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# CITi-ZEN

Living Life Large



**MICHELE KWOK**  

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**THE "FIRST LADY"**  

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**OF F&B**


**Ireka Development Management Sdn Bhd**

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# CONTENTS

- 1 Michele Kwok,  
The "First Lady" of F&B
- 5 ALOFT KL Does It Again!
- 6 Beyond i-ZEN To zenZ,  
another Ireka Concept
- 8 10MAN Story
- 10 Kopitiam News
- 12 Starwood Hotels  
And Resort F&B Offer
- 13 i-ZEN Privileges

## GREETINGS FRIENDS AND VALUED CUSTOMERS

From humble beginnings in 1967, the Ireka Group of companies has been on an epic journey towards excellence and its promise to deliver the very best to our customers. We achieved this with our recognisable i-ZEN brand of properties in upmarket Mont' Kiara and KLCC. We intend to do the same with our new brand, zenZ, aimed at the mid-range market. We covered zenZ's aspirations in Issue 32 and in this one, we want to share with you plans for our residential and commercial developments under this brand in the suburbs of Kajang and Nilai.

Well done once again to the Aloft KL Sentral hotel, this time, for making it onto the international stage by winning the FIABCI World Gold Award in the Hotel Category. It was a proud moment to have received another award for this sassy and modern, industrial chic hotel with its great location in KL's transport hub. Congratulations Aloft KL Sentral hotel!

This issue features the "First Lady" of F&B in Malaysia, Michele Kwok and I am delighted that she agreed to give CiTi-ZEN an interview. The latest addition to their series of restaurants opens to both residents and non-residents in SENI Mont' Kiara in August, which I am very much looking forward to, and am confident Hubba Hubba Mont' Kiara will be a roaring success. Read all about Michele and her plans for Hubba Hubba Mont' Kiara.

We like to tell you about new Malaysian business initiatives and in this issue, 10Man talks to us about their new tenancy management enterprise which is taking off in KL. The relatively uncommon concept of tenancy or property management is seized upon by 10MAN who offer a comprehensive service that you can read all about.

Until we meet again in the last issue of 2015, continue to enjoy living life large!

Lai Voon Hon  
 President / CEO  
 Ireka Development Management Sdn Bhd

# MICHELE KWOK , THE “FIRST LADY” OF F&B

Many column inches have been dedicated to Michele Kwok who in my humble opinion, and is without doubt, the “First Lady” of F&B in Malaysia. She is the celebrity entrepreneur whom, together with her formidable business partner and husband, Fred Choo has set up nine well-known outlets across Kuala Lumpur offering four different brands, each with their distinctive and unique experiences – Souled Out, Tujo, Hubba Hubba and WIP. She is the co-founder, owner and director of the perennially packed collection of restaurants branded under the Soul Society Group.

The combination of catchy (and clever) names, good public relations, trained and loyal staff and a well-defined sense of standards has quickly generated a buzz for each of their outlets. Word spreads about their establishments which have remained popular even after 19 years in the business. This is an achievement in itself.

## WHERE THERE’S A WILL, THERE’S A WAY!

From childhood, Michele knew that she wanted to be a business woman, no idea in what line, but something that involved taking an idea, nurturing it 100% and watching it grow. “I am a small town girl from Seremban who came to the city because I wanted to live my dream which was to run my own business but had no idea in what.” She used to scour the newspapers everyday checking out advertised businesses for sale, dabbled in a few things but kept looking out for “that” opportunity. Michele’s light bulb moment came when, whilst serving coffee as an MAS crew member (which lasted 9 months), she realised that she definitely wanted to be at the other side of the spout!

This started her foray into setting up a string of businesses from being the Malaysian partner for Singaporean-based Business Trends (now Kelly’s recruitment agency) recruitment business and the Malaysian distributor for Hallmark Cards. Going into the F&B world was serendipitous. As Mont’ Kiara residents and as parents of two young boys then, Fred and Michele did not plan to venture too far from home to start up their business and the opportunity came to take over an existing restaurant in Shoplex,



