

**SERI
NEGARA
IN STYLE**

HAVEN

SPOLLS OF SUCCESS

A serene Shah Alam
mansion is both worthy retreat
+ place of refuge

• RYOKAN DESIGN • NOWRUZ IDEAS • A KAMPUNG GARDEN

Complimentary
with THE EDGE
NOT FOR SALE

PP 13134/04/2013(031808)

ISSN 1675-6266



9 771675 626000

Intrika3

SERENE HEIGHTS

by **UEM Sunrise**

New launch in Serene Heights, Semenyih



Rooted in Nusantara design, crafted for contemporary living.

A collection of elegant, freehold double-storey homes thoughtfully crafted with Nusantara-inspired architecture and private gardens, ideal for creating memorable family moments.

IKLAN INI TELAH DILULUSKAN OLEH JABATAN PERUMAHAN NEGARA

MAKLUMAT PEMAJUAN DAN IKLAN YANG DILULUSKAN BOLEH DISEMAK DI PORTAL TEDUH.KPKT.GOV.MY
INTRIKA 3 (Fasa 3A4) • Pemaju: Symphony Hills Sdn Bhd (547800-M) • Alamat: Clubhouse Symphony Hills, Persiaran Simfoni, Cyber 9, 65000 Cyberjaya, Selangor • No. Lesen Pemaju: 11186/04-2028/0829(A) • Tempoh Sah: 27/04/2023 - 26/04/2028 • No. Permit Iklan dan Jualan: 11186-19/07-2027/0615(N)-(L) Tempoh Sah: 2 Tahun (28/07/2025 - 27/07/2027) • Pihak Berk kuasa yang Meluluskan: Majlis Perbandaran Kajang • No. Rujukan: MPKJ/OSC/A12/3/6-2023 Bil (20) dlm MPKJ 2/P/12/2023 • Jenis Hartanah: Rumah Teres 2 Tingkat • Hak Milik Tanah: Pegangan Kekal • Bebanan Tanah: Tiada • Sekatan Kepentingan: Tiada • Jumlah Unit: Jenis B1: 105 Unit • (Min.) RM730,800 (Maks.) RM1,107,220 • Luas Binaan: 178 - 187 mps • Tarikh Dijangka Siap: April 2027 • Diskaun Bumiputera 7%



6.1 m x 21.3 m
(20' x 70')

178 sqm - 187 sqm
(1,914 sqft - 2,010 sqft)

4 Bedrooms + 3 Bathrooms

For more information, please call
012 648 7433

The **EDGE** Top Property
Developers Awards
2025



uemsunrise.com



Subang Jaya's Most Desirable Address

Phase 1 is 90% sold

Phase 2 now open for sale
2 - 3 bedrooms from RM610,000*



Live a vibrant and connected lifestyle in Subang Jaya's hottest fully-furnished service apartments with everything you need within reach.

BOOK NOW



017-3000 190
sjcceast1.com

 **SJCC Gallery**

Open daily: 9.30am - 6.00pm

*Terms & conditions apply

SJCC
High Street



Stylish retail
just below apartments

Subang National
Golf Club



130m covered walk to
Subang Jaya LRT Station



Development Location: 3.08382, 101.59005
Total Units (926 units) Tower A (463 units) Tower B (463 units) • Type: Service Apartment • Expected Date of Completion: June 2029 • Land Encumbrances:
Nil • Land Tenure: Freehold • Balance Units (758 units) Tower A (423 units) Tower B (335 units) • Developer's License No: 10991/11-2027/1114(A) • Validity:
05/11/2022 - 04/11/2027 • Advertising & Sales Permit No: 10991-5/04-2028/0311(A)-(S) • Validity Period: 23/04/2025 - 22/04/2028 • Approving
Local Authority: Majlis Bandaraya Subang Jaya • Reference No: MBSJ.BGN.BP1.600-1/10/5/5(20) • Developer: Sime Darby Property (Subang) Sdn. Bhd.
(Co. No. 199401038985) Level 10, Block G, No. 2, Jalan PJU 1A/7A, Ara Damansara, 47301 Petaling Jaya, Selangor • Built-up Area: 550 sq.ft. (min.) - 1,435
sq.ft. (max) • Selling Price SAMM: RM 250,000 • Open Market: RM 738,000 (min) - RM 1,722,000 (max) • 5% Bumiputera Discount (Quota applies)

THIS ADVERTISEMENT HAS BEEN APPROVED BY JABATAN PERUMAHAN NEGARA
DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION CAN BE VERIFIED THROUGH THE TEDUH.KPKT.GOV.MY PORTAL

Subang Jaya
LRT & KTM Station



130m covered
walkway

Subang Ria Park



450m walk

Subang
Parade



520m walk

NU Empire
Subang



750m walk

Subang Jaya
Medical Centre



900m walk

E1
SJCC
EAST ONE

Subang Ria
Park



SJMC

SJCC High Street

AEON Big

Subang Jaya LRT
& KTM Station

Subang
Parade

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Artist's impression

Tree-lined retail boulevard

Artist's impression

Artist's impression

**SJCC
HIGH
STREET**

Enjoy the convenience of a trendy retail boulevard just below your apartment – made for a vibrant lifestyle with exciting new retail and dining. Coming soon!





ON THE COVER

A beloved Porsche 911 Carrera GTS is the centrepiece of a see-through garage

Read about it on page 28

PHOTOGRAPHY: SOOPHYE



43

NEWS + VIEWS

11 SHARED SPACES

Cultural destinations for your vacation itineraries

12 READING ROOM

Be transported to spaces around the globe through these titles

13 KEEP IT FRESH

Trends for the season of colour and rejuvenation

14 SPRING SPOTLIGHTS

Design and architecture fairs to look forward to

15 TIME'S SQUARE

Royal Selangor's latest outlet adds lustre to a historic city landmark



18

16 BUILDING THE FUTURE

Kuala Lumpur Architecture Festival 2026 is set to help people bond with design

52 OF PLACE, PAST + PROMISE

The restored Seri Negara mansion brings fresh excitement to the city's cultural and historic landscape

75 THE UNSECREAT GARDEN

Badan Warisan Malaysia breathes new life into its garden in KL

IN EVERY ISSUE...

8 EDITOR'S NOTE

68 MARKETPLACE

88 LAST LOOK



35

SERI EMBUN

CITY OF ELMINA

AN ENCLAVE ABOVE THE EVERYDAY

WHERE REFINED LIVING QUIETLY UNFOLDS



Freehold



Private, Gated
& Guarded



A Clubhouse
for Family Time



3-Storey
Superlink Home



Beside a 2,700-Acre
Forest Reserve



Private Invitation Access
Scan the QR code to register.



DISCOVER MORE:



FOR ENQUIRIES, CALL
+6012-393 9118

@E&O Gallery, City of Elmina
Persiaran Shorea, Elmina,
Seksyen U15, 40170 Shah Alam, Selangor

Those who know, insist on E&O.

KUALA LUMPUR | PENANG | JOHOR | LONDON

easternandoriental.com

Pemaju: Eastern & Oriental Express Sdn Bhd (338864-V) • Alamat Pemaju: C-34/01, Menara Vista Petaling, No. 137, Jalan Puchong, 58200 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. • Tel: +603 8682 8220 • Faks: +603 8682 8226 • Lesen Pemaju: 31126/08-2030/0182(N) (Tempoh Sah: 13/08/2025 - 12/08/2030) • Tempoh Hakmilik Tanah: Hakmilik Kekal • Jangkaan Tarikh Penyiapan Projek: Feb 2029 • Pihak Berkuasa Meluluskan: Majlis Bandaraya Shah Alam (No. Rujukan: MBSA.BGN.600-3/4/62, MBSA.BGN.600-3/4/63) • Permit Jualan & Pengiklanan: 31126-1/01-2029/0013(N)-5 (Tempoh Sah: 06/01/2026 - 05/01/2029) • Bebanan Tanah: TIADA • Jumlah Unit: 360 unit • Harga Jualan (RM): Fasa 1: RM2,124,200.00 (Min); RM2,839,200.00 (Maks) • Fasa 2: RM2,226,200.00 (Min); RM2,826,200.00 (Maks) • Jenis Projek: Rumah Teres
DISCLAIMER: The information contained herein is subject to change and cannot form part of an offer or contract. All pictures, drawings sketches and illustrations are artists' impressions only and are not intended to be representations of fact. Whilst every reasonable care has been taken in providing this information, the Developer shall not be held responsible for any inaccuracies and changes as may be required by the authorities, our consultants or otherwise.

A DEVELOPMENT BY

E&O
EASTERN & ORIENTAL
B E R A D

(192701000031 (555-K))

CONTENTS

SPRING 2026

DESIGN

18 HEAVY PETAL

Blooming picks to usher in a chapter of rebirth and hope

58 LIGHT YEAR

Evoke peace and tranquility with Pantone's 2026 Colour of the Year

78 BIOPHILIC CHIC

Bring the outdoors in with these verdant inspirations

LIVING

28 PENCHANT + PANACHE

Personal touches and sentimental value decorate the halls of this serene family villa in Shah Alam

36 KINDRED BY DESIGN

This Bangsar South abode is a bold expression of its owner's bright, fun-loving personality

44 THE FAMILY THAT EATS TOGETHER

At the home of V-Zug Southeast Asia managing director Angeline Yap, the kitchen is where the magic happens

WORKSPACE

62 YOUNG AT HEART

Daythree's renovated office captures the vibrant energy of its contemporary workforce



ENTERTAINING

80 FAMILY AFFAIR

Persian staples served at Nooshe Jan by Fari & Ali's Kitchen are just the thing for the upcoming Nowruz celebration

TRAVEL

70 SOUTHERN LIGHT

Thoughtful Malaysian, Bhutanese and Korean touches make the House of Mi-Rin worthy of a trip Down Under

72 A TALE OF TWO RYOKAN

Regional charm shines through in the design and service at these Japanese hot spring lodgings in the Nagano and Gifu Prefectures



2 Excellent Choices: Built For Living. Primed For Business.

Secure a **FREEHOLD** address with dual opportunities in Taman Sungai Dua Utama, Penang.



Artist's impression



Artist's impression



Artist's impression

2-storey Terrace Homes The Heights Of Contemporary Living



20' x 70'



From 142 sqm. |
1,531 sq. ft.



4 bedrooms
3 bathrooms

2-storey Shop Offices Reap The Opportunities For Business Success



20' x 65'



From 222 sqm. |
2,390 sq. ft.

📞 04-356 9393

🌐 majesticgen.com.my

Landowner:



Developer:



Majestic Aman Sales Gallery by Majestic Gen
No. 35, Jalan Sungai Dua Utama 1,
Taman Sungai Dua Utama, Sungai Dua,
13800 Butterworth, Pulau Pinang





PHOTOGRAPHY: SOOPHYE

2026 HOUSE RULES

My friends in the architecture and design community have been sharing insights on newish design trends that could *actually* work with the way people live today. Pinterest boards, inspired by the Japanese *wabi-sabi* philosophy — which celebrates beauty in imperfection and rustic simplicity — are increasingly featuring mismatched colour schemes, imperfect layouts and organic forms.

Take things a step further by removing the “precious” element from daily life. Keep the beautiful things, yes. Save up for and splurge on truly remarkable *objets d'art*, of course. But don't let them dictate how you live, to the point that you have conniptions if one glass in your crystal set is broken at a party or you delay inviting friends over for dinner until you have assembled a full, matching set of Limoges porcelain and silverware.

Instead, keep your eyes firmly on the now. Time seems to be flying by faster than ever. The children are growing up too quickly. The ageing process, likewise, is speeding up by a few notches.

So, for 2026, the only rule is to bend and break it. Mix moody cinematic design with florals. Let chintz be the backdrop for your collection of Scandinavian knick-knacks. Modern Tropical can so get into bed with Chinoiserie. One of the easiest ways to achieve this look at home (or the office) is to embrace a medley of shapes and upholstery fabric and to pair clashing patterns, such as stripes and florals.

Make it a point to trawl flea markets and antique shops for vintage pieces to go with modern, mall-acquired purchases. It is also strangely soothing when textures and styles go head-to-head, like how clubby leather armchairs benefit from the softening touch of tasselled velvet cushions or perhaps a designer Vitra chair with a locally made rattan table.

Fashion is full of trending styles such as normcore (comfort and plainness), gorpcore (outdoorsy), menocore (mature, relaxed and luxurious) and dadcore (think Adam Sandler, Birkenstocks and baseball caps). In the world of homes and interiors, the buzz for the year is definitely cluttercore. If you've spied it on social media channels, you would know that is all about embracing curated chaos, using what you own as a storyboard of your life versus conspicuous acquisition and clutter that is not messy, but functional.

