



GOT THE T-SHIRT: INSIDE KATA ROCKS RESORT & RESIDENCES

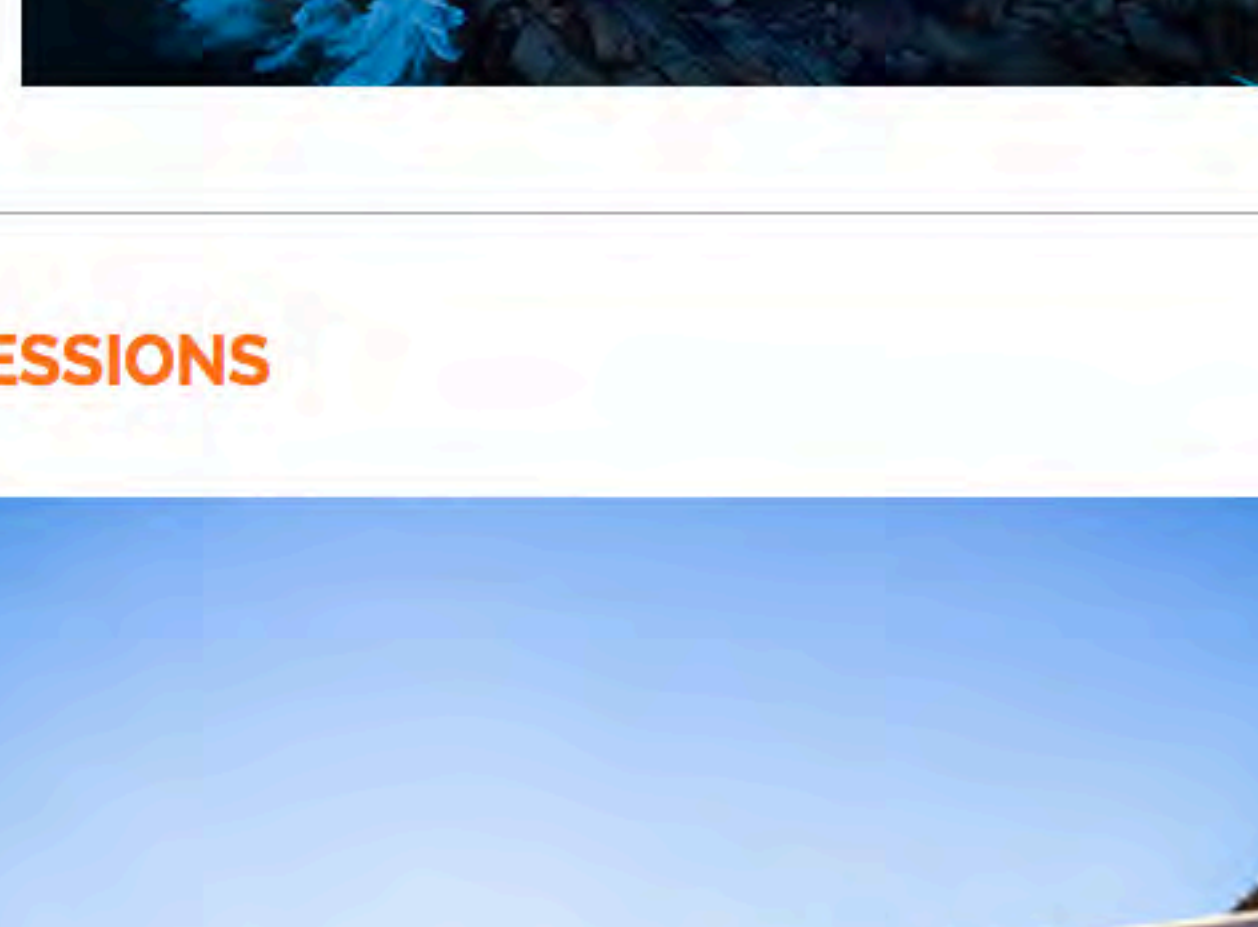
