

KUALA LUMPUR

Slice of life

Malaysian Airlines knows how to pamper its guests

Laxmi Sharath

It starts raining just as we leave the hotel to go to the airport. To us, emotional Indians; it feels like the skies of Kuala Lumpur are bidding us a tearful farewell. I have been in Malaysia for around a week having the time of my life – snorkelling and trekking in the wilds and the exhaustion shows as I climb onto the bus. It's a long drive to the airport located at the southern end of the peninsula in Sepang, almost 50 km from the capital town. I stretch myself, prepare for a peaceful snooze. Finally, the bus deposits us in front of the Malaysian Airlines Terminal and we gather our wits and our bags to enter the Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA).

I have always been in awe of airports since I was a child. Like a

labyrinth, they take me into nooks and corners, and very often I have ended up with a serendipitous discovery, like in this case, a rainforest right in the middle of a concrete jungle. The KLIA, which is supposedly the fourteenth busiest airport in the world, has passengers whiz past you, faster than planes. And there's never sufficient time to explore. However, I am lucky; with more than three hours to kill, I walk into one of the hugest lounges I have experienced.

In KLIA, there are more than three lounges, but the largest is located in the Satellite Terminal. At 43,000 sq ft, the flagship lounge here merges with the Business Class lounge and has a separate seating area for both first class and business class passengers. Operated by Malaysian Airlines,



the lounge is a throbbing live entertainment centre, almost a mini tourist spot in itself with loads of goodies and great food. I could've

lived here, if I did not have a flight to catch.

There is art, music, games and every form of entertainment available to the traveller. Gaze at the paintings while sipping on gourmet wines, relax in the comfortable lounge chairs or tune into a lullaby and nod off to sleep. There is a buffet replete with a local and international spread, making you feel like royalty just looking at the table. I long for a shower and a massage but settle for some great food instead and a power nap after.

The lounge is teeming with people and yet the silence is overwhelming. Walking about, the business centre is abuzz as the Wi-Fi is rather fast and free. In the recreational room, the LED television and the consoles are vibrant with adventure games for the young and young-at-heart passengers.

The sports bar alive with several game screenings; the alcohol selection here is wide and includes champagne. I feel the need for some pampering. So I walk into a spa looking for some foot reflexology. There is a small fee, but I do not mind. A small price to pay for the blissful sleep that followed.

