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Artist's Illustration



ON THE COVER

PHOTOGRAPHY:
SOOPHYE

This beautiful space is also home to a small urban farm from which the family gets greens and fresh fish

Read it on page 46

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ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME CHANCE.



Thomas Hucker's
masterpiece,
Akiko chair

Renowned master furniture designer Thomas Hucker only creates 8 of his wood masterpieces a year. This year, he has collaborated with Backley by LUMBERmart to recreate his renowned masterpieces featuring Backley's exclusive selection of wood. While his work is usually coveted at art galleries and museums in USA and Europe, now his masterpieces like the Credenza console table, Akiko side chairs, and Drummond side table which he unveiled at ARCHIDEX 2019. If you missed it, visit the Backley showroom for your final chance to bring a limited edition collector's item home with you.

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ASIA PACIFIC
PROPERTY
AWARDS
**AWARD
WINNER**
2019-2020



Artist Impression | Melbourne Square Park

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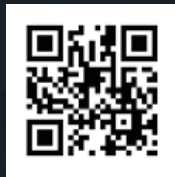
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PHOTOGRAPHY: **SooPhye**

LET NATURE IN

It is always a pleasure preparing each and every issue of *Haven*. 2019 has been particularly eventful. Spring saw us travelling to the Maldives to profile the luxury destination's most design-conscious resort to date, The Joali, which seems as much an island art gallery and museum as it is a world-class billionaire's playground. We were also entertained at the RM12 million, 10,000 sq ft KL outpost of international bar chain Iron Fairies, which has to be seen to be believed, what with its Fairy Dust Factory and Butterfly Room, complete with 50,000 fluttering plastic butterflies. Summer proved to be no less memorable, with an interview by British decorating supremo Kelly Hoppen and design-centric travels that took us from villas just a short drive from the Klang Valley, to the Neri & Hu Design-ed Kimpton Da An hotel in Taipei, and a beautiful private villa by the Indian Ocean, in Sri Lanka, that sets the benchmark for all beach holidays.

Prep for our autumn issue has been equally eventful, but with a decidedly more nature-focused approach. There are, for example, features on how to make the most of Mother Nature's beauty in the house — be it simple potted plants or vases of phalaenopsis orchids — as well as homes that combine comfort with an eco-conscious slant. Assistant editor Anandhi Gopinath also took the opportunity to squeeze in some quality time at beautiful new Peranakan-style boutique hotel, the Liu Men, in historical Melaka. The Baba-Nyonya are famous for their unique architecture and home design, as can be seen in our travel feature on Page 74, which gives you the big picture as well as all the gorgeous, little details.

Our entertaining section goes haute but hip this issue, with Singapore's celebrated and Michelin-starred chef Emmanuel Stroobant whipping up an easy, elegant vegetarian spread that is perfect for the next time you have guests over. Be inspired on Page 84. September 16 marks Malaysia Day and we could not resist putting together some of the cutest and most covetable locally made decorative items for your viewing (and buying) pleasure. As we said earlier, putting each issue together is our pleasure. We hope reading it is yours.

Diana Khoo
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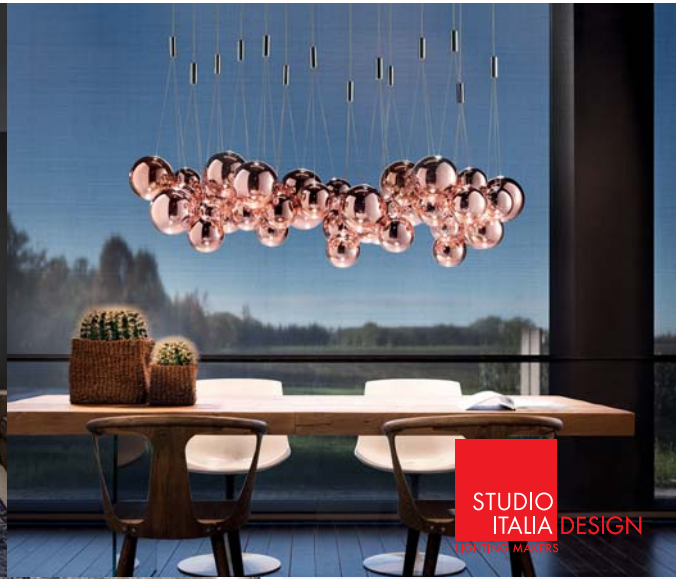
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FALL GENTLY INTO AUTUMN

Half the year is over and there is just a small window left before the festive spirit takes over everything. Make the most of this lull by enjoying your living spaces before the tinsel is hung, the tree goes up and the most wonderful time of the year is underway. Treat yourself to pots of verdant plants or bright and beautiful orchids. Be bowled over by our selection of proudly Made in Malaysia products or get ideas for a last-minute getaway to the country's most historical town. Whatever you are searching for, we hope you will find it within our pages.

1

AROMAS OF THE ABODE

Choose one of these luxurious scents to create a sweet smelling space at home

Text **Lakshmi Sekhar**

1 L'Artisan Parfumeur's Amber Ball diffuser is a delicately crafted sphere with perfume crystals encased at its centre that effuse sensual notes of vanilla, patchouli, tonka bean and benzoin (RM1,173.80, artisanparfumeur.com)

2 The Senti Orchid diffuser is a beautifully crafted piece that can brighten up any home. Choose from a range of fragrances such as white flowers, bergamot and ginger, jasmine and geranium, mandarin and cypress, and fig. (£150, senti.co.uk)

3 Decorative and sweet smelling, the Japonica 3 Macaron Candle set from Voluspa offers three scents – Baltic Amber, French Cade Lavender and Moso Bamboo – all in intricately designed glass macarons (US\$39, voluspa.com)

4 John Galliano worked with Diptyque to make his namesake room spray a warm and mysterious fragrance with smoky accents (RM295)

5 The Aspen Telluride Diffuser from Eight & Bob has base notes of praliné, sandalwood and vanilla, with top notes of caramelised apple and lemon (RM509)

6 For those who prefer something sustainable, try Goutal's Ambre et Volupté Refillable Candle, with notes of cedar and patchouli, which when finished, can be refilled with any other candle in the collection (RM319, kensapothecary.com.my)



2



3



5

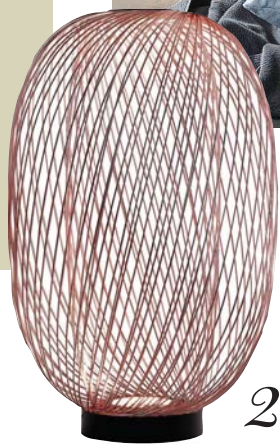


4



6





KEEP IT COSY

Autumnal decorative pieces to warm up your living space

Text **Emily Yap**

1 Cellini's Monte chair and footstool combination is comfortable and stylish and supports the curve of your spine (RM2,060)

2 Sinuous but structured, Stephen Burks' contemporary Anwar P90 Floor Lamp emits a patterned ambient light suitable to brighten any corner (RM24,300, lindsfurniture.com)

3 Add warmth to your sofa with King Living's luxurious Oberon Cushion, which has an elegant pinched-edge detail and a hidden zipper closure (RM159)

4 UGG's Gleason Throw blanket, made from baby alpaca wool, makes for a homely styling piece (£317, amara.com)

5 Designed as a striking centrepiece, Tom Dixon's Tank Vase is the perfect vessel for showing off your autumnal flower arrangements (RM1,694, gudanghome.com)

6 Place Kare Design's Big Leaf Bowl near your entryway or on your coffee table to store your keys, remotes and miscellaneous items (RM262)



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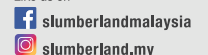
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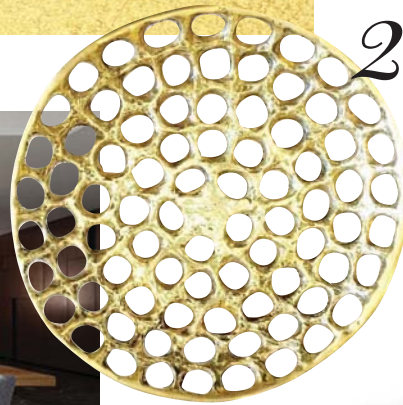
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METALLIC MANIA

Spruce up the house with these lustrous accents to add that extra element of luxury



Text **Rebecca Leong**

1 Adorn your home with this striking Molecular chandelier from **Laito**, a gorgeous statement piece for your living area (**RM490, laito.my**)

2 Handmade from solid cast brass, **Kelly Wearstler's** Verso Platter is a quirky feature to add to your kitchen counter (**US\$1,295, kellywearstler.com**)

3 Inspired by the style of Amy Winehouse, the Amy Table Lamp by **DelightFULL** is a distinctive mid-century modern piece that gives your home a vintage feel (**€1,000.50, shop.delightfull.eu**)

4 Serve your tea in style with this charming tea set from **Fornasetti**, expertly handcrafted in Italy using the brand's age-old techniques (**£325, amara.com**)

5 This candelabrum from **Georg Jensen** will add a sophisticated touch to your dining table and is perfect for a friendly get-together or a peaceful dinner after a hard day's work (**RM431.99, harrods.com**)

6 Done in collaboration with famous leather goods company Frye, the stunning Frye Cocktail Shaker by **Crate and Barrel** is a great addition to your bar. The knurling on the body is the company's signature design, which also gives you a sound grip. (**RM180.19, crateandbarrel.com**)

7 This Equipages d'Hermès 'Diligence' side table by **Hermès** is designed to look like a traditional stagecoach, with old-school detachable wicker baskets (**US\$39,700, hermes.com**)



ALL YOU NEED AND MORE

*Intuitive furniture by King Living provides solutions
to meet needs that have yet to be articulated*

The difference between a house and a home lies in the people who live in it. Strangers sharing a space do not quite a home make – it is warmth, trust and affection that turns a habitat into a refuge. Whether you are living alone or part of a family of two or four or 10, the sense of relief that descends every time you push open the front door signals that you are back where you belong.

Home is the one place that grants you complete freedom to be yourself and engage in all the different activities that make you you. And with that comes the need for flexibility in self-expression: to be a child, parent, sibling, friend, boss, hobbyist – whatever and whenever you please. Aiding that quest for fulfilment is King Living, who, not for nothing, is known as a master of modularity.

Considering the ever-changing needs of individuals and families, the furniture maker concluded that happiness lies in a firm foundation: in this case, exceptionally engineered steel frames. Such strength allows for versatility, which means a space can easily

be reconfigured, whether closing the distance between seating for an intimate gathering or moving furniture around to better entertain a big group.

Additional purpose-built accessories enhance the ownership and user experience, providing customised comfort while maximising space. Choose from modifiable accompaniments spanning wireless charging tables and LED task lights to clever pockets for concealed storage.

And the people behind the brand is constantly brainstorming. Take the Jasper II, an update of the iconic Jasper sofa. Sleeker and more refined, it has been fitted with generous but discreet storage solutions. However, that pales next to its highlight: it is the only King Living sofa to incorporate the cutting-edge Flexguard technology, which guarantees enduring comfort with plumper cushions that retain their shape longer. It can even accommodate a home entertainment system via a state-of-the-art timber media console that is ideal for resting refreshments and concealing a Sonos subwoofer



Flexguard technology keeps the
Jasper II sofa plump and pretty for years



TOP:
King Living designs, such as the award-winning Eto Desk, are renowned for their style and technical sophistication

BOTTOM:
The convertible Zaza is a classy and comfortable addition to any interior

while keeping remote controls handy. The sofa joined the brand's Eto Desk and Sleep+Mattresses as winners of the Australian Good Design Award 2019.

Speaking of victorious ideas, the Zaza sofa – a collaboration between King Living and prize-winning Australian designer Charles Wilson – raises the bar in contemporary style and luxury. With deep seats and adjustable arms and backs, it can be converted into a bed or recliner lounge, ideal for naps or long, peaceful slumber.

Finally, there is the throne that is the King Cloud III. Award-winning design is fused with avant-garde technology in the brand's ultimate recliner lounge. The sofa is capable of adapting to individual preferences in positions with TouchGlide control

technology that adjusts the headrest as well as back and leg rests at the swipe of a hand. Within this cocoon of bespoke comfort, effortlessly enjoy your home theatre system with the attached Smart Pockets. Pair this with the Speaker Bracket specially designed for the Sonos Play:1 speaker to create an immersive cinematic experience.

No amateur could conjure such a host of options. King Living has been in the luxury furnishing business since 1977, growing from a humble stall at Sydney's weekend markets into an international powerhouse with 16 showrooms across Australia and a growing presence in Singapore, New Zealand and Malaysia. The expansion was made possible by its robust and holistic approach to design. The steel frames upon which its reputation – and all its furniture – is built, for instance, is made in-house using precision-cut, high-grade material that comes with a 25-year warranty, a testament of its strength.

