

Gold Service Scholarship Trip to The Mandarin Oriental Hotel Thailand, Bangkok Asia Jupiter Humphrey-Bishop

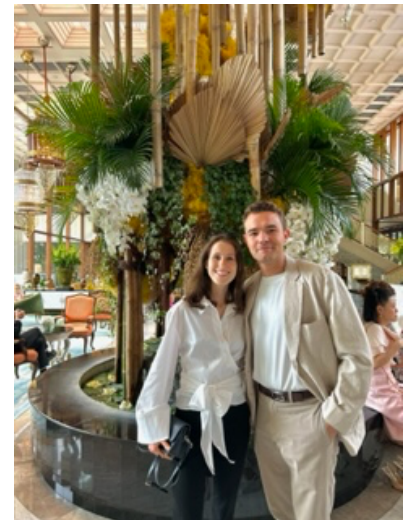
Day one.



We arrived at the airport, boarded the plane and set off on to Thailand. We were met at the airport by the Mandarin Oriental Staff, met our chauffeur and drove to the hotel.



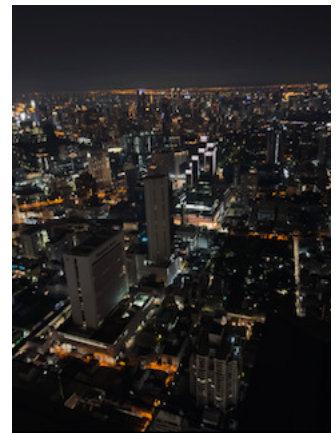
As soon as we arrived, we were given the warmest of welcomes by the Mandarin Oriental staff, and were shown to our stunning rooms with onsuites, beautiful views of the city and given flowers as a Thai tradition. We were then treated to a delicious buffet breakfast with a view of the river and city.



We then travelled across the city to visit the famous “The Grand Palace of Thailand” the official residence of the Kings of Thailand for many years, open to the public to visit in the heart of Bangkok.



Then we travelled to The Ojo Restaurant at The Standard, 76 floors high with city views as far as the eye can see! A dinner to remember for sure.



Day two

We started with a training session on Thai Culture, learning about the Wai Greeting, basic Thai Language and also ways of respect.

Afterwards we had a hotel orientation session including a tour of all of the hotels departments and operational areas. We learnt about how the different departments work together

and got to visit the events department setting up for a luxury wedding that was happening in a few days. We then took a boat across the river and visited the Thai experience restaurant, guest spa and gym facilities. After our day at work, we headed out to the city to try some of the famous Michelin Star Street food. An experience for sure.





Day three

We started with the Head of Departments morning meeting, followed by the Food and Beverage daily Meeting. This was great to see how the managers communicated with each other and how they plan for events and the daily work load. The day followed on with a trip to visit the Mandarin Orientals Shops in the local shopping malls to learn about the companies marketing and sales.



It was currently the Moon Cake season, which was a huge opportunity for the hotel to compete with other top hotels selling the popular cakes of Thailand. On arrival to the shop, the staff welcomed and greeted us with a surprise of their best moon cakes and traditional sweet tea with fruit.

After the staff dinner, we headed up to the Le Normandie Restaurant (a beautiful French Michelin Star restaurant) for our first shift in the restaurant. We met the team and learnt about the restaurant's operations. We also learnt about traditional Thai ways of working and serving and the restaurants menus and wine lists.



Day Four

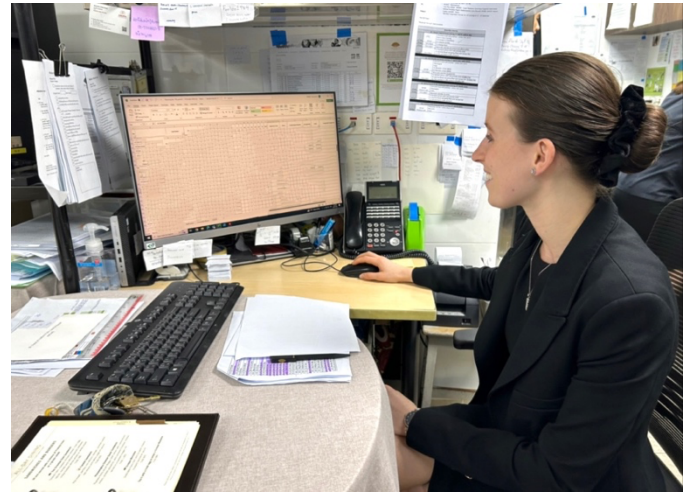
After the morning meeting, we headed down to the hotels tailors, where we got fitted for some tailored suits to take back to London. I then started my shift in the famous 'Authors Lounge', which is in the original part of the Mandarin Oriental building, renowned for its traditional afternoon tea, accompanied with many framed photographs of the famous writers who have stayed at the hotel since the late nineteenth century.

