



Army of unsung heroes ensured pleasant flight home, stay-home notice period

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The writer's room at Hotel Fort Canning during his stay-home notice period from Nov 19 to Dec 3, 2020.

On Nov 19, I returned to the stay-home notice experience in Singapore from the United States, where the pandemic is out of control and discourse remains stuck on mask-wearing and whether Covid-19 is a conspiracy.

It has been a privilege to be back.

From Los Angeles International Airport to Singapore Airlines (SIA) to Changi Airport to Hotel Fort Canning, an army of unseen labour made my journey both possible and pleasant.

And this army laboured despite the possibility that some of us could have brought the coronavirus home.

At Los Angeles International Airport and on board the SIA plane back, check-in and boarding were smooth and the flight was uneventful.

Apart from excellent hospitality, passengers were distanced and each given masks, wipes and hand sanitiser.

At Changi Airport, passage from the plane to the bus transfer was seamless. Along the way, there were guiding signs and airport employees answering queries.

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At the immigration counter, the officer gave a useful explanation of the stay-home order.

Upon luggage retrieval, we were tagged and ushered to a bus that would take us to the hotel.

Staff members checked and loaded the baggage, took the headcount while answering questions, and coordinated the trip.

At Hotel Fort Canning, we were served three meals a day, with trash collected after each meal. There was a daily laundry service with fresh towels and shower amenities, fresh linens, and coffee and refreshments left outside the room on a schedule.



One of the meals delivered to the writer's room at Hotel Fort Canning during his stay-home notice period from Nov 19 to Dec 3, 2020. Photo: Kwan Jin Yao

Staff members also brought extra food deliveries or care packages to the room, each time knocking on the door or making a call to tell us about the deliveries.

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At the hotel, a swab test station was set up at the lobby on the 11th day.

It took only five minutes for me to leave my room, get tested and return to the room. My result was on the Government's HealthHub portal soon after. I also received a call.

Throughout our stay, there were spot checks via telephone or WhatsApp calls as well as physical visits at our doors.

And finally, at the end of my stay-home notice period on Dec 3, check-out went without a hitch.

My experience is, has been and will be shared by thousands of Singaporeans who return home. We are grateful to all those who are labouring behind the scenes.

I have never been more thankful to be home.

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