BY LAUREN GODFREY

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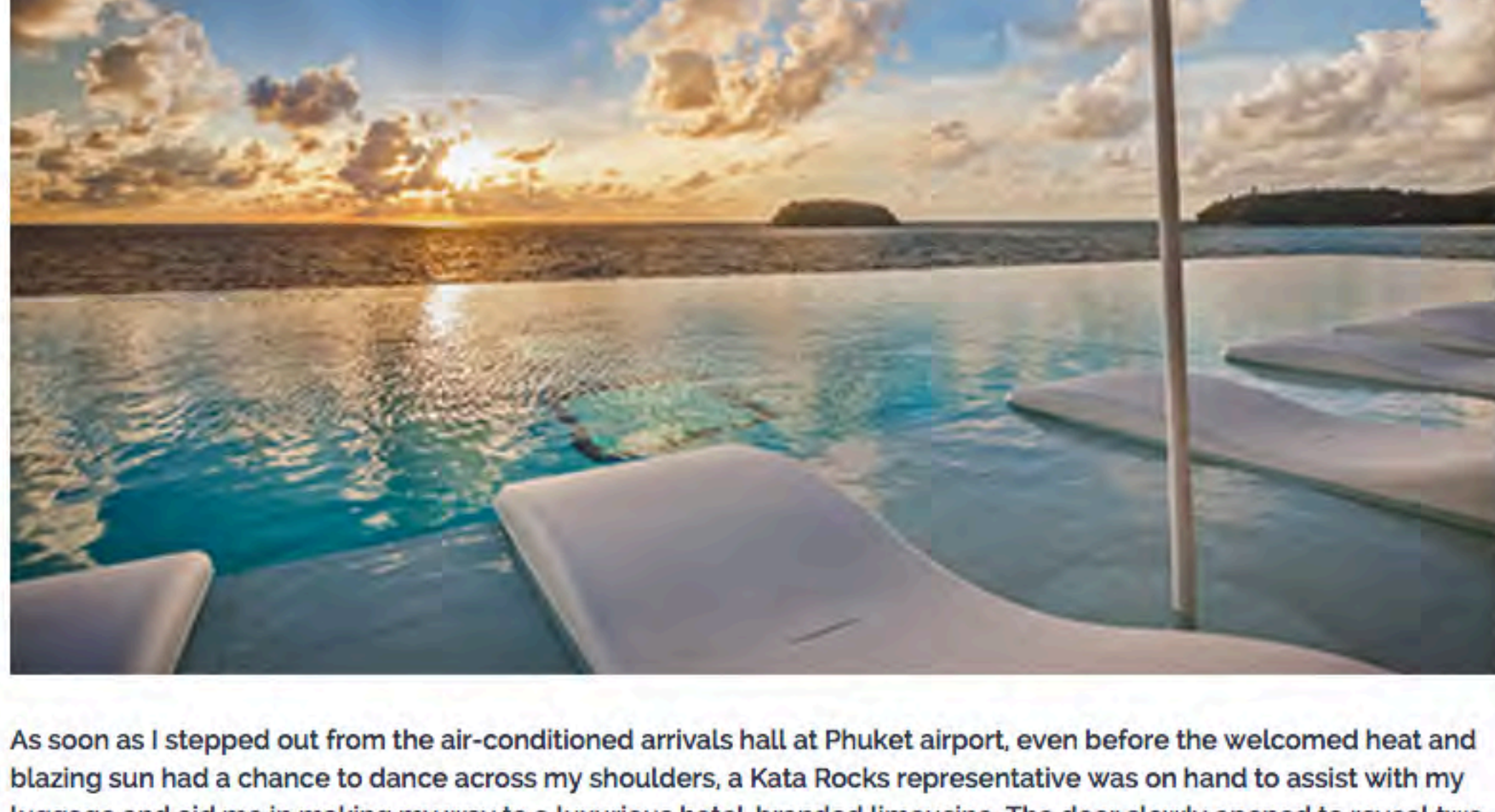
