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A Guide To The World of MICE and Tourism



Empowering Readers: Our Most Precious Asset

"Many of our awards celebrated sustainability and guest experiences"



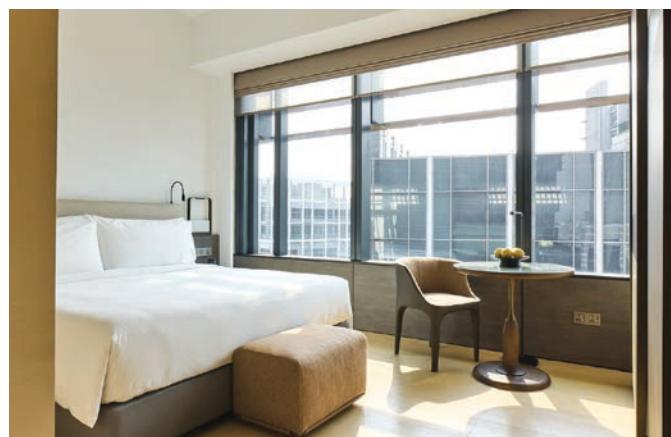
It was again a pleasure to experience COMO Metropolitan Singapore during my HICAP visit to Singapore. More so as this wonderful property was going to receive the HICAP Sustainable Hotel Award recognising hotels that embed sustainability into both operations and culture. This also provided me the opportunity to catch up again with lovely and delightful **Ruby Garcia, GM, COMO Metropolitan Singapore**. Basically from the Philippines, Ruby started her luxury hospitality career in Manila before working across Asia, the USA, and the Caribbean. In a tête-à-tête with our **Editor, Chandragupta Amritkar**, she opened up about the hotel as well as her career. Excerpts

How was year 2025 for COMO Metropolitan Singapore?

Though 2025 was challenging it was defining year for us at COMO Metropolitan Singapore. We strengthened our sense of purpose as a team through consistently positive guest feedback praising the kindness of the team and the high standard of service delivered. Our focus in the New Year is to reaffirm what COMO stands for: refined experiences delivered with sincerity and care.

The year saw the hotel win numerous awards. Can you enlighten our readers on these awards and how has the feeling been among your staff?

The recognition we received in 2025 was incredibly meaningful,



particularly because many of our awards celebrated sustainability and guest experiences. For our team, these accolades were affirming. Hospitality is a people-driven industry, and seeing their daily efforts acknowledged on a larger platform instilled immense pride and motivation. It reinforced that excellence is not a one-time achievement, but a collective, ongoing commitment.

Some of our awards in 2025 were - Best New Hotel from Tatler Best-in-Class in Singapore, one of the Best Hotel Pools from Travel + Leisure Luxury Awards Asia Pacific 2025, Best Business & Leisure Hotel at Exquisite Awards 2025, Outstanding Product Engagement Award by Expedia Group, and of course, we were awarded the EarthCheck Silver Certification.

You won the prestigious HICAP Sustainable Hotel Award. Can you explain the category and what helped you achieve it?

The HICAP Sustainable Hotel Award recognises hotels that embed sustainability into both operations and culture. We won in the category of Climate Action. For us, sustainability is not a standalone initiative — it is woven into how we design spaces, source ingredients, support wellness, and engage our team. Awareness is embedded into operations: staff-run "No Single-Use Plastic Days," refillable amenities, biodegradable dining ware, and circular sourcing partnerships are some examples.

From responsible procurement and waste reduction to guest education and staff engagement, our approach has always been holistic. This award was a testament to consistency, long-term thinking, and shared accountability across the hotel.



Singapore has plenty of hotels and more in the pipeline. How do you look at competition and how does COMO make a difference?

Competition keeps the industry vibrant and progressive. At COMO Metropolitan Singapore, we do not aim to be everything to everyone. Our difference lies in intentionality — spaces that feel calm rather than crowded, service that is intuitive rather than transactional, and experiences rooted in wellness, design, and dining. We believe guests feel the difference when luxury is understated, personal, and genuinely meaningful.

What about demographics of guests?

Our guests are discerning global travellers — business leaders, creatives, wellness enthusiasts, and culturally curious individuals — who value quality over excess. While many visit for business, they choose COMO Metropolitan Singapore for its residential-style rooms, wellness focus, and unique dining experiences. Increasingly, we are also welcoming younger travellers who appreciate conscious luxury and purposeful travel.

What are your future plans for COMO?

Looking ahead, our focus is on deepening experiences rather than expanding for the sake of scale. This includes evolving our room offerings, launching iconic experiences, and continuing to integrate sustainability in ways that are both impactful and authentic. Above all, we want to remain relevant, resilient, and true to the COMO philosophy.

On a personal front, how did you get attracted to pursue a career in hotels?

INTERVIEW

I was attending college in the Philippines when personal circumstances led me to seek a job close to home that was manageable alongside my studies. Almost by accident, a casual search in my neighborhood led to a call from the Front Office at Mandarin Oriental Manila.

After my first year in hotels, I realised how much I truly enjoyed the work, and I was promoted to the Club Floor soon after. Three years later, I was offered the

opportunity to be part of the opening team at Anantara Maldives—the group's first property outside Thailand—which marked the true beginning of my career in hospitality.

What first inspired me—and continues to inspire me today—is the opportunity to create moments of comfort, connection, and joy for people from all walks of life.

How has the journey been?

The journey has been both enriching and humbling. Hospitality has taught me resilience, adaptability, and empathy, while giving me the opportunity to live in beautiful places, meet wonderful people, and experience diverse cultures. Every role, destination, and team has shaped my perspective and leadership style, making it a continuous journey of learning about people, cultures, and myself.

So many different brands as well as countries. Impressive. How has it been working in different cultures?

Working across cultures has been an important aspect of my career. It has helped me adapt my leadership style by being exposed to different cultures. While operational standards are generally consistent, effective leadership requires cultural awareness, and these experiences have made me more adaptable and effective in managing diverse teams.



What difficulties did you face as a hospitality industry as it is perceived as a man's world?

Like many women in leadership, I encountered moments where I had to work harder to be heard or taken seriously. However, I focused on competence, consistency, and integrity. I find that women tend to place a greater emphasis on empowering people to develop their working identity. I am encouraged to see the industry evolving, with more women stepping into leadership roles and supporting one another.

What are your goals as you move ahead?

My goal is to continue leading with purpose at COMO Metropolitan Singapore, creating a workplace culture that values both people and purpose. I want to continue championing genuine connection, elevated simplicity, and quiet confidence — values that shape not just our guest experience, but how we grow and collaborate as a team.