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BTT

BERITA TAN & TAN

VOL 20 2016

THE REVOLUTION WITHIN FOUR WALLS

THE CHANGING AND UNCHANGING
CONCEPTS OF HOMES

STONOR 3:
KUALA LUMPUR'S FIRST LUXURY CURATED HOMES

DAMAI RESIDENCE:
JUST A SCUTTLE AWAY FROM THE BUSTLE

T&T EXTENDS HOSPITALITY WITH
NEW LOBBY GALLERY AND RESIDENTS LOUNGE

DUAL-PURPOSE DEVELOPMENTS:
A HOME AND HOTSPOT FOR BIODIVERSITY

RUN FOR RED:
THE MID VALLEY CITY CHARITY RUN

THE 360° APPROACH TO HEALTH
THE STORY OF GARDENS

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EDITOR'S NOTE

I find it extraordinary that in the last few years, seemingly all aspects of our lives have been touched or directly influenced by the ability to share and access information at our fingertips. This has led us to this issue of Berita Tan & Tan themed Lifestyle Revolutions.

In working on this edition of the magazine, we found that the sharing economy concept, enabled by technology, has and can influence even the property market in a significant way. The emergence of the co-living concept can possibly change the way future developments are planned and businesses like Airbnb are changing the investment perspective. We discovered how social media, Big Data and the Fourth Industrial Revolution are altering lifestyles, from interior design and furniture to preventative healthcare and contemporary education.

It would appear that every aspect of our lives is undergoing change, with the equilibrium not yet in sight. Property developers have to build for lifestyles, which could change drastically in the time the project begins until completion – to curate homes that are timeless and relevant, come what may. I hope that our readers will join us in exploring what is going to be a strange new world in the near future.

Cassandra Chong
editor
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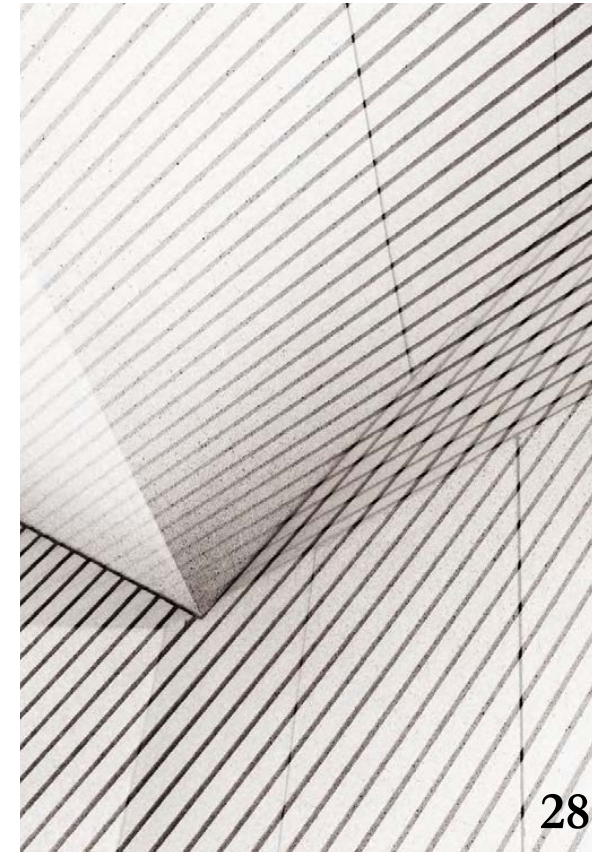
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Stonor 3 is the first luxury curated home in the heart of the city.

A joint venture between Tan Et Tan Developments and its Japanese counterpart, Mitsubishi Jisho Residence, this 41-storey Green Building will appeal to local and overseas investors, and home seekers who desire the appeal of cosmopolitan living in KLCC, Kuala Lumpur's equivalent of London's Hyde Park and New York's Central Park.



