



A Man of the World

Aman Resorts' chief executive Olivier Jolivet shares his take on luxury travel and what he looks for in the perfect getaway.

STORY **APPLE MANDY**

For the avid traveller, there's probably no better job in the world than to be at the helm of a leading luxury hospitality empire. Aman Resorts' expansion sees its chief executive, Olivier Jolivet, jetting between some of the most exotic and exclusive destinations. Here, he reveals where the group is planning to plant its next flag – and his own favourite places to retreat and revive.

How often do you travel each year?

A vast amount, but I never get tired of travelling. It's essential, especially when we are bringing the brand to the west and looking further to open in cities. It also gives me the opportunity to connect with our teams and spend time with other Amanjunkies [devoted fans of Aman Resorts].

Aman's newest property is in the Dominican Republic. How many more properties do you expect to open?

We opened Amanera in November this year [2015] and we are going to open our second Amanemu this coming spring in Ise Shima National Park, Japan. However, one thing that remains absolutely constant with Aman is the little secrecy and intrigue of where it is opening next. That said, I can tell you that following the success of Aman Tokyo – the first vertical Aman – we are looking very closely at some other cities in a very undiscovered and unique part of Africa and South America.

ABOVE
Olivier Jolivet

OPPOSITE FROM TOP
Amankora consists of five lodges dotted around Bhutan's central and western regions. Aman Tokyo, meanwhile, is the first vertical Aman.

What is on your priority list of considerations when opening a new Aman?

Our first priority is guest experience. We encourage our guests to visit new destinations and explore undiscovered experiences like staying at tented camps in Mongolia or Antarctica. We continue to seek exceptional locations to satiate the wanderlust of our Amanjunkies.

Where in the world do you find peace when you need it most?

Bhutan. We have the Amankora – the name derived from 'aman', meaning peace in Sanskrit, and 'kora', meaning circular pilgrimage in Dzongkha, the language of Bhutan. Amankora consists of five lodges dotted around the country's central and western regions. Each one has a spectacular backdrop of valleys with fields of millet and buckwheat. Amankora offers views of the spectacular Himalayan scenery plus colourful festivals, historic monasteries, and a population who are more concerned with Gross Domestic Happiness than Gross Domestic Product. It's refreshing and very different from today's technology-led society.

What country is your favourite to visit and why?

Japan, because it is the most sophisticated country in the world. I believe there is a natural element in Japanese culture which is also inherent in Aman's DNA. We have similarities: discretion, elegance, Zen and the general notion that 'less is more'.

What are the top three essentials you can't travel without?

I always have a book with me. It can be about a culture or a history of a destination I have my eyes



set on for a future Aman. I also can't live without my iPod loaded with relaxing meditation music, and my Blackberry and charger.

What do you do to stay healthy when you travel?

I walk whenever possible and I avoid taking taxis. There is no better way to fully understand and connect with a destination than exploring by foot. I also enjoy switching off by meditating to help maintain my energy, focus, and awareness levels.

What is your favourite spa treatment when you're looking for a bit of pampering?

A shiatsu massage because it promotes relaxation and releases the flow of energy within the body. It's also ideal for fighting jet lag too. ☺