

THAI BUBBLES

| BY KEVIN PILLEY

They look like giant goldfish bowls but really they are human bowls. The luxury see-through bubbles are being offered by Anantara Golden Triangle Elephant Camp & Resort in northern Thailand. But also close to the Laos and Myanmar borders.

The luxury polyester plastic “Jungle Bubbles” were designed by “Eye In the Sky”. Fully air-conditioned, guests can spend from dusk to dawn being entertained by their very own en-suite elephant herd. The bubbles come with bathrobes and slippers, a king bed, bubble-service and non-transparent bathroom facilities.

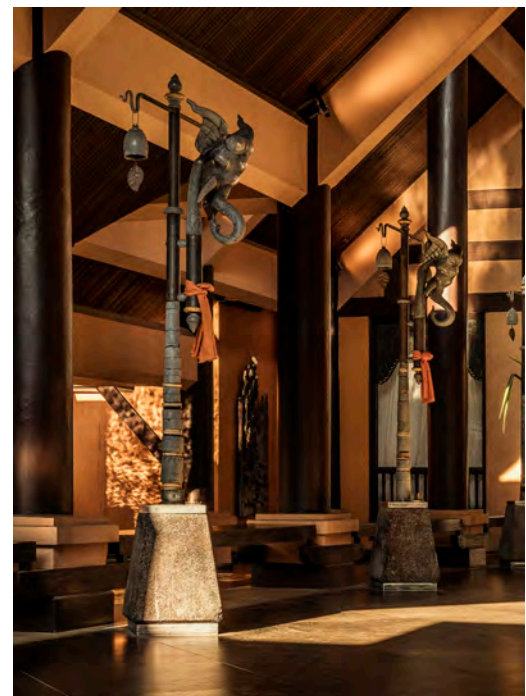
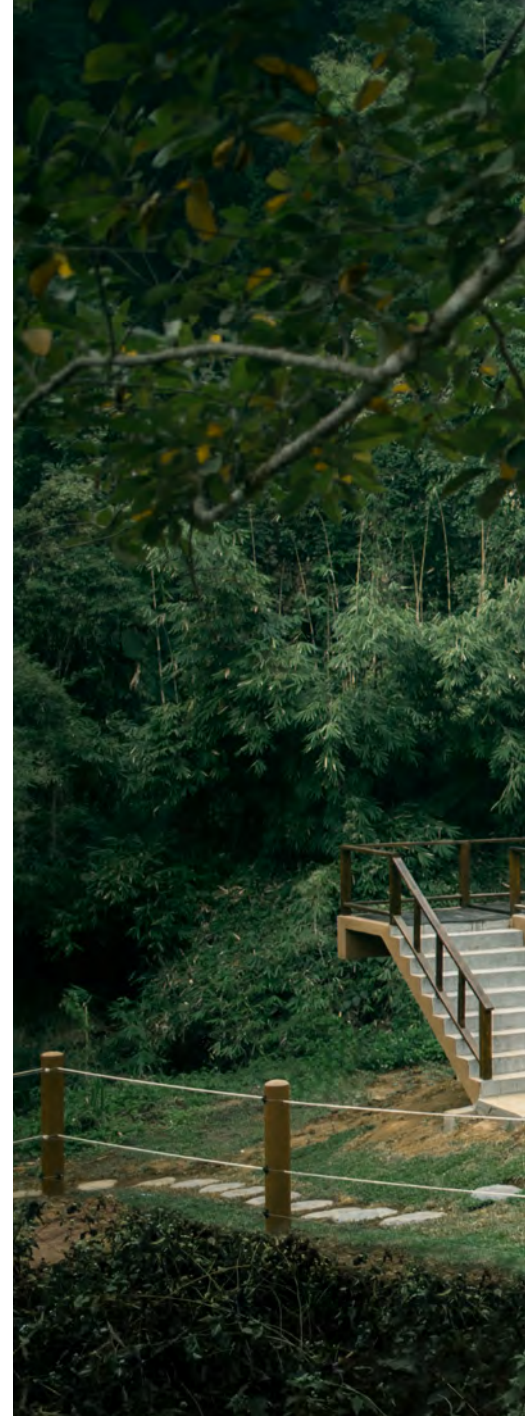
You can also book a VIP elephant arrival. You are picked up at the airport by a chauffeur and driven in a Mercedes-Benz to Chiang Saen where you board a traditional longboat which takes you to the hotel’s jetty. Disembarking you are met by your very own elephant guard of honor.

Other elephant experiences include an elephant walk (you accompany them on their daily “free roam”, an elephant picnic, and a yoga session with elephants on your private and exclusive “sala” in the middle of a paddy field.

The five-star hotel also has a spa with teak-wood suites. As well as Poo Loey wraps and scrubs, herbal compresses and traditional Thai massage, the staff will also run you a milk bath. The signature treatment, however, must be the world’s first and so far only Mahout Relaxation package (130 minutes).

Nearby is an Opium Museum, the White Temple and the summer residence of the Princess Mother. Most rooms have views over three countries. Or the Mekong river.

The 61-room jungle hilltop hotel has an Opium Terrace bar as well as an Italian restaurant and an all-day Thai cuisine restau-







rant. It also has the Spice Spoons Cookery School. You can go ingredient shopping with a chef in a tuk-tuk and learn how to make Thai specialities like Tod Man Pla (Thai fishcakes), Yam Jin Gai (northern-style chicken soup), prawn Chu Chi curry, traditional Thai green curry, and Aeb Pla (mango with sticky rice). There are also classes in fruit and vegetable carving. All graduates from the cookery school receive a certificate, an apron, a chopping board and recipes.

You can say “I do” in 165 acres of Lanna jungle and exchange vows with elephants as witnesses. Priocessional drums are included in wedding packages. You can also enjoy a romantic candlelit dinner in a paddy field with hovering elephants. Other dinner venues include a rice barn and duck pond. Cultural tours take in Buddha staties, padogas and the local Thai Khi market. You can also visit – without a visa Dion Sao island in Laos. And try some of the local rice whisky. ♦

Jungle Bubbles are available at 17700 Baht per night.
goldentriangle.anantara.com

