

Tatler

SINGAPORE

The Next Course

Chef André Chiang writes a new chapter in his creative journey



| Travel |

Here We Come

They say travel is a state of mind—read on for ideas on how to get away while staying grounded

By Kissa Castañeda

LA DOLCE VITA

While we might dream of sailing along the Amalfi Coast or diving into the emerald waters of Sardinia, Italy is likely out of reach for many of us this summer. That's why the arrival of Issimo, a new online lifestyle platform that introduces the best of Italy to the world, is arriving at the perfect time. Founded by Marie-Louise Sciò, CEO and creative director of Pellicano Hotels, Issimo is a culmination of two-and-a-half years of work and is a creative extension of the hotels adored by the likes of Slim Aarons and Sophia Loren.



"I wanted to create a digital experience of our properties—to bring the same philosophy, sensitivity, aesthetic and taste to an online platform. I wanted it to be inclusive of travel, style, food, but all Italian-centric," says Sciò. The platform features artisanal homeware, recipes, fashion and culture, as well a souvenir shop. There's also a black book of Italian destinations, including an entry on Rome by Delfina Delettrez Fendi.

Issimo's first capsule collection features exclusive creations with over a dozen brands including Faliero Sarti, For Restless Sleepers, Les Belles Heures, Solid & Striped and more. "All of the collaborations come about quite naturally. We mainly have Italian collaborators, about 80 per cent, and the rest are international. As of now, we don't have any collaborations from Asia, but you never know," she says. issimoissimo.com

Image: Giada Mariani (Issimo)

Above: Issimo brings the essence of Italy to your home, with limited-edition collaborations with brands such as Solid & Striped (pictured) and a selection of Italian food products and artisanal home decor. **Right:** Belmond's *Eastern & Oriental Express* traverses Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand in old-world style



| The Shortlist |

Micro Holidays

Luxury travel experts Charlotte Harris of Charlotte Travel and Krystal Tan of Blue Sky Escapes share personal insights on how to satisfy your wanderlust close to home

PUT ON YOUR HIKING BOOTS

Even the densest cities present opportunities to immerse yourself in nature and the easiest way to do that is a leisurely hike. "Abundant and untouched forests still exist in Singapore. You'll find lush foliage, towering trees and trails that follow a natural stream," says Tan. Hong Kong is known as a hiking capital, and Harris, who is based in the city, handpicks a few routes that stand out. "If you're up for a challenge, West Dog Teeth is considered one of the hardest hikes in Hong Kong; it's really more of an upward scramble. Lantau Peak is also tough one, but you're met with the most incredible views on the way up. Come back down and end at Lower Cheung Sha Beach for sundowners by the sea."

BOOK A STAYCATION

Five-star hotels have upped the ante when it comes to staycations in recent months, and Harris applauds the Rosewood Hong Kong and the Grand Hyatt Hong Kong for their creative programming. In Taiwan, she recommends Villa 32, which is ideal for those seeking a wellness-inclined mini holiday. "It's

a gorgeous Japanese onsen-style boutique hotel with only five suites, and each has its own hot spring," says Harris.

EMBRACE SLOW JOURNEYS

Still anxious about flying? Tan, who's based in Singapore, recommends scoping out beachfront sanctuaries that are driving distance away. "One & Only Desaru Coast and Anantara Desaru Coast, both located on the southeastern shoreline of Malaysia, offer quick respites." She also recommends the Belmond *Eastern & Oriental Express*—a luxury train that takes guests through the heart of Southeast Asia and expects to resume services by September. "You'll begin by enjoying a Singapore Sling at the Raffles Hotel before crossing over to Malaysia, where you can take in views of rainforests and charming rural towns from the comfort of the observation car. You'll wrap up your journey in Thailand, where you can get your fill of local delicacies during a Thai cookery class." charlottetravel.com.hk; blueskyescapes.com