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Sukotai, Bangkok

Although Sukotai is surrounded by the high-rise buildings of Bangkok, one of

the noisiest and most traffic-choked cities in the world, the 210-room hotel is an exercise in Zen. It's also that rare thing – a resort hotel in the centre of the city. It boasts a stonking six-acre landscaped garden full of Eastern promise, water features, bougainvillea and even an Olympic-sized pool. The decor's stylish contemporary Thai, with a Buddha-in-the-city vibe. But the devil's in the (techie) detail, which is more Silicone Valley than Siam. Bedrooms come with natty boxes of 10 adaptor sockets to fit iAnything; and the restaurants give you iPads with slide shows of the food and Iron Age printed menus. The exotic Celadon restaurant's dishes come with 'rice paddy herbs', 'pandanus leaves' and 'garden chillies'. Then there's La Scala, a European eatery with a visiting roster of Michelin chefs. Everywhere, staff glide by with hands clasped in gestures of sawasdeeka greeting. Go for the hotel's impeccable service-with-a-Gulf-of-Siam-sized smile and for its convenience. Go for the power of calm.

DOUBLES FROM £265

0845 269 1152; quintessentiallytravel.com

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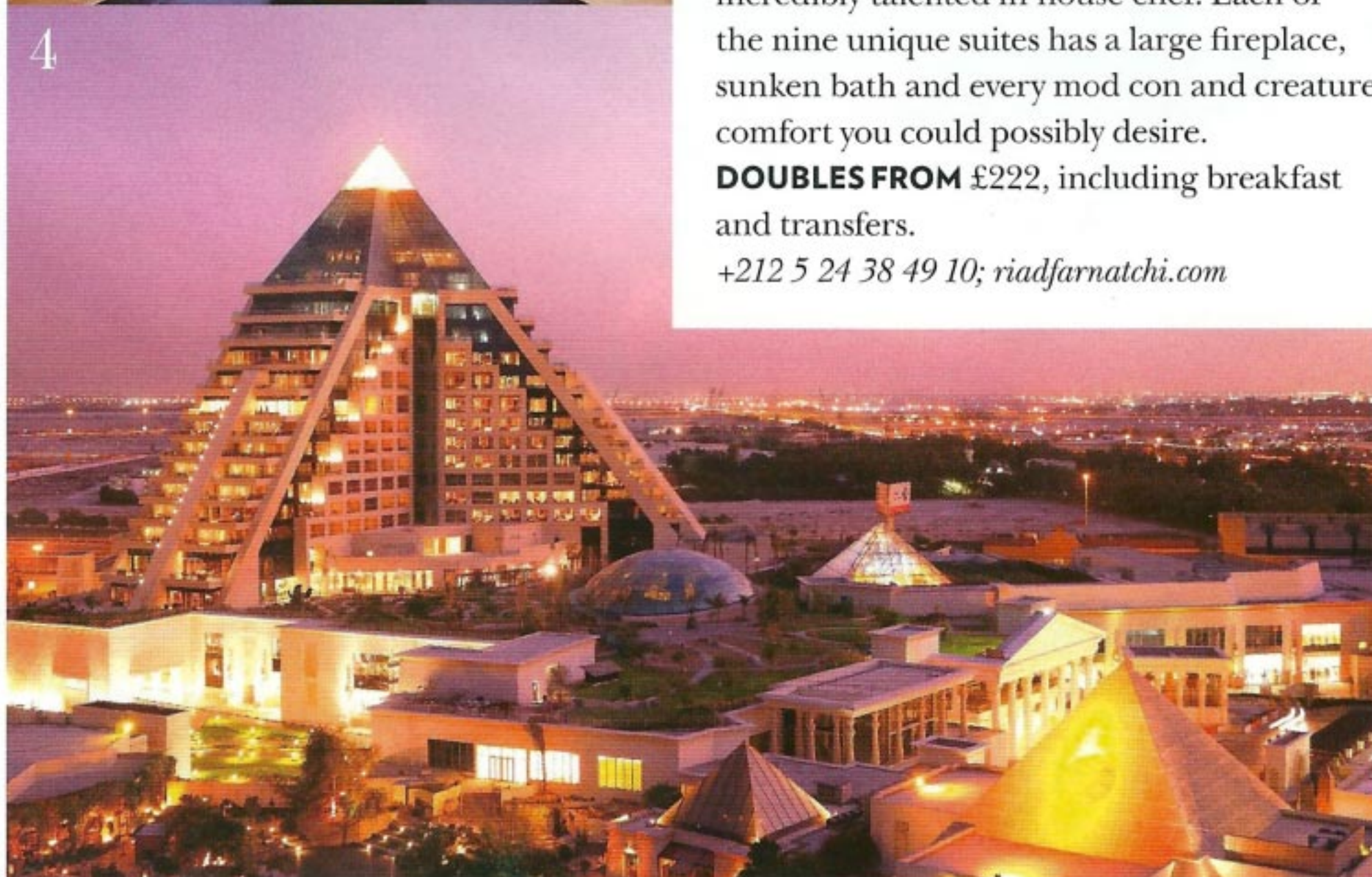
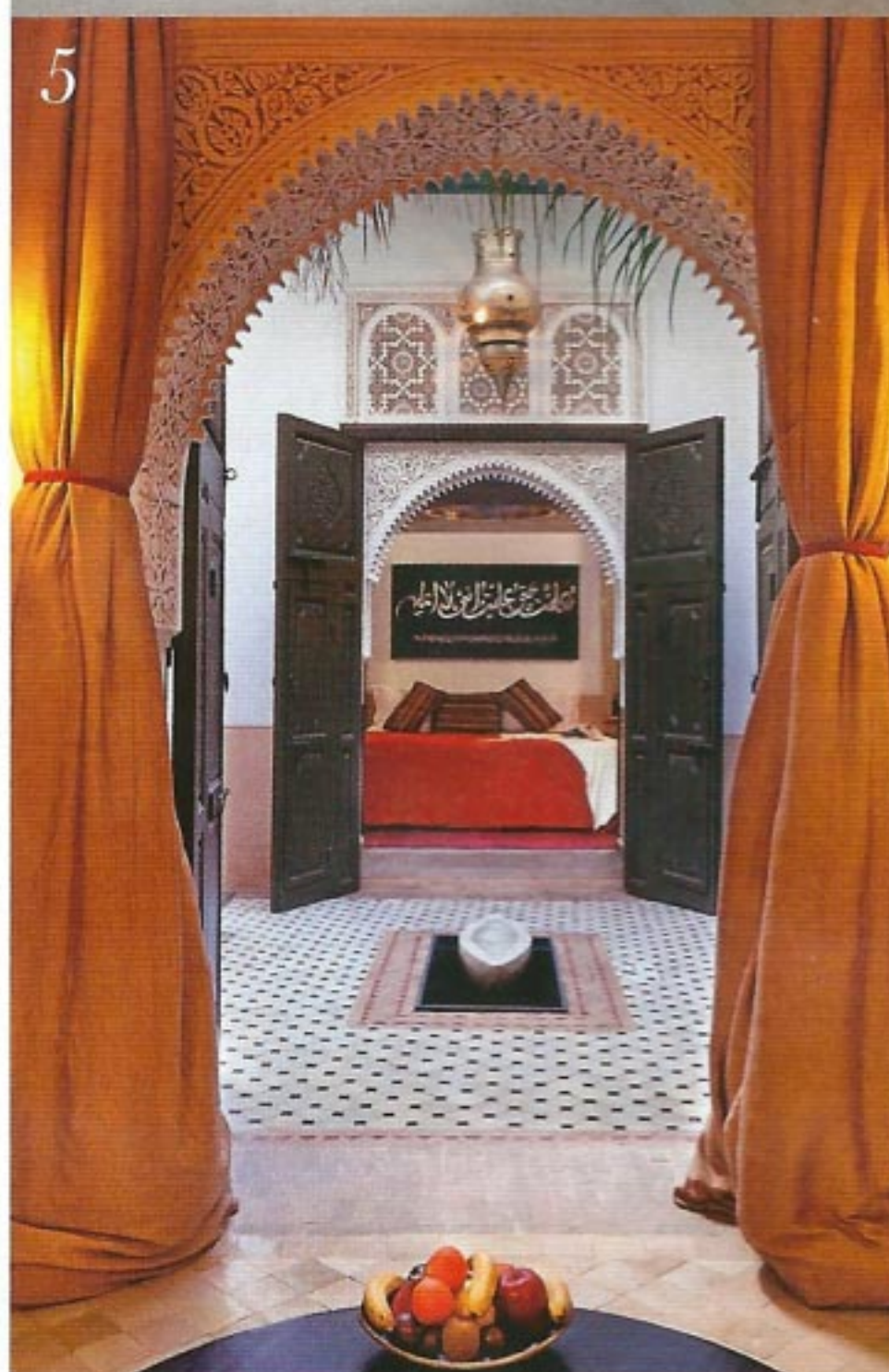
Raffles, Dubai

