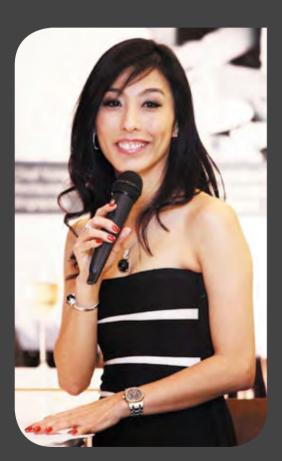






Hotels are no longer just places to grab a night's sleep when away from home. Look around the region and it is clear that new properties now have personalities of their own. They become a physical representation of the characteristics of their brand, and assume distinct quirks and affectations. People now go to hotels not just to stay, but to be enveloped in an experience. It's fitting therefore that we dedicate a whole spread to the men and women who, through their work as architects and designers, bring to life the personality of the buildings they work on. From owners, developers, interior designers and management teams, this issue's Architecture & Design feature sings the praises of the people behind some of Kuala Lumpur's cool new properties.

Build, And They Will Come



Jennifer Ong Founder / Publisher

fast as new hotels are sprouting up in Malaysia, so is HAPA Indonesia gearing upfor the big day. To be held in August 2013, in the beautiful island of the Gods, Bali, HAPA Indonesia nominees number 50 at present, but seeing as it is an inaugural series created to give Indonesian properties the feel of the Hospitality Asia Platinum Awards, I believe there is a good likelihood of many more nominees to come in the future. As it stands, many of the nominees come from a whole new pool of never-fielded personnel, which will bring some fresh new faces to the categories, while also highlighting the properties they are attached to - some of them completely new entrants to HAPA.

The HAPA excitement continues this year after Indonesia. HAPA Malaysia Series 2013-2015 will also see a few new categories introduced in order to keep the Awards as relevant to the industry as possible. The Special award for HAPA Best Lifestyle Living is one which will be nominated by the HAPA panel of judges. It will be awarded to the hotel or resort that provides a new take on the definition of lifestyle design which enhances the hospitality experience. The Awards Presentation Gala Dinner will be held in November 2013, with Make-A-Wish Foundation Malaysia being the selected charity.

The success of the inaugural HAPA-GAB has also set a milestone for the

industry which we will be personally trying to surpass. It is such an amazing feeling to actually see our clients and partners reaping the benefits of a great event. In the case of brewery giants Guinness Anchor Berhad, their event which honours players in the F&B arena, has seen an increase in awareness of how greater service standards can improve the productivity and profitability of a business. To this end, after the first HAPA-GAB awards, GAB's HERO Academy saw a surge in the number of participants who were beginning to realize what a competitive advantage HERO Training was.

The part we play in making the hospitality and F&B industry more vibrant, more competent and more attractive to new job seekers continues to inspire me to bring Hospitality Asia and HAPA to greater heights. I believe when we build a brand, we build also better experiences for ourselves. In our new capacity of event consultants and managers, we have also designed and managed Lamborghini's 50th Anniversary Gala Dinner. Our long experience in the business gives us the knack of knowing what works where, and this is one of the biggest plus points in our favour when we are called on by the industry to assist in creating great experiences.

Feel free to drop me a line at publisher@wapublishing.asia to share your successes with me.



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on the cover In its 20-year existence, Pacific Regency Hotel Suites has carved out a niche for itself as being a surprising oasis of chic comfort for travellers wanting a little bit more than a regular hotel room. Time under the radar has proved the property's resilience, and it has refreshed its product offering with six newly built floors of 131 luxurious rooms, complementing the original 152. Together with its award-winning restaurants and chillout spots, it is a property which deserves a place in every visitors Hot List of Kuala Lumpur.

contents

travel, golf & spa

Travel Report

Mainsails Trimmed And Ready - Hotel Armada Petaling Jaya has been home to many a business traveller and it continues to do brisk business in the MICE segment, with nary a week passing between conferences, seminars, executive breakaways, bookended by weekend weddings. As a wholly Malaysian-owned and operated hospitality entity, Hotel Armada has done exceeding well by its guests.