In case we have forgotten, the horror years of the pandemic and living in lockdown are over. And so is sterility. The world is rich, textured, nuanced, completely dynamic and multi-faceted. Our living spaces deserve to reflect that complexity. **H**

Diana Khoo
EDITOR



WRITE TO US AT
editor@bizedge.com



VISIT US AT
optionstheedge.com
theedgemalaysia.com



LIKE US AT
fb.com/Optionstheedge



FOLLOW US AT
[@Optionstheedge](https://www.instagram.com/Optionstheedge)



EDITORIAL EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Kathy Fong

EDITOR

Diana Khoo

ASSISTANT EDITOR

Kong Wai Yeng

SENIOR WRITER

Emily Yap

WRITERS

Aireena Azni
Genie Leong
Quincy Tan
Puteri Inarah

TRAINEE

Lee Charmynn

CONTRIBUTOR

Sophiya Sabapathy

SENIOR EDITOR

Eddie Hoo

CHIEF COPY EDITORS

Elaine Lim
Mah Pin Pin

ASSISTANT CHIEF COPY EDITORS

Evelyn Tung
Kenneth Francis Martinus

SENIOR COPY EDITORS

Koay Sook Kuan
Lee Mei Geok
Shanthi Murugiah

COPY EDITOR

Arion Yeow

ART DIRECTOR

Sharon Khoh

ASSISTANT ART DIRECTOR

Wennie Heng

ADVERTISING + MARKETING

E-MAIL: advertising@bizedge.com

MANAGING DIRECTOR, BUSINESS

Sharon Teh (012) 313 9056

GENERAL MANAGER

Fong Lai Kuan (012) 386 2831

ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGERS

Gregory Thu (012) 376 0614
Shannon Leong (012) 677 5345

SENIOR MANAGERS

Kenny Lim (014) 334 2733
Shafina Syahrir (017) 281 4787

SENIOR ACCOUNT MANAGERS

Carmen Koh (016) 702 8516
Cecilia Too (012) 319 7666
Lina Diyana Hedzier
(016) 900 0392

ACCOUNT MANAGERS

Dominic Lee (012) 325 3755
Megan Wong (012) 289 2631

MANAGER, AD TRAFFIC

Norma Jasma Norman

MANAGER, DIGITAL BOOKINGS AND INTEGRATION

Avinash Rao

CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS SENIOR MANAGER

Charis Tan

MANAGER

Siti Aznira Azhari

ADMINISTRATION + RESOURCE CENTRE MANAGER

Tan Wellyoung

CIRCULATION GENERAL MANAGER

Joe hari Abd Jabbar

MANAGER

Vijayasaravanan

CORPORATE PUBLISHER + GROUP CEO

Ho Kay Tat

MANAGING DIRECTOR, BUSINESS

Sharon Teh

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

Lim Shiew Yuin

CUSTOMER SUPPORT

TEL: (603) 7721 8033/8034
FAX: (603) 7721 8282
E-MAIL: hotline@bizedge.com

PUBLISHER

THE EDGE MALAYSIA

The Edge Communications
Sdn Bhd (266980-X)

Level 3, Menara KLK
No.1 Jalan PJU 7/6,
Mutiar Damansara

47810 Petaling Jaya,
Selangor, Malaysia

PHONE: (603) 7721 8000

EDITORIAL FAX: (603) 7721 8018

MARKETING FAX: (603) 7721 8008

RETAIL & SUBSCRIPTION FAX:

(603) 7721 8282

E-MAIL: editor@bizedge.com

WEBSITE:
theedgemalaysia.com
optionstheedge.com

PRINTER

Vivar Printing Sdn Bhd
(125107-D)

Lot 25 & 27, Rawang Integrated
Industrial Park, 48000 Rawang,
Selangor, Malaysia

PHONE: (603) 6092 7818

FAX: (603) 6092 8230

Haven is distributed free with
The Edge

PERMISSION & REPRINTS: Material in *Haven* may not be reproduced in any form without the written permission of the publisher.

THE EDGE COMMITMENT: A high standard of editorial quality and excellence should undergird success in an industry that is built around serving the public interest. We believe the interest of the investing public will be served by fair, accurate and timely information. — *Statement of Editorial Quality, The Edge Communications Sdn Bhd*



LET THERE BE ...

One of the most powerful drivers of well-being, be it biological, physical or psychological, the importance of light in our daily lives cannot be underestimated. Beyond allowing us to see visually, it also serves as a crucial regulator of our bodily functions, moods and environment. Naturally, equal importance should be placed on its conduits. These handcrafted lamps by Ong Cen Kuang, a Badung-based Balinese atelier, celebrate beauty from an organic point of view. Turn to Page 36 to find out more. **H**

Ceiling pendants made out of zips by Ong Cen Kuang

Shared spaces

Captivating cultural spots to add to your must-visit list

Text **Lee Charmynn**



WATERFRONT WONDER

Zaha Hadid Architects has revealed its plans to breathe new life into the former industrial area of the Zhedong Canal in Hangzhou, China. Designed as a green corridor, the new layout of the region, dubbed the Qiantang Bay Central Water Axis, will be made up of three waterside structures that hug the waterfront. Renderings released by the creators show the cultural district surrounded by landscaped parklands and plazas, along with bridges and pathways that connect both sides of the canal. The development will contain a youth centre, museum, fitness hall and gallery, with plans for the library including “inhabitable architectural columns”, said to double as book storage and reading rooms for visitors. The archive will include folded glass elements that reflect natural light into the space and masonry inspired by Hangzhou’s jade craftsmanship. (zaha-hadid.com)



ASSEMBLING ART

Transforming the 43,000 sq ft former Citroën Garage into a museum is not easily accomplished alone. Brussels-based noAarchitecten, Swiss architects EM2N and London’s Sergison Bates formed Atelier Kanal to refurbish the space along the Brussels canal into the Kanal-Centre Pompidou. The sprawling cultural complex, set to relaunch in late November, is the city’s first centre dedicated to modern and contemporary arts and architecture, and will house five floors of galleries, performance areas, shops and various dining locations. The museum’s opening is off to an impressive start, with 10 art exhibitions set to take place within its halls. Echoing its past as a place of production and imagination, Kanal is designed to be open to all, whether you are there for the paintings or simply to wander, ponder and enjoy. (kanal.brussels)

SHINSHU CHARMS

Those planning a visit to the resort town of Karuizawa near Nagano, Japan, will have a pleasant surprise come March. Located along the old railway tracks of the Shin’etsu Main Line, Karuizawa T-Site is conceived around three central ideas: eating, spending time and relaxing. Visitors stepping off the Shinkansen can explore the facility, comprising six buildings that house eateries like popular pastry chain I’m donut?, soup stock specialist Dashi Okume and Osobar Station. Book a stay at the nine-room boutique hotel Hacienda Karuizawa before unwinding fully at Aquaigis’ first hot spring location in the Kōshin’etsu region. There for just a day trip? Catch up on work or grab a snack at the Share Lounge, a popular co-working space franchise with unlimited drinks and food for its many patrons. (store.tsite.jp)



Reading room

Peer into built environments through printed pages

Text **Puteri Inarah**

LO—TEK. WATER. A FIELD GUIDE FOR TEKNOLOGY

BY JULIA WATSON

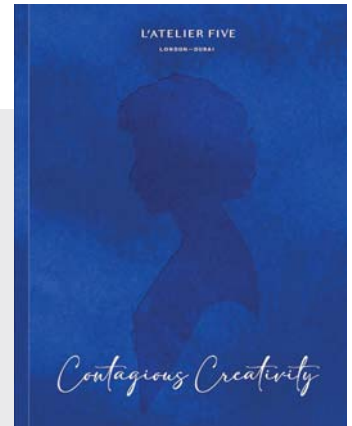
This guide to Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) delves into how civilisations have been sustained for millennia by working with nature. From *chinampas* in Mexico to dike-ponds in China and floating farms in Bangladesh, it explores ancestral water systems alongside 22 modern contemporary TEK projects that bridge ancient wisdom and digital innovation. With information provided by indigenous communities, Watson lays the groundwork for how these methods offer dynamic and adaptable solutions to the current climate crisis.



CONTAGIOUS CREATIVITY

BY L'ATELIER FIVE

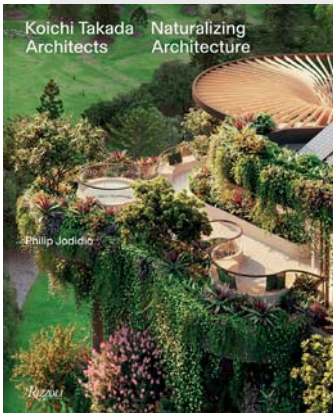
Stepping into a luxury retailer is an experience in itself — the atmosphere is immersive and personalised, specifically crafted to engage all the senses. For L'Atelier Five, this magic begins behind closed doors. The multidisciplinary studio is the invisible hand behind numerous brand activations and installations. In celebration of its 10th anniversary, this monograph showcases award-winning projects and collaborations with brands such as Hermès and Dior, as well as the entrepreneurial journey of founding designer, Saina Attaoui.



KOICHI TAKADA: NATURALIZING ARCHITECTURE

BY PHILIP JODIDIO

Sydney-based Japanese architect Koichi Takada is known for his innovative and sustainable creations that integrate nature into city landscapes. His acclaimed projects include Upper House in Brisbane, Solar Trees Marketplace in Shanghai, Sunflower House in Italy and Mamsha Palm on Saadiyat Island, Abu Dhabi. This book captures Takada's approach to environmentally conscious design through photographs and sketches of his recent works, presenting a compelling look into the practice and its potential future evolution.



MAKING SPACE: INTERIOR DESIGN BY WOMEN

BY JANE HALL

Rose Uniacke, Kelly Wearstler and Elsie de Wolfe are just some of the women who have impacted the interior design sphere. Since the beginning of the 20th century, women have influenced built environments even beyond the confines of their own homes. From flamboyant maximalism to arranged minimalism, this book pays homage to female creatives through the work of 250 names from all over the globe — from prominent figures and pioneers to unsung artists.



ART NOUVEAU

Clean lines and Japandi influences may dominate design magazines but a touch of whimsy can brighten up a home too. Move beyond rigid contemporary forms and step into the sinuous, nature-inspired world of Art Nouveau. Here, organic motifs and flowing curves reign. Anchor your space with an elegant solid-wood statement piece.

Keep it fresh

Spring calls for colours and rejuvenation. Highlight them with these interior design trends for the season.

Text **Lee Charmynn**

SOFT COLOURS

A glance outside during the vernal season reveals a world stirring from winter's slumber: buds push skyward, fresh leaves unfurl from bare branches and the sun casts a richer glow across the sky. Bring that vibrancy indoors with eye-catching hues like airy teals, soft pinks and lilacs, woven through accents and playful décor.



123RF



SAM FONG/THE EDGE

TRADITIONAL CRAFTS

Few things connect us to the world like traditional craft.

Even today, artisans draw from their surroundings — rattan woven into intricate baskets and rocking horses, clay shaped into pottery using the earth from beneath their feet. Support local creators and ground your space with a handmade *labu sayong* or reliable batik, reimaged as an elegant throw or plush cushion.



STRIPES

Versatile and rarely out of style, the humble stripe is a classic that works anywhere, from bathroom mats to wallpaper. Its potential is endless: Bold bands command attention, while finer lines add structure and balance. Stripes also work well with other motifs — pair a striped cushion with a fancy floral companion, or let a single piece stand out against solid tones.

UNSPLASH

SCULPTURAL LIGHTING

Lighting is often overlooked, yet its impact is immediate — it can make or break a space. Leave fluorescent tubes and stiff lampshades in the past; in 2026, thoughtfully designed fixtures are art, not just illumination. Mushroom-shaped table lamps offer a whimsical touch, while maximalists may gravitate towards chandeliers inspired by flowering branches.



UNSPLASH

Spring spotlights

Key happenings in design and architecture for you to set your sights on

Text **Puteri Inarah**

WHAT: Malaysian International Furniture Fair 2026

WHERE: Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

WHEN: March 4 to 7
Southeast Asia's largest furniture trade show is making a comeback for its 32nd edition. Whether you are an enthusiast, entrepreneur or just a casual shopper, the Malaysian International Furniture Fair is definitely something to look forward to. This year, it will span a record-breaking surface of 100,000 sq m, occupying the city's two main exhibition hubs – Malaysia International Trade and Exhibition Centre and World Trade Centre Kuala Lumpur. As both a marketplace and export platform, the gathering will connect over 700 exhibitors with more than 20,000 buyers from 140 countries and regions.



