



House proud Fears of rising sea levels seem to do nothing to deter resort developers putting big money into the Maldives. The latest paradise on the Indian Ocean atolls is Naladhu, the product of the combined talents of Maldivian architect Mohammed Shafeeq and Thai-based interior designer Julian Coombs.

Naladhu, meaning "pretty little island", claims to "capture the elegant aesthetics of a slightly colonial era, with hints of Sri Lankan regality", although that doesn't mean it scrimps on any modern convenience imaginable to the luxury traveller. The 19 ocean houses (above), all named after Maldivian plants, are situated on a private island ringed by coral gardens and vibrant marine life. Each occupies 225 square metres and incorporates a lofty white-gabled roof and generous living, dining and

bedroom spaces. White-washed timber walls are matched with antique furnishings and more contemporary attractions, such as personal plunge pools, landscaped gardens and vast, private teak sun decks. Bungalows have voluminous terrazzo bathtubs with free-form edges and exclusive salas with ocean views. Naturally, the resort is keen to promote its other de rigueur in-house attraction, its spa.

Dining is an event in itself: meals not taken "ashore" can be served aboard a Maldivian boat called a *dhoni*, or perhaps on the Wave Breaker dining platform, which stands over the ocean. See www.naladhu.com for more information, but don't expect paradise to come cheap: rates start at US\$2,000 for a night in a Naladhu ocean house.

Two's company If you can't wait for Valentine's Day before taking the lavish approach to relations with the object of your affections, the Couples' Indulgence package at the JW Marriott Mumbai may prove to be the ultimate romantic gift. An opulent combination of relaxation, romance, spa treatments and fine poolside dining should melt even the stoniest heart. The one-night package includes round-trip limousine transfers, accommodation in the luxurious Juhu Suite with full butler service and extended pampering for two courtesy of the hotel spa, where programmes are tailored to guests' requirements. All treatments are delivered in couples' exclusive spa suites and come with treats such as chocolate-dipped strawberries. Each couple receives a complimentary hamper of natural spa and skin-care products to take home. The package price is US\$7,500 per couple, excluding tax, and will be available until December 31.



Welcome back Development is proceeding apace on the Thai island of Koh Samui. Adding to the already considerable luxury-residence quotient is the Amari Palm Reef Resort and Spa, at the northern end of sweeping Chaweng Beach, at which extensive renovations were recently completed. The resort offers accommodation to suit most tastes, from suites with balconies to family duplexes. The renovations, which took most of last year, extended to the lobby (left), which was rebuilt in traditional Thai style. The property's rooms received an extensive makeover and are more contemporary, spacious and light than before. For details of deals and packages to mark the completion of the resort's renovations, see www.amari.com/palmreef.

Deal of the week The Allamanda Laguna Phuket is offering two nights' accommodation in a junior suite for HK\$3,090, based on two adults sharing. Included are round-trip, economy-class flights with Dragonair between Hong Kong and Phuket, breakfast, transfers and insurance. Guests also qualify for the Laguna Phuket Plus privilege card, which attracts discounts of up to 40 per cent on dining, spa treatments, golf at the Laguna Phuket Club, shopping, car rental and more. Additional benefits available until May 31 include a barbecue dinner for two, 20 per cent off a massage at the Allamanda Angsana Spa and 15 per cent off green fees at the Laguna Phuket Club. For further details, call Farrington American Express Travel on 3121 3000 (Hong Kong) or 3121 3900 (Kowloon), or e-mail info@farringtonamex.com, quoting package ID: L2007FSP0068.

A spa is born More proof, if it were needed, that spa-mania at five-star resorts is not going to abate any time soon comes with the opening of the Gaia Spa at Let's Sea (right), Hua Hin, Thailand. The "new angle" at Gaia is that it is located on the roof of the hotel lobby, meaning guests' spa experience is an alfresco one. While the spa is exposed to the elements it does come with a roof, meaning that even the refreshing sound, rather than the feeling, of tropical rain can be co-opted into treatments if the skies open. And if the weather turns cool, couples might like to enjoy a cosy treatment together in a dedicated pavilion. To celebrate the opening of Gaia, Let's Sea is offering a package that includes two nights' accommodation, single or double occupancy, for 9,999 baht (HK\$2,400), excluding tax. The featured accommodation is a Studio Pier room, which gives guests personal pier access to the resort swimming pool. For more information or to make a reservation, see www.letusseasea.com, call 66 32 536 888 or e-mail info.huahin@letusseasea.com.

