

THE GOLD LIST ISSUE 2021

EVERYTHING CLASSIC. EVERYTHING EXCEPTIONAL

THE LONG VIEW VIETNAM

CAREFULLY CONSIDERED ARRIVALS SIGNAL A RESET FOR THE COUNTRY

Like its neighbour Cambodia, Vietnam has been gradually redirecting its compass from backpacking on a shoestring to a slicker kind of adventuring. For years, hotels such as Amanoi and The Nam Hai have held court, but now the opening of Bãi San Hô will up the ante. Sibling to Arnaud Zannier's other thoughtfully placed outposts (in Namibia, Megève and Siem Reap – see The Gold List, p103), this palm-filled hideout in a secluded bay on the south-central coast draws deeply on Vietnam's cultural heritage, with villas referencing the longhouses and seaside villages of the Rade and Cham people. The art of getting from A to B has become distinctly elevated, too. Anantara is making tracks with a souped-up new train carriage, The Vietage, *pictured*, which trundles behind the 9.31am from Da Nang to its beachfront hotel further south in Quy Nhon. The six-hour trip, passing rice paddies and villages, serves up a snapshot of this captivating coast. As the travel world recasts itself for a new era, this is a case study for how to do it: meaningfully. KATIE LOCKHART