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**GET READY FOR
THE BEGINNING
OF A NEW ERA**

JETSETTING WITH ...

Yotel's Hubert Viriot and Brendan Daly



SINGAPORE—There has been a lot of excitement over hotel brand Yotel entering the Asian market by way of its first hotel in Orchard Road.

The chain of microhotels, which first opened in airports (London's Gatwick and Heathrow, and Amsterdam's Schiphol), is expanding into various cities, from Dubai to San Francisco.

In Singapore, Yotel is opening two properties: One in Orchard in the sec-

ond quarter of 2017 and one at Jewel Changi Airport in 2018.

"The two properties will be complementary to each other," said Yotel CEO Hubert Viriot. "Our hotel in the airport is built around the airport passengers travelling or having early flights or night flights, while the one in the city caters to those visiting Singapore for a short trip."

General manager of Yotel Orchard Road Brendan Daly promised the hotel will be "really exciting" as Yotel is doing away with the things travellers don't need, from room service to check-in counters. Instead, guests check in at kiosks and there'll still be the human touch required. He added: "We're still working on the room rates, but we will present great experiences at a great value — especially for our location on Orchard Road."

Shanghai and Taipei. How does Yotel view the competition here?

Hubert: It's a big place in Asia. I think it's great. The more competition, the better, because we're going to see a segment being built. It only makes our positioning and distribution easier because the consumers get the concept, and expect that kind of offering now. It's fine if they prefer one brand over another. We all have our uniqueness. **Brendan:** Competition makes our job easier. It's testament that this kind of product is what people want.

“Singapore is a major hub regionally and globally. You have a huge traffic of people who're coming through with very short stays. We're catering to that. Isn't it nicer if you could take a proper shower and rest for an hour or so before your next flight?”

Hubert Viriot (left)
YOTEL'S CEO

A: What do you think is the incentive to check into Yotel at Jewel at Changi Airport given that Changi Airport has been widely acknowledged to be so comfortable?

Hubert: Plenty. Singapore is a major hub regionally and globally. You have a huge traffic of people who're coming through with very short stays. We're catering to that. Isn't it nicer if you could take a proper shower and rest for an hour or so before your next flight? Our experiences in Heathrow, Gatwick, and most recently Charles de Gaulle, show people do. Instead of paying for a night's stay, we just charge them by the hour — we have a minimum booking of four hours, and you can get additional hours if you need them. It's an affordable experience — just pay something like US\$60 (S\$81) to make your long haul-flight so much better. You can enjoy (a) shower, rest, watch a movie, charge all your devices, (and) download everything for free. That's how people travel today.

Q: As Yotel Orchard Road will be Yotel's first Asian property, could you tell us what will be different about it? Will it have Yobot (Yotel's luggage robot installed in Yotel New York City)?

Hubert: What's being consciously done is that the DNA of the brand will be there, but knowing that we'll be in Asia — this being our first Asian property and a very important location for us — there are some local design elements that have been incorporated. There are also certain cultural expectations in Asia. Yes, things like slippers and umbrellas provided. We also know that buffet breakfasts are traditionally popular. There's nothing so different from our other Yotels, but we're thinking of these nuances. We have a pool and a 24-hour gym, too. As for Yobot, it's unlikely we'll have it because of space limitations. But there'll be innovation for sure. We'll be using technology and devices to make the guest experience fun, interesting and easy.

Q: Will there be a Yotel beach resort one day?

Hubert: Yotel is being built in all the great gateway and first-tier cities right now. We try to focus on what we do best in these destinations. Our consumer is very urban, but I also know my guests go on (beach) holidays. I don't exclude it. It may happen one day. I can see Yotel happening in a resort destination like Bali. **SERENELIM**

Q: There has been a rise of similar microhotels in Asia with other brands such as CitizenM also opening in

“We're still working on the room rates, but we will present great experiences at a great value — especially for our location on Orchard Road.”

Brendan Daly (right)
YOTEL SINGAPORE'S GENERAL MANAGER



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