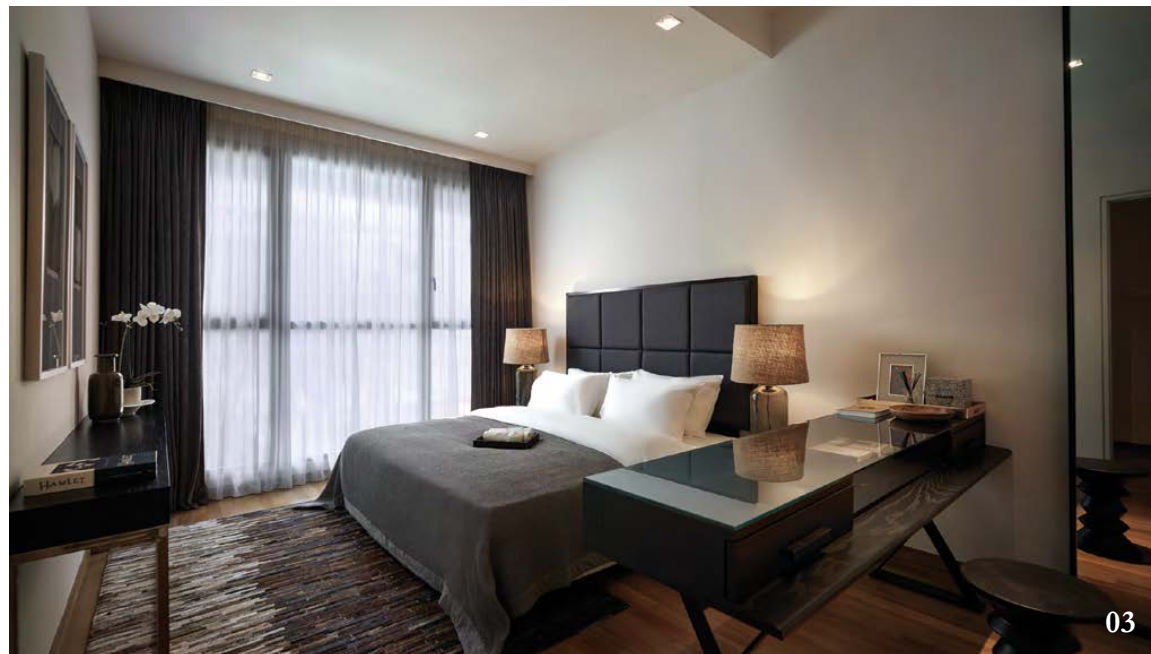


01 From the rich sprawling Burmese hardwood, to iconic French-fitted kitchen appliances and decadent Japanese sanitary ware, indulge in the exquisite artisanal quality of these homes.

Solid Burmese Teak floors inlaid throughout the home evoke an immediate sense of elegance and charm. Living room space opens up to evenly created dimensions. High ceilings impart a heightened sense of expanse. Minimal two large panel sliding doors framed by sturdy aluminum allows a sweeping vista of the outdoors.

02 The entrance is braced by a specially fitted solid panel designer door embedded with the renowned Kawajun lock set to balance both aesthetic harmony and security.





03 In the bedroom, windows stretching tall and wide elicit an immediate space while providing a full view of the lush exteriors. The teak floors continue to maintain a meticulous flow from one room to another.

04 Prevailing Japanese influence makes a statement in the bathrooms. The Toto Neorest is the definition of bathroom luxury. Compact, sturdy whilst capable of hands free auto-flush, equipped with motion sensors as well as water and energy saving modes, it promises to provide a comfortably pleasant experience.

Luxuriate in the semi-sunken bath replete with a bench seat, cleverly designed to conserve space and water consumption. Thoughtfully placed ledges allocate ample utility space in the shower.

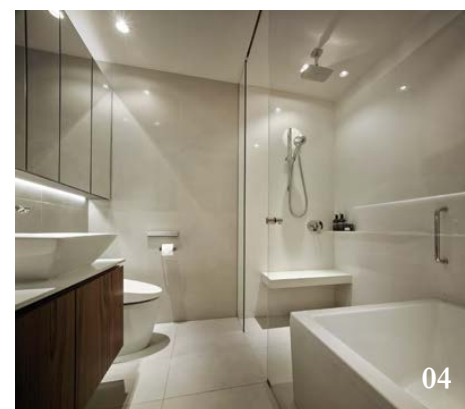
Curated pieces of German faucets and shower fittings seamlessly blend while providing ease of use.

More space-saving allowances with storage available above and below. Cabinet mirrors slide out diagonally creating multi-angled reflections while allowing access to the shelves at the same time.

05 Return to the kitchen where, without compromising form over function, it is fitted with De Dietrich's avant garde appliances. The combi-steam oven, induction hob and downdraft hood blend right into this sleek and utilitarian layout.

The extended quartz counter top astutely conceals further storage space below on both sides, incorporating also a washer/dryer. Wood laminates add an interesting layer of texture to the modern minimalist look.