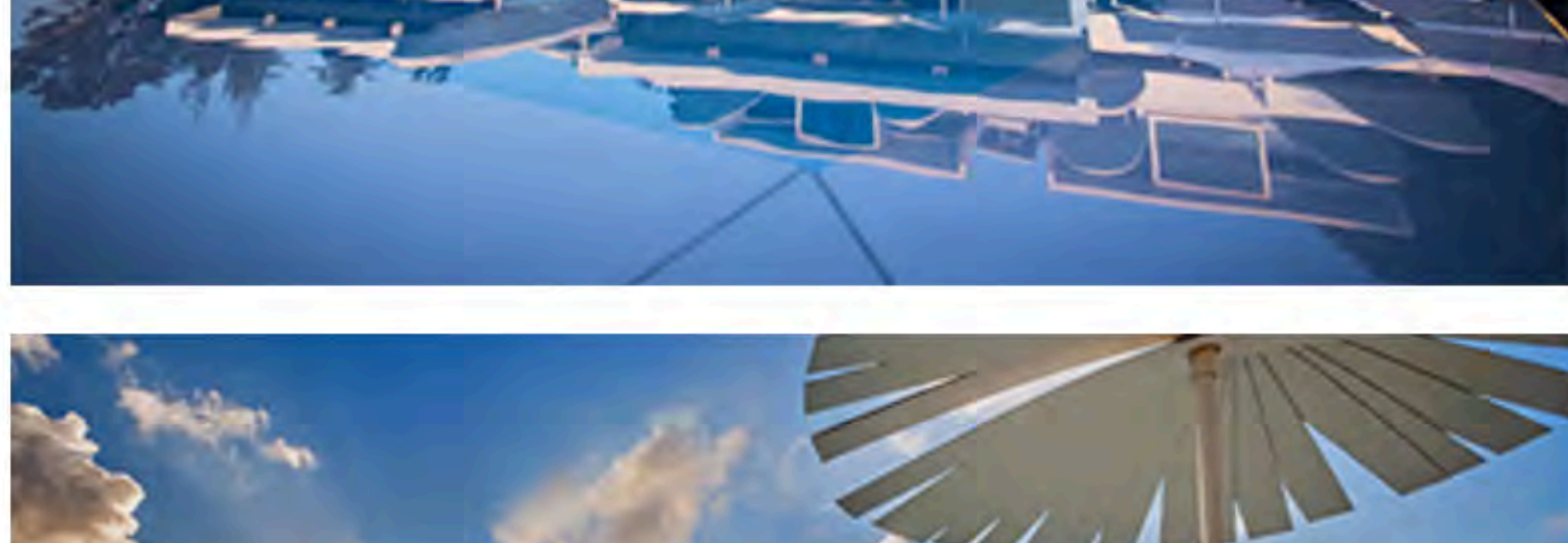
We've been there and done that and here's why you should too...