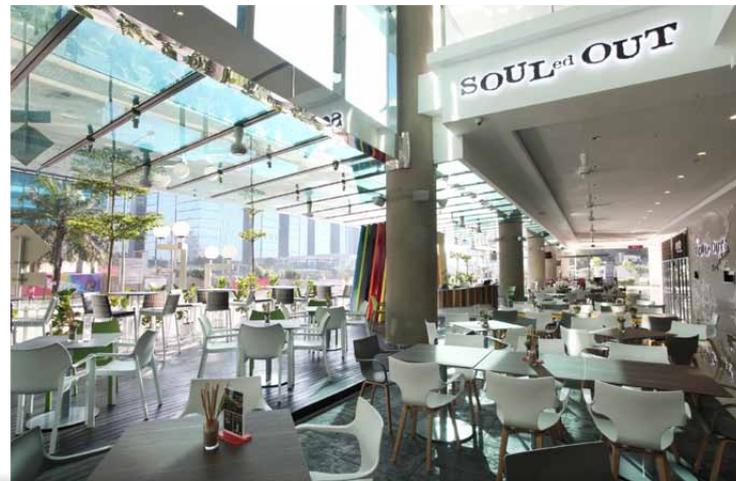
Mont' Kiara, literally next door to home. Neighbours challenged them to take over and run the restaurant given they had no experience in the F&B world. Michele recalls, "It was me, Fred, a waitress and a cook. Fred helped in the kitchen and I waited on the tables. Orders came in for iced lemon tea and I had no idea what to do! Customers started coming and we had to learn the trade overnight. We grew to love the business and after two years moved to Desa Sri Hartamas to bigger premises." That was 19 years ago and today, whether it is Souled Out, Tujo, WIP or Hubba Hubba, you can be assured that no matter if you are ordering iced lemon tea or mojitos, it's all perfect.

## HAVING ALL THE KEY INGREDIENTS

Michele has all the hallmarks of a successful entrepreneur because she remains enthusiastic about her business, full of determination and not afraid to take risks. Having one successful restaurant like Souled Out, with its winning formula of a "something for everyone" feel to the place, would have been enough for most, but not for Michele (and Fred) who do not believe in resting on their laurels. Instead they were constantly asking themselves, "what's next?" but only when they had a solid foundation like Souled Out to build on. In fact, it was 10 years before they decided to add on another restaurant.

I feel that for Michele, being a successful entrepreneur is a lifestyle choice, not a destination which is why to say she is passionate about what she does is not credit enough to what has been achieved. She was determined from the beginning to be successful and said of herself, "I want to make good in anything that I do and I will commit to it more than 100%." There is also the honest realisation it is not just for herself or her family but also for the 450 staff who rely on the success of the business for their livelihoods. In fact, Michele referred to her staff several times during the interview not taking the responsibility to succeed for them, lightly at all. They are both her motivation and her drive. "With 9 outlets, we have had to change our management style but the team still have to know that we care, we are thankful and we are appreciative of the 100% they give to our customers everyday."

The path to success was certainly not paved with gold and it was a hard slog initially. Michele reminisces that "rejection is the next step to a yes, so I didn't mind being rejected in business because it was all a learning experience." Today, Michele relies on her experience and learning, picked up over the last 19 years, and this includes the scars! She acknowledges that things are so different nowadays, everything from the pricing to staffing, market conditions and without doubt, the





competition is so much tougher. Therefore to succeed today, requires the ingredients of uber confidence to get the job done even when things are at their most challenging focusing only on the finishing line, staying sharp through constant learning and adapting to changing circumstances. Although Michele finds the "Passion" word crass in describing her journey, it is in fact passion that has, and continues to fuel the drive and determination required to be successful. There continues to be long days and nights, when the business is all-consuming but at the end of the day, Michele thoroughly enjoys what she is doing.

### A NEW ADVENTURE IN MONT' KIARA

Otherwise, she would not be embarking on her latest adventure opening in Mont' Kiara at the end of July, 2015. It is going to be called Hubba Hubba Mont' Kiara sited at the award-winning SENI Mont' Kiara\* development. It will be the only F&B outlet in the area so there will be a captive niche market to appreciate good quality food. "I would like the customers to see the place as their second home. My vision for Hubba Hubba Mont' Kiara is Souled Out 19 years ago where the menu will have something for everyone and the atmosphere is welcoming for everyone regardless of how old they are. Now I am 19 years older and wiser, I will bring new experiences and am confident to try out new ideas." As a SENI Mont' Kiara resident, Michele knows, at first hand, the place well and what the local community wants.





