Touristic Inversions in the Southeast Asian Tropical Resort Hotel

Oasis
Eden
Mirage

by

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Abstract

As part of an expanding global 'pleasure periphery', Southeast Asia is emerging as home to a select and specialised brand of resort boutique hotels: the tropical resort hotel. Destinations in their own right, these hotels project the image of the perfect vacation getaway - the forest hideaway, the hillside retreat or the island escape.

It is postulated here that the tropical resort hotel environment effects its role as a vacation getaway through the concept of inversion. Inversion here refers to a process whereby the tourist is confronted with a situation remote and contrary to those of his structured everyday existence, thus constituting an escape from that existence.

This dissertation identifies the possible ways inversion is effected by the tropical resort hotel in terms of a proposed framework of landscape concepts - an Oasis, Eden, a Mirage. The tropical resort hotel is then examined for the design components that contribute to these various forms of inversions.

As a basic survey, the tropical resort hotel is discussed with respect to its role as a getaway or theoretically, an inversion. Here, a critical examination of the designed environment is effected with special reference to the use to which it is put. As such, this work offers an insight to the possible relevance of the various design components to the tourist.