Sat atop the rocky cliffs of Kata, a bay on Phuket's shore, Kata Rocks stands majestically like a beacon of luxury luring in the jetsetter crowd. Echoing a cool Ibiza vibe with sleek white furnishings and minimalist modern villas, this five-star resort is the shining gem in the town's crown.

Comprising 34 one to four-bedroom villas complete with private pools and unbeatable sea views, a stay here is certain not to disappoint. But just in case the accommodation didn't live up to its flawless photographs we sent Lauren Godfrey, our marketing manager, over to Phuket for three nights to check it out.



FIRST IMPRESSIONS

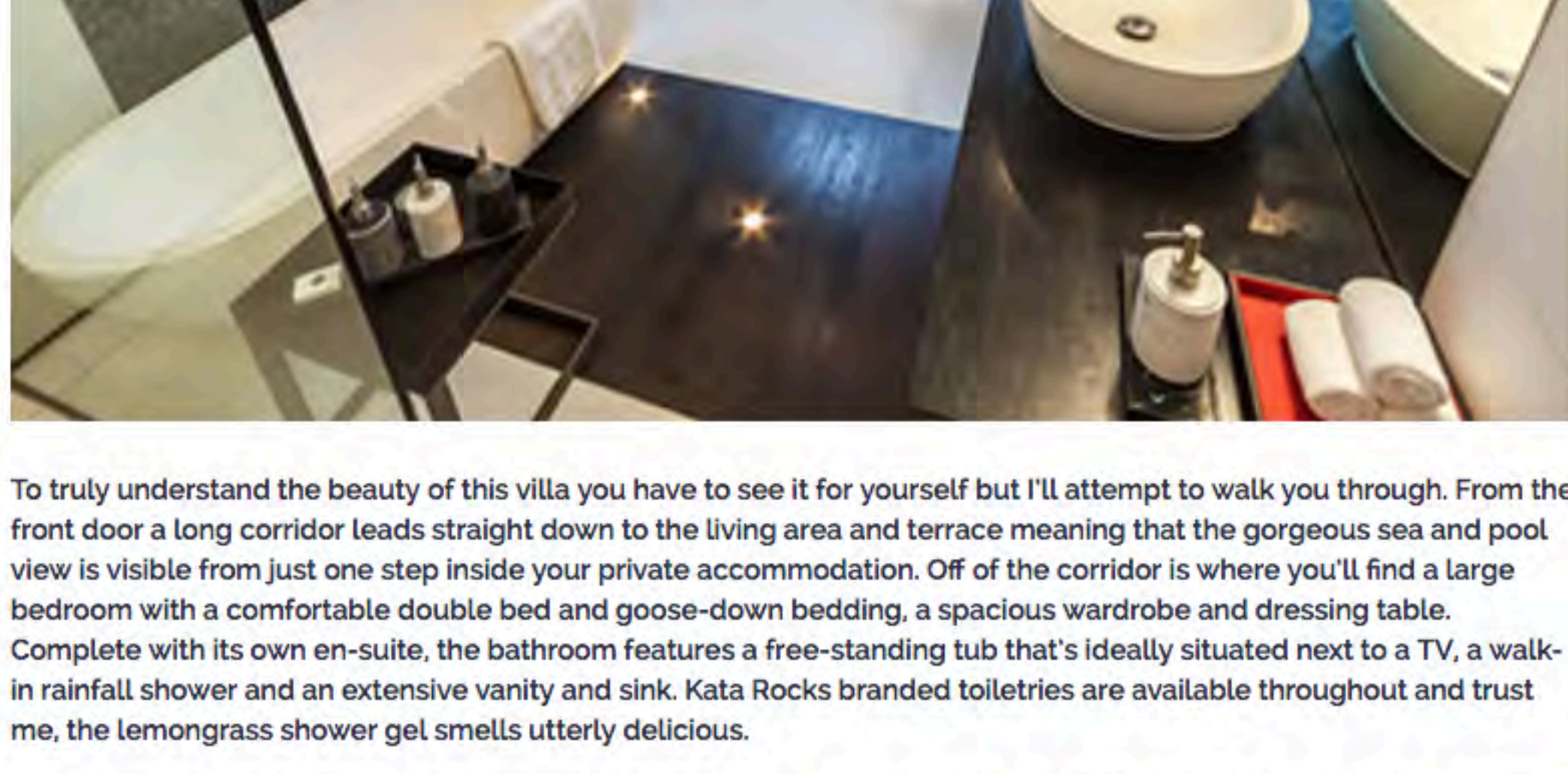


As soon as I stepped out from the air-conditioned arrivals hall at Phuket airport, even before the welcomed heat and blazing sun had a chance to dance across my shoulders, a Kata Rocks representative was on hand to assist with my luggage and aid me in making my way to a luxurious hotel-branded limousine. The door slowly opened to reveal two comfortable armchairs upholstered with a buttery leather that I quickly sunk into. In the arm-rest were a selection of cool drinks and snacks as well as the Wi-Fi password... what more could I possibly need for the hour-long transfer to the resort? Seat reclined, foot rest in position, I browsed Instagram and caught up on emails in utter bliss – my Kata Rocks experience had begun!

As we passed a quaint town bursting with restaurants and shops, the limousine took a right turn up a steep hill where at the top stood Kata Rocks' reception and multiple smiling staff. I was swiftly given a cool towel and a phuang malai (Thai floral garland) before being invited into the reception for check-in. Then it was onto a staff-driven golf cart where I was given a quick tour of the resort before being driven to my One-Bedroom Sky Pool Villa.