Not only will Hubba Hubba Mont' Kiara be a community hang-out with its bar and restaurant, but it will also have a dedicated delicatessen selling pies, pastries, soups, salads and sandwiches. "It will be a place for everyday and it will also be a hidden gem," Michele enthuses. An added benefit for residents is that at the weekends, the restaurant will also provide light foods like hotdogs and pizzas to the SENI resort-style pool terrace area.

So what indeed is the secret of Michele's success? In my view, the reason why the Soul Society Group of restaurants have remained a top-drawer F&B business is because both Michele and Fred still have their hearts in the business and are hands on where quality and staffing are concerned. Most importantly, they just know what customers want – having free valet parking at Souled Out, Sri Hartamas for instance is an invaluable service appreciated by all, and one of only a handful of restaurants that offering this free service in KL.

## AND FINALLY.....

Let's leave the last few words for Michele herself. Her exuberant personality is so infectious and I was reluctant for the interview to end. Michele has cemented her dominance in the KL F&B industry and when asked if she ever reflects on what her life has become, she pauses momentarily before saying, "I am very grateful for everything I have in my life. I wake up everyday and remind myself of the special people and things I have in my life; and I am eternally thankful. If you cannot feel grateful, you cannot be happy."

SENI Mont' Kiara  
2A Changkat Duta Kiara,  
Off Jalan Duta Kiara, Mont' Kiara,  
50480 Kuala Lumpur

# ALOFT KL SENTRAL DOES IT AGAIN!



Not only did the Aloft KL Sentral Hotel win the FIABCI Malaysia's Property Award 2014 in the Hotel Category, it went on to win the World Gold Awards in the same category in May 2015. Collecting the award at the Gala Dinner in Kuala Lumpur, Ireka's Group MD, Mr Lai Voon Hon proudly announced, "Winning another FIABCI award and this time, a World Gold Award is testament to how well the Aloft KL Sentral is recognised for its trend setting design and excellent service. Ireka is indeed very proud to have its consistent commitment to unique design and quality rewarded."

This award represents the second time that Ireka has been recognised internationally for its hotel development - the first time was for the Westin Kuala Lumpur in 2006. This is also due to the Group's standing as one of the top hotel developers in Malaysia and the world!

FIABCI is the "Oscars" of the property industry with stringent evaluation processes. The Aloft KL Sentral sets new standards and is today 11th on Trip Advisor's hotel rankings in Kuala Lumpur.

With Aloft KL Sentral located next to the main transportation hub and the Kuala Lumpur International Airport Express Rail Link, it provides a ready and sizeable catchment of local and international business travellers as well as a need for business functions and conference space. The Nu Sentral shopping and entertainment mall that is directly linked to the hotel by a link bridge further heightens Aloft KL as an option for leisure stay complemented by nearby tourist attractions such as Little India, National Museum, Lake Gardens, KL Bird Park and more.

Come to Aloft KL Sentral and enjoy  
your own sassy experience!



# BEYOND i-ZEN TO zenZ, ANOTHER IREKA CONCEPT

i-ZEN  
Life, styled.

zenZ

Following the success of its high-end i-ZEN brand, Ireka did not draw breath, seizing opportunities in the mid-market property sector, introducing its zenZ brand onto the Malaysian public. In the first issue of 2015, we introduced this brand and its aspirations.

The i-ZEN name today is synonymous with quality, creative designs and luxury. The properties are typically in the high-end areas of Mont' Kiara and KLCC; and they include the well-known developments of SENI Mont' Kiara, Villa Aseana, Kiaraville, Tiffani, i-ZEN @ Kiara 1, i-ZEN @ Kiara 2, and the 1MK Mall and office complex. In KLCC, The RuMa Hotel and Residences is currently under development and due for completion in 2017.

Property pundits pronounce that the mid-range property sector in the medium-term will drive the Malaysian property market for a number of reasons, including the curb on loans and banks preferring to lend to first-time buyers as they are able to get up to 90% loans. According to iProperty.com in its second half of 2014 survey, "Malaysia's relatively young population

and labour force, increasing urbanisation and general inclination to own a house, are factors that are expected to sustain strong demand for affordable residential properties in major urban centres, likely outstripping supply over the near and medium-term."