Destination

Something Old, Something New – Renewing old favourites, and adding new properties to the list is the best way to travel.

food & entertainment

Chef Talk 40

Man Of Steel - Vietnam crowns its first Iron Chef

Being Social

The most prolific food and entertainment events on the social circuit are all covered in this section.

hospitality

Coffee Chat

Three hospitality leaders, with different routes to the top, share the milestones of their properties, the building up of a world-class Asian brand, and their thoughts on product differentiation and the level of service in the industry.

Opinion

When Only The Best Will Do - Hotels and resorts should always use highly recommended and well-known companies to support their operations, as having the latest knowledge and techniques on how to prevent incidents related to incorrect handling of Food and Beverage can help establishments steer away from any pitfalls.

A boom in the construction of new hotels in Malaysia has meant the entry of new brands, with distinct brand personalities. We speak to owners, developers, and hotel management teams to discover what goes into making new hotels and resorts outstanding pieces of architecture and design.









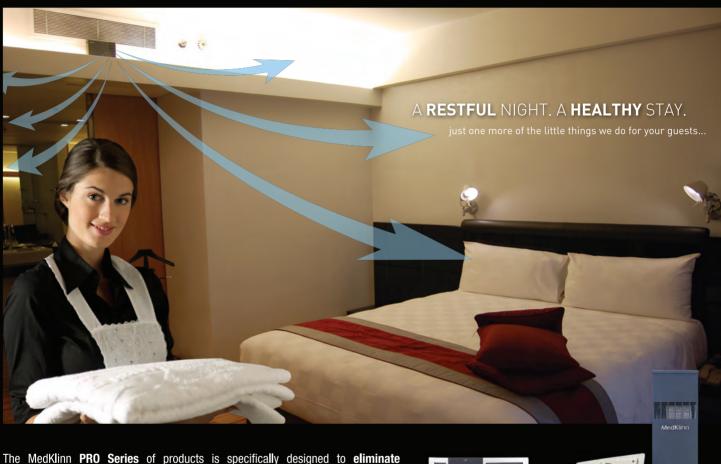
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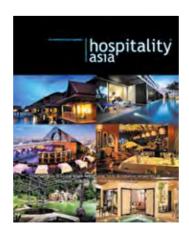
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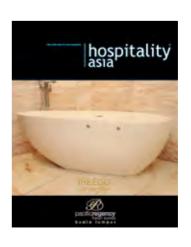
Vietnam Airlines

AIRPORT/AIRLINE LOUNGES Cathay Pacific Lounge, KLIA Dynasty Lounge, KLIA Golden Lounge Domestic KLIA Golden Lounge Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia Golden Lounge Kuching, Malaysia Golden Lounge London, UK Golden Lounge Melbourne, Australia Golden Lounge Penang, Malaysia Golden Lounge Perth, Australia Golden Lounge Regional, KLIA Golden Lounge Satellite KLIA Golden Lounge Singapore Golden Lounge Sydney, Australia Kris Flyer Gold Lounge, Singapore Changi Airport Plaza Premium Lounge, LCCT Silver Kris Lounge, KLIA Silver Kris Lounge, Singapore Changi Airport

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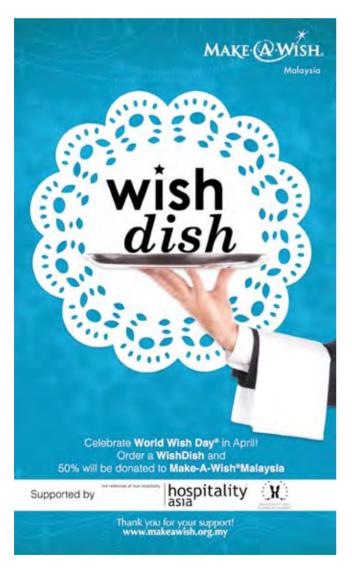






Making Wishes Come True

One of the defining points of the Hospitality Asia Platinum Awards (HAPA) is Corporate Social Responsibility. At every series of the Awards, HAPA chooses a charity or an organization to work with. The establishment is always a local organization or a chapter of an international charity based in the country which a HAPA Series is held in.



APA Malaysia's charity of choice this year is Make-A-Wish® Malaysia. The Malaysian affiliate was launched in 2010 and on average it grants two new wishes every month. Make-A-Wish® Malaysia constantly receives new referrals and with only one staff member, the organization relies on dedicated volunteers to help grant wishes and raise funds for their mission. Make-A-Wish® Malaysia currently has 30 volunteers. The majority of them are trained as Wish Granters.

