

## Luxury Lodge Designed By Aman Resorts Architect Opens In Northern Kachin State, Myanmar

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Silks, rattan, teak and bamboo embellish the brand-new luxury wilderness Malikha Lodge opening for its first full season from Oct. 5, 2007 through April 25, 2008 in Northern Kachin State, Myanmar.

Designed by world-famous architect Jean Michel Gathy whose artistry is displayed at several Aman Resorts, this is one of the last great areas of subtropical and mountain rainforest in the Himalayas and is home to both Lisu and Rawang hill tribes.

Its opening also heralds the highest possible level of commitment from its owner to provide opportunities for guests to view local community projects and thus gain insights into frontier life.

'The simple elegance of our lodge and its intensely beautiful natural surroundings are, we believe, like a piece of poetry or music that can induce a life-altering experience,' says Brett Melzer, founder and owner, who notes that a goal is to reinforce the link between tourism and conservation.

Access is by scheduled Air Bagan flight service to Putao every Tuesday and Friday from early October until the end of April allowing the option of 3, 4 or 7 night stays. From Putao Airport a 20-minute drive brings guests to this 12-acre site bordering the local Lisu village of Mulashidi.

Guests are ensconced in 10 bungalows overlooking rice terraces that lead to the snow-clad Himalayas beyond the tree-fringed Nam Lang River. Architect Gathy plays with the hovering mountain theme in each bungalow where oversize teak tubs positioned in the center of each suite are swathed in yards of gossamer cascading from cathedral ceilings. In the Malikha Lounge where guests congregate and dine, Gathy has created a soaring ceiling punctuated by two large braziers that remove the chill from evening air.

The lodge offers the feeling of a private house party for all meals, with a choice of set menus prepared daily for lunch and dinner, including one vegetarian option. The theme is refined continental country style in keeping with the wilderness mountain location. With advance notice, special dietary requirements or special events can be catered for.

### **A private spa with outdoor plunge pool will be completed during 2008.**

Here in the Putao Valley, one of the most isolated and remote valleys in South East Asia, opportunities for economic advancement remain limited. The decision was made to create a world-class lodge here in a valley wedged between India and China at the mouth of the Ayeyarwaddy River in the Eastern Himalayas.

This lodge makes a statement that it is both of the earth and from the earth in a recreation of traditional-style bungalows carefully sited to recreate a sense of idyllic village life in this garden paradise of old growth bamboo and jungle. A palette of muted olives, grays and russets emphasizes natural woods and stone that lead the eye to the surrounding pristine beauty here at the headwaters of the Ayeyarwaddy, the river that courses south to Yangon.

Melzer, who owns Eastern Safaris ([www.easternsafaris.com](http://www.easternsafaris.com)), operates 'Balloons over Bagan' the largest luxury hot air balloon passenger service in Asia floating over 2000 ancient pagodas. ([balloons@myanmar.com.mm](mailto:balloons@myanmar.com.mm)). A 100 percent private Myanmar Company, he views Malikha Lodge and the access it provides to cultural and wilderness opportunities as an extension of his commitment to sustainable tourism.

On-premise projects include providing training and management to village farmers to supply the Lodge with quality market garden and livestock produce on a commercial basis. A local hunter comes to the Lodge to demonstrate and keep alive his skills as well as accompany certain short treks. A carbon offset pursuit involves reforesting a 100-acre grassland. The Lodge's in house doctor provides free malaria testing and treatment to local staff and their families in the surrounding villages.

Guided half and full-day outings can be organized as well as longer overnight treks. Day trips and guided excursions within the Putao Valley in a private four-wheel vehicle are included in the daily per person rate (double occupancy) that also covers transfers to and from Putao Airport, accommodation, house drinks and full board (three meals daily). The price does not include champagne and a selection of some of the world's finest wines and liquors available in a special reserve list. Through April 30, 2008 the rates are \$1,350 for three nights, \$1,600 for four nights and \$2,500 for seven nights. Scheduled departures are every Tuesday and Friday from October to April inclusive. Because of its remote location, the Lodge is unable to accommodate children under age 12 and the very elderly or frail.

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