

The Clan Hotel review: A blend of Singapore's past and present makes for a staycation experience unlike any other

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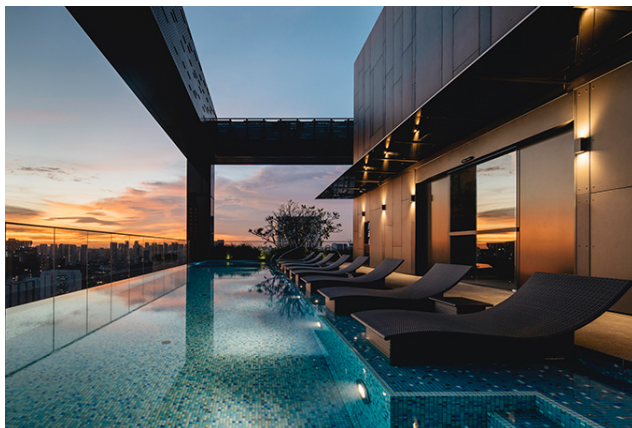


If you have to look twice to find the entrance to the latest addition to Singapore's luxury hotel landscape, know that it is by design. Situated in the bustling crossroads of Far East Square and the Telok Ayer heritage district, the tall, dark doors you'll encounter upon arrival are shrouded in mystery. You may think that you have stumbled upon an undiscovered member's club—but what the doors hold within is a 30-storey tall destination with an inventory of 324 rooms, the newly opened Clan Hotel Singapore.



The Clan Hotel lobby and reception Courtesy of The Clan Hotel

The rooms are wrapped around the central skeleton of the building, which is immediately evident when you step into one and take in the 270 degree vistas of Chinatown and Telok Ayer the expansive windows offer. The juxtaposition between the shophouses dotting the streets below and the skyscrapers on the horizon exemplifies the intersection on which the Clan Hotel operates: between modern-day Singapore and Singapore past. For travellers unacquainted with Singapore, it's the perfect spot to get a glimpse into our culture. And for those of us who have spent our entire lives here—chances are, you'll learn something new without even having to leave the property.



The Clan Hotel sky pool Courtesy of The Clan Hotel

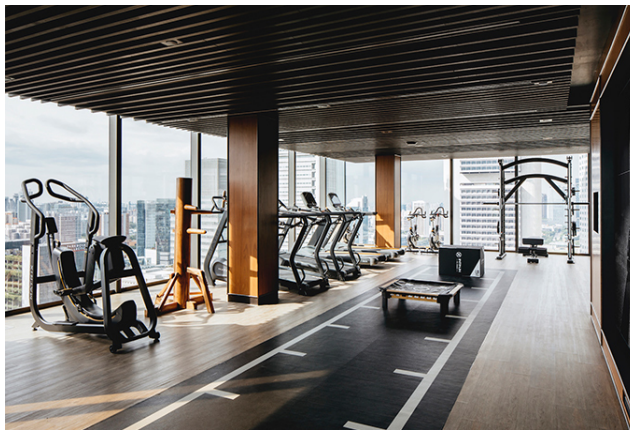
Historical artefacts and art dot every space in the hotel, from the tall cabinets in the lobby, to the restaurant walls, to every room. You'll find relics from the times where Clan associations—once the bedrock of traditional Chinese culture in Singapore—were prolific in Singapore. We may have forgotten their presence today, but their contributions, like numerous schools and Tan Tock Seng Hospital, remain. The Clan Hotel, at its essence, is both a tribute to and a preservation of the legacy that these forefathers have left behind.

Windows play a key role in the Clan Hotel—its glasshouse-esque lobby is a sight to behold with its vintage design elements and floor-to-ceiling glass panes. It's during the golden hours of the sunset that you see it at its most beautiful, sun-drenched and serene, with a tea-master brewing up a pot of traditional *oolong* tea served to you on a platter. This is one of the many communal spaces within the hotel where a busy traveller can stop to catch their breath or get some work in, or maybe, spark a socially-distanced conversation with a stranger.



The Grand Premier room Courtesy of The Clan Hotel

Aside from the scenic rooftop pool on the 30th floor, the best views in the house can be found from one of the 18 exclusive Grand Premier rooms. This is the one to book if you're looking to truly treat yourself—everything from the furnishings to the bathtub tucked away in the compact yet spacious toilet feels elevated and luxe. Every room, regardless of category, comes equipped with a work desk and a sprawling bed but best of all are the bay windows to perch on for a languid evening of sky-gazing. The widescreen TV mounted on the wall gives you several options—you can tune in to local channels, Chromecast your favourite shows on Netflix, and even order all of your room service and housekeeping needs directly from the screen.



The Clan Hotel gym Courtesy of The Clan Hotel

If you have excess energy to work off, head to the rooftop gym. Outfitted with an impressive range of equipment (including a *Wing Chun* wooden dummy) and available to each guest for an hour per day, it is well worth packing along your athleisure for, even if COVID-19 restrictions mean you have to book your time in advance.



The Short Rib at QĪN Restaurant Courtesy of The Clan Hotel

Dinner time might see you wander into the hotel’s signature eatery—QĪN. Designed to be an all-day dining concept, this double-storey restaurant and bar serves up reimagined Asian classics like Siphon Mushroom Tea, Chilled Crab Salad and ‘*San Mein*’, alongside an extensive 60-bottle wine collection. If you are craving more quintessentially Singaporean flavours, call for in-room dining. What you’ll receive is a carefully curated meal crafted in collaboration with Singaporean hawkers known as the Clan Daily Special, featuring dishes like *Bak Kut Teh* and *Laksa*.



The bathroom in the Grand Premier room Courtesy of The Clan Hotel

There is plenty to see and do in the area, so you might want to head out and explore on your own. But if you truly want to feel like a tourist, book the complimentary precinct tours the ever-knowledgeable Clan Keepers host on the daily. This is a leisurely walk that will take you through six monuments and heritage sites (some which, even if you are Singaporean, you may have never come across or truly appreciated) around the neighbourhood, and a stop-over at the famous Maxwell Food Centre for a quick glass of sugarcane.

You might be a little sweaty when you’re back at the hotel, but it’s nothing an evening shower can’t fix. Just don’t expect your toiletries to be the most luxurious—more than a traditional staycation, the Clan Hotel promises you a stay not unlike living in a museum for a day. You will leave well-rested, enlightened, and feeling a little more connected to the country you live in.

Find out more about *The Clan Hotel* at clanhotel.com.sg.