

A Publication of



# ASCEND

A CELEBRATION  
OF LIFE

**New Year,  
New Me**  
pg.06

**What Lies  
Ahead -2023**  
pg.19

20  
23

**Tickled  
Taste Buds**  
pg.08

**The New  
BMW i7**  
pg.16



# 2023

## A CELEBRATION OF LIFE

Across the world, economies and borders have been reopening this year with the hope that we can return to a life of normalcy. In 2023, let us continue to carry that hope, and celebrate the lives we live. In this issue, Affin takes a deep dive into the things that make life worth living. Explore a hotel to escape to in the city and one that gives breathtaking views of nature; take a ride in the all in the new BMW i7, or go for a meal at one of our top 3 picks for dining out in the year ahead. The life we have is also made that much more special by our loved ones, so be sure to check out our feature on future-ready treats that are worthy of gifting to friends and family. Here's to a new year, and a new start!





# WELCOMING OUR NEW PRIME MINISTER

The AFFIN Group and AffinMyFamily would like to extend our heartiest congratulations to YAB Dato' Seri Anwar bin Ibrahim on his appointment as the 10th Prime Minister of Malaysia. We wish you every success moving forward.

Sincerely,





2022

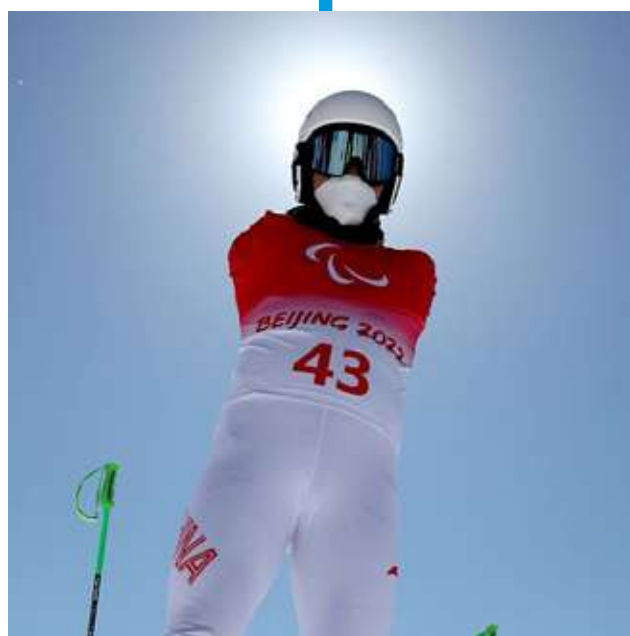
## START

**January 7**

The number of COVID-19 cases exceeds 300 million worldwide. Despite assurances from several different organisations and health bodies, the pandemic is not yet an endemic as it continued to affect a large portion of the earth's population, albeit with a less devastating strain – Omicron.

**February 21-24**

The Ukraine-Russia War begins. Russian President Vladimir Putin signs a decree stating that the Luhansk People's Republic and Donetsk People's Republic are independent from Ukraine and begins a full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

**March 4-13**

Beijing hosts the 2022 Winter Paralympics. By hosting this event, Beijing became the first city to host both the Summer Paralympics and the Winter Paralympics.

**April 4**

The IPCC concludes its Sixth Assessment Report on climate change. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) warns that greenhouse gas emissions must peak by 2025 at the latest and decline by 43% by 2030, if we want to limit global warming to 1.5°C.

FREEDOM  
OF  
SPEECH

Delete Tweet?

This... it will be  
the timeline of  
and fromaccount suspended  
accounts which violate the TwTHE  
WRAP  
-UP

*A Timeline of Key  
World Events in 2022*

A lot can happen in a year, and 2022 was no exception. From the prevalence of COVID-19 in different pockets of the world, to a geopolitical conflict with ramifications on the global economy, the year has passed us and left behind some truly big changes that will impact us in 2023 and beyond. In this article, we endeavour to capture the 12 different events that shook our communities.





### May 9

Sri Lankan Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa resigns. The resignation comes hours after his supporters clashed violently with government opponents in Colombo, a conflict that left dozens injured and prompted police to impose a nationwide curfew. He is succeeded by Ranil Wickremesinghe as Prime Minister three days later.



### September 8

Queen Elizabeth II passes. The Queen passed away at Balmoral Castle in Scotland at 96 years old and is succeeded by her son, Charles III.



### June 28-30

NATO holds a summit in Madrid, Spain. Along with countries from the European Union and the Indo-Pacific, the organisation searched for a consensual defensive reinforcement after the Russian invasion of Ukraine and Russia's sustained threatening over the territorial integrity of other nations.



### October 28

Elon Musk of Tesla fame acquires Twitter. The acquisition costed US\$44 billion and sent the social media company into a tizzy with a slew of retrenchment exercises and the implementation of new and somewhat bizarre policies.