One quick wave of the key fob and the door swung open to reveal a deluxe apartment that was almost double the size of my London flat. Comprising 175 sqm of living space that included a comfortable bedroom, en-suite, separate toilet and an open-plan kitchen, dining and living area, the modern design and chic finish took my breath away... Then I saw the terrace and its pride and joy, a seven-metre private infinity pool, and I knew I was in for an amazing stay.

ONE-BEDROOM SKY POOL VILLA

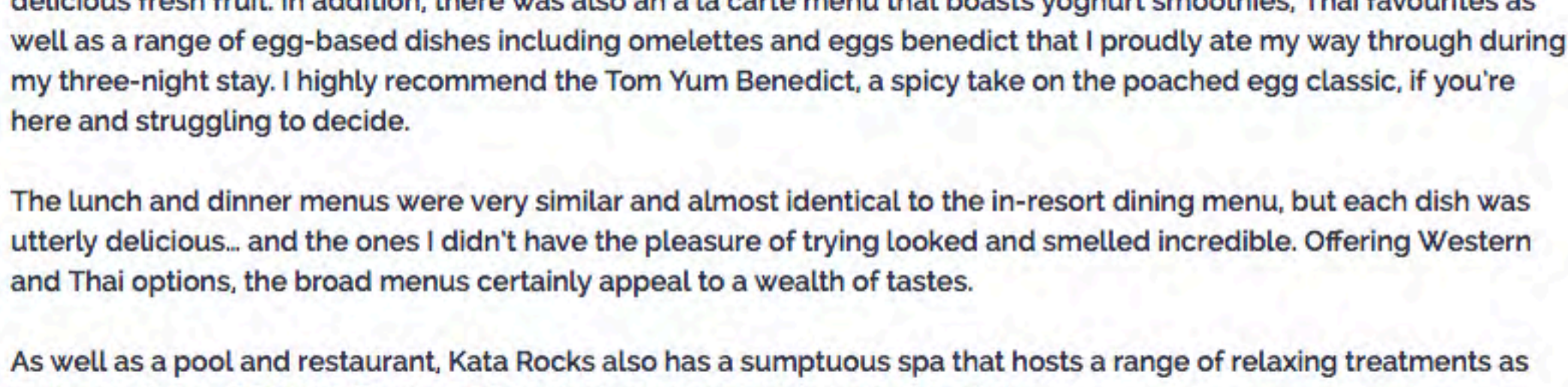


To truly understand the beauty of this villa you have to see it for yourself but I'll attempt to walk you through. From the front door a long corridor leads straight down to the living area and terrace meaning that the gorgeous sea and pool view is visible from just one step inside your private accommodation. Off of the corridor is where you'll find a large bedroom with a comfortable double bed and goose-down bedding, a spacious wardrobe and dressing table. Complete with its own en-suite, the bathroom features a free-standing tub that's ideally situated next to a TV, a walk-in rainfall shower and an extensive vanity and sink. Kata Rocks branded toiletries are available throughout and trust me, the lemongrass shower gel smells utterly delicious.

Sleeping and washing aside, the living area also deserves a mention. Home to almost every gadget you could dream of including a Verasus wine cabinet and luxury Nespresso coffee machine, every light switch, TV, blind and air-con unit in the entire villa can be controlled with one swift tap on the in-resort iPad. In the kitchen, there was enough cutlery for me to host a dinner party for the entire resort as well as an oven, hob, extractor, fridge/freezer, dishwasher and washing machine. The fridge was stocked with a multitude of mini bar snacks and once I helped myself to a drink and chocolate bar, I was spoilt for choice as to where to sit. Should I perch on the breakfast bar stools, pull up a pew at the dining table or kick-back and relax on the Nature? sofa? I opted for none of the above and instead got comfortable on my private terraces' sofa bed before diving on to the sun lounger in an attempt to top up my tan.

However, the villa's main draw is easily the private infinity pool that offers uninterrupted views of the Andaman sea. Each of Kata Rocks' 34 villas are west facing meaning that every evening of my stay I got to witness the mesmerising Phuket sunset in utter bliss – a sight that I could never tire of.

