

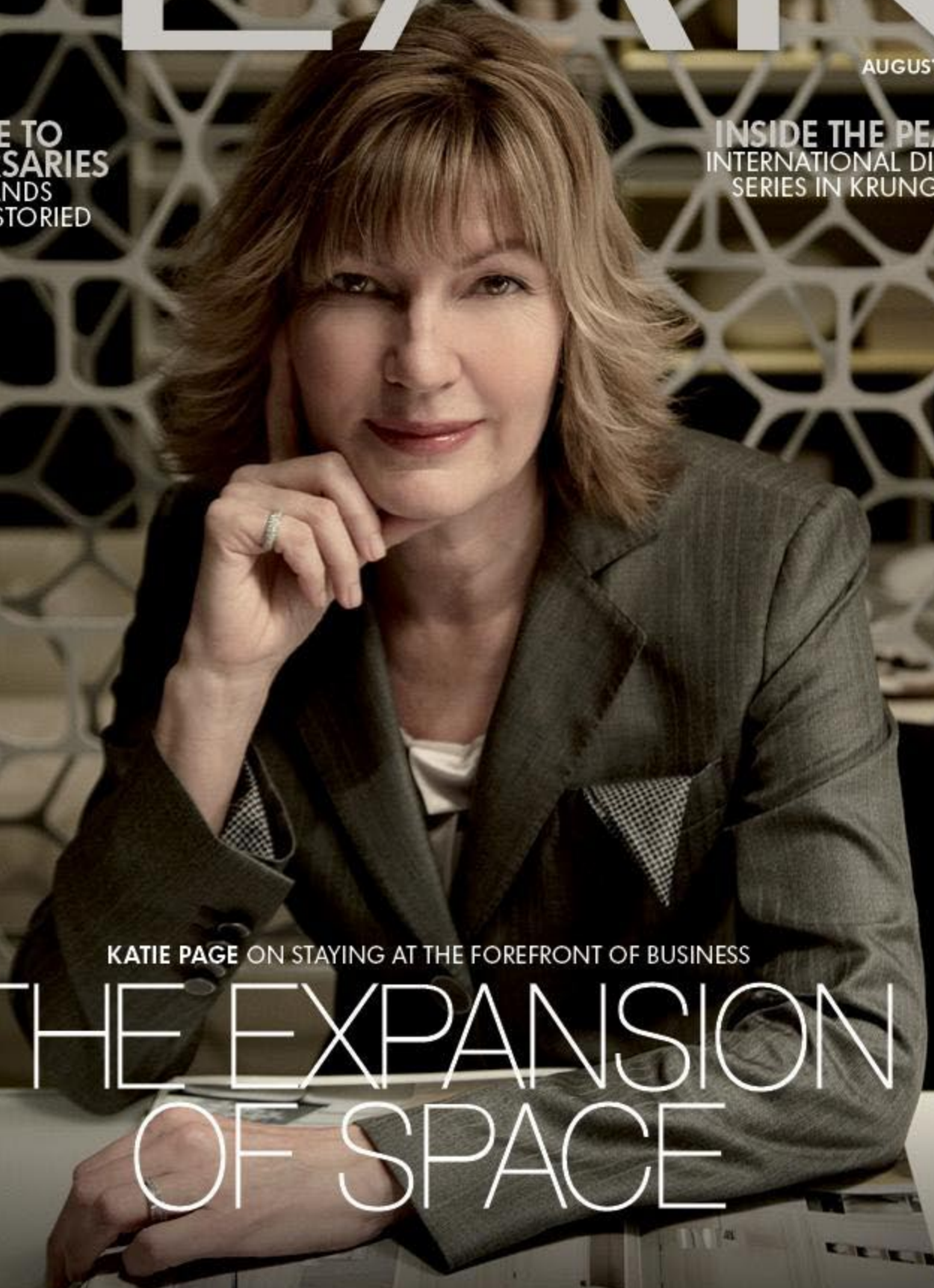
MALAYSIA

THE PEAK

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REGAL ROOMING

The grounds of the Imperial Palace in Tokyo are generally off-limits to tourists, but a privileged view of its gardens can be savoured from any of the guestrooms at the new **Palace Hotel Tokyo**, which stands just outside the royal premises – across a moat, in fact.

The hotel is part of a USD1.2billion development in the financial centre of Marunouchi. Not surprisingly, amenities are top-notch. For one, it has the second Evian Spa outside of France after Shanghai. Drawing inspiration from the natural cycle of Evian water, the spa's design reflects the journey it takes through the Alps – from the loose stone garden at the reception area mirroring the water's source on the mountaintop to the ceilings of treatment rooms that reflect the ripples in a pond. The spa's signature therapy incorporates Japanese point-style technique with Swedish deep-tissue massage. On days when skies are clear, guests can gaze at snow-capped Mount Fuji.

Then they can dine on stars – Michelin stars, that is. From the likes of Shinji Kanesaka, owner of two-star Sushi Kanesaka down at Ginza, to Patrick Henriroux, who runs the two-star La Pyramide in Vienne, France, the kitchens of Palace Hotel Tokyo are definitely well helmed. The hotel has 290 rooms on 23 floors, every one of which faces the palace, plus 17 retail outlets and a connector to the soon-to-be-completed Otemachi subway station. Guestrooms boast modern technology in addition to Japanese touches ranging from bedlinen sourced from Ehime Prefecture, to tea manufactured in Tokyo's Tsukiji district.

Though you will not be staying at the royal residence itself, you can relish in the knowledge that the treatment you receive will be nothing short of princely.