HAPA has selected Make-A-Wish® Malaysia in order to assist them in raising funds to grant more wishes in conjunction with World Wish Day 2013. Make-A-Wish® Malaysia grants the wishes of children with life-threatening medical conditions in order to enrich the human experience with hope, strength and joy.

Malaysia's WishDish Campaign is a Make A Wish programme, and the organization's own initiative. HAPA Malaysia is supporting the programme, and hoping to increase awareness of the programme. Every single cent derived from the WishDish Campaign will go to the Make A Wish foundation.

HAPA Malaysia's role in this exercise is to leverage on our long association with the F&B industry by approaching restaurants under our database to be part of Make-A-Wish® Malaysia's WishDish Campaign. The campaign is to run for the whole month of April and will see selected dining establishments donating 50 percent of the proceeds of a selected dish from their menu to Make-A-Wish® Malaysia. Once an establishment has agreed to be part of the WishDish Campaign, an A-card and print-out announcing the WishDish will be given to the restaurant to place on their tables. The selected establishments will be announced and featured in various mass and social media, with press conferences with the presence of the establishments' representatives to be held before and after the campaign, in order to highlight selected children whose wishes will be granted through the proceeds.

Restaurants participating in the WishDish Campaign can be anywhere in Malaysia, as Make-A-Wish® Malaysia benefits children from all over the country. The campaign will run throughout April 2013. For more information on HAPA's charity of choice, log on to www.makeawish.org.my. ha



The Best Keep Getting



he countdown is on in earnest for the Hospitality Asia Platinum Awards (HAPA) Malaysia Series 2013-2015! The nominees number 110, with the promise of many more to come. As it stands, many of the nominees come from a whole new pool of never-fielded personnel, which will bring some fresh new faces to the categories, while also highlighting the properties they are attached to – some of them completely new entrants to HAPA. To mark each nominee on a fair playing field, HAPA Malaysia will see the categorization of nominees into the fields of Hotels, Resorts, Night Spots, Restaurants, Hospitality Schools, Golf and Spas so as to more fairly judge the different Key Performance Indices of each category.

HAPA Malaysia Series 2013-2015 will also see a few new categories introduced in order to keep the Awards as relevant to the industry as possible. The Special award for HAPA Best Lifestyle Living is one which will be nominated by the HAPA panel of judges. It will be awarded to the hotel or resort that provides a new take on the definition of great lifestyle-centric design which enhances

the standard and pleasure of living experience. The HAPA Public Relations Excellence award targets properties which have the highest level of Public Relations efficiency, communication style and outstanding media relations.

The HAPA Human Resources Excellence award will be presented to the property which demonstrates excellent human resource management and talent management with the objective of efficiency and greater productivity in a company. All the new awards are in keeping with taking the hospitality, F&B and entertainment industries to greater heights of excellence by showcasing the ability of Malaysia's pool of talent.

Judging has already begun for HAPA Malaysia Series 2013-2015 and will end on 31 August 2013. Venue partners are being approached based on the property's bold willingness to execute the new concept which will break from the norm of a traditional gala function or awards presentation night.

These are exciting times, and it will only get better. For more information on HAPA Malaysia, please email hapa@hapa.asia.ha



HOSPITALITY ASIA
PLATINUM AWARDS® 2013-2015
MALAYSIA SERIES

MAJOR HONOURS (7 Awards)

(SVE) HAPA Service Excellence - Beyond Expectations
(RSY) HAPA Resort of the Year - Best Discovery
(HTY) HAPA Hotel of the Year - Extraordinary Stay
(RTY) HAPA Restaurant of the Year - Dining Experience
(ICY) HAPA Icon of the Year - Hospitality Entrepreneur
(GMY) HAPA General Manager of the Year - Ambassador of Hospitality
(KKC) HAPA King of Kitchens - Ambassador of Cuisine

HEAVENS OF HOSPITALITY (9 Awards)