WHAT: Salone Internazionale del Mobile

WHERE: Milan, Italy

WHEN: April 21 to 26

What meaning can design take on today? That is the question presented by the 64th edition of Salone Internazionale del Mobile, to be held at Milan's Rho Fiera fairgrounds. With the thematic campaign "A Matter of Salone", the event is shaped by both visual and conceptual versions of matter – form, function and value. The content and exhibition-filled itinerary includes new and immersive installations such as an imaginary hotel by Maison Numéro 20, and Salone Raritas, which will showcase curated icons and unique objects.



WHAT: Design Shanghai

WHERE: Shanghai, China

WHEN: March 19 to 22

At the forefront of Asia's creative scene is Design Shanghai, which bridges the gap between the East and West by showcasing unique intersections that fuse both design philosophies together. Delve further into innovation and cultural dialogue through a series of forums and city-wide satellite events. Included in the line-up are the Kohler · Design Shanghai Global Design Conference focusing on sustainability and nature, as well as the CMF Conference centred on "vitality" and enhancing product value.



WHAT: High Point Market

WHERE: North Carolina, The US

WHEN: April 25 to 29

Lovers of earthy tones, organic textures and European-inspired silhouettes will likely find themselves lucky at this year's High Point Market, with these elements calling for attention in spring. Bringing together over 1,500 brands, the biannual tradition celebrates creativity and commerce with endless product options ranging from artisanal lighting to wall coverings and performance fabrics, complemented by elaborate displays. Visitors will also be exposed to educational events such as style spotter sessions, keynote talks and tours.





FROM LEFT Royal Selangor executive director Chen Tien Yue; HRH Tengku Panglima Besar Selangor Tengku Abdul Samad Shah Al-Haj; Royal Selangor managing director Datuk Yong Yoon Li; HRH Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah Al-Haj; Royal Selangor chairman Tan Sri Yong Poh Kon; Minister of Federal Territories Hannah Yeoh; and HRH Tengku Laksamana Selangor Tengku Sulaiman Shah Al-Haj

If there was a particular area where the history of Kuala Lumpur is most palpable, it would be Dataran Merdeka, where the Union Jack was lowered and the Malayan flag was first raised on Aug 31, 1957. Facing the vast green expanse is the 129-year-old Bangunan Sultan Abdul Samad, the country's first iconic colonial landmark and witness to the nation's journey towards independence.

Although the Bangunan Sultan Abdul Samad stands proudly, capped by beautiful copper domes, few realise that it was actually revenue from tin — the cornerstone of then Malaya's economic development in the 19th and early 20th centuries — that helped fund the building's construction. Completed in 1897 and with instantly recognisable neo-Moghul and Moorish architectural influences, the building was recently



reopened after an extensive year-long restoration programme by Khazanah Nasional's Dana Warisan heritage renewal initiative.

So, it seems perfectly apt that Royal Selangor, one of Malaysia's most enduring heritage brands and a byword for world-class pewter, unveiled a new 8,000 sq ft gallery and visitor centre in the storied space. The museum and gallery houses a vast collection of pewter artefacts that date all the way back to the 1800s, with pieces made by the company's founder Yong Koon himself, as well as collaborations between august bodies such as the British Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum and the National Palace Museum of Taiwan.



Guests who enjoy working with their hands should check out the company's famed School of Hard Knocks Workshop while those who do not can find respite (and a slice of delicious cake) at the café. The launch was graced by HRH Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah Al-Haj of Selangor on Feb 5. **H**



Building the future

The launch of the Kuala Lumpur Architecture Festival 2026 heralds a stronger connection between design and people

Text **Lee Charmynn** Photography **Low Yen Yeing**



FROM LEFT Lee Maw Jia, Wan Rosalia, Pinky Tan, director Lim Gim Huang, Hannah Yeoh, PAM president Adrianta Aziz, chief curator Rien Tan, Sanjiven Kulasingam and Chuah Pei Jin

From a thriving cinema to a hostel and now a cultural space, RexKL has seen much in its time. A troubled history of fires did not deter its current founders from revitalising the place. Since its refurbishment in 2018, the building in Petaling Street has regularly drawn crowds for a variety of community and creative events throughout the year. One such event was the 2026 Kuala Lumpur Architecture Festival (KLAFF), which was launched in January by guest of honour Federal Territories Minister Hannah Yeoh and attended by members of the Malaysian Institute of Architects, industry players and the public.

Themed “Future Culture”, the year-long programme will celebrate architecture, design,



ABOVE
The opening performance by Orang-Orang Drum Theatre and dancer Tan Bee Hung

LEFT
Visitors check out booths by supporting companies of KLAFF



creativity and public engagement with the aim of garnering appreciation for the practice in the wider public through various forums, exhibitions and city activations. As heritage, technology, traditions and contemporary practices meld, it is up to architects to combine them in a way that responds to the needs of future generations while retaining the identity, values and memories that shape the communities around them.

Several competitions, including batik design, photography, brownfield redevelopments and conceptual sketches for new pavilions at Titiwangsa Lake Gardens, will take place under KLAFF. Other key events include Datum KL and Archidex, which will further cement Malaysia’s image as a platform for evolving architecture. **H**

HEAVY PETAL

Flowers for spring
may or may not be
groundbreaking but who
can deny the power they
wield on a space?

ART DIRECTION LILY G + DAPHANY C
PHOTOGRAPHY SOOPHYE
PHOTOGRAPHY ASSISTANT RICK KEW
RETOUCHER CARMEN H





FIRST ROW, FROM LEFT:

MIDI MERINGUE STOOL, GLORIA PELANGI VELVET, RM1,993, **JANINE**;
CUSHION BOUQUET OF ANEMONES, RM450, **JANINE**;
FAWLEY CUSHION, POLY MISTY ROSE, RM64.90, **HOOGA**;
BINTANG IVORY SIDE TABLE, RM449, **RUMA**; VINTAGE STYLE
PORCELAIN CUP, RM39.90 AND SAUCER, RM39.90, **PARKSON**.

SECOND ROW, FROM LEFT:

BLUSH PETALS, SCENTED CANDLE, RM30, **OBJEK**; GUBI BAGDAD
PORTABLE LAMP, ORANGE, RM1,728, **HAUS LIVING CONCEPTS**;
RESTING BIRD, LIGHT GREEN, RM483, **HAUS LIVING CONCEPTS**;
PRIMAVERA CAKE STAND, RM1,463, **JANINE**; KIT KEMP TEA FOR ONE
DOODLES, RM315, **JANINE**; VITRA HERRINGBONE VESSELS VASE,
YELLOW (RIBBED), RM735, **HAUS LIVING CONCEPTS**; ARTIFICIAL
FLOWER, RM12, **OBJEK**; FLOWER-SHAPED CRYSTAL GLASS
FRUIT BOWL, RM25, **OBJEK**; LINEN PLACEMAT MIMOSA
DESIGN OFF-WHITE, RM216, **JANINE**; CALLIE ELECTRONIC
AROMA DIFFUSER, RM309, **HOOGA**; FIG WHISKY PARFUM
DIFFUSER, RM253, **ANILLO**; FYNN PINK TABLE LAMP,
RM289, **RUMA**.

THIRD ROW, FROM LEFT:

VITRA BALL CLOCK LIMITED EDITION (SUNSET),
RM2,303, **HAUS LIVING CONCEPTS**; TABLE RUNNER,
RM30, **OBJEK**.

FIRST ROW, FROM LEFT:
TARUNA NATURAL TERRACOTTA MALLET VASE,
RM119, **RUMA**; RESIN OLIVE BOWL, RM110, **GUDANG**.

SECOND ROW, FROM LEFT:
VOLTA MOBILE (MALAGA), RM998, **HAUS LIVING
CONCEPTS**; CANDLE HOLDER, RM13.90, **KAISON**;
CERAMIC TISSUE BOX, RM209, **PARKSON**.

THIRD ROW, FROM LEFT:
VITRA TRAYS, SET OF 3, (RED), RM665, **HAUS LIVING
CONCEPTS**; VAN GOGH OIL PAINTING DECORATIVE
PLATE, RM89.90, **PARKSON**.





FIRST ROW, FROM LEFT:

RATTAN AND MOTHER-OF-PEARL SERVING TRAY, RM159, **PARKSON**; TEAPOT SET (2 MUGS), RM49.90, **PARKSON**; CERAMIC VASE, RM545, **GUDANG**; LINEN PLACEMAT MIMOSA DESIGN OFF-WHITE, RM216, **JANINE**.

SECOND ROW, FROM LEFT:

GHIRLANDA FENOUIL CUSHION, RM749, **JANINE**; WAFFLE POM-POM CUSHIONS, CORAL PINK, RM35.90; LEMON YELLOW, RM35.90. **RUMA**.

THIRD ROW:

ELEONORA LINEN FUCHSIA CUSHION, RM741, **JANINE**.





BRDB UNVEILS EDEN TAMAN DUTA, WHERE DESIGN MEETS DISTINCTION

This flagship is poised to become BRDB's next landmark in one of Kuala Lumpur's most prestigious addresses. Designed as a low-density enclave, Eden offers a rare sense of seclusion and privacy, grounded not only in its concept but in the rich heritage of its Taman Duta location.

Artist's impression



If your idea of a home is a sturdy roof and four walls, turn the page. If, on the other hand, home is a place where the soul can find rest, rejuvenation and refuge and enjoy the simplest yet most important pleasures of life, which include spending quality time and precious moments with loved ones, Eden Taman Duta might be just what you need.

Developed by BRDB Developments Sdn Bhd on a precious 12-acre parcel of land tucked within the Jalan Gallagher end of Kuala Lumpur's prestigious Taman Duta enclave, the development is a paean to the things that matter: a life well-lived and a space designed

Artist's impression





to be shared, not just with your significant other, but family that transcends generations.

Brought to life by a conscious collaboration between the developer and a handpicked band of artists, creatives and masters of their craft, Eden Taman Duta is beautiful, no doubt, but function commands equal importance as form in this residential equation. This dedication to creating the most refined and sought-after addresses is par for the course for BRDB, the name and curator behind



One Menerung, The Troika and Serai. With thoughtful brand partners and a heavy hand in design, Eden Taman Duta will be a place where every day feels like an elevated sanctuary, surrounded by lush gardens and spaces designed for dwelling and connection.

And, as with all heirlooms, Eden Taman Duta is built with every intention that it is a sanctuary of living legacy. Far beyond a mere showcase of wealth and success, to live within it is to live well, in harmony and with



purpose. Naturally, for a development that is destined to transcend generations, it is built to last yet always remaining *au courant*.

From the macro viewpoint of enduring craftsmanship, visionary design and architecture to the micro-minutiae that ensures a natural visual rhythm, palpable from the moment one enters the space, BRDB's latest offering is already a palpable triumph. After all, what Eden Taman Duta ultimately offers is not visible; it is felt.





PENCHANT + PANACHE

While traditional homes measure status through scale, this expansive villa in Shah Alam places private rituals and personal passions at the heart of its design

Text **Kong Wai Yeng** Photography **SooPhye**





RIGHT
The garden is surrounded by a U-shaped enclave, maximising privacy



For decades, the prototypical dream house has been one that promises more, defined by multiple floors and a wealth of rooms. But when a banker started planning a new nest for his family in Setia Eco Park, Shah Alam — drawn by its luxuriant terrain, neighbourhood familiarity and enhanced security — he tossed that humdrum convention out the window.

Walls have long acted as an organising force in architecture, setting limits and dictating how space is used. But such divisions can introduce abrupt pauses and hard stops, breaking movement and interrupting continuity. To rethink these limitations, the homeowners engaged Kuala Lumpur-based studio NDC Architects to reimagine and reconceive the double-storey as a fluid, interconnected layout under just two years. By tearing down a room near the entryway and allowing structural beams to be seamlessly absorbed into the interior design, sightlines are extended so that different zones — from the living area to the dining table — take on a more permeable quality. Separation is instead



LEFT

A leopard tree with mottled bark rising through an opening. Its lush canopy can be viewed from the breakfast bench on the second floor.

articulated through the considered placement of furniture, including a cosy Jasper modular sofa by King Living, which forms a pocket of retreat within the open configuration.