A frame designed to last a quarter of a century cannot be comfortable, you might think, but that is without taking into account Postureflex – a seating system similar to that used in many luxury European cars – that provides long-lasting support without losing its shape. In fact, hatchback cars even inspired the easy-life hydraulics that allows one-handed access to the entire built-in storage system where applicable. KingCell pocket springs come in to supply unparalleled resilience and firmness throughout the cushions, so you will never have

THE BUYER'S CHECKLIST

In furniture Disneyland, confronted with an overwhelming host of options, picking out the right investment piece could prove a challenge. Break down the selection process into a catalogue of considerations to ensure you go home with something that suits your needs.

THE FRAME

Wooden frames with staples, dowels and glue that can become unstuck, warp or creak over time might not last long. However, King Living uses a foundation of engineered steel to create a durable frame that comes with a 25-year warranty.

LONG-LASTING COMFORT

Elastic webbing and metal springs found in most sofas tend to lose their stretch and sag over time. The Postureflex Seating System was developed in direct response to this, creating a seating experience similar to that in luxury cars. It is combined with KingCell spring cushioning for enduring comfort and support.

FLEXIBILITY AND VERSATILITY

Fixed units force fixed arrangements. These days, most homeowners appreciate flexibility in their furniture, which allows for easy reconfiguration when necessary. Modular solutions not only allow you to effortlessly rearrange room layouts but also remove cushions, arms and backs to create multi-purpose surfaces. This flexibility cannot be overstated enough when moving house.

STORAGE

Something that occupies space should also create space – storage space, that is. Many sofas these days have handy pockets or sections for simple storage but they quickly become unusable if they are poorly made. Award-winning King Living understands this, even designing stowage without support bars for unhindered access.

COVERS

Most sofas tend to have their fabrics or leather upholstery stapled and glued to their frames. This is not an issue until there is one, when there are stains that cannot be removed or the sofa's colour no longer matches your living space. Removable covers allow for easy replacement. Considering how hard-wearing the brand's steel frames are, changeable covers allow you to keep a sofa in the family and in style for generations.

ACCESSORIES

Changing trends and needs are hard to keep up with, so consider built-in accessories carefully. King Living constantly updates its optional accessories that you can easily attach and detach as necessary. Current selections include tables that wirelessly charge mobile phones and LED lights.

BESPOKE SOLUTIONS

You could buy something produced en masse or designed to fit the needs of many – or you could buy something tailored to your specific desires and circumstances. King Living sofas are tailor-made and handcrafted in its own production facilities to fit your exact requirements. You can even have your name stitched onto the label, asserting that the piece is uniquely yours.

MAKER'S CREDENTIALS

Knowing exactly what went into your sofa requires you to know exactly who made it. As King Living owns and operates its own production facilities, it has complete control over every single step of the production process and the quality at every stage, giving you peace of mind over the end results.



Steel Frame Postureflex

to worry about sagging furniture and backache. Optional adjustable legs can be included to create angled seats that remove the pressure from lower limbs for additional ease. Finally, TouchGlide technology in select models completes the experience, culminating in seating you would be loath to leave.

All covers, whether premium fabric or luxurious leather finishes, are removable to allow for easy aesthetic updates and individual section replacements in the event of irremovable stains. Combined with the signature modularity for which King Living is renowned, buying into the brand assures value for money with timeless aesthetics and comfort that will last you years. The only possible downside to owning any of these is that guests might be just as reluctant to leave them and could linger far longer than you might like. Take that as a compliment: It takes skill to turn a house into a home everyone feels comfortable in.

Visit King Living at www.kingliving.my for its furniture solutions. Or browse through them in person at the new flagship store at 61, Jalan Maarof, Taman Bangsar, 59000 KL or the showroom at Level 1, IPC Shopping Centre, Mutiara Damansara, 47800 PJ. Call (03) 2633 7600 or (03) 7732 0272 for details.

DEEPADALI LIGHT

Inspired by the colour and vibrancy of this Hindu festival that celebrates the triumph of good over evil, here are bold and bright ways to bring a bit of festive cheer into your home

PHOTOGRAPHY SHAWN LOR @ PIXEL PIX
ARTISTIC DIRECTION JOANNE LIM
STYLING ABBY CHUNG + LIEW SHUK KHUEN



LEFT TO RIGHT: DECORATIVE PEACOCK FEATHERS, RM3 EACH, **LORONG BANDAR 21**. DECORATIVE ONYX ELEPHANT, RM49, **INDUS HERITAGE @ CENTRAL MARKET**. MINI HAND-PAINTED SPICE CABINET WITH CERAMIC DRAWERS, RM75, **JWAN ENTERPRISE @ CENTRAL MARKET**. HAND-PAINTED SAUCE PLATES, RM24.30 EACH, **METROJAYA**. ASSORTED HAND-PAINTED CORK COASTERS, RM7.90 (SET OF 4), **PARKSON**. HAND-PAINTED ELEPHANT TILE COASTER, RM11, **MAXWELL WILLIAMS @ PARKSON**. DECORATIVE CUT-OUT JARS, RM6.90, **KOZIOL @ PARKSON**. PAISLEY PATTERNED FLORAL MUGS, RM17.90 EACH, **ROBINSONS**. ROUND PLATES WITH FLORAL PRINT DETAILS, RM7 (SMALL) & RM12 (LARGE), **CI SHAN ENTERPRISE**. LARGE ROUND FLORAL PRINT PLATE, RM49.90, **EMPIRE @ PARKSON**. PINK 'KADAI' POT, RM39.90, **MANGALA THEEBAM WHOLESALE**. SILVER CUP, RM10, **KWONG YIK CROCKERY**. DECORATIVE HAND-PAINTED CERAMIC AND WOODEN TRINKET BOX, RM89.90, **METROJAYA**. HAND-PAINTED RECTANGULAR PLATE, RM23.90, **METROJAYA**. SMALL ROUND FLORAL PRINT PLATE, RM23.90, **EMPIRE @ PARKSON**. BEJEWELLED NAPKIN RINGS, RM27.90 & RM29.90 EACH, **PARKSON**. RED NAPKIN, RM9.90, **PARKSON**. MINI FLORAL 'MALA' CLOTH GARLAND, RM9.90, **MANGALA THEEBAM WHOLESALE**. SILVER 'PAANAI' POT, RM24.90, **MANGALA THEEBAM WHOLESALE**. MURUKU, RM22 PER PACK, **MAYURI'S IPOH MURUKU @ 1UTAMA**.





LEFT TO RIGHT: HAND-PAINTED WOODEN TRAY, RM93.90, METROJAYA. OSTRICH DECORATIVE CANISTER BOWL, RM499, MAISON CURIO @ BANGSAR SHOPPING CENTRE. DECORATIVE GANESHA, RM70, INDUS HERITAGE @ CENTRAL MARKET. FLORAL 'MALA' CLOTH GARLAND, RM39.90, MANGALA THEEBAM WHOLESALE. DECORATIVE PINEAPPLE PHOTO FRAME, RM139, MAISON CURIO @ BANGSAR SHOPPING CENTRE. DECORATIVE INCENSE STAND, RM16.90, MURUGAN STORES @ BRICKFIELDS. ASSORTED HAND-PAINTED CERAMIC BOWLS, RM20 EACH, BLUE EYES CREATIVES @ CENTRAL MARKET. GOLD BOWL, RM9.90, MURUGAN STORES @ BRICKFIELDS. HAND-PAINTED WOODEN TRINKET BOX, RM139.90, METROJAYA. ASSORTED LOTUS CANDLES, RM5.90-RM9.90, MANGALA THEEBAM WHOLESALE. DECORATIVE ORNAMENTAL SQUARE STANDS, RM39.90 (LARGE) + RM9.90 (SMALL), MURUGAN STORES @ BRICKFIELDS. DECORATIVE HANGING ELEPHANTS, RM39.90, BAMCO CRAFT @ CENTRAL MARKET. BEJEWELLED DECORATIVE PEACOCK, RM69.90, INDUS HERITAGE @ CENTRAL MARKET.



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IT'S A JUNGLE IN THERE!

If the idea of a sterile home scares the bejeebers out of you, or if you want to purify the air in your indoor living space naturally, then S K Goh of homegrown indoor plant label, Pasu, ought to be your go-to guy

Text **Diana Khoo** Photography **Haris Hassan**

Wildflowers in meadows or groves of flowering trees only need Mother Nature's loving care – rain and sunshine – to thrive. But unless you are a follower of the Geoffrey Bawa school of thought, which advocates a seamless melding of the outdoors with the indoors, the chances are you would have had to work hard to keep your indoor plants healthy. The recent haze has also prompted most of us to keep our windows tightly shut. One way to score several ticks on the home improvement front while improving air quality at the same time is the simple but effective use of the humble houseplant.

“That’s the reason the sansevieria is my favourite in the houseplant family,” says S K Goh, founder of the indoor plant and flower retail chain, Pasu. “It is a hardy variety and releases oxygen round-the-clock — unlike some other species that release carbon dioxide





Goh says that working with plants is indeed “a happy business”



at night — making it especially ideal for bedrooms. In fact, a recent NASA Clean Air Study showed us that a few plant species are even capable of removing toxins.

“Also, I’m lazy by nature, so these low-maintenance plants are as close to perfect as can be. If you’re looking for natural air-purifiers, calathea, dieffenbachia, money plant, pothos and sansevieria, of course, all make good choices.”

A quick browse in any Pasu outlet is certain to delight the plant lover. After establishing three outlets in the Klang Valley — at Bangsar Shopping Centre, The Starling Mall and the original one at Publika — Goh recently unveiled his first premium plant boutique, Pasu Crafted, at The Linc, KL. Spanning more than 700 sq ft, Pasu Crafted is the place to head to if you are keen on rare collectible plants and succulents. The lush displays are a delight to the eyes, or as the Ma-

lay phrase goes: *sejuk mata memandang*. I saw peace lilies from Holland; serissa, a pretty thyme-like bush with small, pink blossoms that thrives in cooler climates, and marvellous mossariums, a portmanteau of the words “moss” and “terrarium”.

“Malaysians still don’t have the mentality for indoor plants, but it’s slowly changing,” Goh adds. “The usual reason indoor plants keep dying is ‘death by overwatering’. Many indoor plants only need a drink once or twice a week, max. If the air-conditioning is switched on constantly or if you are worried the air is too dry, then a fine misting should suffice. Always check the plant species as each has its own characteristics. Spider plants, for example, love brightness but the sunlight has to be indirect.”

On why he left a career in oleochemicals to become an entrepreneur for the first time, Goh says it was because “I wanted to run a business Malaysia needs and one that would prove sustainable. The name Pasu came about as pots are the foundation of every indoor plant, and I wanted a name that would also resonate with the local market.

“Plants are so amazing. Every day for me is an ongoing discovery. It really is a happy business.” Listening to Goh speak, it seems as if he has hit upon a winning formula – for both himself and his legion of satisfied customers. **H**

Pasu Crafted is at Lot G5, The Linc Mall, 360 Jalan Tun Razak, 50400. Contact: (012) 939 7278

SIMPLY *elegant*

A stalk of orchids can change the feel of a space, adding light and colour to it

Text **TAN GIM EAN**

Someone has given you a pot of orchids for a special occasion, not the fresh bouquet you were expecting. So, what do you do now?

The first thing is to check if the plant has enough moisture. To do that, lift it up by the stem: If it feels light, it needs watering. Place the pot under a running tap for 30 seconds until the sphagnum moss is thoroughly wet. Excess water can cause root rot, so drain it off before placing your plant back in the pot.

Next, find the best spot to place your orchids and let them add colour to your home. A standalone space is ideal for their beauty to show. You do not have to worry about watering again until the next week.

There are various misconceptions about orchids, says Darren PS Yeo, director of Waltex Biotec, the parent company of Orchid Culture, a chain of orchid boutiques. Some people think they require a lot of care. Some plant them in soil and find that they die. Others use bricks and, eventually, the exotic blooms wilt and drop off.

Orchids are aerated plants, so they cannot grow in soil, Yeo explains. Bricks are an option; however, they absorb heat, which can lead to sunburn. Charcoal works, but it is messy.

Sphagnum moss is the ideal medium for the phalaenopsis, a tropical species also known as “moth orchids”, as it can retain moisture and fertiliser for longer.