### July 23

Monkeypox becomes a global health issue. The World Health Organization declares the recent monkeypox outbreak a Public Health Emergency of International Concern as the number of cases hits 17,000 in 75 countries.



### November 19

Malaysians take to the polls. The day's voting results in a hung parliament, the first in our history, before YBhg. Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim is appointed our new Prime Minister by Yang di-Pertuan Agong Abdullah five days later.



### August 28

Floods hit Pakistan. The country declares a climate catastrophe and appeals for international assistance as the death toll exceeds 1,000. The UN and several other nations pledged millions in funding for aid.



### December 7

China opens. After a slew of protests against the country's Zero-COVID policies, the government eases its COVID restrictions. People will no longer need to show negative virus test results or health codes to travel between different parts of the country, and unless an area is designated as high-risk, work and local production cannot be stopped.

END





# FUN FACTS

— about —

## NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS

Every year, many of us make new year resolutions – whether it’s losing weight or spending less – we all look forward to setting goals for the next 12 months. However, there is little known about this practice; here, we share some fun facts about this tradition.



### The Most Common Resolution

As you may have guessed, the most common new year’s resolution around the globe is the goal of losing weight, either by hitting the gym or increasing daily exercise. Since many of us indulge in treats in the months leading up to the new year, it makes sense that most people want to shave off the extra body fat in the months after!

### ORIGINS



## 1

#### The Babylonians

Some people believe that the tradition of making New Year’s Resolutions began with the Babylonians; they celebrated their new year with an 11-day long festival that took place in March. They also made resolutions in the form of promises made to their gods which would secure them divine favour for the next year, with the most common promise being that they would get out of debt.

## 2

#### The Romans

The Romans are the reason we start the new year in the winter after Julius Caesar adjusted the calendar and made January 1st the beginning of a new year. The word “January” was inspired by the Roman god Janus, who heralded new beginnings, ends, and the new year. He was also the god that the Romans offered their resolutions to, and it was believed that he could look backwards into the previous year and then forward into the future.

### Statistics on NYRs

Another fact we can all agree on is how hard it is to keep new year resolutions; most don’t actually come true, with a lot of people giving up on their resolve within the first half of the new year. Here’s a look at the numbers:

22%

of resolutions fail after the first week.

40%

of resolutions fail after a month.

50%

of resolutions will fail after the first three months.

60%

of resolutions fail after six months.



### How can we make sure we achieve our new year resolutions?

The statistics point to about 30% of people who don’t even bother with making goals for the new year because they believe they won’t be able to keep it up. In fact, only 8% of us achieve our goals! The key is to plan, and actually vocalise these plans to yourself. Whether it be via social media or just a word with family and friends, being able to voice out your thoughts and dreams really does make a difference.



# 2023 – YEAR OF THE WOMAN

*With 2022 behind us, it is time for us to look ahead to a new year that will bring its own share of events, happenings, and developments, and no matter what may take place, you can be sure that women will have a big part to play. Here are three Malaysian women set to make a splash in the headlines in 2023:*



## **YB Hannah Yeoh, Youth and Sports Minister**

Often lauded as an outspoken champion of the people in her role as Member of Parliament for Segambut, Hannah is now set to take the local sports scene by storm in her new role as Youth and Sports Minister. At 43, the mother of two has stuck to her guns and ridden the political wave to join our new government. To date, Hannah has already laid out her 5 key focus points for the Ministry of Youth and Sports:

- 1) Making sports accessible to all Malaysians;
- 2) Ensuring that athletes have safe spaces to practice their sport;
- 3) To look after athletes' welfare and to engage with them for their feedback;
- 4) To review existing programmes under the Ministry and to empower these programmes; and
- 5) To work on restoration and rehabilitation for the youth, and raise awareness that they can develop themselves in other ways aside from excelling in academia.



## **Prof. Cheah Phaik Yeong, Founder and Head of Bioethics and Engagement, Mahidol Oxford Tropical Medicine Research Unit (MORU)**

Penang-born Professor Cheah Phaik Yeong is a professor of global health at the University of Oxford; their work revolves around research related to the health of populations around the world. At (MORU) in Bangkok, Phaik has spearheaded many engagement activities in Southeast Asia, and is in charge of ensuring that MORU's research is ethical, responsive, and that its potential health impact is maximised. In 2019, Phaik won the University of Oxford Vice Chancellor's Choice Award for Public Engagement for her "Village Drama Against Malaria" project. At present, she is conducting research on antimicrobial resistance, highlighting the significant implications of antibiotics becoming ineffective against infections, which is a major global health challenge that will affect generations to come.