On clear days, the sun becomes a willing protagonist. Portions of the roof have been carefully carved away, leaving voids where gentle rays stream in and pool. Nearby, a sprawling balcony lifts the gaze skyward, easing the transition between interior and exterior. To temper the tropical climate, a giant collapsible screen can be drawn and retracted, filtering glare while preserving the play of shadow throughout the hour.

“These are like ‘vertical fins,’” explains Ng Dick Son, principal architect and co-founder of NDC Architects. “Made from cengal, they provide some shade from the western evening blaze, while offering a measure of privacy. The adjacent glass doors can be left as is to encourage cross-ventilation — even during





rainfall — permitting air to move freely while the timber screen functions as shelter.”

If wood already exudes a prevailing sense of warmth in the Japandi-style living area, could the lady of the house indulge her desire for clean, metal-and-white kitchen cabinetry without casting a permanent chill over the most important corner of her home? In this case, less truly becomes more. The pared-back palette — accentuated by an island crafted from sintered stone — transformed what could have been a heat-laden workspace into an inviting backdrop for hosting, entertaining and shared meals. A well-appointed oven also sees regular use, particularly when her second son — currently pursuing culinary training in Switzerland — returns home to bake and test new recipes.

Conversation drifts easily towards the adjacent breakfast bench, a daylit perch where morning rituals unfold before a panoramic vista of the forest reserve and hills beyond. The window, in turn, captures a more intimate vignette — the trunk of a mature leopard tree rising through an opening below, bringing the surrounding greenery even closer.





LEFT
Airy tones, breezy furniture and natural light in every corner



Unlike most two-tiered residences, areas devoted to rest and relaxation are anchored on the lower level. Here, the household engages in a range of pursuits, from Playstation gaming marathons in a TV nook to sessions on the drum kit and piano, all set against a display wall showcasing the owner's vast collection of comics and figurines. Familiar characters from X-Men and Batman appear alongside a wider cast of Marvel heroes, charting a hobby and passion that have followed him since his teenage years. Rather than being tucked away, these recreational hubs are thoughtfully woven into the overall plan, transforming personal pastimes into opportunities for better connection and bonding.

The dialogue between the environment and the elements is most tactile in the master suite, where rugged masonry walls extend beyond the building's edge, physically drawing the garden's texture indoors. Within the en suite, a tub bathed in the dappled light of the aforementioned leopard tree offers a silent respite, positioned so that each soak is accompanied by direct encounter with the ebb of nature. This spatial ease continues into



RIGHT
Nooks are decorated with paintings and porcelain pieces passed down from the owner's mother



the expansive walk-in wardrobe, ensuring the daily ritual of dressing remains as uncluttered and composed as the view.

Serenity is not only confined to the inner sanctum; it spills into a three-sided enclave that seemingly shields the premises in a protective embrace, insulating the sanctuary from the gaze of others. Within this secluded fold, the landscape shifts from the contemplative stillness of a Japanese-inspired water feature to a gazebo ready for weekend gatherings or barbecues.

Rounding off this lush circuit is a glass-walled gym, which distills the grit of a workout into a moment of physical and mental clarity. More than just a pavilion of calm, it also serves as a prime vantage point from which to admire the owner's garage, where his beloved Porsche 911 Carrera GTS sits as a centrepiece of engineering art, perfectly visible through the transparent façade.

Refined living has pivoted from the mere accumulation of square footage to the curation of identity. Avocations are no longer relegated to the periphery but are instead built into the very marrow of the floor plan. At the end of the day, a truly resonant home is not just a repository for our possessions but a reflection of our values. **H**

AT ITS ZEN-ITH

Clean furnishings leave plenty of room for personalisation

Text **Lee Charmynn**



1 The beauty of autumn never fades with **Lego's** Japanese red maple bonsai. The plant sports scarlet and orange leaves, and sits in a green pot for easy display. (RM269, boxofbricks.com.my)

2 Those looking to save space in their rooms will like this single-size bedframe by **Nitori**. It comes with two deep drawers to stow spare linen or pillows away. (RM1,299, nitori.my)

3 **Ikea's** Nordkisa open wardrobe with slatted doors has an airy vibe. Crafted from bamboo, it features both shelving and a clothing rail for versatile storage options. (RM899, ikea.com)

4 **MajuHome's** tripod-style Toji floor lamp adds soft ambient lighting to the dim corners of your bedroom, diffusing harsh glows with a fabric shade (RM998, online.majuhome.com.my)

5 Just under a foot tall, this elegant ceramic vase from **Floristika** is decorated with pink flower motifs and practically begs to hold fresh blooms (RM109, floristika.com.my)

6 The Palaver chair designed by Patricia Urquiola for **Louis Vuitton** has 150 cowhide straps woven elaborately through perforations in its solid oak frame (RM64,500, my.louisvuitton.com)

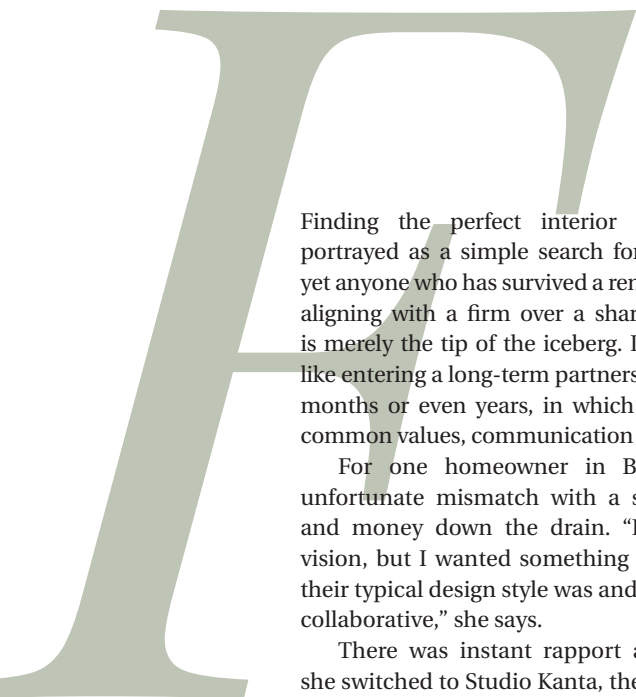
KINDRED BY DESIGN

For this Bangsar South resident, the right designer-client match proves that a sanctuary is most vibrant when it acts as a mirror of the soul within

Text **Emily Yap** Photography **Low Yen Yeing**







Finding the perfect interior designer is often portrayed as a simple search for aesthetic kinship, yet anyone who has survived a renovation knows that aligning with a firm over a shared Pinterest board is merely the tip of the iceberg. In reality, it is more like entering a long-term partnership, one that spans months or even years, in which success hinges on common values, communication and compromise.

For one homeowner in Bangsar South, an unfortunate mismatch with a studio led to time and money down the drain. “I really liked their vision, but I wanted something warmer than what their typical design style was and they were not very collaborative,” she says.

There was instant rapport and synergy when she switched to Studio Kanta, the creatives based in The Zhongshan Building in Kuala Lumpur, who styled the lobby and other common areas of



Curios of all colour enliven the space

The Chow Kit — an Ormond Hotel, designed the wayfinding system for KLoé Hotel, and the interiors of a whole floor within the YTL headquarters.

“They really focused on my personality and functional need for the space. There’s only two of us here, but I have a big family who visits. To anyone else, a dining table that seats eight to 10 is not something I need, but to me, it was very important.”

The dining room serves as the home’s true hearth for the seasoned host. It is where the glow and chatter of a dinner party meets the playful chaos of weekend game night, a routine activity picked up from her days living in Australia.

Distressed boxes of Catan and Cluedo sit tucked away in cupboards, yielding the adjacent floor-to-ceiling shelves to a vast vinyl collection dominated by the King of Pop. “Michael Jackson is a staple in my house. It’s what I grew up listening to, so that’s special for me.”





More recently though, British singer-songwriter Olivia Dean, who recently won Best New Artist at the Grammys, is on heavy rotation. “She’s fantastic. She’s got a great voice, and her perspective of the world and the way she behaves are not mainstream.

“I make it a point to swap out the vinyls. Every Sunday, I do a bit of a reset. I put new ones up on display and that’s what I cycle through during the week. I like the concept of listening to an album in a loop. It’s nice to hear the songs you fell in love with 10 years ago after you’ve grown and changed, and with new company.”

Her well-loved collection sits alongside a playful array of bibelots, from a Yayoi Kusama pumpkin to Lego figurines of Jedi Grand Master Yoda.

With a penchant for eclectic design, this homeowner is often on the lookout for unique pieces. The sculptural fixtures over the dining table

Generous use of wood adds a warm and earthy touch to the rooms





and dry kitchen island were sourced from Ong Cen Kuang, a handcrafted decorative lighting atelier from Bali. “They’re actually zips,” she points to the ceiling pendants over the island. “He’s someone I’ve been following for a few years. I just love the organic shapes of his work.”

Discreet retractable doors mask the Nespresso gear and an impressive stash of mugs, keeping the counters clutter-free. A relative’s sketch of a Sri Lankan landscape brings a touch of sentimentality to the corner, while resinware from Dinosaur Designs and décor from Singapore’s Stacked Store add a modern, colourful edge.

The area also features a lenticular painting, a clever homage to Jeff Koons’ signature balloon sculptures by Aussie artist CJ Hendry. “They were all named after various dogs. This piece is called *Corgi*,” she notes, while petting her frisky four-year-old pooch.

There are still a number of artworks in storage that have yet to find a place in her home, including those by Kiwi sculptor Simon Lewis Wards. “He makes glass sculptures of popular Australia and New Zealand candy from the corner shop. I’m still working on putting them up on my wall.”



The cheerful pup making itself comfortable at the reading nook



brightening light for gentler morning calls, was also a game changer. “It’s a much nicer way to start your day than a phone alarm. I highly recommend it,” she says.

Collaborating closely with Studio Kanta, the designers mapped her daily rituals to inform the spatial layout. Every transition was considered, from the morning flow into the walk-in closet to the evening return and the gradual wind-down that follows.

“If you’re an introvert like me and spend a lot of time at home, you want to feel 100% comfortable in your space. Cosy, for me was the vision, and the ID team really delivered.” **H**

A mezzanine floor was a key selling point for this self-declared workaholic, offering the perfect hideaway for paperwork. The office desk is set against a growing home library, meticulously organised by genre, ranging from poetry and classics to sci-fi and self-development. Yet, her most guarded treasures are not for public display. Tucked into a quiet corner of her master bedroom is a collection of books she would grab in a fire. The dedicated shelf holds her late father’s favourite reads as well as titles gifted by loved ones inscribed with heartfelt messages.

Within her evening sanctuary, she honours a digital-free ritual for at least 45 minutes leading up to sleep. All charging cables are tucked into a dresser away from the bed to prevent accidentally slipping into endless scrolling. Investing in a Hatch alarm, a smart clock that plays gentle music to lull one into dreamland and calming sounds with a gradually

RIGHT
An Isamu Noguchi lamp gently illuminates this corner of the master bedroom, where electronics are kept out of sight and mind





2



PERSONAL STYLE

Eclectic pieces to make your home feel uniquely yours

Text **Sophiya Sabapathy**



1 This Wall Calendar by **Ring-A-Date** is a modern take on the classic 1970s Italian perpetual calendar. Made from durable ABS plastic, it is designed to add functionality as well as a playful aesthetic to both personal and work spaces. (RM778, stackedstore.com)

2 Every bedroom needs an elegant dresser for storing cosy pyjamas, candles and throws. The Mano dresser with doors by **Gudang Home** is the perfect pick with its medium-density fibreboard structure and eucalyptus veneer composition. (RM7,195, gudanghome.com)

3 Set the mood for your next dinner party with a turntable set-up and vinyl display. **Audio-Technica's** AT-LP8X features a tonearm lift that automatically raises at the end of a record side and stops the motor. (RM4,299, sweelee.com.my)

4 Treat your pooch to a **Le Creuset** pet bowl in a lightweight, enamelled carbon steel material that is easy to clean and resistant to stains and scratches (RM160, lecreuset.com.my)

5 Elevate your abode with the Sarashina Aromatique Incense by **Aesop**, which emits woody notes of sandalwood into the air (RM120, malaysia.aesop.com)

6 The Aura Swivel Lounge Chair by **King Living** has gently sloped arms, a deep seat and a 360° swivel base for flexible seating orientation (RM6,110, kingliving.com)





THE FAMILY THAT EATS TOGETHER

*For Angeline Yap, Southeast Asia managing director
of V-Zug, it goes without saying that the heart of
her home is undoubtedly the kitchen*

Text **Diana Khoo** | Photography **Albert Chua**



There is a popular saying about how hands build houses, but only hearts build homes. This would seem to be precisely the case for Angeline Yap, Southeast Asia managing director of V-Zug. As the main driving force behind the state-of-the-art household appliance brand, Yap has worked tirelessly to establish V-Zug as a major player, growing the brand from scratch to a palpable presence in the region in under 10 years.