(5SH) HAPA 5-Star Hotel - Exceptional Experience
(5SR) HAPA 5-Star Resort - Exceptional Experience
(4SH) HAPA 4-Star Hotel - Exceptional Experience
(4SR) HAPA 4-Star Resort - Exceptional Experience
(FMR) HAPA Family & Recreation Hotel/Resort - Delightful Experience
(SVR) HAPA Serviced Residence - Perfect Living
(SPA) HAPA Indulging Spa - Tempting Experience (Hotels/Resorts)
(DYS) HAPA Indulging Day Spa - Blissful Experience
(GFE) HAPA Golf Excellence - The Exhilarating Experience

PASSIONS OF HOSPITALITY (4 Awards)

(MWC) HAPA Masterchef (Western) – Master of Fine Cuisine (MAC) HAPA Masterchef (Asian) – Master of Authenticity (MPC) HAPA Masterchef (Pastry) – Captain of Creativity (FBY) HAPA F&B Personality – Champion of Innovation

FLAVOURS OF HOSPITALITY (5 Awards)

(IGE) HAPA Concept Restaurant - Most Innovative Guest Experience
(NSP) HAPA Night Spot - Outstanding Concept
(TOA) HAPA Flavours of Asia
(TOW) HAPA Flavours of The West
(CCD) HAPA Chic Casual Dining

HOSPITALITY FROM THE HEART (3 Awards)

(FOC) HAPA Front Office Excellence (HSE) HAPA Housekeeping Excellence (CCG) HAPA Concierge Excellence

INDUSTRY RECOGNITION AWARD (3 Awards)

(HPS) HAPA Hospitality School - Academic Excellence (PRE) HAPA Public Relations Excellence (HRE) HAPA Human Resource Excellence

SPECIAL AWARD (1 Award)

(This award is nominated by the HAPA Panel of Judges) (BLL) HAPA Best Lifestyle Living Experience



The Award for Excellence



Making A Milestone: Your Vote Counts!

many countries, so many amazing venues!
How does a magazine which celebrates the best of the Southeast Asian hospitality scene pick the best location for which to celebrate its 20th Anniversary Party, as well as the Hospitality Asia Platinum Awards Regional Series 2014-2016?

Hot contenders are Kuala Lumpur, the birthplace of Hospitality Asia as a business and a publication; or Bali, the island where some of the best, most luxurious pampering hospitality, spa and cuisine experiences take place. The Hospitality Asia team is divided right down in the middle. After all, Kuala Lumpur has some very fine new establishments it wishes to show off, but Bali still compels as an exotic, magical destination. As such, the final votes are going to come from the readers: you! Tell us whether you prefer next year's HAPA Regional to be held – Kuala Lumpur or Bali.

Kuala Lumpur is the defacto choice for our 20th Anniversary Party because of the history of the publication as a Malaysian founded business. Add to that the vibrant nightlife scene in urban KL and you get a cityscape well tailored to a party of amazing proportions. In keeping with that spirit, would a double-banger celebration be on the cards? How would hoteliers and industry professionals feel about gathering in the Malaysian capital for both the anniversary as well as the Regional awards? Would it be a better logistical decision if the events were a continuation of each other? Will non-HAPA Nominees travel to Bali for our Anniversary bash, even if it gives them a chance to meet the HAPA Regional nominees?

The choice is yours now, friends of the industry! We've worked for two decades, being the voice piece and sounding board of the hospitality industry, and we want to continue listening to what you have to say. So let us know your choice. Tell us if you want two events in one great city, or different locations for each. You can make your nominations at hapa@hapa.asia. Remember, this is all for you!



"The will to win means nothing if you haven't the will to prepare."

Juma Ikangaa

For it is in preparation that you set goals to achieve, and in achievement you set benchmarks.

With each step, you distinguish yourself from the rest.

This is the HAPA definition of Excellence.





Setting Industry Standards for Service and Quality Excellence



HOSPITALITY ASIA PLATINUM AWARDS (HAPA) recognizes and rewards the crème de la crème of the hospitality industry at all levels. Focusing on the people who strive ceaselessly to give guests a hospitality experience bar none, this signature soiree has become a much-anticipated event for all players and businesses who work within the hospitality industry. Dedicated to recognizing and rewarding personalities and establishments who have shown drive, dedication and passion for the hospitality industry, HAPA award categories are as diverse as the industry it serves, with Personality awards dedicated to service excellence and leadership, to categories ranging from the best experiences to be had in travel, golf, spa, food and entertainment. The Oscars of Hospitality is held annually, with Malaysia and Regional countires taking it in turn to host the event.