Do not water your orchids under the sunlight because the moisture inside the leaves may heat up and harm the plant. If the leaves turn soft and yellow, go easy with the watering can. When the flowers are in bloom, keep them dry at all times.

Like humans, orchids like the sun but not the heat, so placement is important. Putting them under a lamp in your bedroom will not do because they need direct sunlight to thrive, and proper ventilation to prevent



Yeo: We are trying to understand what consumers want

fungal infection. They can stay out on the porch, but in the shade, and be watered twice weekly.

When roots start crawling out of the pot, it is time to give your orchids room to grow. Repotting is also necessary if the plant shoots up too high.

As the stem (or spike) grows, multiple blooms can weigh it down. Use metal stakes to give it support and shape the angle you want. Curves lend a natural look to orchid plants, which can thrive for five to eight years with good care.

Phalaenopsis blooms are generally long-lasting



before establishing Waltex Biotec in 2006.

The company now owns two farms, named the World of Phalaenopsis, in Ulu Yam, Selangor (open to the public) and Gohtong Jaya, Genting Highlands. Orchid Culture was set up in Bangsar Shopping Centre in 2013, followed by The Gardens Mall and Damansara City Mall, all in Kuala Lumpur.

There are more than 2,000 varieties of orchids at the farms. Over the last year, Waltex came up with about 200 varieties, of which about 70% — determined by the quality and lifespan of their blossoms — made it to the shelves.

Some plants are easy to grow but hard to flower, and vice versa, Yeo says. “For us to confidently say a particular variety is stable takes about a year.” They are also working on producing new colours through cross-breeding and cloning.

Orchids have overtaken roses in terms of sales value all over the world, according to a 2018 market report on floriculture, he adds. Before, they were seasonal gifts packed with hampers. Nowadays, people buy them to decorate their home or office, or present to friends. “We are trying to understand what consumers want.”

The trend of having greenery around the home, especially in urban areas where space is a constraint, has boosted demand. “Place a pot on your coffee table or work desk and it adds light and colour to it.”

Plans are in the pipeline to nurture orchid appreciation and make it a part of healthy living. Orchid Culture works with hotels and offices, providing them with front pieces and smaller arrangements. It set up, and cultivates the Orchid Conservatory for the Majestic Hotel Kuala Lumpur.

“When you give a pot to friends, they will remember because the orchids will still be growing months later. This is a Malaysian product and we do more domestic sales now. We want to ensure we have the best quality and stabilise our production before going overseas,” Yeo says. **H**



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT:

Orchids last and make good gifts

At Waltex’s farms, plantlets are grown in flasks for 18 months

A pot placed in the best spot adds colour to the space

White is popular with consumers

— up to three months. After the flowers and yellowed leaves have fallen, trim the stem to about an inch from the base and feed it food — slow-release organic pellets or water-soluble fertilisers. Your plant needs to rest before it reblooms. It could take between six months to a year before new spikes emerge and fresh buds sprout.

It is worth the wait, if you ask Yeo, who finds it therapeutic staring at orchids. He likes the white ones the most, for their simplicity and elegance. They are easy to match with the decor and other flowers, and are Waltex’s bestsellers. The more colourful varieties, such as purple, red and yellow are popular for festive occasions and as gifts. “We started because we were attracted to the colour,” Yeo says.

What began as a backyard hobby for friends Steven S H Cheong and Y K Yap has blossomed into a business that is big and beautiful. They spent six years researching, cultivating and propagating phalaenopsis

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LAY ME DOWN TO SLEEP

Australian luxury bed and bath label Sheridan has launched a new collection and reaffirmed its commitment to its sustainability goals

Text **Lakshmi Sekhar**

This year marks the re-entry of luxury Australian bed and bath brand Sheridan into the Malaysian market. It launched its new Spring Summer 2019 collection at its flagship counter at Parkson Elite Pavilion, Kuala Lumpur, recently. *Haven* had the opportunity to speak with Sheridan Group general manager Paul Gould, who flew in for the event.

“Sheridan is an authentic brand,” he says. “It’s a business that has existed for 60 years... I like the fact that everything we create is unique to Sheridan. Our designers don’t travel around the world to get inspiration from other people’s prints; we literally create everything from works inspired by Australia. So it’s very different to any other business in our category in the world.”

This philosophy underscores founder Claudio Alcorso’s vision of building a company that would turn art by Australian artists into beautiful textiles.

Sheridan is renowned for its quality. The company tests and retests all its products at its many quality laboratories so customers can be guaranteed a good experience.



“For us, it’s not unusual that people usually get sick of [their Sheridan sheets] before they wear out. I get customers writing to us about a set of sheets that they have been using for 30 years... Now we’re providing the loop for people to return the product if they don’t want to use it anymore and we can have it recycled back into new products,” Gould explains.

Sheridan’s sustainability initiatives, which are in line with its “Make Tomorrow Beautiful” campaign, have been a big part of its business. Other than being able to return products for recycling, the brand has also reduced the amount of packaging for its items. It uses 100% Global Organic Textile Standard-certified organic cotton and has strict guidelines for its dyes.

“We’ve always been very mindful of ethical sourcing but we’ve all realised that global warming is starting to keep a lot of people awake at night. There is nobody in the home category even talking about sustainability, so we thought as a business, we wanted to go out there and make a big thing



LEFT:
The floral
Bellport bed

The exhibit at
Sheridan’s flagship
counter in Parkson
Elite Pavilion

Gould at the event

The dream-
like Atherton
Plantation bed



about what we’re doing and set a benchmark for the rest of our industry to get behind and follow in the hope there will be a movement of people thinking about sustainability the way that we are,” Gould adds.

The Spring Summer 2019 collection is inspired by languid, carefree summer days. Think sun-soaked afternoons surrounded by natural Australian foliage. These designs were created by Sheridan’s artists in its Sydney Design Studio. The collection includes many standout styles — the Bellport bed features watercolour florals in the refreshing colours of coral, gold and blue; while the Atherton Plantation bed evokes the calming beauty of night with floral prints against a navy background.

“What we think is most important is that you have a beautiful sleep, and the fabrics that touch your skin should be sublime, and be sublime for a long time. Most of our fabrics actually get better the more they are used,” Gould adds.

The new collection also includes decorative items such as throw cushions and bedcovers. **H**

Sheridan is available at Parkson Elite Pavilion, Sogo KL, Isetan KLCC, Parkson Elite Gurney (Penang) and Sogo Southkey (JB)



RIGHT:
With a comfy seat
and a drink in hand,
you can sit back by
your indoor garden
and enjoy the view
from the front
balcony



BELOW:
Dual balconies in
the bigger units at
Park Regent flank
the living and dining
areas, creating
one-of-a-kind 'dual
aspect' views and an
'inside-out' sense
of space



BRIGHT + SPACIOUS BY DESIGN

PARK REGENT AT DESA PARKCITY BENEFITS FROM THE INPUT OF RESIDENTS AT THE MATURE DEVELOPMENT IN KUALA LUMPUR



When was the last time you stood outside your front door as a tropical storm built up around you, watching the clouds roll, hearing the thunder rumble and marvelling at the might of nature as rain veiled whatever was within sight? Then, after the force of fury was spent, feeling how fresh and new everything was again?

Stormy weather will not dampen your day nor spoil your party at Park Regent in Desa ParkCity, Kuala Lumpur. In fact, usher your guests to the expansive balconies overlooking the lake or gardens (depending on your unit), and their friendly banter might just drift to the birds, the bees and everything else in between.

There is a lot to see from the twin residential towers spread over 5.6 acres in the 191.4ha township that first took shape in 1999. The best thing is, you get two different views, from the living and dining areas. This dual aspect reinforces the project's key attraction – residents enjoy an inside-out sense of space.

Park Regent is a joint venture by ParkCity Group and CapitalLand of Singapore. Prices start from RM860,000 and apartment sizes range from 872 sq ft for a one-bedroom unit to 4,887 sq ft for a four-bedroom home.

Desa ParkCity, the Gold Winner of the FIABCI World Prix d'Excellence Award 2019 under the Master Plan category, is home to an international community of about 16,000 residents. It boasts easy access to amenities such as F&B outlets, education centres, a hospital, offices and retail stores.

The landscaped Central Park, with the Central Lake at its core, is a magnet for residents as well as those living in the vicinity, who can be seen making full use of the green spaces, children's playground and play equipment daily.

Park Regent, the eighth project in the freehold development, benefits from the feedback of residents who moved in decades ago and are now looking to buy units for their children who grew up there. It bears the thumbprints of two creative talents from across the Causeway – architect Chris Lee of Serie+Multiply, a joint venture between London-based Serie Architects and Singapore-based Multiply Architects, and interior



designer Peter Tay, who has his own studio.

Both are graduates of London's Architectural Association School of Architecture. Lee designed two show units for the project and is also responsible for its porte cochere and communal spaces such as the lift lobby, corridors to the units and the residents' club.

Tay's signature style revolves around spatial quality and light. He creates a duality of space through reflection and blurs the line between the interior and exterior so they become one seamlessly.

He uses mirrors, high-gloss ceilings and treated steel to expand the spatial parameter of the living areas, and layers of vertically aligned full-height glass panels to frame the natural landscape, thus drawing the outdoors inside.

The E2a show unit at Park Regent translates these ideas into reality in a way that quite takes the visitor's breath away.

The first thing that strikes you is the light, a cheery welcome as you step out of either of the two lifts leading to the unit. Sunlight filters in from two balconies flanking the sitting and dining areas, which allow airflow across the 3,046 sq ft unit while continuing the duality aspect of Tay's design concept.

Look up and you will see a reflective ceiling that enhances the volume of the living area. Spotlights and

strip lighting at strategic corners add a "wow" effect to the whole space.

Sliding doors open out onto the balcony, where residents can have their own little garden. A 2ft-deep planter, with sand and soil provided, is bound to lure them to get their hands dirty with seeds and shrubs. Better still, they can set up a vegetable patch and harvest fresh greens for the table. Alternatively, they can build a pond, release some koi and watch them

ABOVE:
The family area can be a cosy sanctum for the brood to gather and do their thing

BELOW:
Built-in cabinets ensure ample storage space for linen, towels and spare clothes





Interior designer Peter Tay uses wall-to-wall glass panels, mirrors, lights and reflection to expand the spatial parameters of (clockwise from top left) the bathroom, dining area and bedroom

swim around. Studies show that watching fish swim reduces stress and anxiety.

Wall-to-wall windows in the bedrooms enable residents to look out from the comfort of bed, pillows and blanket. It also makes this inner sanctum brighter and may tempt them to stay home more – one of Tay's design aims.

A wooden panel separates the dining and family areas. Those who love to entertain and envision frequent

parties at home may want to enlarge the former by removing the panel. Retain the partition and the latter becomes an ideal space for the brood to gather and do their thing.

With a built-in oven, kitchen island, an induction hob and hood, a two-door refrigerator and cabinets all in place in the dry kitchen, you can easily welcome visitors as soon as you move in. A separate wet kitchen leads to the maid's room, laundry section and an air-conditioner ledge with grill door for maintenance access.

Mirrored cabinets in the bathrooms emphasise the light factor again. Guests who pop into the powder room might just catch their own astonished reactions in the ceiling-height mirror as they look out the window at the surroundings. Satin-grey marble on the vanity tops lend a touch of class to these neat cubicles as their strong veins evoke images of an artist's bold brush strokes.

Built-in wardrobes in the bedrooms solve the question of where to keep clothes and other personal belongings. Utility closets at the private lift lobby, family area and yard provide ample storage for knick-knacks and all the tools that help keep a home spick and span.

The private lift lobby, which is 6.5ft wide, gives owners room to play with their imagination. They can fix shoe racks for all kinds of footwear or benches to place potted plants on, use it as a storage space for bicycles and skateboards, or let the children have their own play corner. Who knows? A minimalist may just want to leave the space bare, to reinforce the sense of roominess.

Finishes and furnishings in every project are little details that have big impact because they underline quality. At Park Regent's show unit, porcelain tiles across the floors of the entrance, living and dining areas, as well as the two kitchens, are talking points with their pretty patterns in different shades of grey. They also say something about a project that saw more than 70% of its 505 units snapped up at a priority launch on July 27 and 28, at an average price of RM1,100 psf.