Dubai is a city of superlatives. A visit here can tick off the highest building in the world

(burj Kalifa), the most expensive hotel in the world (burj al Arab), the fastest lift in the world (Kalifa again) and the biggest shopping mall in the world... And, oooh, the shopping. Pack your high heels and head to this glittering Arabian city which offers everything you could possibly need for a sexy shopping weekend away. Get glitzy at the pyramid-shaped Raffles hotel with its groovy red cocktail bar and slick nightclub (awesome views over the city) and book a personal shopping appointment with Dubai's answer to Carrie Bradshaw, Kelly Lundberg (divine. ae). This blonde bombshell will whisk you (in air-conditioned style) from one fab boutique to another, whether it's Louboutin or Lanvin you're after. Shopped out, return to Raffles for the fashionista tea (sugary mini handbags and iced stilettos – how divine!), then ask your personal butler to draw you a rose petal bath in your suite. Dress up to the nines in your new designer threads and head to the just-opened Ivy restaurant to celebrate. Perfect.

PACKAGES FROM British Airways offer three nights at the five-star Raffles Dubai from £759 per person for travel in November.

0844 4930758; ba.com/dubai



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Riad Farnatchi, Marrakech

What was originally a superbly renovated riad for the family

of award-winning hotelier Jonathan Wix, this nine-suite oasis of calm in heart of Marrakech's bustling medina is now one of its most stylish hangouts, attracting stars such as Russell Crowe and Angelina Jolie. The unobtrusive entrance is tucked down a quiet alley and the magic begins the minute your dusty feet cross the cool marble threshold. A stunning pool scattered with rose petals takes centre stage in one of the two tranquil courtyards adorned with bougainvillea and circled with discreet b'hous – sitting areas where you can sip mint tea and nibble the most delectable canapés prepared by the incredibly talented in-house chef. Each of the nine unique suites has a large fireplace, sunken bath and every mod con and creature comfort you could possibly desire.

DOUBLES FROM £222, including breakfast and transfers.

+212 5 24 38 49 10; riadfarnatchi.com