Stonor 3 is a testament of a thoughtful and elevated living orchestration. This conveniently sequestered enclave is sure to provide an immersive and rewarding experience for those who value beauty in sophisticated simplicity.



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"*We were curious to find out how private gardens had changed over the years, and what we could expect to see in the near future. There was no one more overly qualified to enlighten us than award-winning master landscaper, Inch Lim, who gathers top prizes from prestigious garden shows as frequently as calendulas bloom.*"



BTT visited Inch at his office, which is a refurbished early century building on Jalan Sin Chew Kee, one of Kuala Lumpur's lesser-known heritage rows. The office is reminiscent of a secret garden as the door leading in is composed entirely of small planter vessels, out of which a variety of indistinguishable greenery grows. For some reason, the nostalgic interior, which still maintains its original wooden beams and staircase, suits our idea of a landscaper – natural and raw.

As we begin our interview, Inch indulged us with a quick history of modern day gardening. Gardening used to be a pastime pleasure of the privileged, who had both the time and money to indulge in frivolous activities unrelated to earning one's daily bread. Private ownership of land by the average person really only became common practice a few hundred years ago. Before that, the idea that one man could possess the rights to a stretch of land, much less plant fruit trees and pretty flowers on it for mere enjoyment, was unconceivable and thought of as the rights of only kings and nobles. It wasn't until the Industrial Revolution, which started in Europe and saw the birth and growth of an intermediate social class between the aristocrats and peasants, that allowed more people into the esoteric world of gardening.

"During the Victorian era, gardening became a passion, and botanists combed the globe for plants that could be brought home," Inch said. "The North Atlantic Drift keeps England warmer and more humid than the rest of Europe, and exotic plants could actually survive there".

"Magnolias and peonies became popular during that time and remain so until now, but they actually originated from China," he explained. This was the start of global flowering plant trade, and these miracles of nature no longer remained confined to their native soil, becoming immigrants who thrived, propagated and admired in foreign lands.

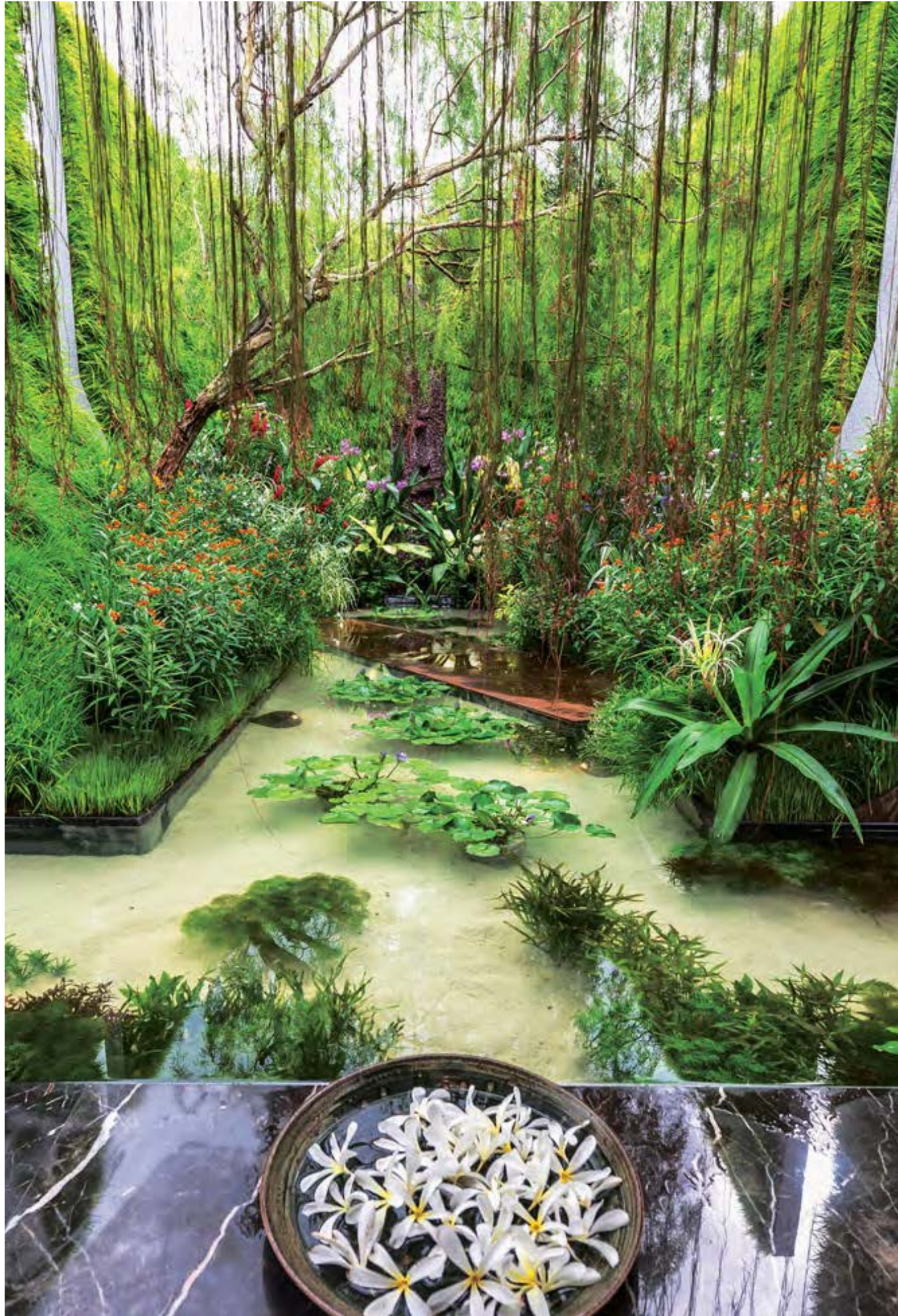
Less formal gardens were popular in the suburban areas, and started as much for practical reasons, with herbs, vegetables and fruit trees for sustenance. The Arts and Craft movement during the late 19th century influenced gardening themes, and more natural planting style became fashionable - the cottage-style design was romanticised and spread to other regions, with Victorian plants now being exported to other countries where they too could adopt the rustic garden design.

