

Paradise Asia (Series 1)

8 x 30 MINUTES

EPISODIC BREAKDOWN

1. Chiang Mai, Thailand

In an attempt to conserve the local culture against the erosion of time and urbanism, the architect of the Four Seasons Resort Chiangmai, Ajarn Chulathat Kitibutr, modelled his design on a traditional village in northern Thailand. Conversely, the Mandarin Oriental Dhara Dhevi is designed more like a small city that showcases various architecture and craft of the region.

2. Phuket, Thailand

The Amanpuri was the first resort in the luxurious Aman chain. The architecture is based on the traditional Thai architecture of the Ayutthaya period. In its unique design and construction, most of the trees have been preserved and the living pavilions built around them. We take a look inside.

3. Bali, Indonesia

The Como Shambhala Estate – owned by Singapore developer Christina Ong and designed by renowned Malaysian architect Cheong Yew Kuan follows the ridgeline contours like a horse's saddle. Named after the natural elements of fire, wind, water, forest and earth, each habitation is singular in design, representing different cultures and areas of Indonesia. We have exclusive access to take a look inside.

4. Java, Indonesia

Incorporating local Javanese elements such as the kubuk (open pavilion) and modelled after Borobudur, one of the greatest Buddhist monuments of the world, the Amanjiwo is an excellent example in the tradition-modern hybrid design. On the other hand, the Losari Coffee Plantation, set against a 60 acre working coffee field plantation, reflects strongly on Indonesia's the colonial Dutch culture.

5. Beijing, China

A former Manchurian hunting lodge nestled beside the Great Wall of China, The Red Capital Ranch is Beijing's first and only eco-tourism resort. Each of its 10 residences is a restored ancient Chinese villa. Meanwhile, the Red Capital Residence situated in the preserved heritage district of Dongsu takes a communist-themed interpretation to the traditional courtyard houses.

6. Yunnan, China

Crafted from local farmhouses using indigenous material and craftsmanship, the Banyan Tree Ringha reflects a strong Tibetan influence in its design. About three hour's drive away, in the Unesco heritage site of Lijiang, a style cross between the Naxi and Chinese style was employed to reflect, but not replicate, the traditional culture of the old town.

7. Rajasthan, India, Part I

A magnificent example of Rajput-Mughal architecture, the Samode Palace is a 150 year old restored palace that boasts some of the finest frescoes and mirror-work in Rajasthan. We explore the 40 room luxury hotel that come a long way from its humble beginnings of just two original bedrooms, and how it single-handedly revived the fortunes of Samode Village.

8. Rajasthan, India, Part II

How does a resort recreate the majesty and tradition of the Rajput era? We take a look through the Amanbagh's Moghul-styled resort, one of the largest projects in Rajasthan in the last 50 years, and learn about how this majesty was built using only bamboo and wood scaffolding and manpower.