



# Romantic getaway: HOTEL VAGABOND

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39 Syed Alwi Road, tel: 6291 3203. From \$300++ a night.

The first of an international luxury hotel collection by Satinder Garcha, the man behind numerous resplendent Sentosa Cove developments, there is a sumptuous, almost palatial glint to Hotel Vagabond. Little wonder too, as it is outfitted by French interior designer Jacques Garcia, whose name is synonymous with a bold, opulent aesthete.

The lobby, also known as the Vagabond Salon which integrates both the restaurant and the cocktail bar, is dressed in ruby red with plush velvet upholstery. It's an artwork extravaganza too, with statement pieces that Garcha has painstakingly sourced from all over the world, such as a rhino-shaped reception desk fashioned out of solid brass, and gold leaf-trimmed banyan trees that 'prop up' the upper floor.

Compared to the grandiose style of the lobby, the rooms are decorated in a more restrained manner, but they are a visual feast nonetheless. The Classic room we stayed in was by no means large, yet the clever layout afforded interesting pockets of space, thanks to the dark wood sliding doors which bear colourful floral motifs. Pull close the panels so that in addition to the main sleeping area, you have a foyer of sorts at the doorway, and a vanity space outside the bathroom. Lavish comfort takes the form of goose-down pillows, a king-sized bed laid in Egyptian cotton sheets, and bath amenities by Italian fashion house Etro.

While there is no lack of local experiences in the vicinity – the hustle and bustle of Little India, the indie charms of Haji Lane, and the industrial cool cafes off Tyrwhitt Road are a mere five minute stroll away from this Syed Alwi address – make time too, to dine at the 5th Quarter for Chef Andrew Nocente's house-cured meats and grills. The menu is intriguing with choices like Lardo with Truffle Honey & Chilli (\$8), rum-cured Pork Belly with watermelon and pickled onions (\$12), and Chocolate Salami with Salted Caramel Ice Cream (\$16).

And since it's a romantic getaway after all, cosy up with the hubby over craft cocktails by the award-winning bartender Mauricio Allende from the Vagabond Bar. – **Mia Chenyze**, lifestyle and consumer writer



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