

travelista

Wander woman **Sophy Roberts** fast-tracks international intelligence on where to be and what to see.

✈ Off-the-beaten-track destinations are the big lure this October. Bangkok and New York-based outfitter **Remote Lands** is bigging up **NORTH**

KOREA with its increasing experience in this difficult territory; it is now even chartering private planes to Mount Paekdu on the border with China where, at 9,000ft, travellers can glimpse the world's highest crater lake (www.remotelands.com; from \$750 per person per day).

Abercrombie & Kent is, as we go to press, backing **EGYPT** after the troubles, inaugurating a nine-night group tour departing October 27 and visiting the newly restored Avenue of the Sphinxes, the ceremonial walkway between the Temple of Luxor and the Temple of Karnak (www.abercrombiekent.co.uk; £1,995 excluding flights). And now that Aung San Suu Kyi has softened her approach to tourism sanctions in **BURMA**, developments are also starting to

show themselves beyond the country's Bagan temple route. New outfitters are joining the fray, including **Khiri Travel** (www.khiri.com; from \$475 for a seven-day itinerary), which has just opened an office in Rangoon. The South-East Asian specialist will now be offering excursions into more remote regions, including Thibaw and Kyaukme in Northern Shan State, and the Rakhine Mountains, its tours incorporating specialist guiding, such as the antiques-connoisseur-led visit to the colonial houses of Pyin Oo Lwin. And on Ngapali, one of Burma's most spectacular white beaches, **Amara Ocean Resort** (www.amaragroup.net; from \$280) opens this month. The 26 bungalows are the brainchild of German Gerald Schreiber and his wife Kalayar, who also operate the teak

Amara I and *Amara II* boats on the Irrawaddy. What makes this resort stand out is that fishermen still significantly outnumber tourists in this forgotten corner of the Gulf of Bengal, which is just a tiny sliver of the country's 1,250-mile coastline (much of the rest is inaccessible to tourists).

✈ Such wild frontiers are also opening up in **CAMBODIA**, where **Song Saa** (www.songsaa.com; from \$668) debuts on Christmas Eve in the Koh Rong Archipelago. The resort spans two islands – its accommodation in the jungle-rich interior, on the beach or over water – and chef Neil Wager is moving here from the royal couple's honeymoon destination, North Island in the Seychelles. A visit to Burma or Cambodia works well when combined



Above: Khiri Travel offers tours to Bagan and beyond in Burma. Below: The Nolitan hotel, New York.



Above: Amara Ocean Resort at Ngapali Beach, Burma.





Above: an over-water villa at Song Saa resort, Cambodia. Below: the cruise-liner-like Hotel Lone in Rovinj, Croatia.

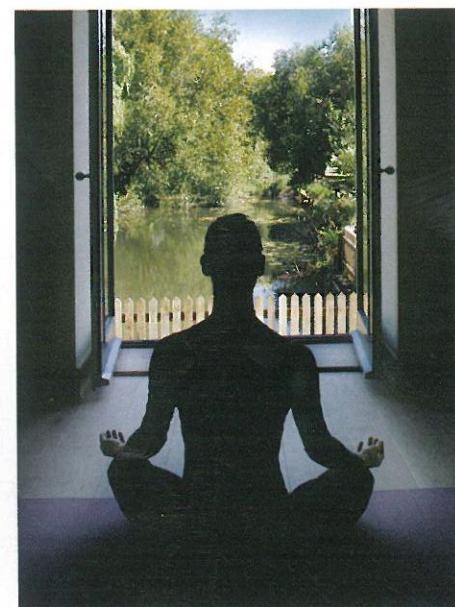
city of Ayutthaya by silk dealer Jim Thompson for his best friend, the Bangkok socialite Connie Mangskau, and the gym will include a Muay Thai boxing ring. If such cultural authenticity matters, take a note of Jok's Kitchen in Chinatown (23 Trok Issaranuphap; +662-2221 4075), where the chef-proprietor cooks by appointment only. There are no menus; dishes include Alaskan snowfish and steamed crab – and at \$30 a head it's got a following among some of the city's biggest players.

➔ Such hole-in-the-wall discoveries are the holy grail among gastronomes, and in **NEW YORK** there is a new 18-seat address that takes no bookings but is packed with three sittings a night: **Torrisi** (www.piginahat.com) at 250 Mulberry Street. A sandwich shop by day, the Italian-American menu is changed each evening – four antipasti, a pasta, a choice of two entrées, a palate-cleansing ice and a cookie plate – to spectacular effect, with simple highlights including the great balls of mozzarella. The restaurant is around the corner from **The Nolitan** (www.nolitanhotel.com; from \$525), a just-opened 55-room boutique hotel on the corner of Kenmare and Elizabeth Streets. Clear and frosted glass dominate the aesthetic, with standout rooms featuring floor-to-ceiling windows that make you feel like you're floating above the street below.

➔ For an equally buoyant experience, the 248-room **Hotel Lone** (www.designhotels.com; from £205), which has just opened on the Adriatic coast in **CROATIA**, is inspired by the cruise liner. Designed by architect Silviye Novak of 3LHD, there is an atrium six floors high opening up to the sky and design details include furnishings by Patricia Urquiola, Richard Schultz and David Rowland, as well as mixed-media art installations.

➔ Such surface sparkle is not, however, the point of a **Jiva Healing** week (www.jivahealing.com; from £475) – a detox retreat incorporating yoga, massage, one-to-one counselling with nutritionists and its popular juice fasts. The next two confirmed dates are October 26 to 30 in Wiltshire, **ENGLAND**, for a five-day cleanse, and two back-to-back weeks in Goa, **INDIA**, from February 25 to March 10. ♦

with a stopover in Thailand, with **BANGKOK** offering the best route into Rangoon via a 90-minute flight. Here in the Thai capital, **The Siam** hotel (www.thesiamhotel.com; from \$500) is due to open for New Year with 39 pool villas and suites over three acres upriver from the Mandarin Oriental. The restaurant will be made of three Thai houses, which were transported from the ancient



Above: Jiva Healing's retreat in Wiltshire.



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