## **Alena Murang, Singer and Songwriter**

Alena is a Dayak-European who is known for her eclectic sound, and she highlights her East Malaysian roots in every song. She is one of the first women to play the sape' a traditional lute instrument from Borneo that was originally reserved for male healers. In 2021, her music video for Warrior Spirit, which was directed by Sarah Lois Dorai, won the "Best Music Video" category at the Rome International Movie Awards, a "Special Jury Award" at the Los Angeles Film Awards, and "Best Ethnographic Film" and "Best Music Video" at the New York International Awards. At present, the Sarawakian is continuing to promote her 2021 Album "Sky Songs" having just finished a concert tour in October, and has also done collaboration videos with The Connected Mangroves Project by Ericsson and Smart Connection, as well as MARECET, an NGO focused on marine mammal research and conservation in Southeast Asia.



# TICKLED TASTE BUDS

Ring in the New Year with a walk on the wild side by visiting these three excellent restaurants in the Klang Valley. Whether you're craving local flavours or a Latin-American fiesta, the locations we've selected for this review are sure to make a meal out with loved ones a truly memorable experience in 2023.



## Chinese Food with a Twist:

### JIBBY CHOW @ BANGSAR VILLAGE II

The hunt for halal Malaysian-Chinese cuisine that truly excites the palette can officially cease; Jibby Chow, which is a solid staple in the local dining scene, serves traditional Chinese favourites with a distinct Malaysian flair.

For mains, try the Cantonese-style sweet and sour chicken with garlic chips, or the stir-fried Australian sirloin in vinegar, chilli, and barbeque sauce, which is served with crispy onion rings. For seafood lovers, Jibby offers a smorgasbord of ocean delights, including lobster, mud crabs, prawns, squid and clams cooked with Kam Heong, salted egg yolk, or marmite sauce. Wrap up your meal with an authentic selection of desserts, including a Red Bean/Lotus pancake, Vanilla pannacotta with passionfruit, a Musang King Gelato, or a simple but hearty bowl of *Ais Kacang*.

#### Located at:

Lot GF-1, Ground Floor,  
Bangsar Village 2, Jalan Telawi  
1, Bangsar Baru, 59100 Kuala  
Lumpur, Wilayah Persekutuan  
Kuala Lumpur

#### Opening Hours:

10 am to 10 pm, daily.

 [jibbygroup](https://www.instagram.com/jibbygroup)







A Jaunt in Nature Served with a Side of Coffee:

## LUCK BROS KOPI @ KOTA DAMANSARA

While most restaurants in town display flora and exude natural vibes, Luck Bros Kopi aims to serve the real deal. This kopitiam, which was formerly known as Luckin Kopi, recently opened their third outlet...and this one comes with a petting zoo!

In terms of food, get ready to dine on amazing Malaysian kopitiam dishes served with a signature Luck Bros flourish; a recommended starter is their Apam Balik Bun, which is a lighter version of our favourite street dish, filled with sweet corn and peanuts. For their mains, Luck Bros has a Salted Egg Chicken Mi Sedaap, which has noodles, 4 pieces of chicken with salted egg sauce drizzle, and an egg; the dish is guaranteed to satisfy your craving for noodles and bring back some childhood memories. Finally, cleanse your palette with a selection of gelato ice cream, which offers flavours such as *kopi* and *teh*, as well as more traditional flavours such as strawberry, pistachio, vanilla, and chocolate.

Entry to the petting zoo is priced at RM 10 and gives young ones and their parents a chance to pet a variety of animals, including goats, rabbits, snakes, and spiders.

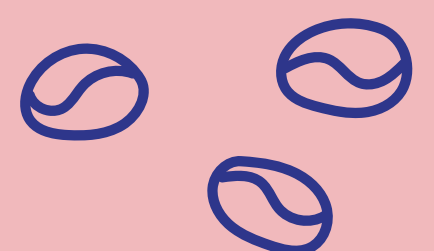
### Located at:

2A-H, PUS Teknologi Sunsuria,  
Jalan Teknologi Taman Sains  
Selangor 1, PJU 5, Kota  
Damansara, PJ.

### Opening Hours:

Daily.  
Weekdays: 10 am to 6 pm.  
Weekends: 10 am to 9 pm.

📷 [luckbrosmy](#)







Serving up Mexican Vibes in Malaysia:

## CHICA BONITA MEXICAN KITCHEN AND BAR @ PUBLIKA

Stroll into The Square at Publika and you won't be able to miss Chica Bonita thanks to the myriad of bright colours adorning all of its décor, including the chairs! Serving authentic Latin American cuisine, Chica Bonita is a firm favourite amongst the Mont Kiara crowd and is definitely worth a visit if you're craving exotic dishes.

