

BIG PICTURE

From Bhutan to the Bosphorus, panoramic perfection from your hotel window.

COMPILED BY MICHAELA WILLIAMS



GEZI HOTEL BOSPHORUS

Adjacent to restaurant hot spot Taksim Square, Gezi Hotel's suites feature floor-to-ceiling windows, overlooking the royal-blue Bosphorus and the red-tiled roofs of local villas. Silver Spa offers the complete *hamam* (Turkish bath) ritual. From €144 (\$182). 34 Mete Caddesi, Taksim, Istanbul, Turkey. +90 (212) 393 2700. gezibosphorus.com



UMA BY COMO, PUNAKHA

Need some unwind time? A stint in the remote Himalayan kingdom of Bhutan is a soothing salve for overstressed psyches. This luxe Buddhist lodge high on the Mo Chu river is a stylish way to achieve inner peace. Glass walls take in all the lush valley bliss and the 11 rooms have superb alpine views. From \$US400 (\$377). Serigang Kabesa Punakha, Bhutan. +975 (8) 584 688. comohotels.com/umapunakha



ASK THE CONCIERGE

TIM VONGSWANG
RIVA SURYA, BANGKOK



- ❖ **When friends are in town I take them for a drink at...** Long Table, with its spectacular views from the 25th-floor terrace.
- ❖ **The restaurant that best shows off Bangkok...** is Supatra River House, a restored tea house on the Chao Phraya River.
- ❖ **For designer fashion I steer guests towards...** Gaysorn, a

luxurious, upmarket complex of white marble and gleaming chrome.

- ❖ **For the perfect gift or memento I'd shop at...** Chatuchak Market, which has something with a touch of Thai for everyone.
- ❖ **Couples wanting a romantic dinner for two should consider...** Sirocco restaurant on the 63rd floor of the State Tower building.

- ❖ **For great art go to...** the National Gallery; the main collection focuses on Thai artists, beginning in the 17th century.
- ❖ **For vintage finds...** Siam Vintage, a collection of around 30 shops, from retro to designer.
- ❖ **An underrated Bangkok attraction is...** the rice barge cruise, which starts with a speedboat ride down the river.
- ❖ **If it's raining...** go shopping; the country's national pastime.

- ❖ **Bangkok's best-kept secret is...** Ancient Siam (formerly known as Ancient City), the world's biggest open-air museum, featuring replicas of historical sites, traditional folk arts and cultures.
- ❖ **If I were a visitor with a free day...** I would visit Jim Thompson's teak house to view the collection of antiques. A military intelligence officer and businessman who helped make Thai silk famous worldwide, he disappeared in 1967.

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