BELOW:
The dry kitchen comes fitted with a built-in oven, kitchen island, induction hob and hood, two-door refrigerator and cabinets





Of instinct & imagination

Clever architecture and instinctive decorating give an intermediate terraced house an unexpected amount of space, light and personality

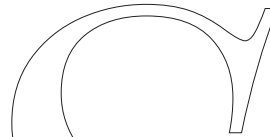
By **Anandhi Gopinath** Photography **SooPhye**
Art Direction + Styling **Wennie Heng**



Lee (left) is the architect of Estavillo's well-appointed and stylish home



Neutral-coloured furnishings prove to be an effective canvas for Estavillo's collection of art and collectibles to become stars in their own spaces



Sometimes, you can tell from the outside that the interior of a home is going to be special. A lush green-and-black metal exterior sets Neal Estavillo's rented home apart in the quiet Desa Sri Hartamas neighbourhood and, upon stepping in, I am surprised at how spacious and bright the intermediate terraced home is. "Home sweet home," Neal says, welcoming me. Indeed, despite the heat outside, it is nice and cool in the house.

Designed by Lee Wei Kit of architecture firm One Earth, the home is aesthetically gorgeous.

Homeowner Richard Tan, who is also an architect, is friends with Estavillo and had been to the latter's beautifully appointed home in Bukit Persekutuan, which, incidentally, had been featured in *Haven* before. Aware that Estavillo, a veteran of the local media scene, was looking to move, Tan invited him to the yet-to-be-completed house in Desa Sri Hartamas. "I am a serial renter and Richard was happy to have me rent this house," Estavillo says. "I came to see the place before it was ready and I said yes because I could see the potential. Kit's design is great!"

The triple-storey house is anchored by a feature rarely seen in urban homes today — an open courtyard. On the ground floor, a small garden is nourished by both sunlight and rainwater — a wonderful way to bring a piece of the outdoors into the house in a neat, unobtrusive way while ensuring constant air circulation within the home. Specially treated wooden slats create a wall of sorts, drawing the eye to the patch of blue sky right above. Among the greenery, a tall *Caesalpinia*



“Personally, I feel like I don’t co-ordinate colours too well, so my strategy has always been to rely on neutral-coloured furniture and fittings while letting the artwork supply the colours.” - Estavillo

ferrea, or leopard tree, soars beseechingly skyward.

“Richard wanted the house to address our tropical weather and have plenty of light, even if it was an intermediate unit. An inner courtyard was the best way to do that,” Lee explains. Inner courtyards are a feature commonly seen in older houses but they are back in vogue and, interestingly, while Tan remembers visiting houses with this unique element, the much younger Lee does not.

With the courtyard as the anchor, Lee completely reimagined the layout of the house, moving the staircase to a corner and extending both the back and front of the house, creating airiness and space. He then moved the kitchen and dining areas right up front — something that appealed to Estavillo’s love for entertaining. Pin-neat wall shelves and countertops and a statement dining table create the ideal setting for family and friends to converge at any time of day. This is also where his four dogs spend most of their day; it is where the food is after all, and the best place to score a nice chin scratch when guests come by.

A wooden bridge over the indoor garden links the kitchen to a small sitting area at the rear of the house, where plush sofas and an interesting array of books are open invitations to relax over some convivial conversation. Artwork — Estavillo makes it a point to acquire work by local artists — and unique sculptures give the space much personality, as they do everywhere else in the house.

“I collect what I like, I don’t have a theme as such,” he muses. “Things have to feel right, somehow. A lot of what I have here were from my previous home,





The central courtyard welcomes in plenty of fresh air. And while encouraging ventilation, it also ensures each level in the house is flush with natural light during the day. Lush leopard trees also thrive in this space, bringing a refreshing touch of green.

actually. I haven't had to acquire too much. Personally, I feel like I don't co-ordinate colours too well, so my strategy has always been to rely on neutral-coloured furniture and fittings while letting the artwork supply the colours."

The second floor is where a TV room and two guest bedrooms are located, while the topmost floor houses the master suite and another bedroom. On each level, small balconies are treated like intimate boxes that extend from the house; while allowing access to the outside world, it still feels like you are protected from the elements. Cement floors provide an industrial-chic feel while Estavillo's collection of furniture, artwork and other bric-a-brac softens the overall effect. Testament to his love of reading, there are lots of books lying around — arranged beautifully, they beg to be read while providing aesthetic appeal.





The master suite is yet another elegant display of Estavillo's extraordinary instinct when it comes to home décor. With a theme that hovers between Scandinavian restraint and the colour and clutter associated with Asian sensibilities, the bedroom is a masterclass in spatial planning. A mirrored wardrobe serves to separate the sleeping quarter from the bathroom, WC and bathtub. Surrounded by greenery, the open-air bathtub is the pièce de résistance here, so even a daily ritual can turn into a superlative experience.

At midday, there is little evidence of the afternoon heat as the courtyard continues to flush the space with cool air. "When it rains, we get a little splashing but nothing we cannot deal with. It's actually quite lovely to sit around, read a book and just watch the rainfall," Estavillo explains.

The dogs, now tired from their frenetic race for affection from us, rest peacefully in the kitchen and the air is delightfully calm. Estavillo is in between assignments and hopes that future work will allow him to spend more time at home now that he has created such a cosy sanctuary.

Estavillo considers the success story that is his home a collaborative effort between owner, architect and tenant. We agree — an architect's job is to build a great living space and a truly house-proud tenant makes the property a home. **H**

Subscribing to same theme as the rest of the house, the master suite combines Scandinavian restraint and typically Asian clutter to perfection. Customised wardrobes are functional space separators, behind which lies a sizeable bathroom and an open-air bathtub, fringed by enviably healthy foliage.



Urban farming

Growing greens and breeding fish for the family's consumption comes naturally to this health-focused semi-retired executive

By **Tan Gim Ean** Photography **SooPhye**







When the owner of this four-storey house in Kuala Lumpur tells you he rears fish, he is not talking about guppies swimming around in a metre-long aquarium placed on a shelf. He means shoals swishing in eight tanks, each of which measures 20ft by 8ft and is 4ft deep.

The semi-retired executive chairman of a listed company readily engages in fishy talk over tea in his dining room, which looks out to the city skyline on the horizon and a pale view of hills. Two floors below, and within the compound of his 14,000 sq ft home, are hydroponics pots, row upon row of vegetables, and fruit trees — papaya, soursop, honey nangka, Thai longan, mango and avocado. Some of the trees are a long way to fruiting because the family moved into the property only over a year ago.





But the leafy greens are thriving and often find their way to the dining table or are shared with neighbours and relatives, who relish the organic treat. There is a lot to harvest, from okra, celery, egg-plant, kai lan, sweet potatoes, kangkong and leek to onions, tomatoes, long beans, lady's finger, chili and different varieties of lettuce.

A health scare was the seed of this bounty. "My mother had breast cancer more than 20 years ago and I started planting, to go organic. It was more of a hobby because we cannot consume so much," says the owner. Mum, now an octogenarian, is hale and hearty, and takes a daily dip in their pool-with-a-view. It is 25m long and hugs one edge of the floor that serves as an entertainment space.

Orchids, many brought from his old house and placed in little pots on customised shelves on different floors, have yet to bloom. When they do — "I've been planting orchids for 30 years. I like them and

have 500-plus varieties" — they will add more colour and character to this three-generation home.

Having the six-bedroom property built from scratch over three years allowed the owner to allocate space for hydroponics gardening — which, he explains, involves science — and tanks filled with fish such as empurau, sultan, kelah, tengalan, temoleh, perch and arowana, the last not for consumption.

"Down there," he says, pointing to the tanks, "I write cheques ... almost RM100,000. There are easily 200 fish there and their organic feed alone costs RM1,000 a month." It is a heavy investment, he concedes, but money cannot buy the big fish he gets to enjoy. "If you go to a restaurant, what you get is 1kg plus. They would lose money if they reared them so big."

Cost aside, catching the scaled creatures for the table is a major exercise because they need to be caught and separated first. "We usually catch a few

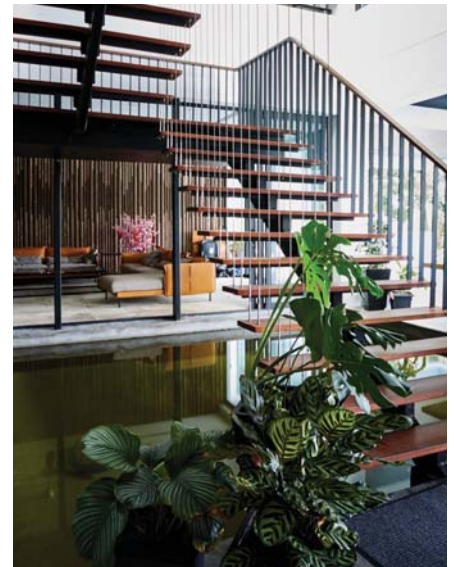
Orchids lined up outside the family area. When these plants start blooming, they will add colour and character to this three-generation home.



**CLOCKWISE
FROM LEFT:**

The roof of this four-storey bungalow can be opened to ventilate the owner's plants

The pool, with a fish tank to one side, has a good view of the surrounding hills





at one time and put them in the tank downstairs first.” Unlike chicken, whose meat gets tougher with age, fish, which can live for several years, taste better as they grow older and bigger because there is less bone.

Friends cannot wait to be invited to dinner at this airy, bright bungalow, which is fitted with waterproof kitchen blinds that can be raised automatically and multiple glass panels in the dining area which slide open to let in light and air. “I’d always dreamt of having dinner in the garden and wanted to create that environment. So I grew orchids.”

The main course in this home, after boiled soup, is steamed fish, easily 2kg or more, on a platter. There are freshly plucked greens and fruits, and eggs aplenty, from the brood roosting on the ground level that lay close to 15 eggs a day and provide fertiliser for the plants.

Birds of another kind — the Australian Rosella — flit around a two-storey aviary with glass walls on one side for people to admire their splendid plumes.

The house owner had worked with his architect to design an open roof for ventilation for his plants. “The contractor asked me, ‘You want to sell veggies, *ah?*’”

A hydroponics system that requires minimum cost and effort — it is not rocket science, he says — makes indoor farming possible for him. Rainwater, harvested in two tanks, is pumped to the fish tanks and used for the plants.

At the end of the day, when he reaches for salad leaves from one of the pots alongside the kitchen counter to tuck into a sandwich, everything makes sense to this father of four who strives to lead a healthy life. **H**

A hydroponics system makes things simple and easy for those who want to be green and grow their own plants



A cornucopia of veggies, fruits and eggs: The health-conscious urban farmer happily shares his harvest with relatives and friends

Kitchen Magic

This family home is anchored by the space favoured by the lady of the house — a brightly lit, cheery and colourful kitchen to which family and friends cannot help but gravitate

By **Anandhi Gopinath** Photography **SooPhye**
Art Direction + Styling **Wennie Heng**



With all the cooking she does, the kitchen is undoubtedly the heart of Thevi Ramalingam's sprawling home in SS3. Anchored by an unusually long island, the bright and cheerful space overlooks the garden and is where family and friends often converge — the dining table being reserved for more formal occasions. “There is a nice sitting area in the house as well but, yes, this is where everyone ends up when they come over, so I’m glad we dedicated so much space to it,” she laughs.

Thevi is a food enthusiast and blogger — look out for Thevi’s Kitchen on Instagram and Facebook — who, when house-shopping with her husband, Stuart, wanted a place where she could properly indulge in her hobby.

When they first saw the semi-detached house, it was in a very old-fashioned style that almost resembled a labyrinth — everything was in its own room and felt a little closed in. They saw the property’s potential, however, and over the course



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP:
The Ramalingams pose by a grand central staircase that anchors the entrance area of the house, a detail especially favoured by eight-year-old Rheanna for its princess-like appeal

The lady of the house has not actively adopted a particular ID style, resulting in a mish-mash of colour, ideas and themes that lend this spacious home a welcoming air



of a year, painstakingly redesigned the space to suit their family of five, which includes two active school-going children and a beagle called Ella.

“Basically, it required a full reimagining of the space. We pretty much brought down the walls so we could let more light in,” Thevi explains. “This house is really old and belonged to a high-ranking public official who much preferred to sell it to a family rather than for commercial gain — someone wanted to convert it into an art gallery. The house itself is very spacious, which is great, but because it hadn’t been changed in years, there was a lot of work to be done.”

This included stripping the carpeting off the staircase and the landing area of the upper floors, extending the rooms to make use of dead space and reorienting the main door. “We kept certain details of the original architecture and design that we really liked, though, such as the marble flooring downstairs, the arches and the grand staircase.”

Anticipating that the family would spend most

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The house itself is very spacious, which is great, but because it hadn't been changed in years, there was a lot of work to be done.





of their time downstairs — the sleeping quarters are on the upper floors — Thevi ensured that there was adequate space for everyone’s needs. Eight-year-old Rheanna loves Lego, so a sun-drenched section is the perfect spot for her. In this little corner, natural light streams through large bay windows over a well-stocked bookshelf and two comfortable chairs, creating a nice reading nook for anyone in search of some quiet at any time of the day.