A recommended starter is the much talked about La Bomba Nachos, which are corn chips topped with grilled cheese with salsa; it also comes with a choice of chilli con carne or chicken for the topping and is famous due to the oozy cheese that accompanies the chips. Moving on to the mains, the Quesadillas La Diva are sure to get your tastebuds going. The grilled flour tortillas come with a choice of chicken, beef, chicken and beef, pumpkin, or mushroom for filling, as well as cheese, pico de gallo, and salsa roja on the side. To conclude your meal, do try the Tres Leches, a sponge cake soaked in three kinds of milk (evaporated, condensed, and cream) and topped with charred pineapple.

### Located at:

Lot 34, Level G2, Block C5  
Publika Shopping Gallery  
Solaris Dutamas, 50480 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

### Opening Hours:

Daily. 10:30 am to 10 pm

 [chicabonita.my](https://www.chicabonita.my)





# PLACES TO GO *to ring in* THE NEW YEAR

The prospect of having a fresh set of 12 months ahead can be a very exciting idea for those of us anticipating 2023, but where can we go to celebrate the advent of another 365 days? Here are a couple of spots to check out if you're looking for somewhere to light up the town in the most unique of ways this new year.



**A State-of-the-Art Escape for  
Golf Pros and their Families:**

## BIG SHOT TROPICANA

Located within the Sports Wing of Tropicana Golf & Country Resort, Big Shot truly offers fun for the whole brood. It was launched just a few months ago and is a virtual golfing centre that offers a “real” golf experience and perfect weather 24/7 thanks to the Bravo Golf System, which is recognised as the number 1 golf simulator worldwide.

Avid golfers and amateurs alike will be impressed by the simulator's superior graphics and realistically mapped PGA courses, which can be played in either a simulator bay or one of the three private suites that BigShot has on offer. What's more, the simulator allows you to replay every shot and analyse them, so if you're in it to win it, this is the perfect spot.

For fans of other sports, BigShot also has a multi-sports simulator with games like frisbee, baseball, and shooting. In addition, the facility has American pool tables, foosball, and virtual reality games, including Light Bike and VR Racing, as well as two Oculus VR bays. Families that are vocally talented should also check out BigShot's Private Golfing Suites, as they have their own built in karaoke systems so you can serenade the night away.

Pricing for each experience is available upon request.

**Located at:**

Tropicana Golf and Country  
Resort, Jalan Kelab Tropicana,  
Pinggiran Golf Saujana, 47410  
Petaling Jaya, Selangor

 [tropicanaganolf](#)



**A Place that Boggles the Mind  
and Encourages Imagination:**

## MUSEUM OF ILLUSIONS

If you think you've seen every museum that our capital city has to offer, think again. The Museum of Illusions Kuala Lumpur, which is located in Ansa Hotel at Bukit Bintang, is the first museum of its kind in Southeast Asia, and is an interactive museum that is sure to impress even the most discerning of museum-goers. “Interactive” means that this is a place where laughing, screaming, running, taking photos, and creating a general bit of noise is not frowned on; the attraction consists of illusionistic rooms, optical illusions, and a playroom with didactic games and puzzles. There are 70 exhibits on site, which are all inspired by science, mathematics, biology, and psychology, and visitors will learn about vision, perception, the human brain – namely, why our eyes see things that our brain does not understand – as they walk through the various rooms.

The Museum also distributes didactic games and puzzles, which encourage people of all ages to “think outside the box” to solve them; those interested in giving it a go should visit the Smart playroom where you can try to solve wooden puzzles, play games, and compete, and if you're not looking to have the fun stop at the Museum's doors, the games are available for purchase at the Museum shop.

**Tickets:**

**Adult:** RM 45 / RM 35 with MyKad

**Children (5-15 years):** RM35 / RM 25 with MyKad

**Family (2 adults and 2 children):** RM 120 / RM 90 with MyKad

**Located at:**

Level 1, Ansa Hotel Kuala Lumpur, 101,  
Jalan Bukit Bintang, 55100 Kuala Lumpur

 [museumofillusions\\_kl](#)



# NEW YEAR, NEW ME

After a tumultuous 2022, everyone is looking ahead to 2023 with new hope and new ambitions. In this issue, we asked three Malaysians about their aspirations in 2023, and what they're looking forward to the most.



 **ZAWIAH  
MOHAMAD  
YUSOP**

## It's been a turbulent year in terms of the economy. What are some of the financial plans you have in place for 2023?

My financial plans for 2023 would be:

- 1) To review all my personal commitments, assets, savings, and other liabilities, and figure out what I should reduce and/or increase so I can pay off debts and create a plan for my long-term retirement fund.
- 2) To start a new budget for 2023 so that I can allocate more money to an emergency fund for items such as medical expenses due to an unexpected illness, or natural disasters such as floods.