Founded in Switzerland in 1913, V-Zug is renowned for its premium household appliances made by combining cutting-edge technology with environmental responsibility and minimalist design. As its main representative, Yap undeniably lives and breathes the brand.

Her home, tucked away in a cul-de-sac in a verdant enclave of Upper Bukit Timah, Singapore, offers space aplenty for her small family unit, which includes her daughter Charlize, mother and live-in helper. "I chose this neighbourhood for the good school nearby. It is a very Singaporean thing to do," she laughs.

Always forward-thinking, Yap dispatched her real estate agent to scour the area for potential houses when she realised schooling would soon



be a consideration. “Raffles Girls’ School is nearby; so, I told my agent to start looking! There were a few options but this house, which was owned by an elderly couple, was pretty much in ready-to-move-in condition. It helped that the house came with an elevator — a key feature I needed, as my mum lives with me. We quickly sealed the deal, after which I gave my renovation guys one month to get it ready.”

Although the land size is not particularly big, spanning 2,700 sq ft, it is built up to a roomy 5,300 sq ft. Five bedrooms and even a basement — a rarity in this part of the world — fan out nicely over three storeys. Even before one enters the house, there is a palpable sense of homeliness and family. Purpose-built planter boxes at the porch area fall under the purview of Yap’s mother, who lovingly fills them with ginger, turmeric and Thai basil, alongside roses and hydrangeas. A wall of podocarpus, or plum pines, also adds another layer of privacy between Yap and her neighbours.

Guests are welcomed in by a large figure of a *fukusuke maneki-neko*, a version of the iconic beckoning cat, but surrounded by seven smaller cats, which depict the *shichi fukujin*, or Seven Lucky Gods. They are: Ebisu (fishing, commerce and abundance),



A fine collection of Limoges porcelain

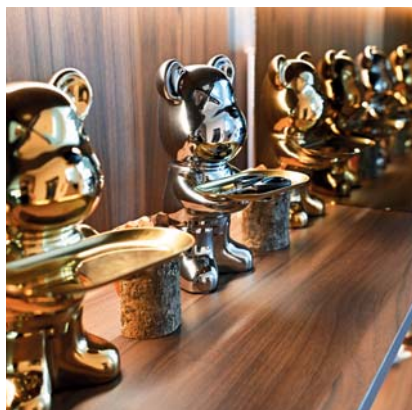
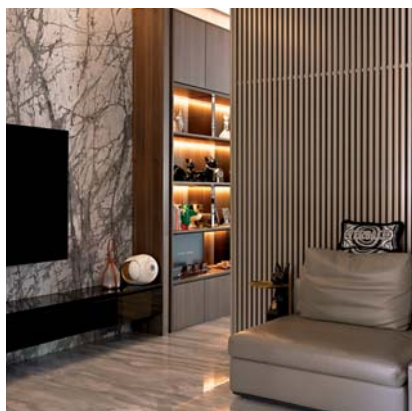
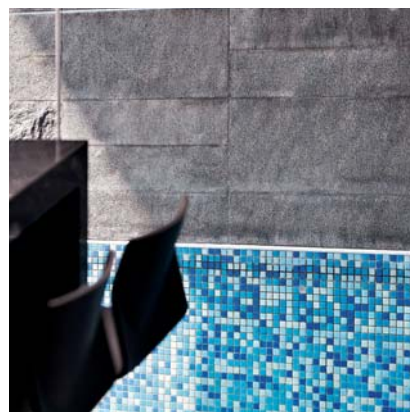


Daikokuten (wealth and the kitchen), Bishamonten (war and warriors), Benzaiten (music, arts and general fortune), Fukurokuju (happiness and wealth), Jurōjin (longevity) and Hotei (abundance and good health).

Sound and visual are the mainstay of the living room, dominated by a baby grand piano and an equally sizeable TV on which Yap's mum loves catching up on her favourite shows and programmes. A specially designed sliding door serves as a space divider, carving out two distinct rooms — or one, should seamlessness be the order of the day.

The main hub of activity for the Yap residence is, as with most homes, the kitchen — all kitted out, naturally, with V-Zug appliances. The recent Lunar New Year festive season also saw all of Yap's siblings (she is the second of four) come by to enjoy family time — and their mum's excellent cooking — ensuring the combi cooktop with a powerful hoodless downdraft is put to good and constant use. "The masterchef of the house is my mum, without a doubt," says Yap. "She uses the steam oven the most, making things like *bao* (traditional Chinese steamed buns) and steamed fish dishes. The beauty of it is that it boasts a roomy cavity, allowing you to fit an entire fish in easily without having to behead it or cut off its tail."

The heart of Yap's home is, naturally, kitted out with state-of-the-art V-Zug appliances, such as this Supreme Cooler V6000 and Supreme Freezer V6000



Little knick-knacks and collectibles are found throughout the home, including sculptures by contemporary Chinese artist Qu Guangci, and animal figurines



ABOVE
The piano adds elegance to the living room

TOP RIGHT
Yap relaxing at home



The marble-look granite island counter, which offers a pool view, is ideal for quick meals or breakfast. Yap, who does not swim, says it was her daughter's favourite spot as a child. "It is a hassle to maintain, but Charlize made full use of it while growing up," she says.

On a wall by the island counter is an artwork by a Shanghai street artist depicting New York City, the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island. "I was in China, not long after joining V-Zug, when I spotted his works, most of which showed Chinese scenes. I asked whether he could do one of the US instead, and he obliged. It is a meaningful piece, as I studied engineering in the US, and a fond reminder of my student days and the life I once had there. I am also grateful my colleagues helped ship it back to Singapore for me."

Despite being a teetotaler, Yap also maintains a sleek V-Zug chiller in her kitchen. "I am gifted bottles from time to time, so it comes in handy but any other space is used for storing chocolates, which the whole family loves," she grins. "It is a bit indulgent to say so, but V-Zug's wine chiller really does offer the perfect temperature conditions for sweets and chocolates." **H**

LESSONS IN LUXURY

Contemporary items to elevate your space

Text **Sophiya Sabapathy**



1



2



3



4

1 Channel the fast-paced energy of the fiery Horse with this **Hermès** paperweight made from hand-lacquered wood with a taurillon leather base (RM3,350, [hermes.com](https://www.hermes.com))

2 Decorate your couch with **Versace's** velvet cushion featuring a crystal-embellished Medusa motif with an outer composition of 100% cotton (RM2,350, [versace.com](https://www.versace.com))

3 Splurge on **Homelosophy's** round herringbone black rug — a bold, sculptural piece with a refined texture meticulously handmade from Patagonian cowhide (RM14,530, [homelosophy.com](https://www.homelosophy.com))

4 Crafted from high-quality ceramic, this artisanal sculpture by **Gudang Home** will be an eye-catching ornament to display on a sideboard or shelf (RM325, [gudanghome.com](https://www.gudanghome.com))

5 Add a touch of playfulness to your tablescape with the Western Polo Bear Dessert Plate by **Ralph Lauren**. It comes in a set of four — perfect for hosting intimate dinners at home. (RM680, [ralphlauren.com.my](https://www.ralphlauren.com.my))

6 **&Tradition's** Flowerpot VP9 portable table lamp is inspired by Verner Panton's iconic design of a rounded pendant with a semi-domed shape. This lightweight piece is rechargeable and brings a cosy atmosphere suitable for indoor and outdoor environments. (RM922, [stackedstore.com](https://www.stackedstore.com))



6



5

Of place, past + promise

Just as it marked the nation's first steps towards liberation decades ago, the restored Seri Negara mansion heralds a new chapter for the city's and country's cultural and historic landscape

Text **Quincy Tan** Photography **Low Yen Yeing**





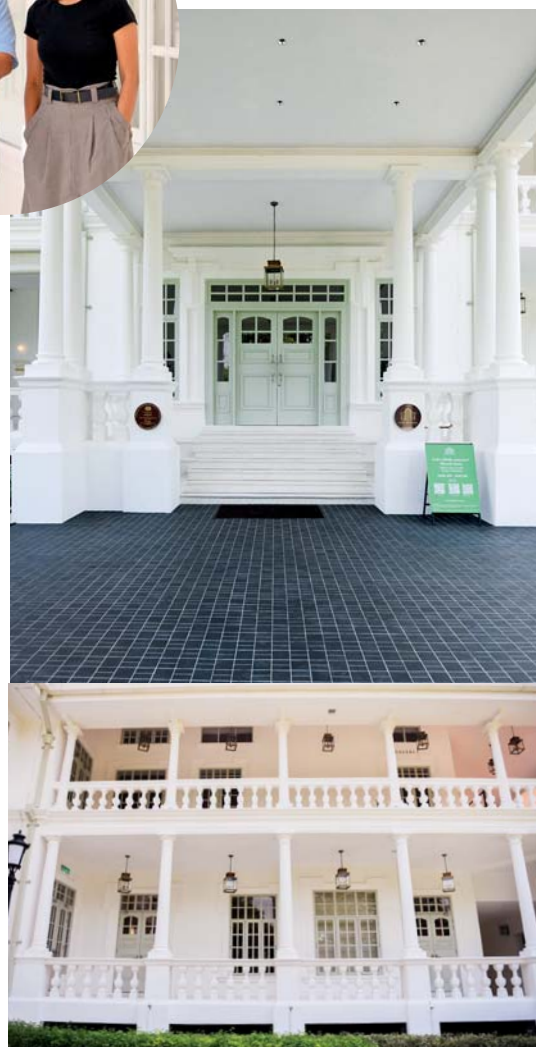
Hilme (left)
and Mariana

Up the verdant, winding paths of the Perdana Botanical Gardens, Kuala Lumpur, sits a relic where Malaysian history was made. Seri Negara, once the official guesthouse of the highest-ranking British officer in the Federated Malay States, and which went on to accommodate royalty and dignitaries, was the hallowed home where the Federation of Malaya Agreement and Independence Agreement were signed in 1948 and 1957 respectively. Yet for all its status as a site of colonial prestige, few modern Malaysians remember it as more than a name in a textbook, let alone a tangible location within the capital.

Today, the estate once reserved for the uppermost echelons of society can be perused freely by the general public, pulled out of disrepair and appointed back to its past glory under the careful supervision of Khazanah Nasional.

“In 2023, the government entrusted Khazanah to take up this heritage project. The brief was to restore, refurbish and revitalise these Category 1 heritage facilities, most of which have been left abandoned for quite some time — Seri Negara included. The intention is to enable the *rakyat* to enjoy these places,” explains Muhmat Hilme Hassan, CEO of Aset Warisan.

Part of the wider Warisan KL initiative to revitalise the city’s historically and culturally prominent locations and landmarks within an urban context, the reconstruction and conservation of Seri Negara



RIGHT
Duck egg green, as seen in the doors, was a popular shade of the period; The long corridors, once walled up for hotel rooms, have been opened up

is handled by the dedicated Dana Warisan vehicle of Khazanah. Seri Negara and Carcosa — its separate, sister residence — represent phase one, while the second comprises six buildings around the Dataran Merdeka area, including the recently reopened Bangunan Sultan Abdul Samad.

For sites of this high-level classification, strict, exhaustive adherence to Jabatan Warisan Negara's regulations is required, with the focus on preserving the whole structure. This is where dedicated historians like Mariana Ramli, one of the contributing curators and conservators for the project, come in.

"When doing this kind of work, you need to have a registered conservator and there are not many in the country. Mariana understands the history and has made sure we are in check as far as adhering to the guidelines," says Hilme.

Seri Negara's last custodians departed in 2019 and by the time Hilme and team came in on Feb 18 last year, it was severely dilapidated: rotted wood, termite infestation, leaking metal roofing.



TOP RIGHT
Airy, bright colonnades blend colonial charm with tropical freshness

BOTTOM LEFT
The museum gallery recounts Malaysia's formation from before independence to the modern day

Time and nature were not the only enemies either. Since the abode had been converted many times, from a residential property to an office and, most recently, a hotel, its former owners had made indiscriminate modifications to suit each purpose.