The zenZ brand is therefore launched at just the right time, addressing a market that includes young professionals and business owners, young families, and first time home owners, students and those who reside in the local area. zenZ's projects will be introduced in Kajang and Nilai, well-established and popular areas because of their affordability and surrounding greenery. Like the i-ZEN properties, Ireka intends for the zenZ developments to focus on style, quality, comfort, and above all, good value for your investment. This latest Ireka concept provides the assurance of the high quality of planning, building on its 48 year history and expertise in the construction business. zenZ's brand philosophy therefore is embodied in the 5E principles of **Economical, Evolutionary, Efficient, Essential and Eco-Conscious**.

Ireka's mid-market property range is all about achieving the ideal work-life balance for home owners through well planned landscaping and outdoor facilities as being central to the development. For the commercial developments, zenZ offers convenient transport routes for connectivity, security as a given and a wide choice of modern design types for commerce in the 21st Century.

## KAJANG

The two developments in Kajang (about 30 minutes from KLCC), are Kajang Residences and the ASTA Enterprise Park:

**The ASTA Enterprise Park** is an industrial development with 49 mixed units of design types and sizes. It is an elevated site with secured perimeter retaining wall and flexible floor plan designs for selected units. These industrial units will be launched in the last quarter of 2015.

**Kajang Residences**, situated in the heart of this bustling suburb of Kuala Lumpur is all about being trendy; a stepping stone in affordable investments for the discerning property owner. These properties, which range from 800 sq ft to 1,300 sq ft, will be launched at the beginning of 2016.



## NILAI

In Nilai, another bustling suburb of Kuala Lumpur, Ireka is actively creating a series of developments for the mid-range market. The first of its project is the low-density **Kasia Greens** development with its 142 freehold homes which have been 100% sold and recently handed over to their new owners.

**10 SHOPZ** is a low-density commercial project currently under construction (60% complete). It has an innovative design of half mezzanine provision (with separate access) at the first floor. It is elevated higher than the road level for a prominent view, and has a wide frontage of 26 feet at the end lot to cater for various business requirements. There are ample parking spaces with direct frontage and access from the main road. Typically, these are 2 ½ -storey buildings of 10 units, of which 50% have already been sold. There are limited units available so contact Ireka at the details below if you require further information.

A few kilometres away, there is the new self-contained township of **Rimbun Kasia**, with a Central lake at its main feature, comprising of a 2.3 acre Recreational Park housing a basketball court, ball field, multipurpose deck, walk path for jogging/ cycling, kids' playground, pedestrian bridge, climbing cube, gathering places and other activity areas designed with residents in mind – open space, trees and greenery are its striking features. The Rimbun Kasia development is all about community living and encouraging the residents to make full use of the facilities together.

This development comprises six parcels of mixed residential and commercial developments complete with unparalleled architecture concept, with green community living as a central concept and the area is well connected to the international airports, variety of educational establishments (Nilai is the country's education hub) and to KLCC by an extensive road infrastructure.

**Within the Rimbun Kasia township there will be the :**

**Dwi courtyard apartments** (9-storeys and 382 units) with dual key features ranging in size from 650 sq ft to 980 sq ft. The owner can either rent out a room or share the accommodation whilst still maintaining individual privacy. The launch date is expected to be in the last quarter of 2015.



Kasia Greens



10 SHOPZ @ NILAI



Dwi@Rimbun Kasia &amp; Rimbun Town Villas

**Rimbun Town Villas**, low-density affordably priced freehold homes providing a new generation of lifestyle living with security at the fore front. There will be 174 homes built and the expected launch date is early 2016.

Parcels 3, 4 and 5 will be high-rise apartments (no more than 25 storeys) and there will also be a commercial lifestyle mall to serve the Rimbun Kasia community which will be launched in 2016.

For further information on any of these developments, contact [sales\\_enquiry@ireka.com.my](mailto:sales_enquiry@ireka.com.my)

# 10 MAN STORY

## TENANCY MANAGEMENT MADE SIMPLER

Property or Tenancy Management in Malaysia is not yet a common concept which is surprising given the number of properties that are bought and rented out. Mostly, people tend to manage the rental properties on their own in Malaysia or rely on the estate agency to help when needed. Ironically however, when Malaysians purchase properties abroad, such as in the UK, they usually don't hesitate to hire a property management company to manage the rental for them, paying the standard 15% - 18% (London rate).