## Have you set any personal goals (i.e., self-improvement, up-skilling, hobbies) for 2023?

My personal goals are to gain valuable industry knowledge and enhance my skills with a variety of professional certifications in my current field and to improve my health and wellness.

## Now that travel is an option for Malaysians, do you have any plans to visit anywhere and when do you plan to go?

I plan to visit Switzerland in between April and October 2 years from now as Switzerland is known as one of the most scenic places in all of Europe.

## If you could see one world issue tackled or improved in 2023, what would it be?

I would say that it would be the COVID-19 pandemic issue, especially in Malaysia, because our government imposed a Movement Control Order in March 2020 which helped to stop the virus from spreading; we also had vaccinations and provided financial funding for those in need. Additionally, these four actions: border control, movement control, physical distancing, and self-protection have been well implemented in our country and now our businesses can run as usual, even with some new rules in place.

## How are you feeling about the year ahead, and what are you looking forward to achieving in 2023?

I'm looking forward to meeting new people, enjoying life, and cherishing my family.







 **MAZIAM  
BIN. RAMLI**

**It's been a turbulent year in terms of the economy. What are some of the financial plans you have in place for 2023?**

My financial plans for 2023 would be as follows:

1) Due to the possible uncertainties that might come up in the coming year, I will be reviewing my medium/long-term liabilities and will be looking at cutting/reducing unnecessary expenses.

2) To allocate some money as a "contingency fund" so I can deal with any unforeseen circumstances.

**Have you set any personal goals for 2023?**

- 1) Become more fit and healthy.
- 2) Develop self-esteem and positivity.

**Now that travel is an option for Malaysians, do you have any plans to visit anywhere and when do you plan to go?**

I have yet to make plans but will carefully consider it when the time comes.

**If you could see one world issue tackled or improved in 2023, what would it be?**

Pandemic issues will be completely tackled with no further possibility of variants or mutations appearing, because it has caused social disruption, economic loss, and general hardship for so many of us.

**How are you feeling about the year ahead, and what are you looking forward to achieving in 2023?**

I hope that everything will be good if not better than this year. I am looking forward to having work/life balance in 2023.



 **DAVID LIOU  
YIK HAN**

**It's been a turbulent year in terms of the economy. What are some of the financial plans you have in place for 2023?**

While the decade-high global inflation shows signs of peaking, the rising cost of living, uncertainties surrounding geopolitical risks, and the talk of a possible recession suggest a slowdown in the economy in 2023. Personally, I would avoid taking on extra debt or spending on any big-ticket items in 2023 when the cost of borrowing is expected to increase.

**Have you set any personal goals for 2023?**

I plan to spend more time exercising to improve my fitness level and health.

**Now that travel is an option for Malaysians, do you have any plans to visit anywhere and when do you plan to go?**

Probably somewhere near as I don't plan to splurge too much on non-essentials in 2023.

**If you could see one world issue tackled or improved in 2023, what would it be?**

Food security, because you can't build peace on an empty stomach.

**How are you feeling about the year ahead, and what are you looking forward to achieving in 2023?**

Cautiously optimistic. I think hoping for the best and preparing for the worst is a good way to carry ourselves. I'm looking forward to advancing and growing together with my team and our comrades in arms in 2023.



## DESTINATION 2023

*The promise of a new year also brings about the promise of travel and new beginnings, so why not start 2023 on a high note with a stay in a luxurious hotel? Whether you're hankering for peace, quiet, and cool weather or just looking for an urban escape that still sits a comfortable distance away from the city, the two hotels on our list this month are sure to meet your expectations and even exceed them!*

# M RESORT AND HOTEL

@ Bukit Kiara

*Since opening its doors to guests on Merdeka Day 2022, M Resort and Hotel has been the talk of the town. It sits uphill next to the Bukit Kiara golf course, and brands itself as a family-friendly resort surrounded by nature.*



## ACCOMMODATION: COSMOPOLITAN CHARM MEETS MODERN MAGNIFICENCE

*M Resort has 385 guestrooms and suites in total, each with their own set of special features to make your vacation a memorable one.*

### • The Standard Room

With a floor size of 28.7 square meters, the Standard gives you entry-level access to the hotel's offerings. Available with a king-sized bed or a set of twins, the room is outfitted with sophisticated and bright accents of purple fabric on furniture and bedding, and has an open concept bathroom that is designed to bring light in from its surroundings.

### • The Superior Room

Beginning with this room, guests can choose a city, pool, or golf course view according to their preferences. The Superior Room also comes with a king-sized bed or a set of twins, and is designed with the idea of sanctuary in mind. Guests are greeted with snowy-white sheets and a simple but luxurious interior that's perfect for a night's rest after a long day shopping, visiting local sites, or an extended trip to the golf course.

