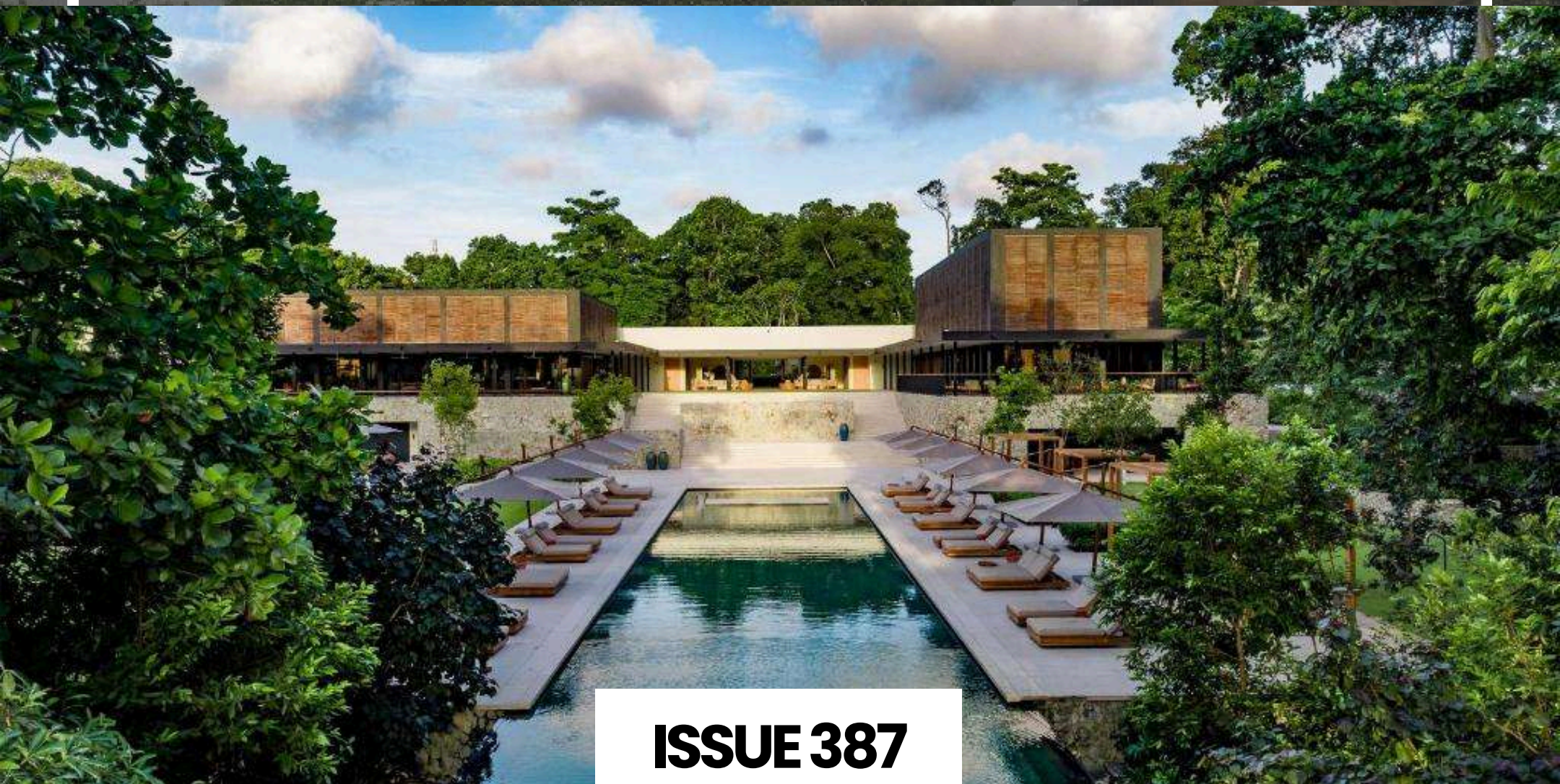


HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY NEWSLETTER



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IOI Properties Adds Four Marriott Hotels And 888 Rooms To Its Portfolio



IOI Properties Group has signed a portfolio deal with Marriott International for four new hotels in Malaysia totalling 888 rooms, lifting its Marriott managed hotels to 15. The line up includes W Langkawi with 173 rooms at Pantai Kok, opening in 2030 as the luxury brand's Langkawi debut near the Langkawi Sky Bridge.

The Ritz-Carlton, Putrajaya will offer 215 rooms and open in 2032. It sits in a 70 storey mixed use tower within Phase 3 of IOI Resort City. In addition, Aloft by Marriott Sepang will have 250 rooms in a 40 acre commercial development in Kota Warisan, while Aloft by Marriott Johor Bahru Plentong will add 250 rooms within IOI @Plentong. Both open in 2030, with Plentong marking the brand's Johor Bahru debut.

Marriott's Rajeev Menon said the projects reflect shared confidence in Malaysia's hospitality sector growth. IOI chief executive Datuk Lee Yeow Seng said the deal cements the group's position as a significant hospitality owner. IOI aims to reach a hospitality footprint of 4,648 rooms across Malaysia, Singapore and China by 2032.

Holiday Inn And Suites Penang Prai Reportedly Open To Offers



Holiday Inn & Suites Penang Prai is reportedly on the market, with sources indicating an asking price of RM220 million to RM230 million. This works out to about RM693,000 per room. The owner has considered a sale since late 2025. The 36 storey freehold hotel has 332 rooms at Juru Sentral in Seberang Perai and sits about 30 minutes from Penang International Airport.