A sitting area on the upper part of the split-level ground floor is where 11-year-old Aiden plays with his X-Box and the family can relax on plush, comfortable sofas. The garden, which extends around the house, is where the two children play football. “When we bought the house, the garden was really crowded and busy — passionfruit creepers, a durian tree that fruited once before it died and a mango tree,” Thevi shares. “We had to clean things up a bit so it was more manageable for us. We’ve put in a few new

Open cookbooks pinned for future reference, lush herb pots and a colourful array of well-used cooking utensils vividly bring this vast kitchen to life





The formal dining table is comfortable enough but it is the kitchen that is the preferred hangout spot for family and friends alike



seedlings, so once they grow, the trees will provide lots of shade as well.”

And then there is, of course, the kitchen, the space where all the magic — read: the food — is made. It is surrounded by plenty of cabinets for storage, and is neat and orderly — everything has its place here. By a window is Thevi’s thriving herb garden — rosemary and basil, in particular — while touches of colour from a vase of flowers, brightly coloured tools of the trade and wide-open cookbooks pinned for a later project lend the space a feminine air. Once-shiny appliances exude a matte glimmer from heavy usage because Thevi’s kitchen is one that, more than anything, works for its owner.

She smiles. “I decided from the start that I didn’t need wet and dry kitchens, so that gave us the chance to open everything out and have one big space rather than two small ones. Apart from cooking, I am also interested in food styling and the space has allowed me to collaborate with Picha Project to photograph some of their food. And I also hope to start cooking classes soon.”

Sign us up, please, just so we get to hang out in that kitchen again. **H**

MADE IN MALAYSIA

In the spirit of Merdeka, celebrate all that is clever, creative and artistic about our nation's shared heritage that spans generations of culture, faith and tradition

PHOTOGRAPHY SHAWN LOR @ PIXEL PIX
ARTISTIC DIRECTION JOANNE LIM
STYLING ABBY CHUNG + LIEW SHUK KHUEN





LEFT TO RIGHT: BASKET BLOOM FOLDING FAN, RM41, **NALA DESIGNS**. BIDAYUH TOMBOK WITH LID, RM80, **KEDAI BIKIN**. CANNONBALL POT HOLDER, RM49, **NALA DESIGNS**. ROUND BATIK COASTERS, RM13 (SET OF 4), **C BATIK @ CENTRAL MARKET**. SQUARE BATIK COASTERS (SET OF 6), RM75, **KITAKITA**. BATIK + WOVEN PLACEMATS, RM49 (SET OF 6), **RAMCO BATIK @ CENTRAL MARKET**. WOODEN SPICE BOX, RM75, **JWAN ENTERPRISE @ CENTRAL MARKET**. TANOTI RATTAN PLATTER, RM56, **KEDAI BIKIN**. TANOTI OBLONG RATTAN PLATTER, RM88, **GUDANG @ BANGSAR SHOPPING CENTRE**. TRADITIONAL WOODEN MASKS, RM40 (A PAIR), **RAMCO CRAFT @ CENTRAL MARKET**. RED IBAN BASKET, RM295, **KITAKITA**. MELANAU LIDDED BASKET, RM50, **KEDAI BIKIN**. PARLIMEN GREEN TEA TOWEL, RM99, **NALA DESIGNS**. MULTI-COLOURED IBAN BASKET, RM445, **KITAKITA**.



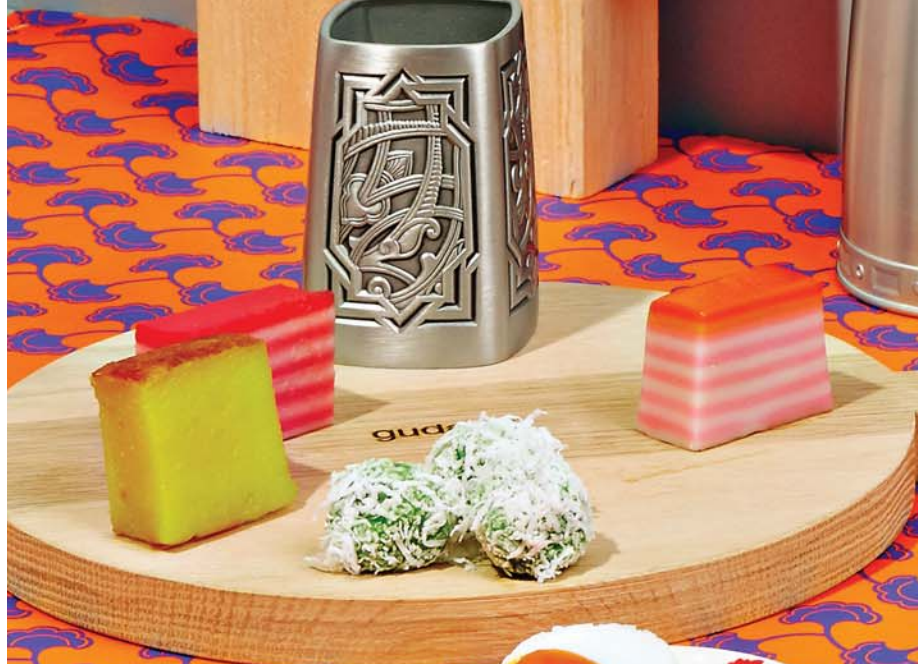
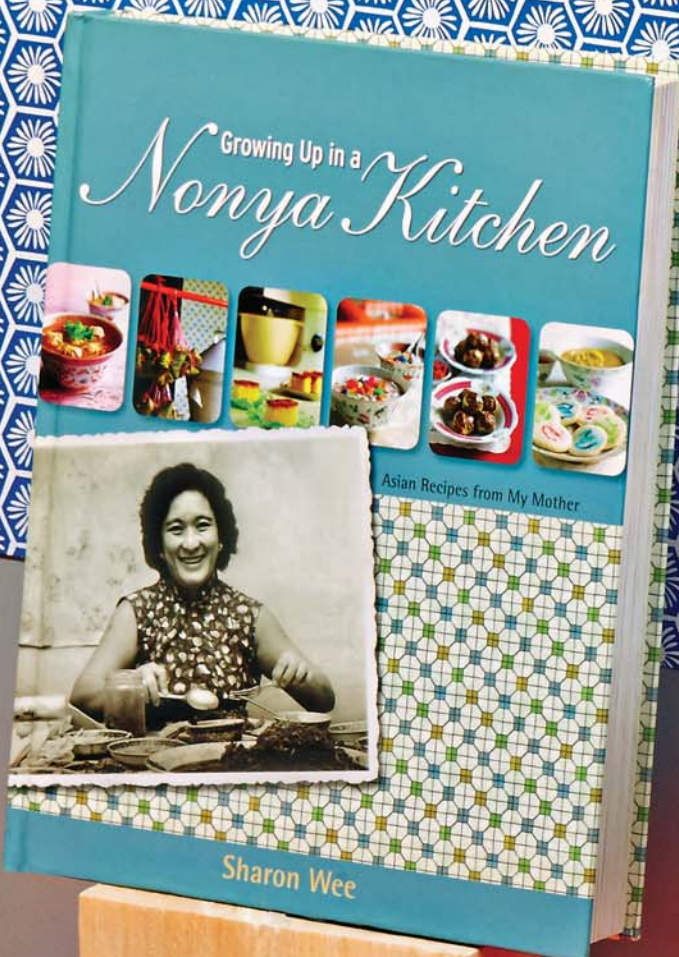
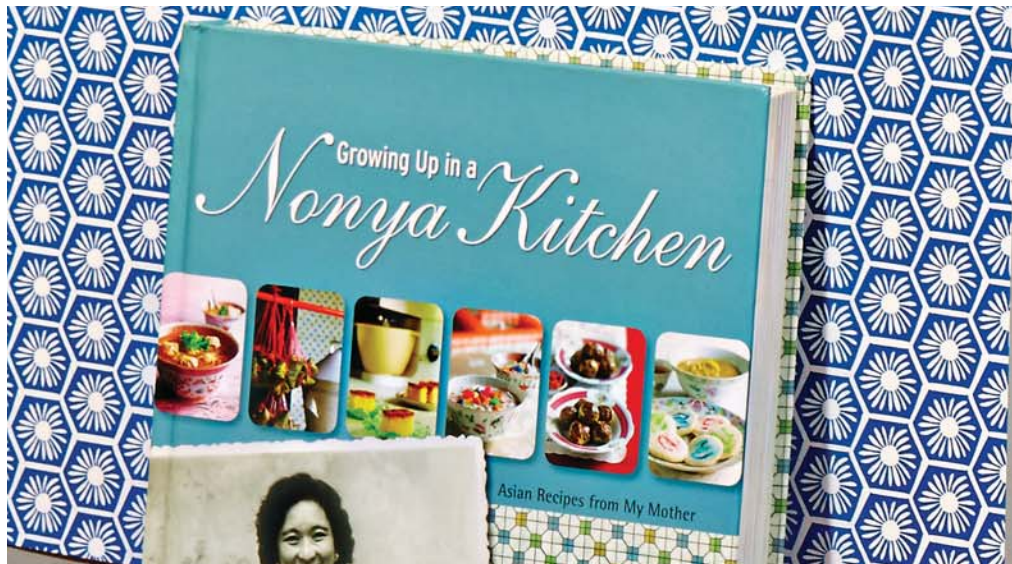


LEFT TO RIGHT: THREAD OVER HEELS PLACEMAT BOOK (VARIOUS PRINTED PLACEMATS), RM128, **NALA DESIGNS.** TERRAZO GEOMETRY TABLE LIGHT, RM425, **KEDAI BIKIN.** SILVER SONGS CARD HOLDER, RM160, **NALA DESIGNS.** VALET LEATHER TRAY, RM175, **KEDAI BIKIN.** ENVELOPES, RM49, **NALA DESIGNS.** TWIN TOWERS POCKET LIGHTER, RM99, **ROYAL SELANGOR.** PESAKRAF LUGGAGE TAG, RM143, **KEDAI BIKIN.** WOODLAND SHAVING BOWL, RM390, **ROYAL SELANGOR.** CUSTOMISABLE NOTEBOOK, **ANA TOMY.** MULTI-COLOURED HANDMADE STRAW COIN POUCHES, RM10 (FOR 3), **CENTRAL MARKET.** IPAD SLEEVE, **ANA TOMY.** CUSTOMISABLE NOTEBOOK, **ANA TOMY.** WILLOW LACE NOTELETS, RM49, **NALA DESIGNS.** BROCHE BLUSH PINK COIN PURSE, RM112, **NALA DESIGNS.** LACQUER BOX, RM309, **KITAKITA.**



LEFT TO RIGHT: NORI KEBAYA FINE BONE CHINA PLATE, RM65, KITAKITA. BATIK NAPKIN, RM10, C BATIK @ CENTRAL MARKET. BATIK COASTERS SET, RM13 (SET OF 4), C BATIK @ CENTRAL MARKET. CERAMIC BOWL, RM60, KEDAI BIKIN. BUNGA RAYA WOODEN COASTERS, RM60 (A PAIR), KITAKITA. THREAD OVER HEELS PLACEMAT BOOK (VARIOUS PRINTED PLACEMATS), RM128, NALA DESIGNS. NORI KEBAYA FINE BONE CHINA MUG, RM69, KITAKITA. NORI KEBAYA FINE BONE CHINA NOODLE BOWL, RM79, KITAKITA. CERAMIC CONTAINER, RM120, KEDAI BIKIN. PATCHWORK COASTER, RM10, C BATIK @ CENTRAL MARKET. BANGKITA YELLOW PLATE, RM50, KEDAI BIKIN. BATIK BLOCK PLACEMAT, RM72 (A PAIR), KITAKITA.