### • The Deluxe Room

The Deluxe Room takes your stay at M Resort a notch higher, providing a cosy feeling to guests the minute one steps through the door. Upon choosing the city, pool, or golf course view, you'll notice the tiny details of opulence seeping in, with subtle and yet bright furnishings, and tastefully appointed art gracing the room.

### • The Executive Suite

At double the size (57.4 square metres) of the other rooms, the Executive Suite is truly suited for guests looking to make their vacation in the city an extremely comfortable and indulgent experience. It is the most in-demand of the rooms at M Resort, and booking it means that you won't have to wait in line at the lobby to check-in, and you get access to the M Lounge which serves a light breakfast as well as snacks and beverages throughout the day.

## DINING: SUMPTUOUS TREATS FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

M Resort has two dining options on premise, the Fairway Coffee House, which serves a large buffet spread for breakfast featuring local delights such as Indian food and Malay cuisine as well as unique Western fare such as roasted beef and lamb as well as a healthy Salad Bar and a Seafood Bar which offers chilled seafood and LokLok.

As evening approaches and the day winds down, head over to the Hive Bar and Lounge which has a TaiTai Afternoon Tea Set that comes with two refreshing mocktails, premium coffee or tea, and a three-tier set of sweet and savoury snacks to enjoy by the pool.





# CROCKFORDS

@ Resorts World Genting

*Opened in 2014, Crockfords Hotel is billed as Resorts World Genting's poshest accommodation and is situated in quiet corner of the Genting area away from the hustle and bustle of the main thoroughfare.*



## ACCOMMODATION: COMFORT IN THE CLOUDS

There are 111 Superior Rooms and 8 Junior Suites at Crockfords, and each come with luxurious Greek Calacatta marble restroom fixtures that are exclusive to the hotel as well as an in-room private steam bath. Guests can use the one-touch technology to control the blinds, room temperature and lighting, so you truly get to make the room feel like your home away from home during your stay.

### • The Superior Twin

Guests in this room can expect compact comfort with cushy and well-outfitted twin beds situated just next to a spacious seating area which also features a study desk. The room is kept bright and light with the presence of a chandelier as well as vases of fresh flowers.

### • The Superior King

For couples looking for a private getaway, this room has a separate living area that is sectioned off from the entrance by mirror-encased doors. The décor is subtly elegant with reflective furnishings that add light and a sense of sophistication to the room. The king-sized bedroom overlooks the hills, providing an amazing way to wake up to the clouds.

### • The Junior Suite

This suite caters to the demands of discerning travellers who are all about the view. The king-sized bed is accompanied by a chaise lounge that allows you to soak up the surrounding beauty and relax after a day out at the theme park.

### • The Executive Suites

There are only eight Executive Suites at Crockfords, making this experience an exclusive one. Guests can choose from three themes – Gym, Tatami, and Mahjong.

The Gym Suite has a high-end Italian gym system that allows you to work out in your own space, while the Tatami Suite is inspired by Japanese culture and features a Zen tea ceremony space. Last but certainly not least, those looking to sharpen their Mahjong skills can choose the Mahjong Suite which has a built-in table that shuffles the tiles on its own with the press of a button. All Executive Suites come with a living and dining area, a smaller bedroom, and sliding doors for extra privacy, as well as a massage chair.

### • The Villa

For a family getaway worth boasting about, the three Villas are three-bedroom suites that have two king beds and two sets of twin beds to accommodate large parties. Spacious enough to provide privacy for everyone, each Villa also has a large living and dining area for meals and TV time with the kids. There are two bathrooms, with one master bathroom serving the master bedroom, as well as a small private gym and spa room. The Villa also stands out for its luxurious furniture and fittings, making one feel like one is walking through an exclusive residence in a modern cosmopolitan city.



## DINING: CUISINES FOR EVERY PALETTE

Guests at Crockfords Hotel that take a Junior Suite or higher are treated to breakfast at the Executive Lounge, which overlooks the hills and offers a buffet selection of cold cuts, bread, and Western fare to accompany main breakfast dishes. Resorts World Genting is also known for its many dining destinations, so guests are spoilt for choice in terms of restaurants, including Trattoria Il Lago for lovers of Italian fare, and Harry Ramsden's Fish and Chips for guests seeking authentic British fish and chips in crispy and fresh batter.



# BMW i7

OWN 2023 WITH A CHEF-D'ŒUVRE  
IN AUTO CRAFTSMANSHIP



**Following up from our last issue's article about some of the best EV options in the Malaysian market, the latest version of BMW's flagship sedan is a veritable masterpiece in technology and luxury. The combination of extravagance and the integration of the most cutting-edge technology makes this opulent vehicle a true force to be reckoned with, well worthy of the hype it has generated since its announcement.**

## STEPPING INTO A NEW ERA WITH A CLASSIC NAMEPLATE

Back in April, BMW celebrated the 45th birthday of their famed flagship 7 Series sedan by debuting a brand-new generation (model code G70). Poignantly commemorating this momentous anniversary, was the reveal that this iteration would for the first time be available in both traditional combustion engine and battery electric variants. The latter variant, for which this article is about, has been given the "i" moniker treatment and was named the i7. The latest addition joins the family with some of its i branded siblings being the i3 (established almost a decade ago in 2013) and the exceedingly popular large iX SUV (established just last year in 2021).

