

Love is in the Air

 By [Brian Berkman](#)

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Sometimes the ultimate luxury is simply being alone with your loved one. At [Pavilions, Phuket](#) and their sister properties in the Himalayas and Bali, their marketing differentiator is not their abundant luxury, albeit very abundant, nor their hillside location, but exclusive privacy and the romance that awaits.



Being collected from Phuket's airport in a limo with chilled jasmine-scented towels and perfectly cut squares of mango and watermelon is not, in itself unique, but I bet no other limo collection will have a romance playlist that kicks off with John Paul Young's Love is in the Air and gets more meltingly tender as the 45-minute drive from the airport to the top of the hill above Layan Beach comes to an end. Only the most stoic among us will not have had their love-strings plucked by the time they arrive.

The views from the open-sided reception area onwards to the Andaman Sea are wonderful and having a large gong sounded as you step through the foliage into reception has more than a little Lara Croft adventure about it.

Battery-powered golf buggies are always at hand to take guests to or from their villas to The Plantation Club restaurant where breakfast and all day dining is served under timber fans and windows that peel back to reveal the hillside breezes, planters of Bird of Paradise, moat-like water features and the sea beyond. There is also a funicular up the steep hill.



Although we were in an entry-level Spa and Pool pavilion, until viewing the other category rooms - Ocean Pool View villa, Tropical Pool villa, Spa and Pool penthouse and the grand Three-bedroomed Pool villa - I couldn't have imagined lodging any larger than ours. In fact, our pavilion and pool was larger than many apartments.

Ming Dynasty meets Paris nightclub

I thought the interiors a mix of Ming Dynasty Opium Den and Parisian nightclub chic with black lacquer Chinoiserie screens, a mix of contemporary and antique furniture and striking red accents. Each villa has a signature flower which forms the wallpaper behind the large, flat-screen and in front of the ultimate love-seat couch.

The granite bathrooms are vast with a walk-in dressing room, tub, rain shower, twin basins and a water closet. The stand-out feature of the Spa and Pool Pavilion is, wait for it, your own spa. Yes, a double spa suite, complete with sauna and steam room, is exclusively yours. With an outside door which allows your therapists to set up the room without disturbing you, this is the ultimate in private sanctuary.



Resident manager Simona Chimenti told me that some guests never leave the resort, let alone their villas and if we weren't so keen to explore the Layan Beach we might also have simply cocooned in the balmy Thai heat, worked on our all-over tans on our private sun beds and then retreated to the air-conditioned cool of our villa.

All the tech you want

I loved having password protected super fast Wi-Fi inside and out and an iPod with a million great songs in my villa or a docking station for my own music. The villas are so spaciouly located within the resort that we could listen to music at volume without disturbing the surrounding calm.

Our villa had a kitchenette with kettle and toaster as well as plunger and top-grade coffee grinds and a mini-bar pantry with a note to say that items were competitively priced so we shouldn't hold back. "We want guests to feel they can enjoy themselves fully without feeling they're being punished by the mini-bar prices," Simona says.



You too will also find it hard to leave and will take full advantage of the BBQ in the Buff when you visit. But that's another story.

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