"Because there have been several occupancy uses, we have to decide which layer of history it should be restored to," notes Mariana. Ultimately, the team concurred that the residence should be reverted to its original appearance, as it was when it was built in 1913.

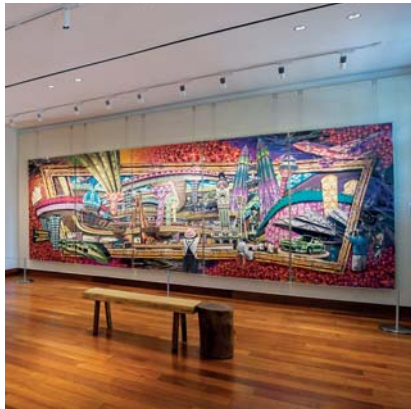




ABOVE
An antique manhole cover from Doulton & Co and a humble flight of steps are a few surviving highlights from the residence's earliest days

Seri Negara as it stands today is architecturally identical to the day it was first created, 113 years ago, an authoritative estate with Neo-Gothic and Tudor Revival influences rendered in pearly white and accents of duck egg green along its doors and windows. By a fortuitous stroke of luck, the bright red clay roof tiles were able to be sourced from the original Spanish manufacturer.

Having removed the previous hotel suite walls, visitors can now stroll uninterrupted along the ground and first floors, which house a museum gallery depicting the formation of Malaysia pre- and post-independence, as well as an art space featuring works from Khazanah's collection. After a guided tour, guests can adjourn to the Semuka Café or Serai House restaurant for refreshments or proper meals.





The stairs leading to the restaurant, rather unassuming at first glance, have their own storied past. “It wasn’t there before; it was further down. But based on the drawings, we realised they were meant to be in a different location,” says Hilme. As it turns out, the feature had been buried when the path was constructed, forcing the team to excavate and reveal the slumbering steps, preserved from over a century ago.

Other elements were not so long-lived and had to be recreated. The down piping running along the external walls had to be custom moulded and fashioned from cast iron, just like in the old days. The *pièce de résistance* of the lobby, the main staircase, was a particular point of pride. The previous concrete flights, made to accommodate the hotel layout, were demolished in the recent works and fully replicated by local craftsmen in merbau hardwood based on old photos and drawings.

For Hilme, who had worked on the Petronas Twin Towers and several huge projects in his career, this initiative has proven there is always something new to discover. “This is my first time working on heritage buildings. One thing I’ve learnt is to really value these places. I started work in the 1990s and my office was in Dayabumi. But I never set foot into Bangunan Sultan Abdul Samad even though it was just next door because there was no need! What’s more, Carcosa and Seri Negara, these were just for the who’s who. Now, anybody can walk in.”

He credits the widespread cooperation of not only Khazanah, its consultants and contractors, but also various government agencies and neighbouring properties, who have united in ensuring a major Malaysian landmark could be reconstructed successfully. A meaningful ripple effect has also been the growing impetus for private entities to embark on similar restoration projects, recognising both the cultural and economic viability. **H**

ABOVE
The chandelier was sourced from Bangunan Sultan Abdul Samad, as Seri Negara’s own had gone to a private collector



LIGHT YEAR

Amid all the clutter, chaos and noise of the world, look towards Cloud Dancer, Pantone's Colour of the Year 2026, to evoke peace, tranquility and stillness

ART DIRECTION **LILY G + DAPHANY C**
PHOTOGRAPHY **SOOPHYE**
PHOTOGRAPHY ASSISTANT **RICK KEW**
RETOUCHER **CARMEN H**





FIRST ROW, FROM LEFT:

TALA MANTLE PORTABLE LAMP, RM1,020, **GUDANG**;
JOODI WHITE PHOTO FRAME, RM22.90, **RUMA**;
INCANTO LACE MEDIUM CAKE STAND, RM540, **JANINE**;
GUBI OBELLO PORTABLE LAMP, NUAGE (CÉRAMIQUE),
RM1,743, **HAUS LIVING CONCEPTS**; NUAGE (CÉRAMIQUE)
LARGE SIZE, RM1,085, **HAUS LIVING CONCEPTS**;
ANSEL WHITE CERAMIC VASE, RM219, **RUMA**.

SECOND ROW, FROM LEFT:

FLAVA CUSHION, IVORY WHITE, RM49.90, **RUMA**;
VITRA METAL SIDE TABLE, WHITE (M SIZE), RM3,885,
HAUS LIVING CONCEPTS; BRINLEY VASE, RM69.90, **HOOGA**;
LED DESK LAMP, TOUCH LIGHT, RM25.90, **U.JU HOME**.



FIRST ROW, FROM LEFT:
NORDIC CERAMIC VASE, RM12.90, **U.JU HOME**; ARCH SCULPTURE
DÉCOR, RM39, **OBJEK**; MARBLE SERVING TRAY, RM79, **OBJEK**;
INC BAROQUE BUTTER DISH, RM224, **JANINE**.

SECOND ROW, FROM LEFT:
VATIRI HEAVY-DUTY ROPE DOOR STOPPER WITH HANDLE,
RM59.90, **PARKSON**; VATIRI HOME WHITE FLORET DINNER PLATE
& STARTER PLATE, RM39.90/SET, **PARKSON**; PORTMEIRION
SOPHIE CONRAN OIL & VINEGAR CRUET, RM345, **JANINE**.

THIRD ROW, FROM LEFT:
CONTEMPORARY, QUIRKY DESIGN VASE WITH TRIPLE RING
HANDLES, RM53.90, **HOOGA**; HAND-MADE CERAMIC STONE VASE,
RM49, **OBJEK**; LOWELL TEXTURED WHITE JUG, RM80.90, **HOOGA**;
DECORATIVE ARCH SCULPTURE, RM39, **OBJEK**.





YOUNG AT HEART

Daythree's recent addition to its offices at UOA Business Park encapsulates the vibrant and innovative energy of today's young workforce

Text **Genie Leong** Photography **Low Yen Yeing**





Born roughly between 1997 and 2012, Gen Z has cemented its place in history as one of the most interesting and unorthodox age groups. Raised by the internet with the oldest members now in their late twenties, they are known for their emphasis on mental health, diversity and meaningful work and are well on the way to becoming the dominant presence in the global workforce in the next 10 years.

In a shifting and highly competitive job market, these young adults naturally flock to companies that have the means and ability to revise their offices and frameworks to suit changing times. They look for organisations that can offer growth, mobility and a conducive environment. At a time when hybrid work models have become the norm, the third condition is of the utmost importance for a generation forging a new way of working.

For award-winning business process provider Daythree, understanding the needs of its youthful employee base was a top priority when planning to expand its operations. With clients from across Asia-Pacific and a digital-first approach, the company — now more than 2,000-strong — has only grown younger over the past decade. “Around 90% of Daythree employees are millennials and Gen Z under the age of 40,”

As one of the first spaces new recruits and clients enter, the foyer had to embody the company's values and approach





notes chief operating officer Charanjit Kaur. The fresh talent requires a workspace that facilitates collaboration and out-of-the-box thinking. Rows of sterile desks or stuffy cubicles would not do.

Designed by Samera Craft Engineering and completed last October, Daythree's new space joins the rest of its offices at UOA Business Park in Shah Alam. The office, which was a gold winner for interiors under 10,000 sq ft at the 2025 Atap Design Awards, was envisioned to go beyond basic purposes. "It was designed as a centre of innovation — a place where people can come together easily, share ideas quickly and bring new solutions to life," explains Charanjit.

Showcasing an open floor plan, the office takes on the company's signature industrial sports-inspired aesthetic. Wood, concrete and brick are the highlighted materials. "We focused on choices that feel simple, purposeful and true to Daythree,"



Onboarding and training sessions are held almost every week





the COO explains. “To balance that, we added greenery and warm lighting, making it comfortable and welcoming.”

The organisation’s five core values — empathy, innovation, passion, trust and insight — are depicted in blocky black and red lettering around the space.

A race track detail leads you to each dedicated area. The welcome foyer is first, where posters with company information and a framed illustration containing the lyrics of the national anthem adorn the wall. Long benches provide a space to perch, while upholstered chairs just across the floor are the comfier option for quick team huddles. A white wall with colourful inlays beckons you into the pantry where bar-style seats facing a floor-to-ceiling window offer a view of residences and buildings.

Separated by glass walls, a large boardroom and a training area sit at opposite ends of the floor. The former boasts a long wooden table, flanked by swivel chairs. Just in case extra room is needed, a bench with red cushioning awaits at the side. Meanwhile, the latter is reminiscent of university classrooms, with rows of desks and chairs facing a large projector screen. This space, commonly used during coaching sessions for new hires, also doubles as a station for departments that have more mobility.

At the centre of the floor is the main stage, equipped with a state-of-the-art audio system and live band instruments. Stools fashioned to look like action keys are arranged in front. “They come in a

Splashes of bold colour contrast the neutral foundation to keep the design vibrant

few different colours, which is great for fun group activities,” says Charanjit.

As the company does onboarding sessions for new hires almost every week, a high capacity area like this is necessary for orientation, ice-breaking and culture-sharing.

“The open areas are used for town hall meetings, recognition events and internal showcases that bring everyone together. We have also hosted talent show events where teams share creative performances and ideas. On top of that, we host client visits with walkthroughs, presentations and



live demos, and the open plan makes it easy to move from presenting into deeper discussions and working sessions.”

The new office is also where one of the company’s most interesting initiatives takes place. Thrice weekly, recruitment sessions are conducted on TikTok Live with the aim of reaching a younger demographic. By the botanic wall in the carpeted lounge space, employees sit in front of the camera to promote the latest job openings and answer questions from potential applicants.

Human-centric design, underscored by the company’s youthful energy and forward-thinking, is what enables the renovated floor to serve multiple functions. The collapsible wall of the training room offers a more versatile layout, opening into the stage area for large casual company events and closing back up for small group instruction sessions. As noise travels easily in open floor plans, acoustic panels are strategically installed around meeting corners to reduce distractions. The use of clear



glass is intentional, allowing one to connect and collaborate the moment you walk in, emphasising the company’s commitment to developing trust among employees and with clients. Usage of natural illumination and efficient lighting systems also cuts power consumption.

Charanjit elaborates: “The renovation was designed to strengthen the way people work together and support a more productive day-to-day rhythm. The open layout improves visibility across teams, making it easier to connect, align and share ideas. Clear sightlines and accessible shared spaces encourage frequent interaction and faster collaboration, which helps teamwork feel more connected and consistent.”

The best testimony, though, is how motivated and invigorated employees are by the renovation. This newfound flexibility elevates productivity while boosting quality of life at work which, in the current professional scene, can be hard to come by. “They genuinely enjoy being in the space,” she says. “It feels energising yet grounded and professional, creating an environment where people feel comfortable, engaged and happy to spend time working together.” **H**

ABOVE
Charanjit:
We focused on choices that feel simple, purposeful and true to Daythree

LEFT
Dedicated zones for independent and group work ensure operations run smoothly

Feruni's collaborative piece with Lisette Sheers of Nala Designs brings the charm of local orchards into the home. Flowers from fruits like durian, water apple and rambutan decorate a large porcelain slab that will add colour to any space. (RM5,988, feruni.com)



Some good dishes may be what you need to complete your tablescape. Noritake's dinner sets in Trefolio Platinum are made from bone china and feature an elegant four leaf clover pattern. (From RM8,900, artelia.com.my)

Small and silent, the HushJet Purifier Compact by Dyson has a star-shaped nozzle built to reduce airflow noise while staying powerful. The electrostatic filters trap a variety of allergens, including dust, mould and dander. (RM1,699, dyson.my)



Slip clothes that have been worn into Panasonic's Care+ Edition smart closet to refresh them in a jiffy. The slim wardrobe steams garments to remove wrinkles and odours, while Heat Pump tech makes quick work of damp clothes and shoes. (RM7,799, panasonic.com)



Equipped with the latest in LG's colour gamut technology, the QNED Ai TV also comes with a powerful processor to deliver the best image quality. An artificial assistant lets users search for programmes via voice commands. (RM9,599, lg.com)



Designed for comfort, the Strata sofa from King Living is a modular system that fits every lifestyle. Extend the depth of the seating with TouchGlide technology and convert it into a cushy bed. (From RM12,674, kingliving.my)





Text Lee Charmynn

QUARTERLY ECLECTICA



SOUTHERN LIGHT

The House of Mi-Rin in Yea, about two hours' drive from Melbourne, Australia, offers rest and solitude through hospitality laced with Malaysian, Bhutanese and Korean accents

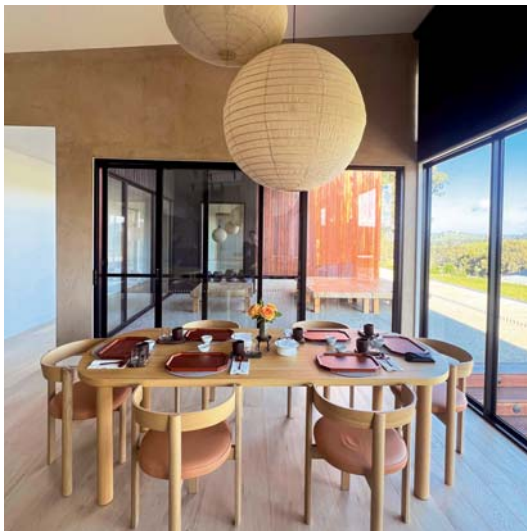
Text **Diana Khoo**

Standing on the ancestral land of the Taungurung people, the House of Mi-Rin was built with thought, intent and purpose. Envisioned as a place for rest, rejuvenation and healing, it is designed to offer comfort, inspiration and renewal to all who come to stay or dine.