LEFT TO RIGHT: THREAD OVER HEELS PLACEMAT BOOK (VARIOUS PRINTED PLACEMATS), RM128, **NALA DESIGNS**. *GROWING UP IN A NONYA KITCHEN* BY SHARON WEE, RM167.58, **MALAYSIA. KINOKUNIYA.COM**. ATIYA TUMBLER, RM275, **ROYAL SELANGOR**. ROUND CHOPPING BOARD, RM125, **GUDANG @ BANGSAR SHOPPING CENTRE**. CHICKEN SAUCE PLATE, RM5, **KWONG YIK CROCKERY**. ORNAMENTAL WOODEN BIRD, RM149, **NOIR**. WOLF TANKARD, RM450, **ROYAL SELANGOR**. ESPRESSO CUP, RM62, **KEDAI BIKIN**. ORNAMENTAL HANDLE CHOPPING BOARD, RM130, **GUDANG @ BANGSAR SHOPPING CENTRE**. VINTAGE BOWL, RM60, **KEDAI BIKIN**. DAPO BALAU PLATTER, RM140, **KEDAI BIKIN**. THE TIFFIN COMPANY 3-TIER TIFFIN, RM220, **PARKSON**.

gudang





LEFT:
Tonon's River
Collection
is modular,
sculptured and
versatile

IN STEP WITH NATURE

Polish designer Mac Stopa sculpts modular furniture and other interesting objects that take their lines from the elements

Text **Tan Gim Ean**

When Mac Stopa was growing up, there was a subtle tussle at home to influence his choice of career. Dad, a doctor, was always going on about cells and chemicals. But it was his mother's work that coloured his imagination and inspired him to live life by design.

Mum was a set designer for theatre and TV. "I grew up surrounded by costumes, big hats, books on culture, the history of interiors and décor", things he could see and enjoy as a child, compared with memorising biology formulas. "I wanted to mimic her."

Warsaw-based Stopa — the name is Polish for foot, he says — studied architecture, influenced by the three architects in his family. He founded Massive Design in 1996 and built his reputation designing customised office workspace solutions, work-efficient corporate buildings and public spaces, among them the Art Waan open-air art gallery in Poland's capital city.

Always interested in furniture, he found that "you can do things a bit different, better, in a way that's less 'office'. Even plastic chairs: with technology, you can mould them and make them soft. Softness is important for comfort; it has a better feel and will not



scratch. It is an extension of your body, which is soft.

“Design is about creation, not repeating the same thing. The pleasure is in doing something fresh,” says the award-winning architect and designer who is known for organic, modular furniture that look like sculptures. And manufacturers want to develop them, he discovered.

Stopa was in Kuala Lumpur to introduce Italian brand Tonon’s River Collection, which he designed, at the opening of Chesters Collection’s flagship showroom in Bangsar. He was accompanied by his wife Dana Grizwin, and Tonon Italia owner and CEO Sandro Tonon.

Chesters Collection has luxurious home and office furniture from eight premium brands that originate from Switzerland, Belgium, Germany, Italy and the UK. It was founded by CEO James Edison and his wife Jane Lui, who have been in the industry for 25 years and believe “every piece of furniture reflects the personality and expresses the lifestyle of its owners”.

The River Collection, inspired by nature, bears Stopa’s imprint. “I remember taking pictures of sand on the beach after the rain and wind. It had uneven lines.”

Amazed by their beauty, he sculpted lines into the moulds of lightweight chairs, poufs and benches that are “not afraid of the sun” but can sit pretty inside the home. The result is versatile conversation pieces that reflect the nature of water, which expands and shrinks. They are sturdy, comfortable and easy to keep clean.

Technology guides Stopa’s hand as he analyses how things are made, their function and the best tools for production. It enables him to use geometry and mathematics, which fascinate him, in multiple

ABOVE: Riverside’s 3D geometry design is inspired by nature. Its shape and organic curved lines resemble the pattern of waves in the sand, sculpted by wind and water.



FROM TOP:
The River Stone table can also serve as a seat

Use the River Snake modules on their own, or join pieces together to create different combinations

disciplines — architecture, industrial design, interior design, graphics and digital art — with clients such as Google, Samsung, Coca-Cola, BMW, Unilever, Pernod Ricard, Bacardi-Martini, PwC and EY.

Last year, his Tapa poufs were used in a garden scene in *Loro*, a film by Oscar-winning Italian director Paolo Sorrentino. This year, the interiors of the Warsaw Spire and the Drum chairs he designed for Cappellini were featured in Natalia Kukulska's music video, *Rekonstrukcja*.

He has been experimenting a lot with fashion, together with Dana, creating clothes that improve the visual look of a woman's body, making it look slimmer or bigger, depending on what one wants. He is also working on accessories that follow his signature approach — “modular, with a flow of geometry”.

Again, Stopa turns to nature for ideas. He has created attire with “liquid and open” fishtail patterns they both wore while in KL, and a chunky silver ring for her that can be flipped from one finger to the next.

Women appreciate the artistic approach in fashion and the bright colours he likes to work with, he says. But for now, “we don't know where to produce. Every few weeks, we're going to different shows and talking to manufacturers”.

Stopa feels design is about “improving elements and technology for future generations, for science, not just furniture”. His pieces for Tonon, which include the River Chair, Riverside, River Stone and River Snake, are exclusively available at Chesters Collection. **H**



2



3



4

4 Vinyl lovers would know that the sound of a record playing is unlike any other. **Sony's** new PS-LX310BT turntable offers the best of both worlds with the added convenience of connecting to a wireless speaker, soundbar or headphones with its built-in Bluetooth transmitter. (www.sony.com.my)

5 Indoor plants never looked more stylish than in the hands of Barcelona-based lighting designer **Vibia**. The Palma collection allows for creative compositions, both vertical and horizontal, with mounted visual axes that integrate vegetation. (www.lightcraft.com.my)

6 These Faux Agate Slices by local handmade décor designers **Bentuk Bentuk** add a touch of panache to your home, be it when serving drinks to guests or even just to have a cause for celebration when you feel like it. (www.bentukbentuk.com)

5



1 It is not necessary for something to be conspicuous to add value to a space. The Denny one-seater armchair by **Merlino** makes an elegant statement without the need to stand out. (www.harveynorman.com.my)

2 Inspired by nature, **BoConcept's** Elpida rug features a subtle leafy design that befits the season (www.boconcept.com)

3 Designed for ultimate comfort, the simple and clean silhouette of **King Living's** Max sofa belies its sink-in soft, feather-topped tufted seats with adjustable-depth back cushions. Engineered with the Postureflex Seating System that ensures good support, the modular sofa also allows for flexibility in configuration. (www.kingliving.my)



6



Oriental charm

Melaka's latest boutique hotel, Liu Men, sits at the junction of luxury, modern design and ethnic style

By **Anandhi Gopinath**



As the Pang family is proudly Chinese, the overarching theme of Liu Men is distinctly oriental. Against a backdrop of black and white, Peranakan-style accents and precious heirlooms from the family's own collection bring colour and personality to the slick and modern space.

Because boutique hotel Liu Men sits where six individual houses were once situated along the historic, colourful stretch of Jalan Tokong in central Melaka, the name came easily to its owners – *liu* is the Mandarin word for six, and *men* means doors. Six is also an auspicious number symbolising smooth journeys and safe travels, and has proven to be a lucky number for the owners as well.

From its location — close enough to the action of Jonker Street but far enough to be unhindered by it —

to its design, which combines oriental charm, Tudor-style influences and the geometry of the Art Deco style, Liu Men has much going for it. Less due to luck though, and more thanks to the three years' worth of research, planning and painstaking restoration.

Owned by the Pang family, which founded and runs the Mamee-Double Decker food business, Liu Men is the hotel the larger Jonker Street area has needed for a while. Small homestays and hotels are aplenty, but there is a dearth of hotels for the more discerning holidaymaker.

Spacious, welcoming and peaceful, Liu Men's story begins with the hotel's façade — bright, white stucco walls decorated simply with the number "1939", the year the building was first constructed. Glass doors open up into a reception area, which sets the tone for the whole property. There are black-and-white walls and flooring, with pops of colour and



personality coming from Peranakan-style floor tiles, choice furniture and beautiful oriental décor, many pieces of which are from the Pang family's private collection.

Jason Pang, the son of Mamee CEO Datuk Wira Pang Tee Nam, worked with architects and interior designers from Melaka and Kuala Lumpur to create the master plan for the hotel, and is proud of the property's intensely local roots. The brief was to create a sleek, modern décor theme that pays homage to Melaka's history without being overly ornate or kitschy. The Pang family are proudly Chinese, and were keen on having that element as a major aspect in the design. This can be seen in small touches like tasselled key chains as well as more prominent

details such as the lanterns dangling in front of each bedroom door.

When seated in the the triple-volume lounge area that also serves as breakfast and tea room, keen eyes will spot unique designs woven into the black wrought iron banisters on the upper floors, as well as art-deco style lighting fixtures to break the monotony of the black-and-white theme. Using the white walls as a canvas, the architects created various vertical wall features matched with a unique selection of chairs and artwork — a clever design theme that also ensures adequate seating for everyone, even when the hotel is operating at full capacity.

The sun-drenched lounge space is easily my favourite, and not just because of how peaceful it is — it is a great display of the inspirations that inform the entire hotel's design. Within dark wood cases, a vintage radio, charcoal iron and porcelain urns are proudly displayed, precious heirlooms that hint at the storied homes they came from.

Liu Men's 30 guestrooms are split across five categories — the top-end Parameswara suite comes with a balcony and a spacious bathroom replete with a free-standing tub, while the Jebat and Kapitan rooms are smaller, but no less luxurious replica spaces. The Hang Tuah suite offers the best of both worlds, we think, with a spacious enough bathroom (it features a shower instead of a tub) and a balcony on which to soak up the sun. Each bedroom boasts herringbone wooden floors in dark wood and beautiful statement beds that make long lie-ins imperative, and indeed,





the rooms are comfortable enough to warrant more than a late morning or two.

And because one's ablutions are of paramount importance, the bathrooms are a masterclass in understated style – Peranakan tiles, ebony-framed mirrors and copper-finished fixtures make the space personal yet in keeping with Liu Men's sleek, modern theme. Even the public access facilities on the ground floor are afforded the same treatment and have details such as a porcelain bowl repurposed as a sink. All the fittings and furnishings were custom-designed for the hotel, and it shows – the overall effect is both comfortable and effortlessly stylish.

This particular trip to Melaka was especially enjoyable, and was wrought with none of the issues that usually plague my journeys to the south. The weather was perfect and the traffic more forgiving, making me leave with a heavier heart than usual. Perhaps there is something to be said about the significance of the number six, I think, as we drive away. I will have to plan another stay at Liu Men to find out. **H**

Public spaces are given the same attention to detail as the guest bedrooms, with custom-designed fittings and furnishings



**LET'S
START TO
REDEFINE
HOW WORK
IS DONE.**



THE SPACE BETWEEN

A look at how a global co-working chain offers the best of both worlds

Text **Mae Chan**

If not for the reception counter at the entrance, along with a simple logo emblazoned on the wall behind it, it would be easy to mistake a Spaces centre as a café with its clean and cosy vibes.

But the Dutch-based global co-working brand's distinctive style will soon be recognisable in Malaysia as it is marking its arrival here with a 60,000 sq ft centre at Platinum Sentral in Kuala Lumpur. This will be followed closely by a centre in Beach Street, Penang, next month and another in Menara Prestige in the heart of KL by the end of the year.

A tour of several Spaces' offices in Singapore recently proved to be a study of one of the world's fastest-growing players in the flexible workspace industry. It offered insights into how the company grew from one location in Amsterdam in 2006 to over 40 countries and 250 cities worldwide now, with 23 locations in Asia in just over 20 months.

At its centres, one would note the lack of fancy entertainment or gimmicky fixtures. "Some [co-working spaces] have pumping music, some have funky lighting and furnishings, foosball and pool tables ... and many have that big, completely open space — that's not really us," said a manager at one of the four Spaces we visited across the Causeway. "We believe in providing a good, practical environment for working, providing the support for your working and business needs, but with the added element of community."

Work is made a pleasure at Spaces, which emphasises plenty of sunlight and warmth

WORKSPACE

Bought over by office rental giant IWG (formerly known as Regus) in 2015, Spaces differentiates itself by having a hybrid model of private office spaces in a shared community environment. While it offers hot desks, reserved desks and meeting rooms, which are also available for booking by the public, the firm's predominant clientele are its private office members.

The marriage of the traditional office environment and the dynamism of a commune space has found success among major corporations and multinational brands. Rather than commit to big office spaces in their international outposts, these companies find the element of co-sharing and interactivity with other businesses appealing, enticing them to take up private floors or sections within a Spaces office.

This, in turn, becomes a draw for smaller companies, small and medium enterprises and start-ups to join the fold. "A lot of them want an opportunity to engage with some of the larger boys, the established companies," says Vijayakumar Tangarasan, country

CLOCKWISE, FROM BOTTOM LEFT:
It's not all corporate businesses, as Spaces on Robinson Road includes the café Pickleville

Also within the facility is a rooftop garden and swimming pool accessible by members

Meeting rooms at Spaces are available for public rental

Community areas often offer a feeling of home



head for Malaysia, Indonesia and Brunei at IWG. "On top of that, members are given opportunities to present their business and product ideas through networking events. And if you're a Spaces member, you get access around the world. So for businesses that want to grow out of the country, this is attractive."