## REVEALING A NEW POTENTIAL IN ELECTRIC POWER

Ranking far behind comfort and prestige, performance had generally never really been an important priority on the checklist for ultra-luxury car shoppers. What vehicles like the i7 do is make it so that there doesn't need to be a compromise. While it's still largely meant to be a chauffeur driven car, we're willing to bet that prospective owners will want to regularly take their i7 for a spin. What has been achieved with the technology is nothing short of spectacular and this shows in the performance figures. The i7 is powered by two electric motors. Despite its future status as one of

the longest and largest vehicles on our roads, the 544 hp and 745 n M propels the sedan from 0-100 km/h in just 4.7 seconds! The i7 will also boast one of the highest total ranges for EVs at up to 615 km. Charging times vary depending on the power but at high power stations, the i7 can be charged from 10% to 80% in just 50 minutes.

## BEAUTIFUL SOPHISTICATION; INSIDE AND OUT

Mandatory kidney grilles aside, the current edition is unrecognisable from the original 1977 7 Series, seemingly sharing very little DNA. However, when we compare it to the more recent offerings from this century, the newest model is unmistakably a 7 Series. This is especially true when viewing from the sides and rear. The profile has not been significantly altered as it retains a similar, solid shape while the distinguishing features of the rear are also recognisable. Up at the front is where we get the most changes with the split headlights bejewelled with Swarovski crystals being the difference. The layout exudes an elegant yet aggressive image. At the centrepiece of it all is the enormous and illuminated kidney grille alluded to earlier. Despite mixed reactions to this style choice, BMW has proceeded to continue enlarging this much talked about feature across several models over the years. Distinguishing itself from ICE variants, the i7 sports noticeable light blue accents along parts of the exterior just like other i branded products.





Entering the palatial interior is pure bliss as passengers are welcomed into a cabin from the future. We would ordinarily start by describing the cockpit but an exception must be made for a rear passenger compartment that is truly one of a kind. Nestled inconspicuously above the lush furnishings, the star of the show is the drop-down 31 inch display that turns the cabin into a mini cinema. Lounging in the ergonomic seats will make it difficult to go back to the average massage chair. The reclinable seating will remind distinguished occupants of luxury air travel as they immerse themselves in their chosen media. Expect to relax on the smoothest leather hides known to mankind.

Moving up front, another enormous screen spans from behind the steering wheel to the centre console and immediately grasps attention. This one is curved and houses the latest BMW iDrive infotainment system. As is reasonable to expect moving through the 20's, wireless android and apple connectivity is standard for those who prefer a mobile interface. The wide screen is where we can see the most family resemblance with the iX. Air vents are cleverly hidden underneath the swooping screen so passengers might be too mesmerised to notice that they are seemingly absent. Swarovski's Advanced Crystals make a reappearance on the inside as they are the material of many key touch points such as the seat adjusters and the dash. BMW assures that the Advanced Crystals are developed with planet-consciousness at the forefront of their production process.

## A FUTURISTIC STATEMENT PIECE HEIGHTENED THROUGH PRACTICALITY

Continuous developments in EV tech keep us in awe. The BMW i7 with its elec-terrific innovations is a perfect example of this in action. Having said that, the cartists in Munich have outdone themselves beyond the wonders of EV tech, succeeding in bringing our collective awe to new levels. To label the i7 as "high-tech" feels like a vast understatement – the description simply doesn't do it justice. Among the smorgasbord of features included are; an advanced augmented reality system, the ability to pre-set tricky manoeuvres, the ability to remote control the vehicle using smartphones, and an unprecedented cinematic experience like no other.

The introduction of augmented reality in navigation has made journeying through tricky routes much easier. The i7 may not be the first vehicle to feature augmented arrows on the road but the ability to see these waypoints right behind the steering wheel is a very convenient and safe feature. Another feature is the ability to store difficult manoeuvres in the car's memory. This will be extremely useful to avoid that pesky three-point turn after a long day out. Once the car has committed the routine to memory, the driver can just relax as it self-parks. For the last generation 7 Series, there was much buzz surrounding the feature of controlling the car from the key fob. While many would still find this tech mindblowing, BMW has taken it a step further by allowing the control of the vehicle from registered smartphones. The main use for this would be for tight parking spots but people have been creative in its use. The whole experience is sort of like piloting the largest remote control car ever - a childhood dream realised. The aforementioned 31 inch screen in the rear compartment boasts an 8k resolution and claims the record for being the largest screen available in any car. The user experience feels much like a smart TV with options such as YouTube and Netflix. Paired with the phenomenal Bowers & Wilkins speaker system, BMW promises an ultra-immersive in-vehicle cinema.



