

AT LEISURE

# A LASTING IMPRESSION

Regent Phú Quốc is the new kid on the block along Vietnam's westernmost island coast and it's the perfect spot for a weekend getaway – and then some.

BY KATHERINE ARTECHE

**H**ere's what many of us have been missing: Frolicking in the sun, sand, and sea, facing the Gulf of Thailand while in the plush confines of Vietnam's newest island resort – Regent Phú Quốc. Fresh from its soft opening in April this year, the Vietnamese destination from the Regent Hotel & Resorts brand has set a new standard for luxury holiday-goers, starting with thoughtful design, a largely contributing factor that's bagged themselves the accolade for "Asia's Leading New Resort" at this year's World Travel Awards.

## It's Pronounced "Foo Ku-op"

When BLINK Design Group was assigned to transform the barren land into Phú Quốc's latest beautiful pocket, this was the goal: To create a luxury resort experience imbued with the soul and culture of Phú Quốc in an enviable location. Clint Nagata, founder and creative director said, "It was right in our wheelhouse in terms of delving into the art of placemaking; going very deep into the cultures, materials, and traditions of the vernacular before we even put pen to paper." He shared that the greatest challenge was to materialize the design, and to make sure the grand plan fit, figuratively and literally.





CLINT NAGATA

Nagata explains that the approach the team took was to enhance Phú Quốc's surrounding natural beauty, in other words, to use whatever was right in front of them. He said in a statement, "This is a country with strong local culture and traditional architectural heritage. One of the structural systems commonly found is the wooden truss system, known locally as the Bovi. We have abstracted that feature and developed it into subtle patterns that feature on screens, carpets, and accessories."

Instances of Bovi architecture are evident. Guests have the shallow roofs and the wide spaces to thank for the generous daylight and cooling breeze that enter the expanse. Even the furniture bears the Bovi characteristic, such as exposed joints at the base of your villa's dining table albeit for aesthetic purposes only.

Keeping it luxurious wasn't the challenge as opposed to making it all look too perfect. "I had to get used to breaking the symmetry," said Nagata. "Balance is introduced in the other elements, such as the vast spaces, the placement of water, and the use of colors." Nagata gestured to the sheltered walkway leading into the foyer, flanked by the length of foliage and koi ponds. "In this case, I realized I don't have to create a perfect duplicate for either side."



### A New Regent

In fact, asymmetry complements organic design, which works well for a resort like Regent Phú Quốc. The hotel sits along Phú Quốc's coastal stretch that's already home to major hotel chains and residences, such as InterContinental, Park Hyatt, and Pullman. But Regent's presence is not just another addition to the island's growing beachfront — it's the debut of Regent Group's rebranding (note the new typeface).

Taking over 11.2 hectares on Phú Quốc's southwest, the new Regent resort boasts a private beach, six dining establishments including rooftop and oceanfront venues, a state-of-the-art spa, and suites and villas that total up to just over 300 keys. At the time of writing, the hotel is currently operating at fifty per cent capacity, which, if you're after an idyllic getaway to Vietnam's lesser-known locales, is ideal for a crowd-free weekend. The vast landscape allows you to explore as you please and makes it easy with the seamless connectivity between the buildings. The showstopper is undoubtedly the main swimming pool that takes over the central front and is a sight to behold with the elegant sheer drapes overhead. It is an excessive choice of functional design, considering each suite and villa come with private pools of their own. "These individual spaces create transition and different experiences within the same house," said Nagata in a statement.



"Our spatial zoning presents a contemporary interpretation of Gian Nha (a Vietnamese vernacular in reference to the courtyard-like villas), blurring the boundaries of indoor and outdoor."

It's safe to say that the new Regent brand understands luxury, although that's not saying that the hotel brand never knew it before. Regent's new outlook is apt for a new generation of travel, especially since our confinement days during the pandemic. Leisure activities are in abundance, from the in-house speakeasy Bar Jade to the employment of the resort's very own 12-person catamaran, Serenity,

where guests can take a tour of the An Thoi Archipelago. Even the award-winning spa, The Spa (appointed the "World's Best New Resort Spa" at the 2022 World Spa Awards) has its title duly deserved, with region-specific style of treatments (one of which involves a satisfying heated sand bath) in BLINK-styled spaces.

Admittedly, the pictures do well in capturing the resort's beauty. But the Phú Quốc experience? You'll have to try that out for yourself. [E](#)

For more information, visit [phuquoc.regenthotels.com](https://phuquoc.regenthotels.com)



# Forecast 2023: The Silver Lining

*In collaboration with GuocoLand*

Thought leaders, industry experts, and changemakers from Singapore and beyond come together in this edition of Portfolio Forecast to answer the burning question: As we navigate economic uncertainty, inflation, supply chain disruptions, and geopolitical issues, what, then, is the silver lining for 2023?

*by* ANTON D. JAVIER, KATHERINE ARTECHE, *and* MARC ALMAGRO

*Photography by* CHINO SARDEA, *assisted by* TRACEY NGUYEN

*Shot on location at* MEYER MANSION/MIDTOWN BAY/MIDTOWN MODERN *Showflat by* GUOCOLAND

# Clint Nagata

FOUNDER AND  
CREATIVE DIRECTOR  
BLINK Design Group  
*Design & Hospitality*



One of the major hurdles that we faced in 2022 was figuring out how to start off projects or completing them, due to the travel restrictions. Once that was lifted, we found it extremely beneficial to once again resume in-person meetings, prospect new sites, and visit projects under construction. While technology allowed us to manage through the pandemic, in-person meetings will always be irreplaceable.

The pandemic has fuelled interest in luxury travel perhaps more than ever. We have had interest in clients looking to create amazing destinations not only in Asia, but in other areas like Europe as travellers continue to look for curated resorts and hotels that tell stories of a place and its culture.



# Adrian Chng

FOUNDER AND CEO  
Fintonia Group  
*Licensed Digital Assets Fund Manager*

Trust was shaken with the Luna/Terra crash, Celsius and 3AC implosion, and most recently the FTX debacle. This revealed bad practices, such as comingling of client's funds and poor risk management. Greater investor education is important and working with licensed regulated entities is one area we believe can improve industry outcomes.

Digital Assets and crypto is considered a fairly new asset class by traditional standards and has largely been unregulated. We see regulators getting more active in this asset class and this will bring great transparency and order to the industry. With that, we will see a lot more institutions investing in the space which is a good thing for the ecosystem. With the innovation of the crypto products (web3, metaverse) coupled with the scale of institution investment, there is huge potential for all stakeholders and investors alike.

# PORTFOLIO FORECAST



FORECAST 2023

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT

THE F&B LANDSCAPE | NEW HOSPITALITY TRENDS | AGRICULTURE & BEYOND  
SUSTAINING SUSTAINABILITY | THE FUTURE OF FINTECH

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