At the heart of Spaces' community building is its "business club lounge" concept. Always located near the main walk-in area, it functions like a house's living room, one that draws the household together, adds Vijayakumar.



Sevil Peach, a renowned architectural designer who created the original blueprint for Spaces, crafted his concept from the mottos of “comfortable, social and collaborative”, fanned by a belief that as the nature of innovation and collaboration shifts, so too must the design of spaces that fosters it.

Understanding the balance between segregation — to facilitate focus at work — and the need to encourage interaction in order to build a community, the design team calculates even the likelihood of people passing each other on the stairs, making them a point of commune, as well as strategically places coffee machines in dedicated café areas in the heart of the building rather than in isolated corners.

Visually, Spaces takes a quintessentially European approach that is sophistication and muted elegance over ostentation. Quality and refinement are expressed in substance rather than just aesthetic, as seen in its choice of furniture — brands used include Swiss designer Vitra, particularly its classic Alcove Chair by Ronan and Erwan Bouroullec; Danish company HAY, which is known for its modern Scan-

ABOVE: The design of Spaces City Hall reflects the building’s industrial history

TOP RIGHT: Cubicles are a common feature of each lounge area, offering privacy for discussions and a break from the standard desk

A meeting space named The Assembly sits on the same floor as Pickleville in Spaces on Robinson Road

dinavian designs; and textile company Kvadrat, which contributes to the generally neutral and pastel hues that define Spaces’ overall palette.

Another defining philosophy of its design DNA is the use of materials in their “true nature” as much as possible. This we see in the former industrial building at City Hall, with its exposed ceilings and raw concrete finish, and in the slightly more swanky contemporary office in Robinson Road, with its subtle New York Art Deco flair. In every space, warm wood tones and natural light are prioritised, while furnishings do not dominate or overwhelm but allude to Spaces’ tongue-in-cheek tagline: “Welcome home. Oops, we meant welcome to work.”

“Consistent and recognisable” may not be popular descriptions when it comes to design, but the Spaces design team and the templates it offers seem to value them, creating a calm and professional setting in all its offices. This allows “one to be inspired without being loud or forcing someone else’s culture on you”.

That is not to say that the interior has to be bland or uniform — decorative accents in the right places create unobtrusive but welcome diversions when needed. Witty quotes pepper the commune areas, often seen alongside artworks by local artists for a personalised touch, while jars of coloured pencils at every corner serve as down-to-earth ornaments and practical stationery, serving as a feature that has become a beloved hallmark of both the brand’s spirit and its offices around the world. **H**

COAST IS CLEAR

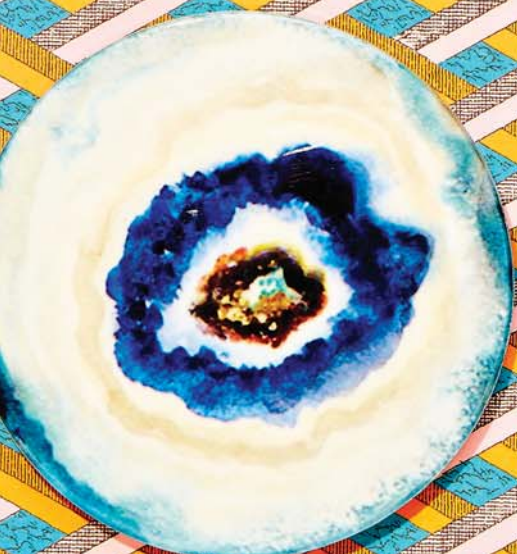
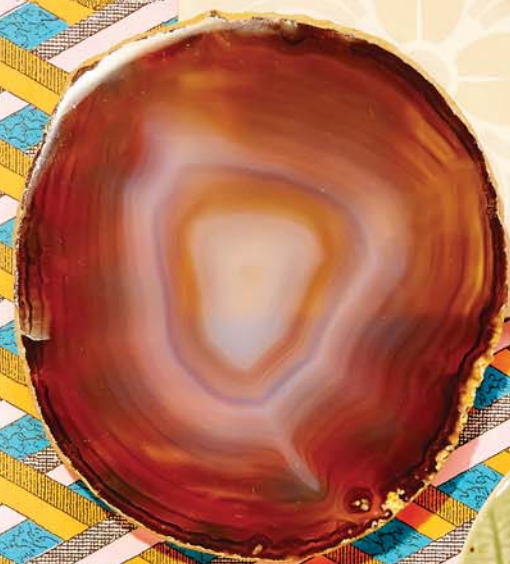
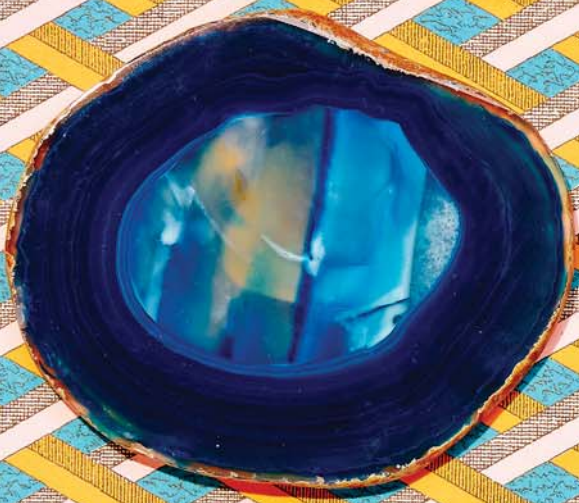
There is much fun and frolic to be found in this underrated accessory, so let your sense of fun, wit and whimsy come to the fore with these tabletop must-haves

PHOTOGRAPHY SHAWN LOR @ PIXEL PIX
ARTISTIC DIRECTION JOANNE LIM
STYLING ABBY CHUNG + LIEW SHUK KHUEN



ASSORTED CAPTIONED COASTERS, PIZZA PRINT, VEGETABLE AND DOG COASTERS (SET OF 4), RM79.90, ROBINSONS.

ASSORTED PATTERNED SQUARE TILE COASTERS, RM11 EACH, **MAXWELL WILLIAMS @ PARKSON AND ROBINSONS**. CERAMIC "LEAF" PATTERNED COASTERS, RM65.90, **LIVING ART @ PARKSON**. COLOURED ONYX COASTERS, RM75.38 EACH, **CLOVER WINN @ PARKSON**. TYE-DYE PRINT COASTERS, RM6.90 EACH, **KOZIOL @ PARKSON**.



La vie est belle

Leave it to Emmanuel Stroobant to make entertaining at home a cinch. Haven flies to Singapore, where the Michelin-starred chef and his family are based, to enjoy a healthy and delicious vegetarian feast.

Text **Diana Khoo** Photos **SooPhye**



Few pleasures in life can equate to sitting down to a home-cooked feast in a space filled with love and warmth. So, those privileged enough to call Michelin-starred celebrity chef Emmanuel Stroobant and his Malaysian-born wife Edina friends would count their blessings twice over whenever an invitation is extended.

The home, a semi-detached unit in a leafy area of upscale Bukit Timah, seems unassuming from the exterior but, upon entry, opens up to an expansive space. The distinct spaces welcome you in a seamless flow — from the living area, accessed by a short flight of five steps, into the dining area and then into the open-concept kitchen and out onto a small garden, where a plot of herbs is lovingly tended to.

The five-bedroom home is shared with the couple's two daughters, Keira and Mia, and a trio of cats — a Siamese tom named Cocaine and two tabbies, Luna, a Persian, and Valrhona, a Burmese. Edina's parents also visit often from Seremban and have their own room.

It is the open-plan dining and kitchen area, however, that forms the heart of the Stroobant home. A quick glance immediately lets you know the kitchen is not designed with amateurs in mind. Four serious-looking burners share space with a French top, a grill and a hot plate — all by Waldorf — as well as a sous vide machine and three Fisher & Paykel fridges. A very used-looking Nespresso machine services the couple's love — and frequent need — for coffee while a countertop matched with well-travelled La Palma bar stools makes eating and conversation easy and breezy. A veritable library of cooking and recipe books — spanning titles like Robert Parker Jr's *The Wine Buyer's Guide*, Joël Robuchon's *Ma cuisine pour*

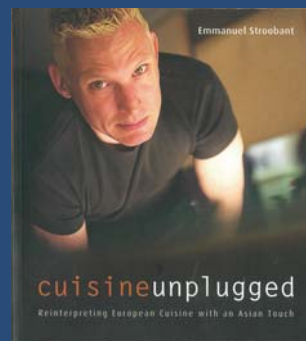


vous, David Thompson's *Thai Food* and Grant Achatz's *Alinea* — takes up all available shelf space above the fridges. Emmanuel quips, “Ah, that reminds me. My daughter will be asking me to return her mermaid cookbook to her shortly.”

Naturally, the kitchen proper is Emmanuel's domain. “I don't cook,” says Edina, unapologetically. “Once in a while, maybe, as Mary and Siti, my two helpers, do most of the daily meals. Emmanuel takes over when the kids request something special, like

BOOKS BY COOKS

Emmanuel Stroobant is the author of *Cuisine Unplugged – Reinterpreting European Cuisine with an Asian Touch*, published in 2003. To get a taste of his cooking locally, visit the Malaysian outpost of Saint Pierre at W Hotel Kuala Lumpur. Alternatively, make a trip across the Causeway to his flagship, Michelin-starred restaurant, Saint Pierre, or Shoukouwa, both of which are located at One Fullerton, Singapore.





Mexican, which they love. You know, tacos, nachos ... that sort of thing.”

When it comes to his own meals, Emmanuel prefers to keep things healthy as he is a vegetarian most of the time, due to health reasons. Today’s lunch menu reflects his approach to entertaining — uncomplicated but beautiful, with a focus on fresh produce and simple presentation, and always with an artistic twist. “We are happy the children have adventurous palates, so when we go abroad, it’s not too bad,” points out Edina, sharing that they travel often, for quality family time as well as for inspiration.

“Venice is on the cards soon as our 20th wedding anniversary is coming up,” she says. “But no kids this time. Just us. We travelled as a family to the Netherlands, Germany and Belgium last year and we ate our way through 19 [Michelin] stars in 10 days, children too. Holland, particularly, surprised me with a restaurant called Inter Scaldes. It was understated but so very good.”



FAB 5

Five of Emmanuel Stroobant's favourite cookbooks

1 *Heston Blumenthal at Home*: “This book offers a simplified version of what he does, really. It’s mainly ‘simple, well done’. At home, that’s what we do and how we eat also.”

2 *Jerusalem* by Yotam Ottolenghi and Sami Tamimi: “I love Ottolenghi. If I visit the UK, it’s always my first stop in London. I love his concepts and the displays are always beautiful ... you can see the freshness. I also like how it’s almost a buffet but not.”

3 *Kansha: Celebrating Japan’s Vegan and Vegetarian Traditions* by Elizabeth Andoh: “I picked this up when I became vegetarian in 2009. I like the simplicity and how the recipes are ingredient-based. Very much like what we do at Shoukouwa (the Stroobants’ two-Michelin-starred Japanese restaurant in Singapore).”

4 *In The Kitchen with Alain Passard: Inside the World (and Mind) of a Master Chef*, written and illustrated by Christophe Blain: “This is a very cute book and I love the way it’s written. Normally, you don’t ‘read’ a cookbook but this, you do.”

5 *Pierre Gagnaire: Sucré — Salé* by Beauge, Bloch-Laine, Commoli, Pennor’s and Simon: “He is a genius. There is only one Pierre Gagnaire and I like to see the combination of elements he puts together. His style is extremely complex yet simple and, somehow, everything works together beautifully. I like to think this is how our diners perceive our ‘snacks’ at Saint Pierre. I also admire how he has managed to extend himself to London and Dubai without losing the quality of his main restaurant in Paris.”

FLATBREAD WITH HUMMUS AND BABAGANOUSH

Serves 4

HUMMUS

140g chickpeas (cooked)
40ml lemon juice
40ml olive oil
Salt (to taste)
Pepper (to taste)
Paprika (a pinch)
4g parsley
40ml cream

1. In a blender, combine all ingredients except the cream. Blend for 1 minute on high speed.
2. Add cream and blend for 20 seconds.
3. Add salt and pepper to taste. Keep chilled.

BABAGANOUSH

2 eggplant, Australian
40ml lemon juice
40ml olive oil
1 clove garlic
2g fresh thyme (picked)
Salt (to taste)
Pepper (to taste)

1. Cut the eggplant lengthwise and halve.
2. Score the flesh without piercing the skin and drizzle with olive oil.
3. Roast at 180°C for 20 minutes.
4. Remove the flesh from the skin. Blend the flesh with lemon juice, garlic and thyme.
5. Add salt and pepper to taste. Keep chilled until it is used.

