

# Staycation Review: The Clan Hotel Is The Newest Luxury Hideaway In The CBD; Now Has Opening Deals Until May

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It's starting to feel like new hotels are the equivalent of new travel destinations in the time of Covid-19.

Do we need another new hotel in Singapore? At a time when we're all grounded with nowhere to go, the answer is a resounding yes. But don't be mistaken: The Clan Hotel, which just opened its doors on March 1, is not merely a new hotel.

Nestled on the fringe of Far East Square, the 30-storey property, in all its gleaming bronze glory, doesn't just want to be yet another retreat for you to escape day-to-day life. Of the 324 rooms here, the 18 Grand Premier and 60 Premier rooms are what's known as Master Series rooms, which offer guests a plethora of perks that elevate the staycation experience.



Hotel entrance

The Clan Hotel is certainly not the first modern luxury hotel in the area, but it definitely wants to stand out from the rest. Inspired by clan associations that once peppered this neighbourhood and helped Chinese immigrants settle in to their new country, the hotel incorporates these elements of heritage, nostalgia and kinship with deft modern urban touches, from décor and food to staff uniforms and even the hotel's signature welcome tea ceremony.

The Clan Hotel is now running promos to celebrate its opening, so you can snag a deal for a Master Series Premier room at \$588 for one night, with a complimentary second night. The package also includes a one-way limo transfer, breakfast for two, customisable in-room refreshments, a local precinct tour, and a \$100 voucher for your next stay at Oasia Hotel Downtown, The Barracks Hotel or Orchard Rendezvous Hotel.

***Is the Master Series experience all that it's pimped out to be? 8Days.sg checks in for a preview 3D2N staycation at The Clan Hotel and tells you what to expect.***



## 1 of 6 The check-in

The staycation starts the moment I step out of my home. Guests who've booked Grand Premier or Premier rooms, both under the Master Series category, will be chauffeured from home to the hotel with a limousine transfer service. In my case, a genial uncle takes me to the hotel in a Mercedes. Check-in is done on the way to the hotel in the car, and I get my room key cards even before I arrive.

As the car pulls into the hotel porch, there's a small team on standby to welcome us. Not an unusual sight, except that one of them is holding a large gong. As I alight, said concierge staff sounds the gong enthusiastically, and bellows: "Welcome to The Clan Hotel!" Talk about a grand entrance. Speaking of entrances, the hotel's main door is decidedly discreet with its uber-cool industrial exterior, reminiscent of a hip underground club's (remember those?) that don't betray at all what lies behind those doors. And, boy, are you in for a surprise once you step through these main doors.



## 2 of 6 Tea off with a warm welcome

As the main doors close, the hustle and bustle of the streets is instantly sealed off, and you're ensconced in another realm. It's oh-so-peaceful here. We're ushered to the second floor lobby and lounge, where the hotel's resident tea master greets us with an elegant Chinese tea ceremony. He serves a soothing cup of Nanyang Ritual tieguanyin and osmanthus tea, accompanied by a bite-sized tau sar piah from the famed Tan Hock Seng bakery just next door.



Coffee, tea or tau sar piah?

I find out that sipping on hot tea slowly gives you a good excuse to leisurely admire the handsome interiors of the lobby — how could you not, with its soaring ceilings, a sublime installation piece floating above the reception and \$1,000 umbrellas on display. In this moment, regular life, deadlines and day-to-day worries are a world away. Now this is how you start a staycation in style.



Guests can soon buy these \$1,000 umbrellas if they so wish. Do not keep this for a rainy day.



### 3 of 6The Clan Hotel: A look at a Premier Room

The Clan Keeper, the hotel's personal concierge service for Master Series guests, takes me to my Premier Room on the 15<sup>th</sup> floor. I'm greeted by 270-degree views of the Telok Ayer and Chinatown districts from the comforts of my sun-drenched room. All 78 Master Series rooms are corner rooms, so you're guaranteed fantastic sweeping views of the heritage shophouses and skyscrapers below.

Decked out in warm wood hues and marble, the elegant, minimalistic 32sqm Premier Room is given added flair with subtle heritage touches alongside modern-day luxuries. Here, you can stream shows from your phone to the Chromecast- and Airplay-enabled smart TV. Netflix (or Disney+) and chill while you enjoy the welcome refreshments of moreish bak kut teh cookies and Chinese tea? Why not?



More welcome refreshments in the room.

Guests in the Master Series category also get to choose up to five items for a complimentary basket of in-room refreshments. We opt for a variety of cheddar and onion crisps, chocolate biscuits and dark chocolates. Of course, we couldn't pass on The Clan Beer Orient Brew, an easy-to-drink craft beer specially created by the homegrown 1925 Brewing Co for the hotel. Master Series guests will also find a surprise at turndown service — a nighttime tea and a lavender essential oil roll-on for a good night's sleep.

Other thoughtful touches can also be found throughout, like the bathroom, which comes fully pimped out with — wait for it — a heated toilet bowl. Now, it's something we never knew we needed in Singapore until now, not least because it evokes memories of winter holidays from once upon a pre-Covid-19 time.





Bathroom with a view

There's also a Hyflux filtered water tap in the washroom, an eco-friendly alternative to bottled water. Standard tea and coffee making facilities are available, so you can Nespresso anytime of the day. There's also a UV steriliser perched on the desk, so you can easily sanitise your phone or other knick-knacks, a stark but practical reminder that we're still in the midst of a pandemic.



