



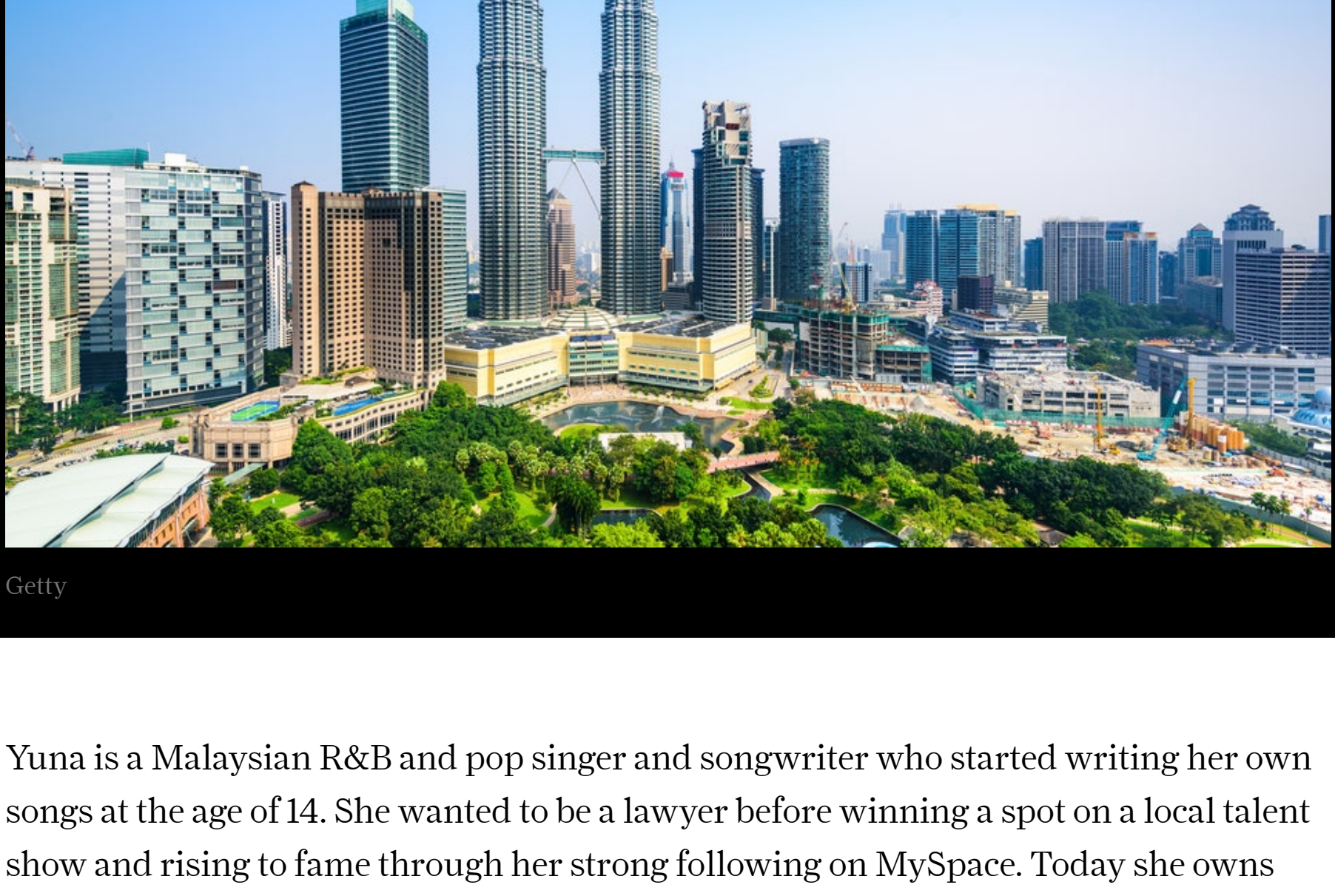
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A local's guide to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Singer Yuna on the top curry houses and music spots in the Malaysian capital

BY LAUREN HO
3 September 2021



Getty

Yuna is a Malaysian R&B and pop singer and songwriter who started writing her own songs at the age of 14. She wanted to be a lawyer before winning a spot on a local talent show and rising to fame through her strong following on MySpace. Today she owns her own record label, **Yuna Room Records**, where she manages and supports local indie artists, and has collaborated with the likes of Pharrell Williams and Usher.