The only disadvantage to retaining a property management company, as far as I can see, is the effect on profit margins which must be factored in from the outset. The argument for having your rental property managed by a property agent is compelling. For a start, property managers will do all the communication for you with the tenant, or with

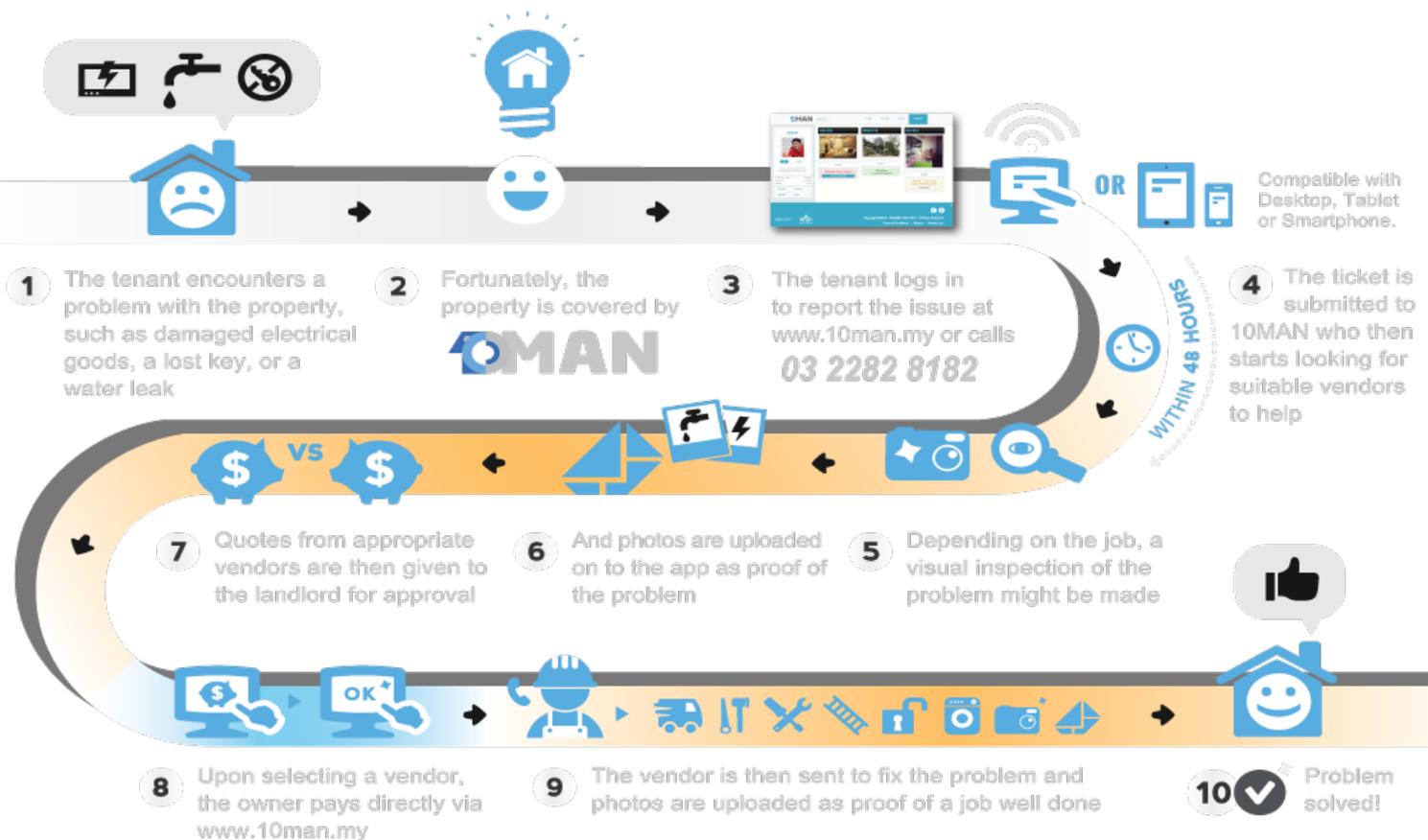
contractors, which includes managing any complaints or emergencies that may arise, day or night.

