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## Culinary Retreat

Nestled on the edge of a rainforest, Bayan Indah is a hidden gem for culinary enthusiasts.









Enveloped in cool refreshing tranquility, Bayan Indah is reminiscent of a tropical resort. This is not surprising given its surrounding of tropical jungle. What was surprising is that this area is actually located in Kuala Lumpur. Located in a village in Sungai Penchala, it's just ten minutes away from the affluent neighbourhood of Taman Tun Dr. Ismail and approximately 30 minutes from the city centre.



### **An Electric Mix**

No doubt part of the charm is the hidden location and of course the owner, the prolific food writer, stylish and chef, Rohani Jelani. She has converted her previous home to a homestay and also a venue for her cooking classes. But this is no ordinary cooking school. Calling it a school itself undermines the role of the place. "I wanted it to become an eclectic sort of landmark for modern Malaysian food, a place where people (especially foreigners) discover that Asian food is not only Thai or Indian or Japanese but can also be Nyonya, Malay, Malaysian Indian and Malaysian Chinese," Rohani related her dream for Bayan Indah.

And as to reflect the diversity of Malaysian food, the furniture pieces here are also of mixed elements. In the verandah area, you can find Chinese antique stools, tables and cabinets sitting comfortably next to a very modern refrigerator, a contemporary dining table and chair set and a plush sofa. This area is also the main dining area where students can enjoy their cooking after their classes. Indeed, this is the perfect place to wind down after the 'hard work' of cooking, overlooking the greenery at the front of the house. The vast porch area also has a pond and two additional seminar rooms catering for corporate functions.









### **Dream Kitchen**

To the left of the dining area is where the expansive kitchen for the cooking classes is held. Rohani is passionate about cooking and take a fun approach to teaching, making it an enjoyable experience for the participants. Far from learning in an enclosed and cramped kitchen, in Bayan Indah, your cooking experience is enhanced by the cool breeze of the surrounding tropical jungle, courtesy of the open-air kitchen and even a herb garden for you to nip some fresh herbs to add to your cooking.

Using her experience as a chef, Rohani designs this kitchen to be as practical as possible for any cook, be it novice or professional. A dream kitchen for many, the open-concept helps to heighten the vastness of the space. Equipped with a few working islands and numerous ovens, there is also a dedicated pantry room for tableware and cooking utensils.



Guest Rooms

The showcase of East meets West continues to the space upstairs, where it has been renovated and decorated to be comfortable guest rooms. Big enough to function as a house on its own, it comprises a master bedroom, three bedrooms, a living hall, a patio, a pantry area and even a dedicated room for laundry.

White neutral backdrop provides a blank canvas for art works and Asian antique to stand out. Unique glass art works, made by Rohani's good friend, Penang artist Wong Keng Fuan adorn the walls while the furniture displays the fine craftsmanship of her carpenter, Mr. Lim.

Each of the room has its own name – Kantan (torch ginger herb or ginger flower), Kunyit (turmeric), Selasih (Thai Basil), Pandan – taking its inspiration from the herbs of traditional Malay cooking. All the bedrooms are fitted with en-suite bathrooms but take a deep breath before you go to the bathroom of the master bedroom – not only does it has an additional bathtub, it's flanked by a large window with a wonderful view of the rainforest! The master bedroom, Kantan also displays eye-catching antique furniture especially the Oriental-style yellow lacquer screen, giving privacy to the bed yet a peek to the area reveals a fiery red headboard that begs to stand out no matter what's in front.







### **Heritage Trail for Malaysian Food**

Despite the somewhat hidden location, Bayan Indah has steadily grown in popularity with both the locals and foreigners, as seen in the positive reviews in local blogs and international travel website such as [lonelyplanet.com](http://lonelyplanet.com) and [tripadvisor.com](http://tripadvisor.com).

Truly a retreat, privacy is ensured as the place is not easily accessible and address is not given freely. However, a very detailed map will be given, complete with photos of landmarks to guide visitors. And when you are here, you will understand and know it's worth the effort to discover the place.

With its electric mix of design and furniture, in addition to the tropical surroundings and resort-like ambiance, Bayan Indah is not far from what its owner has envisaged – making it a must-stop place for people who want to experience Asian and Malaysian cuisine.

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