Drawing from Asian cultures and customs, the House of Mi-Rin — a portmanteau of the founders' names, Ming-Ne Tan and Sherin Wong — is a boutique retreat offering just five impeccably appointed suites and a dining room set amid acres of grazing land. Situated in the little town of Yea, en route to Mount Buller, it is ideal for a weekend escape — or a longer spell, should you feel that your mind, body and soul need it.

After all, just being on this tranquil patch of Australian countryside is enough to slow the heartbeat, calm the mind and restore clarity to one's thoughts. The farm-to-table cuisine is prepared with heart and generosity while interaction with the other occupants — from flamboyant peacocks to gentle cows, alpacas and Shetland ponies — will definitely encourage calmness or even spark joy.

The five suites — named after the Hibiscus (the national flower of both Malaysia and South Korea) and the Four Gentlemen of



Rest and renewal
amid nature
are part of the
House of Mi-Rin's
promise

Chinese classics (plum blossom, orchid, bamboo and chrysanthemum, symbolising the Confucian virtues of inner beauty, humility, integrity and resilience) — are fitted out with traditional *shoji* screens, designed to invite the natural rhythm of light and shadow, honouring man's ancestors who used to rise with the sun and rest with the moon.

Guests — after storing their shoes away in a traditional Japanese *getabako* by the *genkan* and donning indoor slippers — can gently tread on the natural timber floors to catch glimpses of rainbows or a flight of cockatoos. This practice is also in line with the Asian philosophy of marking the transition from the external world into a place of purity and rest. Linen sheets and cases, sourced locally, cover the most comfortable Sealy mattresses and pillows while the structure of the main house itself gently follows the contours of the land. And should you wish not to be disturbed, simply hang an elegant Korean *maedeup* (decorative knotting) on the door.

The menu changes with the seasons, as it should, featuring the best bounty harvested from the property's garden and vegetable patches. There are also on-site huts for taking tea and meditating, a heat pod-cum-sauna, yoga and healing room, lounge-library and small Japanese garden to explore. You will find that at nightfall, rest comes easy here, as you are rocked and gently cradled in nature's embrace. **H**

To make a booking, visit houseofmirin.com.au

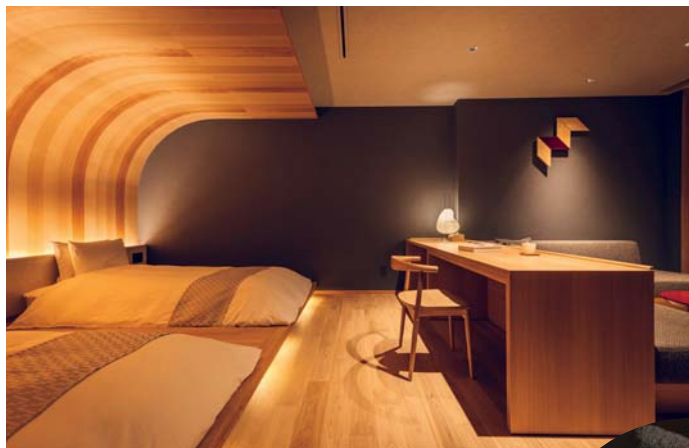
A TALE OF TWO RYOKAN

Discover a leading hot spring hospitality brand in Japan that prides itself on ensuring each property highlights regional charm, design and aesthetics

Text **Diana Khoo**

If you have not yet heard of Kai, a leading brand of hot spring *ryokan* by Hoshino Resorts, you should. With over 20 properties and counting all over Japan, and found in classic hot spring regions such as Lake Poroto in Shiraoi, Hokkaido and Cape Hino in Izumo, Kai resorts boast Japanese *auberge*-style lodgings with explorations of local arts and culinary specialities. Its signature rooms, however, will appeal to those with an eye and appreciation for regional craftsmanship. Here is what is offered at two of its properties in the neighbouring prefectures of Nagano and Gifu in central Japan's Chubu region, separated only by the Northern Japanese Alps.





KAI OKUHIDA

Borrowing from the traditional design elements of a Hida-style inn, Kai Okuhida opened in September 2024, the 24th property under Hoshino Resorts' Kai umbrella and its first in Gifu Prefecture. Surrounded by the Northern Alps and at an altitude of 1,200m above sea level, the small village of Hirayu boasts the largest and oldest hot springs in Okuhida-Onsengo. Hirayu's *onsen* culture was said to have begun when Takeda Shingen was guided by a white monkey to soak in hot water to heal his battle wounds and fatigue.

But beyond sybaritic soaks and delicious beef from Japanese Black cattle, Hida is also renowned for its exceptional craftsmanship — it specialises in woodwork, particularly *mageki*, a unique wood-bending technique from the region. Naturally, each



The art of *mageki* or wood-bending is showcased all over the hotel



of the 49 guest rooms harness the calming power of natural wood, as evinced by the eye-catching modern headboards above the beds, complemented by other regional arts and crafts to create a contemporary, immersive experience of traditional Hida style. Also pay attention to the walls, which are adorned with *Hida-shunkei* lacquerware wall art, a treasure of the nearby Takayama town. What makes the lacquerware distinctive is that it eschews classic red or black as well as gold. Instead, it is made using the unique *suki-urushi* technique that consists of repeatedly rubbing raw lacquer, in thin layers, onto wood, thus allowing the beauty of the wood's natural grain to shine through. Oh, and as a final pop of colour, every room at Kai Okuhida is accented with a dragon cushion, the mythical beast being a favourite pattern in Hida. Crafted using a traditional dyeing technique called *Hida-zome*, the cushions are from Hida-zome Yuhara Senko, a Takayama-based atelier established over 150 years ago that specialises in festival costumes. The resort commissioned its fifth-generation owner, Yuhara Masaki-sama, to create something unique for the guest room sofas. The result? A true Hida welcome, offering comfort but also true regional flair.

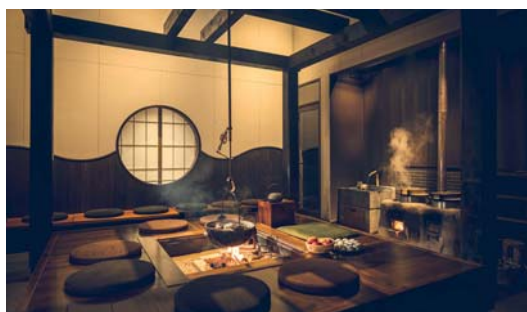


With champagne-fresh mountain air, sumptuous Japanese meals and soothing *onsen* soaks, it is no wonder that guests tend to sleep deeply at Kai Alps. But credit must also go to the game changing silk throw blankets on each bed, made in the Ueda Tsumugi style. Choose from four main room types, including the Japanese-style room with loft, with indoor bath or the more private option with an annex. **H**

KAI ALPS

Gentle yet illuminating, Matsuzaka *washi* paper lamps are found in each room at Kai Alps. With a history that dates back to 1000 AD, it is believed that Matsuzaka *washi* was first used for a festival in the region. With papermaking a dying art, the resort has made sure to keep it alive by installing lamps using the delicate material at the entrance of its room. On the walls, you will see unique paper-cutting art made using the natural elements of Nagano as a source of inspiration. Common motifs include local trees, birds and flowers. The paper used for this art form traditionally consists of three sheets of handmade *washi*, stacked one on top of the other and dyed with persimmon juice.

Handmade *washi* paper is used for screens and lanterns



THE UNSECRET GARDEN

Badan Warisan Malaysia celebrates the recent completion of the heritage kampung garden surrounding Rumah Penghulu Abu Seman in the heart of Kuala Lumpur

Text **Diana Khoo** Photography **Patrick Goh**



Gazetted by Jabatan Warisan Negara (the Department of National Heritage) as a Heritage Object under the National Heritage Act, Rumah Penghulu Abu Seman remains one of the finest examples of Malay vernacular architecture. Likely constructed in stages between 1910 and 1930, the beautiful timber house was originally owned by the headman of Mukim Bagan Samak, from the small village of Kg Sungai Kechil in the northern state of Kedah. Having fallen into disrepair, it was rescued, relocated and lovingly restored by Badan Warisan Malaysia (the Heritage of Malaysia Trust) as part of a Unesco award-winning restoration project in 1996.

For those unaware, Badan Warisan was established 43 years ago with the main mission of highlighting heritage issues and advocating for a conservation-friendly environment in Malaysia. Today, its treasured *kampung* house is a key highlight for all visitors to Badan Warisan. A lone but proud traditional structure, it stands like a small sentinel amid the city's sea of skyscrapers and is the core of the Trust's cultural and community outreach work. Guided tours to the house are available, with access to explore its interiors. What has been attracting more attention of late, however, is what lies outside the Rumah Penghulu Abu Seman.

For eight long months, the team at Badan Warisan have been hard at work revitalising the traditional herb and heritage garden that surrounds

TOP LEFT
Tan Sri Leo Moggie tours the grounds

RIGHT (FROM LEFT)
Ivan Camacho, Kate Karpfinger, Inch Lim, Hanum Ain Zainal of DBKL, Badan Warisan Malaysia president Lim Wei-Ling and Johan Razak





the *kampung* house. Roping in the talents of superlative landscape architect Inch Lim, with the support of SLB, Yayasan Hasanah and the Pentago Group, the team at Badan Warisan has succeeded in creating a little garden that evokes the memory of small planted plots ubiquitous across old Malaya in the early days of independence.

The heritage garden was a project that dates back to 2004, established to highlight the loss of urban green spaces as well as to foster, nurture and inspire greater appreciation for our rich natural heritage, which remains under threat. Working with Rimba Ilmu of Universiti Malaya, the garden features more than 50 species of trees and plants of environmental, cultural and historical interest.

Recently reopened to the public, the newly named Heritage Kampung Garden in the City continues on its original mission, which is to offer a small but much-needed slice of nature as well as serve as a living classroom. Anyone is welcome to come celebrate the joy of green spaces or the simple pleasure of seeing plants and flowers being nurtured. Under Lim's artistic eye, the garden is now bursting with colour. Fish dart about in the tiered pond. A footbridge invites exploration and guests can learn about the various herbs and medicinal plants that have long held starring roles in traditional culinary and medicinal traditions or simply admire their beauty. **H**

The Heritage Kampung Garden in the City is at 2 Jalan Stonor, KL, and is open from Tues to Sat, 9:30am to 4pm. Entrance is free.

Biophilic Chic

Bring the outdoors in.
Here are some ideas
for inspiration.

ART DIRECTION LILY G + DAPHANY C
PHOTOGRAPHY SOOPHYE
PHOTOGRAPHY ASSISTANT RICK KEW
RETOUCHER CARMEN H



FIRST ROW, FROM LEFT:
FAUX BOTANICAL, SANSEVIERIA IN POT, RM99.90, **HOOGA**;
GARDENING SCISSORS, RM11.80, **DAISO**; MEDITERRANEAN-STYLE
CERAMIC POT, RM7.50, **GOOD2U HOME**; **GARDEN FUTURES: DESIGNING
WITH NATURE** PUBLICATION, RM360, **HAUS LIVING CONCEPTS**.

SECOND ROW, FROM LEFT:
MAISON DE REVE ARTIFICIAL LEAVES IN SEAGRASS BASKET, RM109,
PARKSON; CROCHET PLANT POT HANGER, RM14.50, **UJU HOME**.