After my shift in the Authors Lounge, I headed back to the Le Normandie restaurant for another dinner service. We had training on different table side elements and gueridon trolley service, I am so grateful for this opportunity to learn from such a well established restaurant.



Day five

I got the opportunity to work in the Room Service department and learnt all about how the room service operates. From taking orders by telephone, to table laying to service in the room. I also learnt that it was a Thai Tradition to take your shoes off before entering the guest's room, and to greet with the Wai greeting.



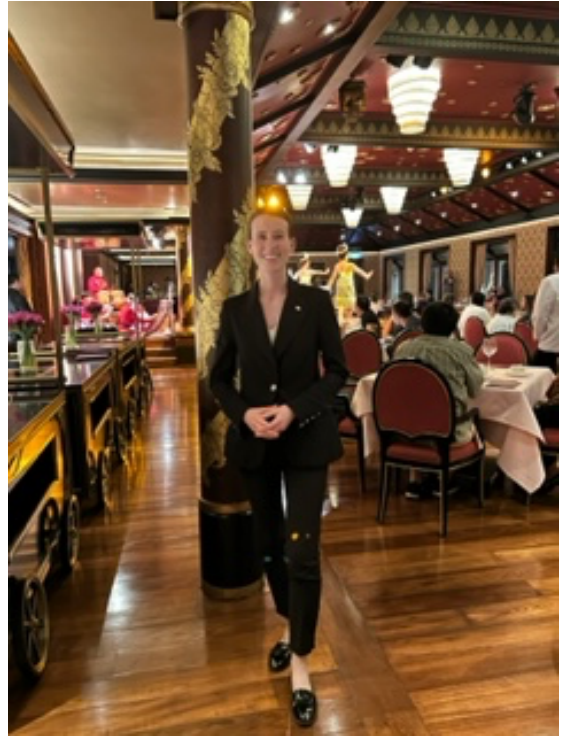
We then had a training workshop in the Le Normandie Restaurant on gueridon trolley service. We learnt how to prepare beef tartar, flambe crepe suzette, and fillet dover sole table side. It was wonderful to learn these skills and techniques!



The evening consisted of a shift in the world famous award winning 'The Bamboo Bar' learning all about the bars cocktails, history, style and I even got to make a few Thai classic cocktails using fresh Thai ingredients, one of my favourite ones being with fresh coconut, lemongrass and ginger. The bar also has live music each night with a classic jazz bands on the weekends, creating a wonderful lively atmosphere.

Day Six

Today I worked a shift in the Verandah Terrace. The weather was currently in the middle of a heatwave reaching nearly 41 degrees for a few hours, and service was very busy! It was great to see such different areas of the hotel with a lot of variety of style, which allowed me to understand more about the hotel as a whole.

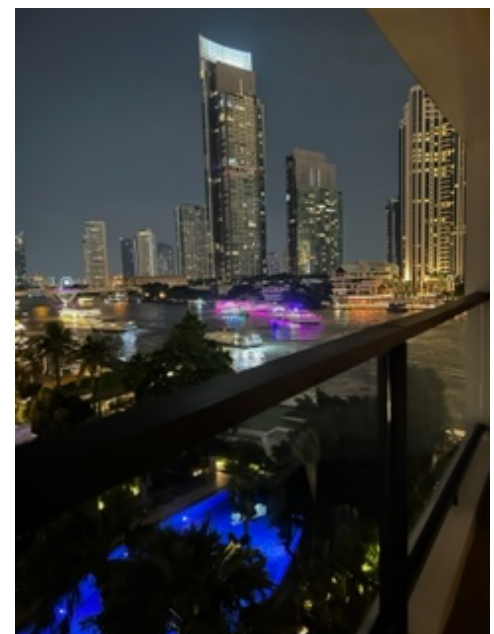


I later worked in the Sala Rim Naam (The Thai experience restaurant) where the restaurant is divided into two sections, the Thai side with cushions as seats and tables very low to the floor and also the western side where they had tall tables and chairs). It was great to learn about the Thai traditional service of removing your shoes and sitting on the floor next to the guest to serve them their food.

During the restaurant service they had traditional dancers and musicians for the guests entertainment. There were also professional fighting acting out a historic story.

Day Seven

We headed out to the city to do some exploring of the local street food markets, shops and places to eat.



Day Eight

We were gifted with a poster copy of The Oriental Times with a photograph of us with the team which had written good luck messages from the Le Normandie restaurant staff. We had a quick breakfast before our flight back, and just before we left they gave me a platter of fresh fruit with Bon Voyage! It has been such an amazing trip with so many lovely memories and experiences, a trip I will certainly always remember.



I'd like to thank everyone involved with the Gold Service Scholarship for a fantastic opportunity to train in one of the world's best hotels. This has been a truly wonderful experience and I feel I have learnt a lot about different styles of hospitality and service. A huge thank you to the Mandarin Oriental Staff for looking after us so well and teaching us so much about luxury hospitality.