The hotel opened in early 2025 and is managed by IHG. Its developer is Exopuri Development Sdn Bhd, led by founder and managing director Ng Kock Leong. The project was first announced in 2016 with 288 rooms, a cost of RM117 million and a 2019 completion target. Average occupancy is described as slightly over 50%. It adjoins Citadines Prai Penang, which has the same owner, and targets professionals in the industrial and manufacturing sectors.

The listing comes during an active period for hotel transactions in Penang. Mainland hotels typically trail island properties because they depend on weekday corporate demand. Even so, the property offers a freehold asset with an established international brand.

Sinyi Builds RM1 Billion InterContinental Resort To Lift Papar's Profile



Taiwan based Sinyi Group is building an InterContinental resort worth about RM1 billion in Melinsung, Papar, Sabah, which will be the district's first five star hotel. Papar MP Datuk Armizan Mohd Ali said the main hotel is due to open in December 2027, with the full resort following in 2028. The project spans more than 32.4 hectares and was 34.1% complete as at September 2026, while the main hotel stands at 47.7%.

The resort will offer 418 rooms and accommodation units, down from the 450 rooms announced in November 2023, and should create about 700 jobs. IHG Hotels & Resorts will operate it. Facilities include four restaurants and bars, 2,400 square metres of meeting space across 11 rooms, three outdoor pools, a spa, a fitness centre and a children's club.

Armizan expects local food, transport, supply and tourism operators to benefit. Sinyi also plans a low density resort on Mengalum Island, where it invested RM226 million in 2019 for more than half the land. It targets net zero carbon emissions there by 2030, though construction timelines remain unspecified.

MM2H Attracts 7,650 Applications And Delivers RM8.85 Billion In Economic Value



The Malaysia My Second Home programme generated RM8.85 billion in economic value from October 1, 2024 to August 31, 2026. Deputy Tourism, Arts and Culture Minister Chiew Choon Man said the figure comprises more than RM5 billion from property purchases and RM3.82 billion from fixed deposits. The programme drew 7,650 new applications across its Platinum, Gold, Silver and Special Economic Zone categories during the 23 month period.

China remained the largest source market with 3,847 applications. Taiwan followed with 1,054, then Hong Kong with 324, Singapore with 287 and the United States with 284. Chiew said the results reflect strong international confidence in Malaysia's long term economic prospects and show potential to expand foreign direct investment.

To widen its reach, the ministry is targeting key markets including Hong Kong, Japan and South Korea. The MM2H One Stop Centre plans overseas sales missions in these three markets to attract more applicants and investment. Officials also engaged consultants and representatives from real estate, education, healthcare and banking at the 14th MM2H National Workshop 2026 to gather feedback.

KLIA Expects Up To Four New Airlines Before The Year Ends



Kuala Lumpur International Airport expects to welcome at least three or four new airlines before the end of 2026. Malaysia Airports Holdings Bhd group managing director Datuk Mohd Izani Ghani said discussions with those carriers are quite advanced. The announcement was made on September 30, 2026, and signals continued growth in the airport's international network.

Gulf Air has already launched its inaugural Bahrain to Kuala Lumpur service, becoming the tenth Middle Eastern carrier at KLIA. The route runs three times weekly all year on a Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner. The addition strengthens links between Malaysia and the Gulf region and widens choices for both leisure and business travellers.

The momentum comes as Visit Malaysia 2026 continues to support arrivals. The Formula 1 Bahrain Grand Prix, held from October 2 to 4, 2026, is also expected to draw about 200,000 spectators. Against this backdrop, Malaysia Airports is coordinating with government agencies to manage passenger volumes and keep operations smooth. More carriers and routes should in turn support tourism receipts and hospitality demand across the country.

Penang Pushes For Stronger Air Links To Maximise Airport Expansion Gains



Penang wants Budget 2027 to prioritise air connectivity, international events and George Town's heritage to strengthen tourism and local economic benefits. State tourism and creative economy committee chairman Wong Hon Wai said the state urged the federal government to strengthen the tourism agenda through targeted investments, so tourism delivers tangible benefits to communities.

A key proposal is an International Air Connectivity Fund, including matching grants to attract direct flights from Japan, South Korea, Australia and the Middle East. It would complement efforts to maximise the planned expansion of Penang International Airport. Capacity should rise from 6.8 million to 12 million passengers annually once the project completes in the next two years. Wong said the next priority is to fully use this capacity through new routes and more frequencies.

Wong recently met senior Malaysia Airports Holdings Bhd officials on expansion, upgrading and route development. Regular engagement will cover routes, aviation market trends and future projects, alongside information sharing. He also sees potential in air cargo, given the concentration of multinational corporations, and noted that the airport is Malaysia's second busiest.

Sabah Tourism Gains Momentum As Chief Minister Stresses Air Connectivity Priorities



Sabah recorded 2.6 million tourist arrivals in the first eight months of 2026, according to Chief Minister Datuk Seri Hajiji Noor. International visitors made up 1.1 million or 43%, while domestic visitors contributed 1.5 million or 57%. Chinese tourists totalled 578,681, up 4.1%, and remain the leading market, followed by Singapore, Australia, Europe and Japan. Italy and Spain showed notable growth in August.

The state has reached 64% of its four million arrival target. A further 1.44 million visitors are needed, equal to about 361,000 a month. Speaking on October 3, 2026 at Padang Merdeka, Hajiji said affordable airfares and flight availability are the biggest challenges. He added that air connectivity must continue to receive close attention so that the full potential of the tourism sector can be realised.

Achieving the target will require stronger promotions, better connectivity and cooperation among stakeholders. Cultural tourism is also supporting local communities, with events such as the 12th annual Gala Night and Rhythms of Kinabalu 2026 adding to the state's visitor appeal and the wider tourism ecosystem.