'Natural' is a reoccurring theme throughout gardening history and Inch is seeing a reemergence today. "At the annual Chelsea Flower Show, the judges used to laud and award 'perfect plants', but I found that recently, there is a preference for the more natural look that is at least perceived to be less contrived."

"For instance, master garden designers like Piet Oudolf are leading the New Perennials movement today, which uses the more practical perennials and native plants to create what would appear to be wild gardens," Inch said.

Yet, in this time and age, there remains a distinction between those who have the means to maintain a garden and those who do not.

left page
Inch, photographed
in a refurbished
pre-war building,
which serves as
his office.



left page
Immaculate
aqueous
feature blends
seamlessly into
the garden.

"The herbaceous border, which consists of densely planted perennials first introduced in the Victorian era, is also gaining popularity again," Inch said. "But while seemingly the outcome of spontaneous planting, it is very labour-intensive to maintain."

Although Inch relies very much on natural elements – like the sun or flickering candlelight to cast shadows and create movement – he finds that new technology has allowed landscapers to incorporate new features into their creations.

"For example, I'm trying to create seamless water features that are level with the deck, with barely a gap in between. This was not possible before," he said. "Or the functional use of plants to create a hybrid system of plants and filter to clean swimming pools, dispensing with the need for chlorine."

As urbanisation continues to draw more people into cities, who then live in high-rise developments with limited space, many have relinquished the dream of owning their own gardens. There is irony in that a few hundred years ago, it was progress that allowed the everyday person to own a private garden, and today it is progress that takes it away. But perhaps that need not be so. Inch ran through trends for city gardens and gave us snippets of his thoughts on them:

Rooftop gardens. "Entirely possible, and not even requiring any cutting-edge technology. We just have to figure out a better irrigation and drainage system for a flat surface."

Vertical gardens. "Patrick Blanc invented the vertical garden, which doesn't require soil for the plants to attach themselves to, so it doesn't compromise the structural integrity of the wall."

Edible gardens. Inch sighed before continuing: "Everyone should have an edible garden now, simply because food is getting so expensive nowadays."

Thus the interview drew to an end, with us reassured that concrete jungles need not be the only type of 'wilderness' that our children will know in the future.

As Inch walked us out, we had time now to pause and admire the pond, in which Scissortail Rasboras darted nippily about and healthy water plants inhabited. We noticed how clear the water was, devoid of perceivable algae; it was a perfect hybrid system of plants and technology, as Inch has mentioned earlier, to maintain a healthy ecosystem.

