

Review: EQ Hotel, Kuala Lumpur

From eating Beluga caviar to swimming in the best pool in Malaysia, here's what it's like to stay at EQ Hotel in Kuala Lumpur.

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The lowdown



EQ has been Malaysia's finest 5-star hotel since the 70s

Holding court as [Malaysia's](#) finest 5-star hotel since the 70's, The Equatorial was the darling of high-society and high-end travellers alike for decades. But in 2012, when it was completely razed to make way for its new incarnation; [EQ, the hotel](#) was masterfully elevated to claim unrivalled city views. Adding a sky deck to its crown, a full floor dedicated to wellness, plus the re-imagining of its seven iconic restaurants, EQ has won the title of *Best City Hotel in Malaysia*, as voted by *Travel+Leisure Southeast Asia's* readers for three years running. Could there be a more confident step from a storied golden era into the present?

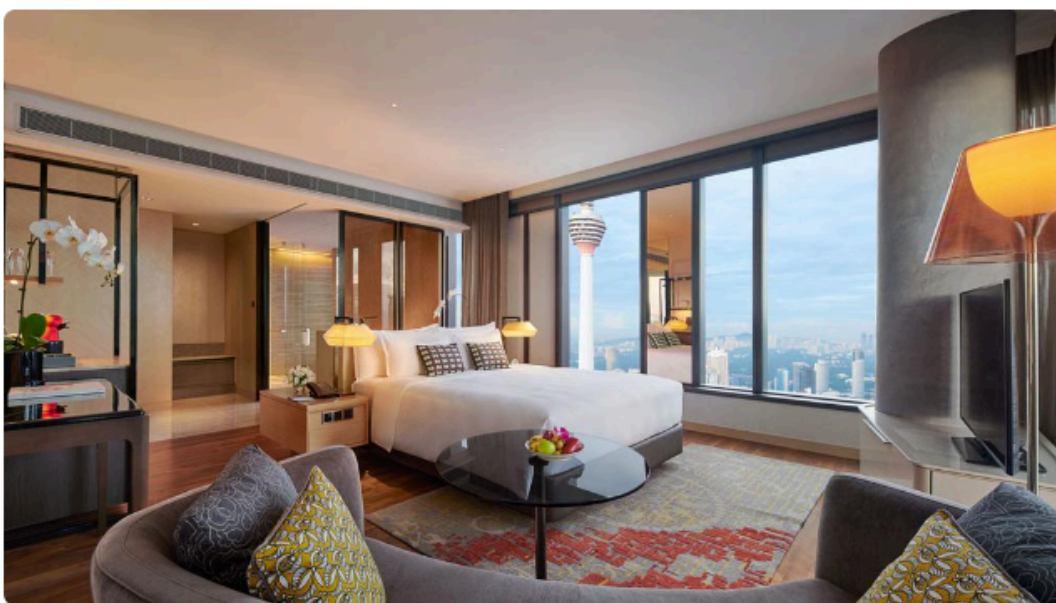
Location



It sits in a prime location

Retaining it's Golden Triangle position on Jalan Sultan Ismail, EQ sits within the gravitational pull of the city's central business district, shopping, street-dining, nightlife and public transportation is conveniently close. But so too is a labyrinth of air-conditioned, undercover walkways linking Petronas Twin Towers, KLCC and high-end shopping malls Suria KLCC and Pavilion KL, making exploring by foot pleasant, even in KL's notorious heat and humidity.

The rooms



A lounge within arm's length of the mini bar? Consider me sold

Luxuriously decorated, a modern Malaysian palette of biscuit hued wood, creamy marble, and subtle soft furnishings reflecting local motifs, layer atop crisp white linen, glossy timber floors and deep, plush pile carpets. Thoughtful inclusions like international adaptors will appease well-travelled guests, while complimentary snacks and soft drinks and both a deep plunge bath as well as a separate wet room shower were welcome touches also. A double-sided chaise lounge perched perfectly within arms length of the mini-bar was my favourite spot. And where I spent many long moments, transfixed by the light and clouds painting nearby Petronas Twin Towers, which can be admired from selected rooms and suites.

Food & drinks



There are a range of dining options at EQ

Seven restaurants made dining an indulgent choice at EQ. Sabayon, located on EQ's highest floor was superb, skipping through seven Eurasian courses as a degustation. Next door, selections from Blue's 11 page beverage list can be coupled with bar bites through to bumps of Beluga caviar. While Sky51 is the smooth lounge bar beside, and *the* place to be for sunset - both for curated cocktails, and to watch Petronas Twin Towers aglow. Fresh teriyaki salmon poke bowls from Étoile Bistro were divine, as was the savoury, wok-fried carrot cake from Nipah - washed down with refreshing house-made lemonade. For a celebratory afternoon tea, visit Bottega, but swap out the teh tarik for Prosecco, and take time to savour EQ's undisputed icon; Kampachi, *the* name of KL's best Japanese over 5 decades.