## 10 MAN

10MAN, founded by Daniel Yap and Andrew Kong is a recently established tenancy management company set up in 2013 to help landlords manage their tenanted properties. According to Managing Director, Shu Hiong Tan, "Getting a tenant is just the beginning of the process. What happens if something goes wrong that has to be fixed or sorted straight away. This is where 10-Man's service is invaluable."

With 10MAN successfully managing your tenanted property, their reliable team of field agents will consistently maintain and deliver the services that are essential in making your home or investment a safe and desirable one. Peace of mind is what 10MAN is all about – and maximising the value of their clients' properties.

# HOW 10MAN GETS THE WORK DONE



## SERVICES ON OFFER :

- End-to-End tenancy management, including finding and managing tenants
- Call centre support
- 100-point check-up of the property.
- Preparation of maintenance records and statements
- Managing contractors and supervision of building works
- Scheduling twice yearly air-conditioning service and maintenance
- Site visits by field agents
- Inspect the managed properties mid-term
- Liaison with residents on all matters
- Scheduling of pest control inspections
- Preparation of year end accounts and returns
- Reminders for bills and rent payments
- Regular reports to owners and landlords

10MAN really do take the pain away because they will negotiate and supervise the contractors on your behalf, and if the tenants are not able to communicate with the latter, 10MAN will have a field agent or the call centre on stand-by to provide the interpreting service. The experienced field agents will make the initial visit to assess the size of the problem first before appointing any contractor. Where possible, they will help to fix the problem themselves. Best of all, 10MAN will make contact with the contractors at least an hour before the appointment time to remind them to be punctual for all meetings!

## IT'S ALL IN THE TECHNOLOGY

The time consuming aspect of setting up 10MAN was getting the technology right because in order to be a no-fuss service, clients would need to be able to access the company almost immediately in order to communicate problems, agree appointments at mutually convenient times and settle payment.

10MAN has the only platform of its kind in SE Asia where clients can log in their requests, keep track of all the expenses pertaining to their property and 10MAN keeps records of every transaction and issue resolution (with photos where necessary) for all the properties they manage which are easily accessible and available for reference or even for tax purposes (e.g. fees and cost of repairs for tax returns). There is a transparency to this way of working where even quotes from contractors are uploaded on the system for clients to see. They don't seem to keep still at 10MAN because they are continually adding to the technology for the convenience of their clients such as rental collection, auto mailing and so on.

There is a well-structured fee payment system to all this and details can be found on their website, [www.10man.my](http://www.10man.my)

Being the "Go-To" people for tenancy management support

10MAN's vision is to be the "go-to" people for property management support because of the dependable service they offer and working tirelessly to maximise the value of their clients' assets. 10MAN are more than aware that there is a great deal of trust involved when asking a company like theirs to manage one of our biggest assets and so they are determined that everything is managed professionally as well as tailored to meet their clients' particular requirements and it is this reassurance that in itself is invaluable.

10 MAN can be contacted  
on +603.2282.8182 or  
[hiong@10man.my](mailto:hiong@10man.my)  
[www.10man.my](http://www.10man.my)



# KOPITIAM NEWS!

The i-ZEN & zenZ Community Page

## JAPANESE CLINIC AT YOUR DOORSTEP

Hibari Clinic is a brand new health facility offering a GP service primarily, although not exclusively to the local Japanese population. The first in Mont' Kiara itself, the clinic is conveniently situated in Menara 1 MK and looking to cater for the 6,000 Japanese people living in the area.

There are currently two doctors in residence with extensive experience of children's and women's health, and although they are not Japanese themselves, there are 5 Japanese staff available to do the medical translating. For information, it is very difficult for Japanese doctors to get a license to practice in Malaysia. The doctors speak some Japanese, as does the Malay nurse (whom I heard at-first-hand speak what sounded like fluent Japanese to a Japanese colleague).

### Hibari Clinic's opening hours are:

8.30 – 6.30 : Weekdays (no lunch break)  
9.00 – 6.00 : Weekends and Public Holidays  
(lunch 1pm – 2pm)

The clinic has reciprocal arrangements with another KL hospital if referrals are required for MRIs or CT Scans for instance, and transport can be arranged by the clinic. For more information, please contact either the clinic or send an email to [miho@hibaricl.com](mailto:miho@hibaricl.com)

### HIBARI CLINIC

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Tel : +603 6211 5919 Fax : +603 6211 5918  
[www.hibaricl.com](http://www.hibaricl.com)



## HEALTH AND BEAUTY



### JURLIQUE

Jurlique is 30 years young in August 2015 and they have many special offers to thank loyal customers. To celebrate their 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and their long-standing love affair with roses, Jurlique has created deluxe version of one of its most iconic hand care products. The limited edition Precious Rose Hand Cream in pure nature and available now!!!