FIRST ROW, FROM LEFT:

WOOD DESK PANEL, RM5.90, **DAISO**;
FAUX BOTANICAL, PINE NEEDLE SUCCULENT IN POT,
RM81.90, **HOOGA**; RESIN CRACKED EGG BOWL, RM110,
GUDANG; HAND FORK, RM19.90, **ACE HARDWARE**.

SECOND ROW, FROM LEFT:

FAUX BOTANICAL, ALOCASIA IN POT, RM87.90, **HOOGA**;
FAUX BOTANICAL, SANSEVIERIAS IN RUSTIC NATURAL
WATER HYACINTH FIBRE PLANTER POT, RM87.90,
PARKSON; SOHERICA IN WOODEN POT, RM139, **HOOGA**.





Family affair

Nowruz, or Persian New Year's Day, falls on March 20. If you feel the need to welcome spring with hope and renewal, be inspired by the family recipes from the founders of Nooshe Jan by Fari & Ali's.

Text Aireena Azni Photography Low Yen Yeing

The warm and welcoming ambience of a cosy home can be felt as soon as one steps into Nooshe Jan, a Persian restaurant located in the commercial district of Bukit Damansara, Kuala Lumpur. Helmed by Sharifah Samira Syed Anwar, her Iranian mother Leily Amini and cousin Sharifah Athirah Syed Azmin, the establishment built its foundation on respect and responsibility towards heritage and tradition.

Before opening its doors to the dinner crowd, this quaint dining room serves the immediate community traditional breakfast, artisan brews and spectacular desserts during the day under the label Fari & Ali's Kitchen, named after Samira's grandparents. The café, set up in 2023, was a dream come true for the 34-year-old who started selling *noon khomei* (Persian cream puffs) from home during the pandemic.

In its first two years, Samira would occasionally revise the menu to include set lunches and Sunday specials featuring main meals prepared by her mum. It was a matter of time before the mother-daughter duo joined forces to expand the enterprise.

Last November, they introduced a dual-concept eatery that takes customers on an extensive Persian culinary journey — Fari & Ali's Kitchen in the morning, and Nooshe Jan at night (only on Thursday, Friday and Saturday). The latter offers substantial courses ranging from starters, rice and flatbreads to sides and desserts.

"It was my suggestion that we go in this direction because we don't have a good Iranian restaurant here," Leily says. "I'm used to cooking for many people; our family is big. I thought it was a great opportunity for me to introduce my food and culture to Malaysians."

A big part of Persian culture is family and community. "It's more than a restaurant, it's an extension of home. Nooshe Jan means 'May it nourish your soul' in Parsi. When you come here, you should feel like you're in our kitchen. We talk to you, we cook and cut the cake for you — we're feeding you proper food," Samira says.



That shared connection strengthens during Nowruz, the Iranian New Year, which falls on the spring equinox. "It signifies rebirth, so it always feels like a fresh start," says Leily. "Back home, the big celebration normally runs for two weeks, families come together and we visit one another. We also prepare a traditional table setting called Haft-Sin, which has seven food items — all start with the letter S."

"It is an honour for me to be able to share my heritage and traditions with other people. From the moment we laid the first brick to renovate the space, everything was built with love, joy and happiness," Leily shares.

"Of course, like any other business, we hope to make a lot of money. But ultimately, the smile on someone's face fulfils us at the end of the day," Samira remarks. **H**

FROM LEFT
Samira, Leily
and Athirah

65, Jalan Medan Setia 1, Bukit Damansara, KL.
For reservations, visit [@nooshejan.kl](https://www.nooshejan.kl).







TRADITIONAL JOOJEH KABAB (CHICKEN KEBAB)

Serves four

INGREDIENTS

About 1.4kg chicken (boneless thighs preferred, or mix of breast and thigh), cut into large bite-size pieces

INGREDIENTS FOR MARINADE

1 large onion, finely grated (save the liquid)

½ cup fresh lemon juice

¼ cup neutral oil

1 tsp salt (or to taste)

½ tsp black pepper

1 tsp bloomed saffron (½ tsp saffron threads + 3 tbsp hot water)

METHOD

1. Combine chicken with grated onion and its liquid, lemon juice, oil, salt, pepper and saffron.
2. Cover and marinate for at least four hours, ideally overnight in the fridge. Don't marinate for longer than 24 hours as lemon can toughen the meat.
3. Thread chicken onto flat metal skewers (or soaked wooden skewers). Don't pack too tightly, leave a little space for even cooking.
4. Preheat charcoal grill (traditional), gas grill or broiler to medium-high.
5. Cook the chicken for around 12 minutes, turning occasionally until golden and lightly charred.
6. Brush lightly with melted butter during the last minute for shine and added flavour.
7. Serve with *polow* or flatbread.



GHORMEH SABZI (PERSIAN LAMB AND HERB STEW)

Serves four

INGREDIENTS

600g lamb or beef, cut into bite-size chunks
(lamb shoulder or beef chuck are ideal)
1 cup finely chopped parsley
1 cup finely chopped cilantro
½ cup finely chopped chives or green onions
(green parts)
¼ cup finely chopped fenugreek (fresh or dried)
1 large onion, finely chopped
1 cup dried red kidney beans (or 1½ cups cooked/
canned)
2-3 Persian dried limes (*limoo amani*), pierced
with a fork
3-4 tbsp vegetable oil
1 tsp turmeric
Salt and black pepper, to taste
Water as needed

METHOD

1. Prep the beans. If using dried beans, soak them overnight (or at least 6 to 8 hours), then parboil for 20 to 30 minutes until tender. Set aside.
2. Heat 2 to 3 tbsp oil in a wide pan over medium heat. Add all the chopped herbs and sauté slowly for about 15 to 20 minutes until dark green, fragrant and slightly crispy.
3. In a large pot, heat 1 tbsp oil and sauté the chopped onion until golden.
4. Add turmeric, then the meat. Brown all sides.
5. Add enough water to cover the meat. Bring to a gentle boil, skim any foam and reduce heat to low. Cover and simmer for 45 to 60 minutes.
6. Add the fried herbs, cooked beans, pierced dried limes, salt and pepper. Add more water if needed. Take note that the stew should be thick, not soupy.
7. Simmer gently for another 45 to 60 minutes. Stir occasionally until the meat is tender and the oil has slightly risen to the surface.
8. Adjust salt and lime flavour. If you want more tang, gently press the dried limes with the back of a spoon.
9. Serve hot with basmati rice and a knob of butter on top.



SALAD SHIRAZI

Serves four

INGREDIENTS

3 medium tomatoes, finely diced
 2 Persian cucumbers
 (or one large English cucumber), finely diced
 1 small red or white onion, finely diced
 2-3 tbsp fresh lime juice or verjuice
 Salt, to taste
 Optional additions
 2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
 Freshly ground black pepper
 1-2 tbsp finely chopped fresh mint
 1 tbsp finely chopped parsley
 A pinch of dried mint (instead of fresh)

METHOD

1. Cut tomatoes, cucumber and onion into tiny cubes.
2. In a large bowl, place all the diced vegetables, as well as lime juice, salt and other additional herbs.
3. Mix well and serve.

POLOW (PERSIAN STEAMED RICE)

Serves four

INGREDIENTS

3 cups basmati rice
 Water (for soaking and boiling)
 2-3 tbsp salt
 3-4 tbsp vegetable oil or butter
 ½ cup water (for steaming)
 A pinch of saffron, bloomed in 2 tbsp hot water (optional)
 2 tbsp butter (optional, for serving)

METHOD

1. Rinse the rice, then soak in plenty of water with 2 tbsp salt for 30 minutes to two hours.
2. Bring a large pot of water to a rolling boil. Add 1 tbsp salt.
3. Drain the rice and add it to the boiling water.
4. Boil 5 to 7 minutes until the rice is soft on the outside but still firm in the centre.
5. Drain immediately in a colander and rinse quickly with lukewarm water.
6. Return the pot to medium heat, then add oil (or 1 to 2 tbsp butter).
7. Optional for saffron *tahdig* (crispy crust at the bottom of a pot of rice): Mix 2 tbsp rice with a little saffron water and spread at the bottom. Otherwise, layer thinly sliced potatoes or flatbread.
8. Gently mound the rice into the pot and shape it like a pyramid.
9. Using the handle of a spoon, poke 5 to 6 holes down to the bottom. Then pour ½ cup water around the rice.
10. Wrap the lid in a clean kitchen towel and cover tightly.
11. Cook on medium heat for 10 minutes until steaming. Then reduce to low heat and steam for 30 to 35 minutes.
12. Turn off heat and let rest for 5 minutes.
13. Finish off with butter and saffron water (optional).
14. Gently fluff the rice, then invert to reveal the golden brown *tahdig*.



MY SPACE: ROBERT CHENG

The founder of Brewin Design Office talks about his work for the hotly anticipated Capella Kyoto in Japan, on track to open in March 2026

Text **Diana Khoo**

What were your first thoughts when presented with the project?

Our first instinct was to work with intention. Capella Kyoto sits in a part of the city where history isn't something you reference lightly, but something you respond to carefully. Rather than asking how visible the design should be, we asked how quiet it needed to be. The project felt less like an opportunity to make a statement, and more like a responsibility to contribute something measured and enduring to its context.

How familiar were you with Kyoto prior to the Capella project?

I had travelled to Kyoto a number of times prior, but it is a city with such depth that familiarity is always relative. Kyoto doesn't reveal itself all at once — it unfolds gradually through presence, seasonal change and time spent observing rather than just visiting. While the Capella project deepened my understanding in a more focused way, it also reinforced the idea that Kyoto is never fully 'known'; it's a place you continue to learn from the longer you stay engaged with it.

What do you want people to feel when staying at the Capella Kyoto?

One of the guiding perspectives that was shared with us early on by the Capella team was that this hotel would not be for everyone, especially those seeking things like stunning views or landscapes. Capella Kyoto does not rely on the obvious advantages of a panoramic vista or garden settings, but is instead woven into the everyday fabric of the historic, mixed-use



neighbourhood of Miyagawa-cho, just a short walk from Gion. This is an area that has long been shaped by craft, making and lived culture, and that context became central to how we approached the hotel. The experience at Capella Kyoto is about looking inward, creating an intensely curated sequence of spaces.

Do you have a favourite space within the hotel?

While I am hesitant to single out one space, if there is a moment that best captures the spirit of the hotel, it is the journey from the entry vestibule to the Living Room. That passage — across a human-scaled bridge, flanked by the external courtyard on one side and the triple-height atrium on the other — places you in the midst of the architecture as it unfolds. It is a moment of

transition, where movement, scale and light are carefully calibrated, and, for me, that sequence embodies how Capella Kyoto is meant to be experienced — not as an immediate reveal, but as a gradual unfolding.

What are your favourite sources of inspiration?

Much of my inspiration comes from the galleries I follow closely around the world. I receive updates and enjoy engaging with them as a way of staying connected to contemporary making. I am particularly drawn to galleries that focus on furniture and object-based design, and work that sits at the intersection of art, sculpture and industrial design.

How do you like to spend a few days in Kyoto?

I enjoy experiencing Kyoto on foot, observing how it handles the in-between: paths, thresholds, framed views and moments of pause. It is a city that reveals its design intelligence most clearly through careful attention rather than accumulation. I always pay a visit to the antique street Shinmonzen-dori, where galleries, antique shops and everyday life sit quietly side by side. I would also highly recommend a visit to the Katsura Imperial Villa, not just for the architecture but to appreciate its mastery of proportion, sequence and the seamless relationship between architecture and landscape. An equally meaningful experience is the moss temple Saihoji, where the garden and its atmosphere is shaped through abstraction, simplicity and time. **H**

Noritake
TROCADERO

MALAYSIA

artelia.com.my

[artelia.my](https://www.instagram.com/artelia.my)

[arteliamy](https://www.facebook.com/arteliamy)

• Artelia, SEIBU
The Exchange TRX

• Artelia, LEVEL 3, Bangsar
Shopping Center

Feruni®

Where Every Tile Is A Work Of Art



Feruni's projects are a showcase of the beauty and durability of our creations, where each transforms spaces with design and style. From residential to commercial projects, our portfolio reflects some of Feruni's tile mastery at its finest.

With premium tile collections, top-notch retail stores and a passion to make living spaces an enriching environment, Feruni is poised to become the gold standard for property developments across the nation.

FERUNI CERAMICHE SDN BHD 200101019027 (554784-M)
No. 12, Jalan 51A/213, Seksyen 51A, 46050 Petaling Jaya,
Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia.
Phone: +603 7784 7277 Email: enquiry@feruni.com

www.feruni.com