Set the sustainability bar



Sustainability is important to EQ too

Standing alone, rather than as part of an ubiquitous chain, EQ is Malaysian owned and grown with excellence in hospitality it's revered hallmark. Respectful nods to the past, include revealing the same prized artwork by copper tooling artist Yan Sook Leong, with was commissioned in 1974, that now sits as a tribute to artistic legacy, and as a commitment to preserve and protect Malaysian heritage. Outstanding future vision is present too, as EQ holds a Green Building Index (GBI) Gold Certification, positioning it amongst the most energy and resource-efficient buildings in the country.

The extras



EQ staff really go above and beyond

Hospitality is etched into every facet of the EQ experience, however, when the chefs take time out of their busy morning service to explain the nuances between Chinese, Indian and Malaysian flavours sprinkled throughout the breakfast buffet. I consider that going over and above expectation. Snacks and soft drinks are also complimentary in room.

What's hot



The pool gives you the best kind of vertigo

Sanctum Spa's full-floor sanctuary on level 29 includes the newly crowned *Best Pool in Malaysia*, as voted by *Travel+Leisure Southeast Asia's* readers. The 25-metre infinity pool inspires admiration of KL's most famous buildings while afloat, but pop your head under to appreciate the hotel's playlist, complete with adapted underwater acoustics.

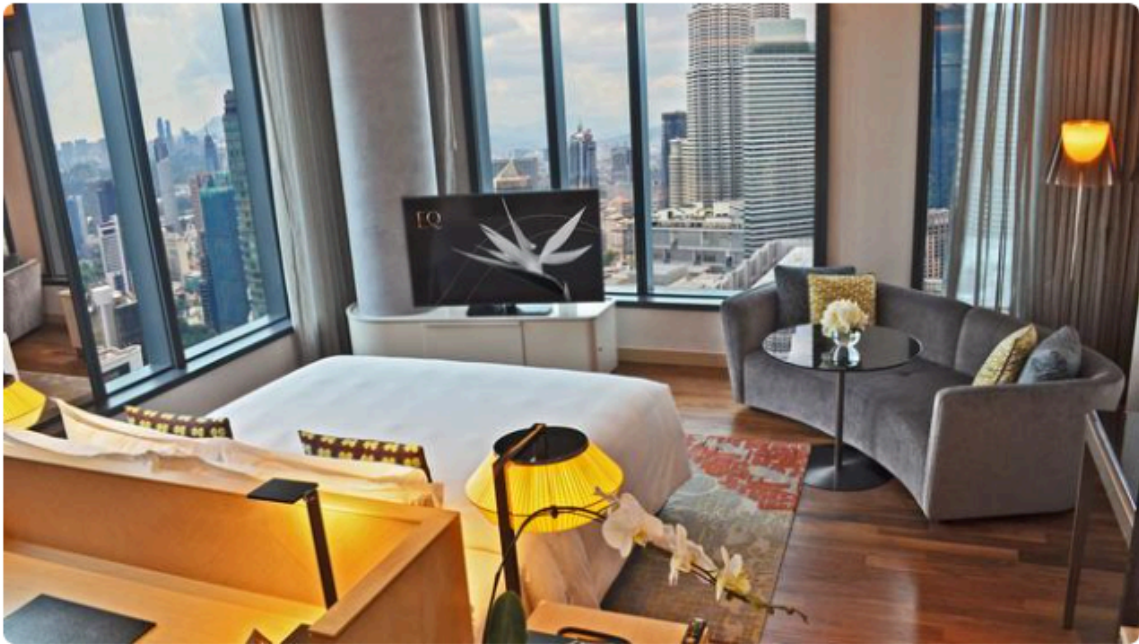
What's not



Some of the decor gave me a fright

The jump-scare of seeing pint-sized children playing near the driveway of the hotel! On closer inspection, it's the incredibly lifelike works of Malaysian artist Nizam Abdullah titled *Sorok Sorak*, depicting children playing hide and seek that represents joy and unity of Malaysia's multi-ethnic society. Startled my mum radar though.

Verdict 9.5/10



Close to perfect

A seamless, sublime experience from arrival to fond farewell. Expectations were surpassed, hospitality was warm, genuine and engaging and as a guest, I felt like I could be family.

Stay

EQ rates start from \$269.00 for a Deluxe King room or \$313.00 with breakfast for two people. Or upgrade to a Deluxe King with Twin Tower view from \$302.00, or \$345.00 with breakfast for two. Excludes taxes and fees.

www.eqkualalumpur.equatorial.com

Get there on [AirAsia](#), who fly several times a week to Kuala Lumpur from Sydney, Melbourne, Perth (and seasonally), from the Gold Coast.

This writer was a guest of AirAsia and EQ Hotel.