Kuala Lumpur's Best Kept Secret

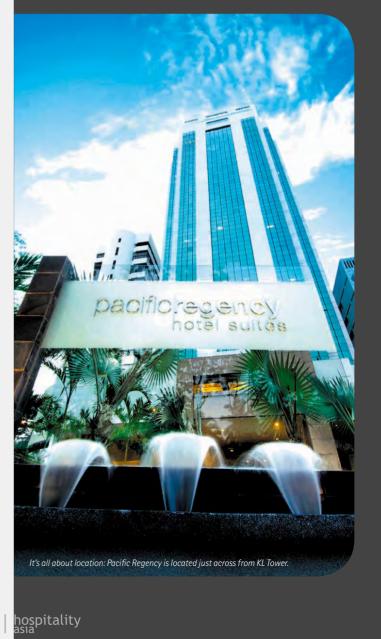
There's a lot to be said about a property which does not aspire to be the best five-star hotel suites in the country, or even in Malaysia's capital. Daniel Chong, General Manager of Pacific Regency Hotel Suites distilled the essence of what it meant to be truly great when he told his team that the only mission the property would have was that it had to give every guest who checked in a best stay experience.

Il things considered, it is not too lofty a goal. In its 20-year existence, the property has carved out a niche for itself as being a surprising oasis of chic comfort for travellers wanting a little bit more than a regular hotel room. As far back as 2005, the travel community was already sharing their stellar experiences at this Malaysian property. Not only was it located right across from one of Kuala Lumpur's best known landmarks, the KL Tower; it was also closer to the nature sanctuary that is the Bukit Nanas Forest Reserve than to the hot tarmac strip of the main Sultan Ismail. It gave travellers a respite from the neon glare, with the option of a few minutes' walk to be back in the game, whether it be high level business meetings in the city centre, a shopping marathon on Bintang Walk, or a hot night on the town in Changkat Bukit Bintang.

A New Take On Comfort

Location aside, there was also the hotel's list of accolades ranging from the Hospitality Asia Platinum Awards Best Service Residence 2010–2012 and Agoda.com Gold Circle Award 2012. Another attraction was the size of the rooms, ranging from the stylish and luxurious 409 square feet Deluxe to 603 square feet suites, right on to the redefined comfort and sophistication of the 668 square foot Regency Junior Suite. Needless to say that all suites are tastefully furnished in warm contemporary tones, with cozy lighting, generous wardrobes and spacious bathrooms.

Time under the radar has proved the property's resilience, and it has refreshed its product offering with six newly built floors of 131 luxurious rooms, complementing the original 152. Like the older rooms, the new units all offer a sweeping view of the surrounding Kuala Lumpur skyline. The new rooms retain the hotel's signature style of warm functionalism with a contemporary edge, with much thought having gone into the longevity of the rooms, their functionality and the conveniences to the long-stay guest. Some of the high points include full latex mattresses for the complete omission of bed bugs, mites or any such travellers' scourge, memory foam toppers on the beds, high thread count cotton sheets and duvets, 42" LCD flat screen TV, iPod docking





stations, broadband internet access, and induction stovetops which are both energy efficient and safer for use around children.

Look closer and you begin to realize the thought that has gone into the design of the rooms. All bed edges are curved so that hard knocks and bumps are curtailed. Ditto with the TV console. The wardrobes close on silent hinges, while there is a rubber bath mat next to the spacious bath tub nicknamed The Egg for obvious reasons, for use in the tub if guests travel with children or elderly folk. Sinks are deep enough to wash baby bottles in comfortably. There are ample toiletries, and the basin comes with an add-on magnified side mirror with lights on the rim for clearer views for closer shaves or better make-up application. Guests on the premium floors also enjoy a complimentary limited mini bar and pressing of suits.

Other services and facilities offered at the hotel include foreign currency exchange, parcel and postal services, laundry, pressing and dry cleaning services, limousine services, 24-hour concierge, Regency Care Centre, and 24-hour security with CCTV surveillance.

