

A Planet-Friendly Paradise - Santiburi Koh Samui



From time to time, we all need an escape. A vacation to rejuvenate our bodies, hearts and souls. It is nice to know that you have a perfect place to escape to, and that this place is also making our planet better.

Today we are talking to Sabine Lamberts, General Manager of Santiburi Koh Samui, about running an A-level hotel in Thailand, the company's environmental initiatives and being named one of the best Luxury Hotels in Mae Nam, Thailand by Luxury Lifestyle Awards.

Sabine, what would you single out as the signature feature of your hotel? What makes you stand out from other resorts in Thailand?

Many of our guests describe Santiburi Koh Samui as a 'Feeling'.

Built in 1992 and designed after the summer palace of King Rama IV, Santiburi depicts a uniquely inspiring cultural heritage. The rich botanical and marine surroundings and the sophisticated blend of traditional Thai elegance with chic contemporary touches offer a distinctive environment of Koh Samui. We consider these magnificent surroundings to be an ideal playground to make our guests feel relaxed and happy. You may simply cherish a nature walk on your own, or discover our innovative and fun 'well-being' concept that includes culinary experiences, cultural and sports events, exclusive spa treatments and exceptional resort activities that are tailored to all ages.

What are your usual tourist demographics? What age and nationality groups come to stay with you more often?

Santiburi Koh Samui has a lovely mix of international guests of all kinds - families during the main school holidays, then couples, honeymooners, wedding and anniversary parties, as well as golfers, sports devotees, spa lovers and small select groups. Our holidaymakers come from all over the world, with European nationalities being on top of the list.

Will both families with children and couples feel comfortable at your resort? What kind of entertainment / services do you have prepared for these groups?

Absolutely. This is, in fact, one of our strengths! To begin with, let me highlight the design of the resort as an ideal reserve for every person's interest; with 23 acres of botanical paradise and a sublime 300-meter private palm-lined beach, the resort provides plentiful space to explore, while preserving an intimate ambience of lavish coziness. In harmony with this exclusive natural setting, we propose a holistic well-being concept, specially developed for a diverse audience. Our philosophy is to respect and value your personal state of mind in order to make you feel happy. As such, we respond to your current mood with a multitude of attractive activities for families, couples or single wanderers alike.

This can be a family Thai cooking class or a Thai boxing camp for kiddos; a detoxifying inner reset ritual, morning beach yoga or a jungle trek to the waterfall; a private sailing lesson, a cultural temple tour, as well as an individual luxury sailboat cruise with pick-up at the Santiburi beach; a Thai silk massage, a local market tour, or a romantic beach dinner, not to mention our evening dining events with varied entertainment and live music directly at the sea.

We've heard a lot about your company's great People & Planet initiatives. Could you tell our readers in a couple of sentences what this is about?

Our company strongly embraces the principles of cultural respect and contributive exchange, constantly pursuing innovative ideas that help to preserve our natural environment. We aim to protect, care for and develop local communities, and choose partners and work affiliations that

adhere to the same values.

Resort guests can appreciate our sustainability commitment through the absence of usable plastic (no plastic bottles in the resort, no plastic straws), our amenities are 100% environmentally friendly, we apply an energy savings program and we run a zero waste model concept, including composting and waste water programs.

Passionate about progress, we have exciting CSR projects in the pipeline that will be revealed later this year.

This year you were recognized as one of the best Luxury Hotels in Mae Nam, Thailand by Luxury Lifestyle Awards. What does this victory mean to your business and to you personally?

We are extremely proud and grateful to be recognized and awarded such a glamorous prize. It is significant for a single unit property like ours to get celebrated amongst the myriad of international brand names that benefit from solid marketing and distribution networks.

I am genuinely honored by this recognition, as it is the greatest tribute a hospitality team can envision. An internationally revered accolade symbolizes highest quality standards and praises our associates' endeavor, passion and devotion to ultimate guest service excellence. It perfectly accentuates our credo: "We are driven by service excellence and are inspired to create an unparalleled experience for every single guest."

Your hotel offers a variety of great services and leisure opportunities. But could you name several interesting things to see/do outside of the resort?

The destination of Koh Samui is a magical getaway. It is a Thai island of a decent size - the country's second largest island - and has one of the world's most charming airports, possesses a stunning 18-hole championship golf course, and offers a variety of exciting land & sea excursions.

Must-Dos are visiting the elephant sanctuary, taking an island tour, which includes temple visits, a walk through the Magic Gardens and a stroll through Fisherman's Village in Bophut, combined with a traditional night market. For those seeking an adventure, a mountain or quad safari can be of great fun, along with one of the many boat excursions for snorkeling, diving or just for enjoying the tropical breeze.

Samui is an island that protects its authenticity, while developing a vast activity portfolio.

Come and stay with us - I am certain you will enjoy a wonderful holiday!