EXPLORING KATA ROCKS



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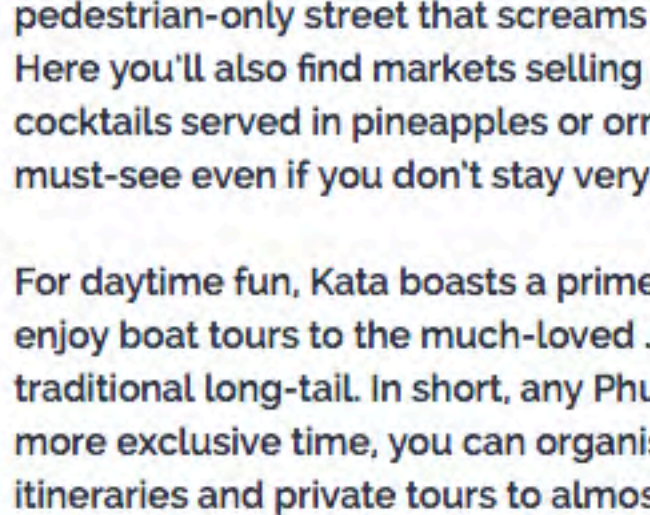
Although the resort doesn't offer direct beach access, it is beautifully draped over the cliffs of Kata and provides access to the oversized rocks below. From here you can jump straight into the sea, although the climb back up didn't look easy. However, I had no interest in swimming amongst the fishes once I saw the resort's main swimming pool. Lined with in-water sun loungers and parasols on one side and the views of the Andaman Sea on the other, this infinity pool is one which I never wanted to leave. Located directly next to the hotel's restaurant, it's certainly the centre point of the resort.

Breakfast, lunch and dinner are all served here and it was a constant hub of activity from morning 'til night. Breakfast comprised an international buffet brimming with European pastries, traditional hot food as well as a selection of delicious fresh fruit. In addition, there was also an à la carte menu that boasts yoghurt smoothies, Thai favourites as well as a range of egg-based dishes including omelettes and eggs benedict that I proudly ate my way through during my three-night stay. I highly recommend the Tom Yum Benedict, a spicy take on the classic, if you're here and struggling to decide.

The lunch and dinner menus were very similar and almost identical to the in-resort dining menu, but each dish was utterly delicious... and the ones I didn't have the pleasure to look and smelled incredible. Offering Western and Thai options, the broad menu certainly appeal to a wealth of tastes.

As well as a pool and restaurant, Kata Rocks also has a sumptuous spa that hosts a range of relaxing treatments as well as a state-of-the-art fitness centre where you can break a sweat in style.

RECOMMENDED PROPERTIES



KATA ROCKS
 ★★★★★ Thailand, Far E...
 7 nights from **£2219** pp inc flights
 Best for: Beach, Couples, Food & Wine

- Home to 43 sky villas with mesmerising vistas of the Andaman Sea
- Located in a prime location just 10-minutes from two fabulous beaches

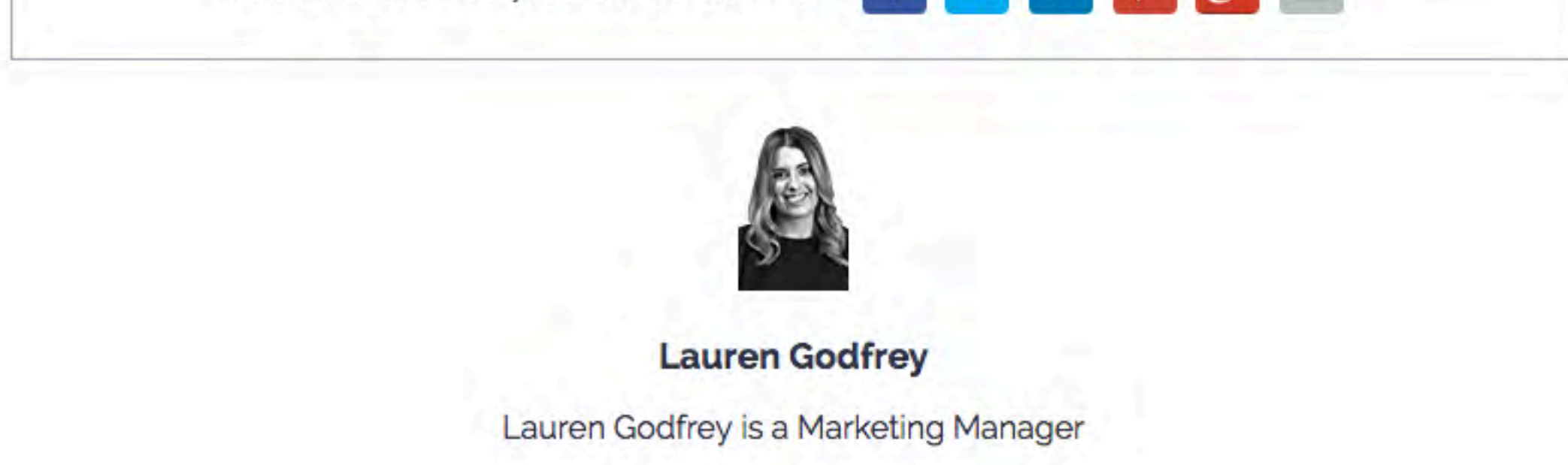
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THE STAFF AND SURROUNDING AREA



