

Banyan Tree Group and The Boutique Farmers Form Joint Venture To Develop ORI9IN, the first Gourmet Organic Farm in Chiangmai, Thailand *Pioneering sustainable retained farming and cooperatives for living and eating well*



Singapore, 24 June 2020 – Banyan Tree Group has opened ORI9IN, the first gourmet organic farm in Chiangmai, Thailand, together with James Noble, Two Michelin-Star Chef-turned-Sustainable-Farmer of The Boutique Farmers, established as a reputable grower. A partnership grounded on the passion for a sustainable future through food, this enterprise leverages the post-COVID quest for better health and wellbeing. This venture of Agro-tourism aims to lead the curve in sustainable retained farming and cooperatives for living and eating well.

Championing local procurement and sustainably sourced food, **ORI9IN is the only retained farming operation globally that partners with a network of restaurants and hotels to focus on import substitution, and reduce carbon footprint without sacrificing flavour.** Set on 350 acres of land, ORI9IN is a multi-faceted farm with extensive facilities. It is committed to land stewardship through biodynamic farming knowledge and methods and market distribution of high quality organic products planted by local farmers. A joint venture with Banyan Tree Group, the farm is the brainchild of James Noble and Khun May of The Boutique Farmers Pak Nam Pran which now at an expanded scale, consumers can learn the art of growing and save costs on healthier products suitable for both commercial tables and homes.

ORI9IN features retained farming with farm rental spaces to grow specific ingredients as well as to test and plant overseas products for over 15 top Michelin-star chefs hailing from Thailand's restaurants and hotels. Families can also rent land, bond over farming and enjoy the harvest of vegetable and fruit salad, delivered to their home weekly. The farm's community garden grows a variety of vegetables (*Aubergine, Kale, Chillies, Pumpkins, Green Beans, Basil, Lemongrass, Garlic and Tomatoes*) and provides complimentary vegetables harvesting to villagers daily.

The farm is also home to **the world's very first White Menu** dining experience, observing provenance and zero waste. Almost all ingredients come from the farm itself or from local cooperatives of 30 km radius. To enable a zero-waste kitchen, diners experience an alternative gastronomy of fine dining where ingredients and produce take centrestage over price and plate presentation.

"Luxury is changing. Fine dining is changing. What people want from the new norm is to know where their food is coming from. They care much more about the process than whether there's a white cloth on the table. This is the future," says James Noble. "All guests just write their preferences on a white piece of paper, and they love the surprise factor of seeing what I'm able to come up with between that and when I put the dish in front of them. It's in the moment, yet incredibly considered."

With the change in seasons, each dish may never repeat itself. Ingredients dictate the culinary direction and incorporate healthful traditional techniques of solar-baking, 16-hour earth oven roasting, fermenting, sun-drying, pickling and curing of the food. The farm has created cooperatives in the community and help develop livestock farmers, fishermen and artisans who contribute to the menu from plates, furniture and food. Examples of a menu

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focused on creativity, seasonality and surprise are *Fig with Tomato Bruschetta & Garlic Flowers*, *Sweet & Sour Duck Hearts*, *Sambal Babaganoush Croquettes* and *Duck Marquez Sausages with Pumpkin Chilli Mash*. From the **Herbalist Medicine Garden**, healing plants such as Turmeric, Ginger, Dok kajan, Echinacea and Gingko can be picked and mixed into bottled drinks as traditional remedies to build immunity.

Come October 2020, the ORI9IN farm will be officially opened to the public from 9am – 6pm daily, with ticketed options for different journeys. A 30-minute drive out of Chiangmai towards Phao, guests can enjoy a full-day of fun at the farm, the highlight of which is **Asia's largest Maize Maze**, and experiencing first-hand the practice behind crop planting and jam factories. Additionally, the spacious **Wooden Farm Sala** and **Lanna House Food Venue** will soon welcome MICE groups and Wedding events.

James adds, "I really think business as usual needs to change. We should be in business not only for ourselves, but also to protect and improve the health and livelihoods of the local community. In my small way, I also hope to inspire people to rethink the way products are grown and prepared. Our children needs us to do things differently. We need to farm for the future."

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ABOUT BANYAN TREE HOLDINGS LIMITED

Banyan Tree Holdings Limited ("Banyan Tree" or the "Group") is one of the world's leading independent, multi-branded hospitality groups. The Group's diversified portfolio of hotels, resorts, spas, galleries, golf and residences is centered on five award-winning brands (Banyan Tree, Angsana, Cassia, Dhawa and Laguna) that offer exceptional design-led experiences for global travellers of today and tomorrow.

Founded in 1994 on the core concept of sustainability, Banyan Tree Holdings seeks to create long-term value for all stakeholders and destinations across its network of properties, products and brands, through a purpose-driven mission. With 11,000 associates across 24 countries, Banyan Tree Management Academy (BTMA) was established in 2008 to support the Group's goals through advancing people development, management excellence, and learning with integrity and meaning.

Banyan Tree Holdings has received over 2,611 industry awards and accolades since inception. It has also received recognition for its commitment to environmental protection and community development through its Banyan Tree Global Foundation (BTGF), which aligns the Group's efforts to the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Executing on its regionalised growth strategy, the Group's global footprint continues to grow with 46 new hotels and resorts under design and construction in the pipeline, in addition to 47 operating hotels in 24 countries as of 31 December 2019.

Banyan Tree Holdings entered a strategic long-term partnership with AccorHotels in 2016 to develop and manage Banyan Tree branded hotels around the world along with the access to AccorHotels' global reservations and sales network, as well as the loyalty programme Le Club AccorHotels. It also formed a joint venture with China Vanke Co. Ltd. In 2017 – focusing on active ageing and wellness hospitality projects.

www.banyantree.com www.angsana.com www.cassia.com www.dhawa.com laguna.com

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ORI9IN is the first gourmet organic farm in Thailand, where the number 9 in its name pays tribute to the country's farming father King Rama 9. Focusing on Agro Tourism, it grows the finest products for the industry and works with Michelin-star chefs, hailing from top restaurants and hotels through retained farming.

A joint venture with Banyan Tree Group, ORI9IN The Gourmet Farm offers managed organic farming and growing facilities focused on affordability and transparency. The farm is the brainchild of James Noble and Khun May of The Boutique Farmers Pak Nam Pran which now at an expanded scale, consumers can get involved at any level, learn the art of growing and save costs on healthier product suitable for both commercial tables and homes.

The ethos is rooted based on Sustainability, Traceability and Provenance of each harvested plant and produce on its supply chain journey to the table. ORI9IN is the only retained farming operation globally open to partnership of multi-operations and hotels. It has also innovated the world's very first White Menu dining experience, observing provenance and zero waste.

www.ori9inthegourmetfarm.com

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