- **4 of 6The food**

Just because you're spoilt for choice with endless F&B options in the 'hood doesn't mean you shouldn't check out Qin Restaurant and Bar. The TungLok Group dining concept in the hotel serves up elegant Asian-inspired cuisine given a fun, contemporary twist. Zero in on the Siphon Mushroom Tea (\$58++), a comforting broth of seasonal mushrooms that's served with a free-range egg custard that is

prepared tableside, as well as Short Rib (\$68++), grilled over binchotan for an intoxicating smoky flavour and is accompanied by a spicy peanut espuma and sambal matah.



Siphon Mushroom Tea



Short Rib

The next night, I have dinner in my room, and choose something from The Clan Daily Special, an in-room dining menu specially curated for Master Series guests by food blogger Leslie Tay of [ieatishootipost](#). The menu will change over time, but at the moment the array comprises famous local hawker faves such as Punggol Nasi Lemak, Legendary Bak Kut Teh, and Ibrahim Satay Power. These are ordered and served hot in quaint tingkat carriers to your room. Prices start at \$30, which is admittedly a veritable indulgence for hawker fare, but worth the occasional splurge, especially if you want to shun the crowds outside.

Of course, staycaying in the heart of the CBD means there's a plethora of dining and drink options at just about any price range at your doorstep, literally. I jumped on this chance to skip the wait for a table at a new popular casual burger joint across the street, and tapao-ed some to enjoy in the peaceful sanctuary of my room.



Who knew bak kut teh and satay would go so well with a Wandavision binge fest?



## 5 of 6 The facilities

Perched on the top floor is the hotel's picturesque infinity pool and jacuzzi, and a gym so fancy, even those who can't tell a kettlebell from a kettle will be inspired to work out.

The Clan Hotel's rooftop pool isn't so much for serious swimmers as it is for serious Instagrammers who are chasing sunset pool views and the perfect OOTDs. Perfectly fine by me, since I didn't come on a staycay to attempt to break Joseph Schooling's record anyway. The bird's eye views of the cityscape are stunning, and the reduced capacity due to Covid-19 measures means I managed to take pics and enjoy a leisurely dip, sans photobombers. Pre-booking required and is in one-hour slots.

I'll admit that I usually wouldn't think twice about going to the gym during a staycation (or a vacation, for that matter). But the state-of-the-art gym at The Clan Hotel deserves a mention — and one hour of your time (pre-booking required). The spacious gym is outfitted with spanking new trampolines, elliptical machines, treadmills, stationary bikes, rowing machines, boxing equipment and... *wait a minute*, is that a Wing Chun wooden post I spy? Yes, there's no better time to channel your inner Ip Man.



## The Sky Gym

If you don't know where to start, there are on-demand personal training videos that you can choose to play on a floor-to-ceiling giant screen while you work out. The gym is open 24 hours so if you're shy about it, go when it's less busy.



## 6 of 6The activities

The hotel prides itself in providing an experience-driven staycation, while telling the stories of local culture and of the neighbourhood. For this, Master Series room guests get to fill their staycay itinerary with precinct tours and bespoke experiences like a personal tailoring session or a visit to a shoe spa nearby, all arranged by the Clan Keeper.

You've lived your whole life in Singapore, perhaps even spent a chunk of it working in the CBD. And you're wondering why would you go on a walking tour or seek out bespoke services in the vicinity? I get it. I thought I was familiar with the 'hood... until now.



Our amiable tour guide takes us through a jaunt around Amoy Street, Pickering Street and Chinatown.

Even though I go on the precinct tour (available for Master Series guests on Wednesdays and Fridays; pre-booking required) purely in the name of work, I'm genuinely surprised that for a few fleeting moments, I feel like a tourist exploring a new town. During the two-hour tour, our guide regales us with tales like how a



certain boutique hotel used to be a shared dormitory for workers 150 years ago. We make a pitstop at the fascinating Singapore City Gallery in the URA Centre, somewhere I'd never thought to visit, despite passing by many times before.

On any other staycay, I wouldn't even think to carve time out for a bespoke tailoring session. But that's exactly what the Clan Keeper arranges for me, as part of their value-added services for Master Series guests to discover local craftsmen in and around the neighbourhood (available at an added charge).



## Q Menswear

My appointment is at bespoke tailor Q Menswear, just a stone's throw from the hotel. Founder and designer Chong Han San, 39, who has dressed celebs such as Lee Teng and Kym Ng (they do womenswear too), is also the man behind The Clan Hotel's staff uniforms, each of which is tailored to suit each individual. It's unlike his previous work with other Far East Hospitality's hotels where uniforms are standardised. "This time it's like designing an entire collection," he says, as we pore over fabric swatches for my outfit. Most bespoke outfits will take about two to three weeks to complete, and can be shipped straight to the customer. Chilling out in a quaint shophouse with a fashion designer and getting an outfit done is something I wouldn't usually do in Singapore, so this definitely feels like a getaway of sorts.

In fact, the idea of an escape in your own country (or, gasp, in the CBD where your boss may be lurking at the next corner) may not initially make sense to some folks. But The Clan Hotel may just change their minds, with its well-appointed rooms, fab

amenities and overall subtle but thoughtful gestures, all of which go a long way for a great staycay.

*The Clan Hotel is at 10 Cross Street. The Clan Opening Special promo is available for stays until May 31, 2021. More info at [www.theclanhotel.com.sg](http://www.theclanhotel.com.sg).*

*Photos: The Clan Hotel, Jasmine Teo*