Self-drive guests have the security of an ample, covered car park and unobtrusive yet vigilant security. For easy city commuting there is the neighbouring monorail and LRT stations.

For Business Or Pleasure

The business traveller is kept connected with a range of professional services, flexible meeting spaces, and pockets of quiet spaces to discuss deals in private. The newly-built Pacific Regency function rooms can accommodate 800 persons for a cocktail reception and 560 persons for a sit-down banquet dinner. Designed in a unique horseshoe configuration, guests are afforded an almost 360 degree view of Kuala Lumpur's skyline. With a total of nine function halls altogether, the rooms are equipped with modern audio-visual facilities that offers innovative solutions for any business needs. Pacific Regency's concierge is also a member of the Les Clefs d'Or, an elite group of talented, motivated individuals who have their fingers on the pulses of their cities, and are able to advise guests on restaurants, night life, sporting and theater events, sightseeing tours, shopping, etc.

There are, however, reasons a-plenty not to desire to venture far afield from Pacific Regency. The hotel has a rooftop pool which offers a great look of the city especially at sunrise or sunset. A fitness centre keeps the feel-good endorphins going, while the Ayer Spa employs ancient Malay secrets of herbal remedies and holistic techniques to invigorate and de-stress.

Amazing Experiences

Pacific Regency has won awards for more than just accommodation. For a standalone property, it has made a big name for itself for its food and entertainment outlets. For some belly-warming cuisine, Soi 23 and its fabulously authentic Thai food cannot be beaten. The restaurant and its Northern Thai cuisine won the Best Asian Cuisine Restaurant 2010–2012 at the Hospitality Platinum Awards. Soi 23's Thai chef is authentic, creative and adept at making the taste buds sing. One could eat a meal every day at Soi 23 and still be surprised by the culinary mastery. A more bistro-styled option is to be found at Olive Lounge, where an impressive range of beers, wine and spirits take centre stage, eclipsed only by the great city view. General Manager Daniel Chong shares that changes to Soi 23

will be effected soon, giving the Thai restaurant a more intimate, prestigious feel while an all-day dining restaurant will be added in due course.

Food is just part of the draw of the classy Cristallo di Luna. Offering a fusion of local and western favourites, Cristallo gets its name from dazzling rows of crystal chandeliers, and is the non smoking zone designed to make tobacco prohibitionists feel pampered and catered for.

Offering a splendid 360° view of the KL skyline, the internationally recognized winner of the HAPA Nightspot of the year 2010-2012, Luna Chill Out Bar is undoubtedly one of the hippest nightspots in town – a must visit for all guests. Its relaxing environment (imagine, a bar where music is played at a volume which actually promotes conversation!) makes Luna an Award



Above (left to right): Please provide captions. Below: The chandeliers give Cristallo di Luna its name.







Top row (left to right): Please provide caption; Me time at the spa. Above (left to right): Please provide captions. Below: Up on the roof is where all the action begins - Luna Bar!



Winning Chill Out Bar and recipient of the Excellence Award, Best of Malaysia 2012 for Best Hotel Bar from Expatriate Lifestyle. Add in the extensive list of drinks, and the many weird and wonderful things that mixologist Jose Kim (Hospitality Asia's Most Stylistic Bartender 2011–2013) can come out with, and you're guaranteed a night to remember (unless you've had too many Lychee Martinis, in which case, you'll be very glad of the conscientious service staff).

For morning after breakfasts, Geo Café offers great coffee, good croissants and a spread of pastry treats. Quick meals can also be grabbed here at lunch while keeping connected with the outlet's complimentary wireless internet access.

As it heads into its second decade of hospitality, the new, refreshed Pacific Regency Hotel Suites is looking primed to regain lost ground and continue its dominance on the chillout scene. There is a sense of true service awareness, from the security guard who guides a puzzled guest into another set of lifts to a separate section of the hotel, to its restaurant wait staff and chefs.

Refurbishment exercise aside, there is life in this property still, and everything which has been done points directly back to Daniel Chong's vision of the Pacific Regency Hotel Suites experience being one of the 'suite-est' experiences to be had in Kuala Lumpur.

The Region's **Most Entertaining** Hospitality, Travel, Golf, Spa and F&B Magazine

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