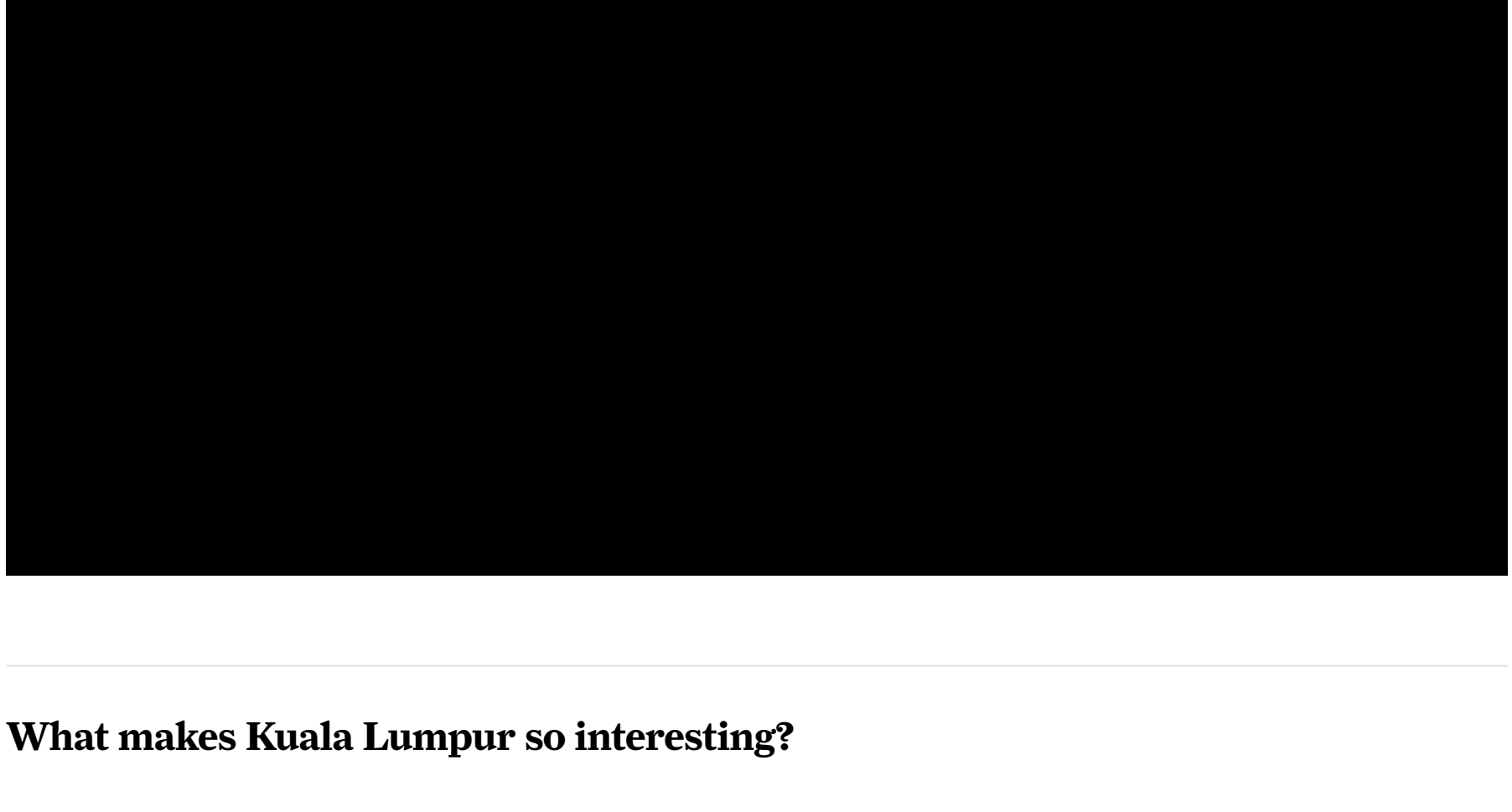
*This interview is part of **The World Made Local**, a global collaboration between the seven international editions of Condé Nast Traveller in which 100 people in 100 countries tell us why their home turf should be your next destination.*

What is the Malaysian music scene like at the moment?

It's new and it's growing. I'm excited for the new generation of musicians in **Malaysia**, who are very talented – they are able to make music at home and really well, too. A lot of Malaysian kids are also experimental when it comes to fusing old and new elements together: they are proud of their Malaysian heritage but also make their sound current.

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What makes Kuala Lumpur so interesting?

It's a really busy city with a lot of corners... and there's a story in every corner. You'll see a durian stall, a street-food stall, a temple, or a vendor selling clothes and shoes – things like that.



Yuna Aimanness Harun

Are there any secret, off-the-radar music venues we should know about in Kuala Lumpur?

It really depends what you're going for. I started out playing open-mic gigs at a spot called **No Black Tie**, but there's a really popular spot where a lot of young hip-hop acts are performing, called **Safehouse**. And then there's another place where indie bands like to play, called **Atas by Bijan Fx**. I'm sure there are more!

Where and what are the best places to hang out?

At the moment there are a lot of boutique hotels that are interesting. There are a few near Changkat Bukit Bintang, close to the heart of the city, so within walking distance from the old-town areas where all the restaurants and cafés are. Each hotel is unique, like **KLoé Hotel**, which is such a nice place. I recently went to a friend's birthday dinner at **Concubine KL**, which has great food and a nice vibe. It is located in a hidden corner of a dark street that has been done up, and I can't wait to go there again.

Where are your favourite places to eat?

Although I appreciate nicer restaurants, I grew up eating street food. It's hard to nail down one place when it comes to local food, but my favourite places to eat are any seafood restaurants on Jalan Alor, which is a street with a great atmosphere that has it all. One meal that I love is the banana-leaf rice from Kanna Curry House, which is white rice served on a banana leaf with chicken, mutton, or fried fish curry. I like to sit outside in the 100-degree heat, under the trees, and enjoy my spicy curry while sipping iced tea... there's nothing quite like it.

What is the first thing you do when you return home after a trip away?

It's kinda funny, but I'm known for my love of banana-leaf rice – if my flight lands in the afternoon, you can count on seeing me at Kanna Curry House an hour later!

Follow Yuna on Instagram @yuna

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