Jurlique has been Australia's No 1 brand in natural Skin Care science since 1985

KEDAI KECANTIKAN

# Melvita

french organic beauty care since 1983

G21



Come and visit Melvita's new concept store at **1 Mont Kiara Mall**.  
 Enjoy an eco-friendly organic shopping experience in a natural atmosphere!  
 Welcome gift from **now until 5th September 2014**.

THANK YOU GIFT  
 FOR RECYLING  
 \* with purchase of RM200  
**SKIN RESCUE KIT**  
 (WORTH RM109)



FREE  
 WELCOME GIFT



**20%**  
 ON SPECIAL VALUE KIT

NEW  
 VIP PRIVILEGES  
 (WORTH RM135)



**10%**  
 ON ALL NORMAL  
 PRICED ITEMS

*\* Whilst stocks last. Other terms & conditions apply.*

# starwood

## Hotels and Resorts

### F&B OFFERS

The Starwood Group has some great F&B offers for i-ZEN Card holders in their Malaysia hotels until December 2015, so flash them your card and indulge.



#### **The Westin Langkawi Resort & Spa**

(20% off BAR rate inclusive of breakfast for 2)  
(20% discount on Food & Beverage in all Restaurants except In Room Dining and Banqueting)  
(20% discount on Westin Heavenly Spa treatments)

#### **The Westin Kuala Lumpur**

(20% discount at all restaurants)

#### **Points by Sheraton Penang**

(20% discount at The Best Brew and The Eatery)

#### **Sheraton Imperial Kuala Lumpur**

(20% discount at Celestial Court, Villa Danieli and Essence and receive a 50% voucher to be used on your next visit)

#### **Four Points by Sheraton Puchong**

(25% discount at The Eatery's buffet lunch from Monday to Friday and buffet dinner from Sunday to Thursday)

#### **Aloft KL Sentral**

(30% discount on food & beverage at The Nook)

#### **Four Points by Sheraton Sandakan**

(15% discount on food & beverage at The Eatery, The Lobby Lounge and The Best Brew. 20% off best available rate inclusive of 2 complimentary breakfasts and 4pm check-out)

#### **Le Meridien Kuala Lumpur**

(50% discount for 2 diners, 33% for 3 diners, 25% for 4 diners and 20% for 5 diners or more on food only at Latest Recipe and Favola for lunch and dinner. 20% off on food only for lunch and dinner at Prime)

For all these establishments, terms & conditions apply.  
The offer is valid until 31 December, 2015 with black-out dates in place.  
Please contact the hotel for further information.



## i-ZEN PRIVILEGES

### IT'S OUR PRIVILEGE!

As an i-ZEN card member, you are the selected few invited to indulge in exclusive shopping, dining and pampering experiences with the premier merchants we have lined up with you in mind. We want to ensure that the experience is attractive and especially for you, presenting special offers and discounts.

Your i-ZEN Privilege Card is welcomed in any of the outlets below and there is no expiry date as we believe your benefits should be timeless! Just show them your card and enjoy the discount privileges today

For more information on your i-ZEN Privilege card, contact Rene Anthony, Customer Relations on +603 6411 6388 (ext. 6887) or email to enquiry@i-ZEN.com.my



<<< Scan this with your QR code application or visit [www.i-zen.com.my/privileges.htm](http://www.i-zen.com.my/privileges.htm) for more information on the full member privileges available in year 2014/15



## THE i-ZEN PRIVILEGE CARD GIVES YOU ACCESS TO EXCLUSIVE OFFERS AT YOUR FAVOURITE SPOTS

#### SHOPPING



#### TRAVEL



#### BEAUTY & WELLNESS



#### ACCOMMODATION



#### EDUCATION



#### HOME & DECOR



#### DINING



Keep an eye out for more lifestyle brands in our forthcoming issues.



# THE RUMA

HOTEL AND RESIDENCES

@ JALAN KIA PENG, KLCC



+603.6203.0020  
[www.the-ruma.com](http://www.the-ruma.com)