The staff at Kata Rocks couldn't do enough for us. The entire resort was spotless at all times and it only took an hour or two for the majority of the staff to remember both mine and my partner's name and room number. Getting around the resort on foot was challenging in the heat (and my impractical footwear) as it is extremely steep however the staff-driven golf buggy arrived within seconds to pick me up and drive me to wherever I wished to go. This even extended to the main road of Kata and the beach which is at the bottom of the steep hill I mentioned earlier.

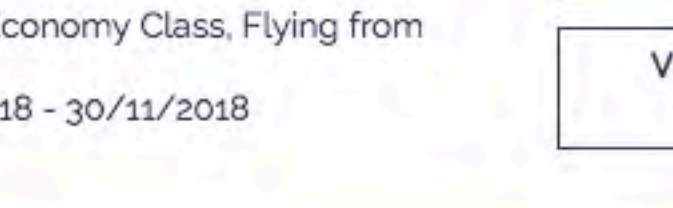
Kata Rocks is located in a picturesque town and is surrounded by restaurants, bars and shops. It's bustling with visitors and is popular with Brits so you're bound to make a new friend during your stay. For couples or younger families, you'll be pleased to hear that Kata Rocks is only a half hour taxi from Patong's infamous Soi Bangla, a pedestrian-only street that screams the latest chart hits, blinds you with its neon lights and always offers a crazy night. Here you'll also find markets selling everything from handbags to makeup and restaurants with live music and cocktails served in pineapples or ornate glasses. An evening here was one of the highlights of my trip and a definite must-see even if you don't stay very late.

For daytime fun, Kata boasts a prime location for exploring Phuket. Not far from the iconic Big Buddha, you can also enjoy boat tours to the much-loved James Bond Island and the popular Phi Phi Islands either by speed boat or traditional long-tail. In short, any Phuket adventure you had on your bucket list can be fulfilled from Kata and for a more exclusive time, you can organise your experience through the in-resort concierge team who create bespoke itineraries and private tours to almost anywhere you want to go. In short, no request is too big or too small here and no activity is out of reach. A 10 out of 10 stay all-round that was faultless from beginning to end.

How do I book?


Three-nights at Kata Rocks has certainly convinced me that I have to go back... and soon. If you're here on visiting Phuket then get in touch today with one of our personal travel managers by submitting an enquiry here who will help you plan your dream trip. Alternatively, find out more about Kata Rocks here.

Share with someone you'd love to travel with



Lauren Godfrey
 Lauren Godfrey is a Marketing Manager

RECOMMENDED OFFERS



EXCLUSIVE SAVINGS, DELICIOUS C...
 ★★★★★ Phuket, Thailand...
 7 nights from **£1799** pp inc flights
 Best for: Ultra Luxury, Beach

Flight: Etihad Airways, Economy Class. Flying from London Heathrow
 Travel: Travel 01/05/2018 - 30/11/2018

To book or customise this offer call us on **0203 816 0985**

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