasty selection of 9 different curries, plus exotic fish head soup. For diners who are in the mood for less spicy alternatives, a separate carving station features prime rib, sliced to order.

At the **Restaurant J and Bar**, the design is Zen-like, with solid black pillars, black lacquered wooden furniture (no tablecloths), beige napkins and discreet track lighting. On the night we dined, the buffet featured delicious *miso* soup, fresh mussels and crabs, mackerel, tuna and salmon sashimi, and crunchy marinated seaweed among other delicacies. Some of the matching sauces were weak, and the single-use, pull-apart balsa chopsticks were a cheap touch.

At **The Buffet**, we—naturally—had the buffet. It showcased a selection of very tasty and appealingly presented dishes, including rich mutton curry, delectable apple wood smoked salmon, and Peking Duck *roulade*; a separately-manned station prepares noodle dishes to order.

Today's stressed-out business travelers are increasingly looking for resort-like amenities, even at city-center business hotels. M Hotel meets this burgeoning demand with its unique



Fresh mussels and much more at Restaurant J and Bar

Waterfloor, an integrated “urban” spa, gym and pool area. The outdoor swimming pool has a hyper-modernist, almost sci-fi feeling, with a blue sheet of water set against skyscrapers that loom dramatically all around it. (And just in case you get a sudden urge to check your email, the entire floor is Wi-Fi!)

At first the streamlined spa design felt overly clinical, but over time we warmed to it. We received dual treatments in a tranquil double room decoratively accented by Australian sandstone and Egyptian marble. Every treatment room at the spa is self-contained—the best possible layout, since there’s no need to traipse off to some locker room in order to shower and dress afterwards. Here a triple stack of “bubble” wall panels made a pretty picture while emanating soothing gurgling sounds.

His treatment commenced with a scented dip in a temperature-controlled, state-of-the-art hydrobath. With his muscles warmed and relaxed, he went to experience an expertly-delivered rendition of the spa’s signature massage. The treatment combined a variety of Asian techniques, with long, sweeping motions and pressure points gradually but effectively alleviating tension.

Her treatment began with a vigorous dry brush exfoliation. Then it was on to the “cocoon.” Mud and algae were applied before the lid was closed, leaving only the head exposed. For the next 20 minutes, steam opened her pores while allowing the mud to work its magic; a therapist delivered up a relaxing scalp massage while monitoring the whole process. Finally, a 5-minute Vichy shower returned her to the waking world. After applying moisturizer, she felt clean, refreshed, alert and relaxed—just what a spa treatment should be!

This article was written by contributing editors to *Cognoscenti Magazine*.

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