FLATBREAD

1.5kg flour
5g salt
5g sugar
750ml water
10 eggs (whites only)
150g butter (room temperature)
4 eggs (yolks)



1. Combine all the dry ingredients (flour, salt and sugar) in a mixer with a dough hook.
2. Add wet ingredients (water, egg whites and butter) and mix till everything comes together. Rest dough for 30 minutes.
3. Roll out dough between two sheets of parchment paper.
4. Whisk egg yolks and brush on top.
5. Bake at 200°C for 17 minutes.
6. Serve immediately.

FINISHING:

1. Put hummus and babaganoush into bowls. Drizzle with extra virgin olive oil. Sprinkle paprika on top of the hummus. Sprinkle thyme on top of the babaganoush. Serve with flatbread.

TOMATO AVOCADO

Serves 2

TOMATO

2 Amela tomatoes (washed, peeled)
1 lily bulb (washed, thinly sliced)
tbc mixed cress/flowers (washed, keep on kitchen towel)

AVOCADO CREAM:

150g avocado (peeled, stone removed)
20ml basil oil
8ml lime juice
1g salt

1. In a blender, combine all ingredients. Puree until smooth and strain.
2. Keep chilled in a squeeze bottle.

SZECHUAN PEPPERCORN OIL

100ml grapeseed oil
15g Szechuan peppercorns
15g fresh ginger (peeled, grated)
6 cloves garlic (peeled, grated)
20g black sesame seeds
15g sugar
5g salt
20g light soya sauce
15ml rice vinegar

1. In a small pot, heat the grapeseed oil. Do not allow it to smoke.
2. Combine all the ingredients in a bowl.
3. Pour the warm oil over the ingredients. Allow to infuse for 3 minutes.
4. Strain out the ingredients and reserve the oil. Allow to cool.

FINISHING:

1. Place a tomato in the middle of a plate. Dot with avocado cream. Garnish with lily bulb, cress and flowers. Lightly dress with Szechuan peppercorn oil.





PROVENÇAL STUFFED BABY VEGETABLES

Serves 4

BABY VEGETABLE SHELLS

- 4 baby zucchini (washed, cut lengthwise into 3cm pieces)
- 4 baby eggplant (remove $\frac{1}{4}$ off the top, lengthwise)
- 4 baby capsicum (deseed and remove $\frac{1}{4}$ off the top, lengthwise)

1. Scoop out the centre portion of the baby vegetables with a spoon or melon baller. Be careful not to pierce the skins.



STUFFING:

- 40ml extra virgin olive oil
- 2 shallots (peeled, diced)
- 2 tomatoes (peeled, deseeded and diced)
- 3 cloves garlic (peeled, crushed)
- 3 tbsp parsley (chopped)
- 80g roasted pine nuts
- 100g black beans (cooked)
- 1 red chilli (peeled, deseeded and chopped)
- 60g grated parmesan
- Sea salt (to taste)

1. Heat the olive oil, add shallots and cook until fragrant. Add tomato, garlic and cook for 3 minutes. Add parsley, pine nuts, beans, chili and salt.
2. Stuff the vegetables with the mixture.
3. Cover with grated parmesan and place on a baking tray.
4. Bake in a pre-heated oven at 200°C for 10 minutes.

LEMON MERINGUE TART

Serves 8

TART SHELL

250g flour (sifted)
125g butter
(softened at room temperature)
50g sugar
1 egg

1. Add butter to flour and mix for 5 to 6 minutes.
2. Add sugar and egg. Mix until smooth and form into a ball.
3. Wrap in cling film and allow to rest for 1 hour.
4. Roll flat to a thickness of 5mm. Lay into a tart mould.
4. Preheat oven to 175°C. Bake blind for 15 minutes at 175°C.
5. Remove from oven and allow to cool. Set aside.

LEMON CURD:

50g butter
2 egg
1 lemon (zest and juice)
1 gelatine sheet
(soften in iced water)

1. In a small pot, combine the butter, egg, sugar, lemon zest and lemon juice.
2. Remove excess water from gelatine and add it to the pot.
3. Heat slowly while stirring constantly.
4. Once the first boiling bubble appears, remove pot from heat. Immediately strain into a bowl and cool on ice. Once tepid, pour the lemon curd into the tart shell.
5. Allow to cool, then chill in the refrigerator to set the tart.

FRENCH MERINGUE

100g egg whites
100g fine sugar
100g icing sugar

1. In a mixer, add egg whites and whisk slowly till it starts to foam.
2. Add 30g of sugar and keep whisking until the mixture turns white. Then, add another 30g and continue whisking until mixture is firm. Add remaining 40g and keep whisking for 10 minutes.
3. Remove the bowl from the mixer. Using a spatula, gently fold and incorporate the icing sugar into the meringue. Transfer the meringue into a piping bag with a tip. Pipe the meringue onto the lemon tart.

FINISHING:

1. Using a blowtorch, gently caramelize the meringue. Garnish with lemon zest. **H**





VIVA ESPAÑA

To introduce the Dekton Slim, Cosentino held a gin masterclass to celebrate all that is Spanish

Text **Lakshmi Sekhar**

The surfaces in your home are a key element in ensuring that your space feels cosy and looks stylish, especially for when you are entertaining. Spanish multinational company Cosentino specialises in such surfaces for architectural and design purposes. Under its Dekton range, it has released a revolutionary Slim version which, as its name suggests, has a more compact design. Whether it is your kitchen cupboards, bathroom closets or other spaces, Cosentino has got you covered.

The Dekton Slim is only 4mm thick and weighs 10kg per square metre. It is ideal for covering walls or kitchen and bathroom furniture, and has all the great features of the original Dekton such as high resistance to scratch marks, stains, thermal shock and ultraviolet rays. This versatile material can recreate the effect of any type of material to fit all your décor needs while still retaining its impeccable quality. Presently available in



eight Dekton tones, the Slim will gradually expand to include the other colour references in the collection.

To introduce the Dekton Slim to the media in Kuala Lumpur, the company invited us to the Cosentino centre for a gin masterclass taught by Javier Rodriguez. After munching on some canapés, various cheeses and cold meats, Javier introduced us to the four gins for the evening — Gin Mare, Mahon, As de Picos classic and As de Picos tropical.

As Cosentino is a Spanish brand, it was only right that we drank our gin and tonic as they do. Javier was very particular about us following his instructions, but his Spanish drawl, interspersed with a few random *lahs*, endeared him to all in the room.

The perfect G&T begins with a balloon glass, or even a wine glass, so your hand does not warm up the drink. Next, you must pile your glass with ice to the brim and, using a bar spoon, move the ice to cool your glass.

“Your tonic water must be chilled,” said Javier. He presented us with the most premium Spanish tonic water, 1724, which, unlike most tonic waters, has essence of orange instead of lemon. This versatile tonic has the lowest sugar content, which can be attributed to its fantastic quality, he continued.

The ideal ratio is 50ml of gin to 200ml of tonic, which is the reason why every bottle of tonic from Spain is exactly 200ml — perfect for one drink.

Next, you must pour in your tonic slowly, so as not to crush the bubbles. One gentle stir with a spoon and you are all set for some botanicals.

“You put on your perfume after you shower, not before,” said Javier, in reference to the smidgen of herbs he added to dress a G&T. According to him, one or two botanicals are all you need, or you will overpower the



gin. For instance, an orange peel or a sprig of thyme, lightly smacked before being submerged, is more than enough.

Finally, we reached the moment we had been waiting for — the tasting. The Gin Mare is one of the more popular spirits now and said to be perfect for cooking with. It went down easily and had a lot of fresh flavours of its own.

The As de Picos is crafted from 14 botanicals and considered the No 1 gin in Spain, according to Javier. The tropical version includes five additional fruits — strawberry, raspberry, lychee, mango and pineapple. Even without tonic water, it was sweet, cocktail-like and very fruity.

My favourite was certainly the Mahon gin. It is a traditional back-to-basics spirit which, Javier said, is enjoyed by Spanish connoisseurs in the form of a Pomada cocktail — essentially a G&T with a nice squeeze of lemon juice. Glasses in hand, we sipped and swapped to get a taste of the different flavours and herbal renditions. Nothing quite makes a party like an ice-cold G&T, good company and well-designed environment. From gin to innovative surfaces, Spain certainly produces many fun ways to brighten your home. **H**

The Dekton Slim is an ideal surface for your bathroom or kitchen





CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: BAKING RACK, RM23.90, **LIVING QUARTERS @ METROJAYA**. RECTANGULAR BAKING RACK, RM5.90, **DAISO**. RECTANGULAR BAKING RACK, RM14.80, **OLD TOWN PLASTICWARES SDN BHD**. ROUNDED BAKING RACK, RM5.00, **PERNIAGAAN YEEN FATT @ PJ OLD TOWN**. STEEL BAKING RACK, RM14.00, **HIN HUAT HUNG TEMBIKAR SDN BHD**. BAKING RACK, RM33.00, **ROBINSONS**. RECTANGULAR TRIVET, RM18.77, **AEON**. MINI BAKING RACK, RM5.99, **JASON'S @ BANGSAR SHOPPING CENTRE**.



on the grid

As your freshly baked goods recover from the heat of the oven, lay them out to breathe atop these truly superlative surfaces

PHOTOGRAPHY SHAWN LOR @ PIXEL PIX
ARTISTIC DIRECTION JOANNE LIM
STYLING ABBY CHUNG + LIEW SHUK KHUEN

MY SPACE: CHARLES LEE

Founder and managing director of Lumbermart

Text **Anandhi Gopinath**

DOES YOUR HOME SUBSCRIBE TO A PARTICULAR THEME?

I take a minimalist and contemporary approach, with very simple lines and accents like a few key pieces of furniture. I love the feeling of space, hence I spend quite a bit of time in my al fresco dining areas — of which there are a few. They have timber decking, and I love sitting on the patio in the evenings, listening to music and just enjoying the serenity of the garden while having a drink or two.

YOU MUST HAVE A LOT OF WOODEN FURNITURE. TELL US WHAT YOU'VE GOT.

One of the main features is a customised Backley round dining table ... [then there are] a Chevee console cabinet, a bespoke Backley television cabinet and side tables, which I designed and had custom-made to suit my space. I enjoy eating with my loved ones, so I designed the dining table with family gatherings in mind. To me, it's a beautiful work of art made from solid walnut wood and is hand-buffed and handmade. As for the Chevee console, I use it to demarcate the living and dining rooms so that it looks cosier. It is also very useful to provide additional storage area in the living room. What I love about these creations is that they combine traditional wood joinery techniques and the wood is handpicked for its one-of-a-kind natural grain and characteristics.

WHAT BOOKS WOULD I SEE ON YOUR BOOKSHELVES OR COFFEE TABLE?

I have a variety of books on world history, travel, business management and cars. Examples are *Furniture with Soul* by

David Savage, *The World is Flat* by Thomas L Friedman, *Blue Ocean Strategy* by W Chan Kim and Renée Mauborgne, *My Side of History* by Chin Peng, *Chronicle of the Chinese Emperors* by Ann Paludan, *Connoisseurship of Chinese Furniture* by Wang Shixiang and *Jack Welch and the GE Way* by Robert Slater.

DO YOU PREFER ART ON THE WALLS, A FEATURE WALL OR A CLEAN LOOK OVERALL?

I prefer a simple clean approach rather than any particular pieces. I guess my mantra is crafting stories in wood creations, which inspires new chapters in any spaces. So I tend to let my furniture and other elements of wood be the focal points. These pieces are custom-made in accordance to my choice of wood, design and dimensions, and are truly like no other. They are crafted to inspire any living or working space and built to last for generations to come.

I think the dining table is important as it's where the family or friends gather. Memories, laughter, eating, bonding — all different but precious times celebrated at the dining table.

IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT ELEMENTS DOES EVERY HOME NEED IN ORDER TO BE COMPLETE?

I think the dining table is important as it's where the family or friends gather. Memories, laughter, eating, bonding — all different but precious times celebrated at the dining table.

HOW DID YOU CHOOSE THE AREA YOU LIVE IN, AND WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT IT?

It's again the outdoors, as I love to connect with nature. I chose a neighbourhood that I can walk my dogs safely in, with proper walking paths and jogging tracks and plenty of shady trees that provide a bit of respite any time of the day. **H**



Mariposa Sofa
Design: Edward Barber & Jay Osgerby, 2014
The Original is by Vitra



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