**Those considering an i7 will need to hold out a little longer for further information on the Malaysian release. Pricing estimates start from around RM 700k. For more info on the official Malaysian debut, stay tuned.**



*NB: At the time of writing, BMW Malaysia has soft launched the i7 and it is available for pre-order.*



# FUTURE -PROOF TREATS

Embrace a futuristic state of mind in 2023 and treat yourself or a loved to these top-of-the-line items that are set to make your year ahead something to look forward to.

**For the Fashionista**  
**THE ROAV AUDREY**

We all love the idea of sunning ourselves by the pool while also keeping our eyes protected. These sunglasses, which are part of the new Superstar sunglasses collection from ROAV Galaxy, are meant to deliver extra glamour and convenience, thanks to its foldable and lightweight frame. Choose from a variety of colours when it comes to the lenses, with blue, grey, silver, and pink tints on offer, while the frames come in black or silver.

Price: RM 849



**For the On-the-Go Friend**  
**THE TECH BRIEFCASE**

Hailing from Down Under, Bellroy has been known to be one of the best brands this side of the world for bags, briefcases, luggage, as well as tech gear, and this product is no exception. Crafted with the ultimate techie in mind, this briefcase has clean lines and a professional look, and is designed to make every morning commute by car or public transport a breeze. Key features include a padded 16-inch laptop sleeve, a spacious main compartment, and luggage pass-through slides (for sliding over a suitcase handle), perfect for the travelling business person. For those who are environmentally-conscious, this bag is leather-free and comes in three colours: black, navy, and slate grey.

Price: RM 639

**For the WFH Aficiando or the Audiophile**  
**JABRA EVOLVE2 BUDS**

Just announced this past December, the Jabra Evolve2 Buds are top-of-the range earphones meant to boost concentration and improve collaboration for professionals that are working on the go or staying put at home. The buds come with Adjustable Active Noise Cancellation (ANC) technology, which can be used to personalise the ANC to their listening preferences; they can also block any external sound and minimise distractions. Other features to look out for are MyFit, SafeTone, and PeakStop, which all ensure enhanced hearing protection and the most optimal seal for the best and most personalised ANC experience.

Price: RM 1,640

OR

Price: RM 1,860

(USB-C UC)

(USB-C UC with wireless charging pad).





# WHAT LIES AHEAD - 2023



## Technology | AI the Disruptor

Social media and traditional media alike were recently abuzz with the news of two AI applications, OpenGT and DALL-E, both of which are rumoured to eventually give writers and graphic designers a run for their money. OpenGT can write content in an almost human-like manner, covering everything from advertising copy to long-form articles. DALL-E on the other hand, has shown that it can create images from basic instructions. Both AI tools do this by mimicking human speech patterns and synthesising data.



## World Politics | The Coronation of King Charles III and Queen Consort Camilla

King Charles III and his wife, Camilla, will be crowned King and Queen of the United Kingdom and other Commonwealth realms on Saturday, 6 May 2023, at Westminster Abbey in London. The event is already being anticipated as the “symbolic high point” of Charles III’s accession; he acceded to the throne on 8 September 2022, when his mother, Queen Elizabeth II passed away. The coronation is expected to be shorter in length and more inclusive of other religious faiths and communities, as well as less expensive than previous coronations.



## Sports | The Rugby World Cup 2023

Fans of football had their thrills and spills at the end of 2022 with the Qatar World Cup, and 2023 is set to be the year for rugby lovers with the Rugby World Cup in play. The international rugby competition, which happens every four years, will be contested in France, and although we Malaysians may have firm favourites such as the New Zealand All Blacks, sports analysts are already cautioning fans to expect upsets, based on the performance of the contending favourites in various tournaments this year; rugby today has rarely been less stable or predictable, which makes this sporting event one to really look forward to.



## The Economy | Malaysia to Weather the Storm?

For months on end, financial experts and institutional bodies alike have been warning of a global recession that will impact every country, but in a recent article, RAM Ratings has reported that it expects Malaysia’s broad and diversified base to cushion intensified headwinds to growth in 2023. Our GDP growth will slow to 4% - 5% next year, down from 8.2% in 2022, but domestic demand is expected to drive the economy as our businesses and households continue to recover from the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, despite the global economic slowdown, which will likely dampen our exports, and notable price pressures as well as tighter monetary concerns, Malaysia is expected to remain resilient and ready in the year ahead.





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