As we stepped back out onto Jalan Sin Chew Kee, we suddenly remembered that we are actually at the centre of Kuala Lumpur. We realised that we have just experienced what was the garden of the future – little green sanctuaries in the midst of tempestuous city life that will always keep us grounded.

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Thoughtful use of communal spaces such as this family room in Park Manor, Sierramas can help foster greater integration among family members, especially if there are more than one generation living in the same home. The spacious family homes in Park Manor have as standard features two, if not three, of these interaction spaces, which are also ideal as 'chill out' places, children's playrooms, media rooms, mini gyms, etc.

For more information, please visit www.tantan.com

PREPARING STUDENTS FOR THE UNPREDICTABLE TOMORROW



bottom left
The IGB International School,
located in the residential
neighbourhood of Sierramas.

bottom
Anne Fowles, Head of School

Wayne Demnar, Director of
Admissions and Marketing



The conventional school system was set up to meet the needs of the industrial age back in the early 20th century: the masses were given basic literacy education and prepared for skilled labour in factories; secondary education groomed a small fraction of society for managerial and professional vocations; tertiary education primed an even smaller group of people to become the doctors, engineers and scientists of the world.

At present, mainstream schools operate like a manufacturing plant – every student who enters is sorted by age, instructed on a pre-determined group of subjects during inflexible time periods; they are then tested for 'quality' before emerging at the end of the assembly line. Most schools are still educating the younger generation to meet the needs of

an industrial world from which we have long moved past. We are now entering a new era – the Fourth Industrial Revolution – and the skills required in this new world are now vastly different from before.

BTT visited the IGB International School, which offers the International Baccalaureate Programmes (PYP, MYP and DP), to learn how an IB World School is keeping ahead of times, and preparing students for a future that no one can yet see clearly. According to Anne Fowles, IGBIS's Head of School, employers are now looking for "people who possess problem-solving and communication skills, the ability to build relationships, the aptitude to break down complex ideas and understand them, and tech-capable."

"As such, teaching only content is now no longer relevant. Students must be able to do more than regurgitate information; they must learn how to critique, how to work in groups and to facilitate team-based projects," she says.

Wayne Demnar, Director of Admissions and Marketing in IGBIS, adds, "In our time, learning involved sitting back, listening to the teacher, and feeding back what we heard. But today factual learning has been replaced by conceptual learning." He summarises the skills required today as the '4Cs': communication, collaboration, creativity and critical analysis.

These skills are arguably harder to teach and learn than hard facts, but Anne and Wayne advocate that the





foundation for such learning be laid in the early years of education. Wayne explains, "Even with very young children, you can start guiding them in their learning with good questions – open-ended questions that encourage them to ponder on the subject."

For the younger students who are just starting to learn to communicate and socialise with others their age, learning happens through play. "I call it student-initiated learning," Mary Richards, a teacher of the Early Years Programme for children aged three and four, says. "The teacher sometimes takes a step back and lets the children make up scenarios as they play together. The adult might sometimes initiate a direction, but it is the children who lead the game."

At this stage, they might not yet be able to communicate with clarity through speech, but the teachers are able to recognise and encourage other forms of expression. Mary demonstrates with a student's artwork (*left, top picture*). "This patch of colour on the upper right corner might look like the random work of a child, but as he

was colouring it, he said that this was him sliding down a grassy slope during the holidays. This is how he sees it in his mind."

As the children enter Kindergarten and advance through the years, a more structured approach is introduced. IGBIS uses Units of Inquiry in its Primary Years Programme, which comprises different concepts and themes that promote transdisciplinary learning. One of the themes, for instance, is 'Sharing the Planet', and in the course of exploring this central idea, students will learn different subject matters - from science and geography to social equality and conflict resolution – all by the time they finish Grade 5 at the age of 10.

There is no distinct hierarchy of subjects in the way IGBIS approaches learning. Conventional school systems are rooted in industrialism, thus, subjects such as science, mathematics and reading are ranked highly in importance while music, art and drama languish at the bottom of the list; this is, however, no longer relevant.

As society becomes increasingly aware that intelligence comes in a variety of forms, standardised testing is clearly insufficient to measure success. While it is still carried out at IGBIS, it carries a smaller weightage. Instead, other qualitative measurement tools are also used to gauge the student's progress. "The teachers measure and document success from observation and using a checklist of performance indicators," Anne says. "There is a great shift of perception, in that we no longer test for failure, but we assess for success."

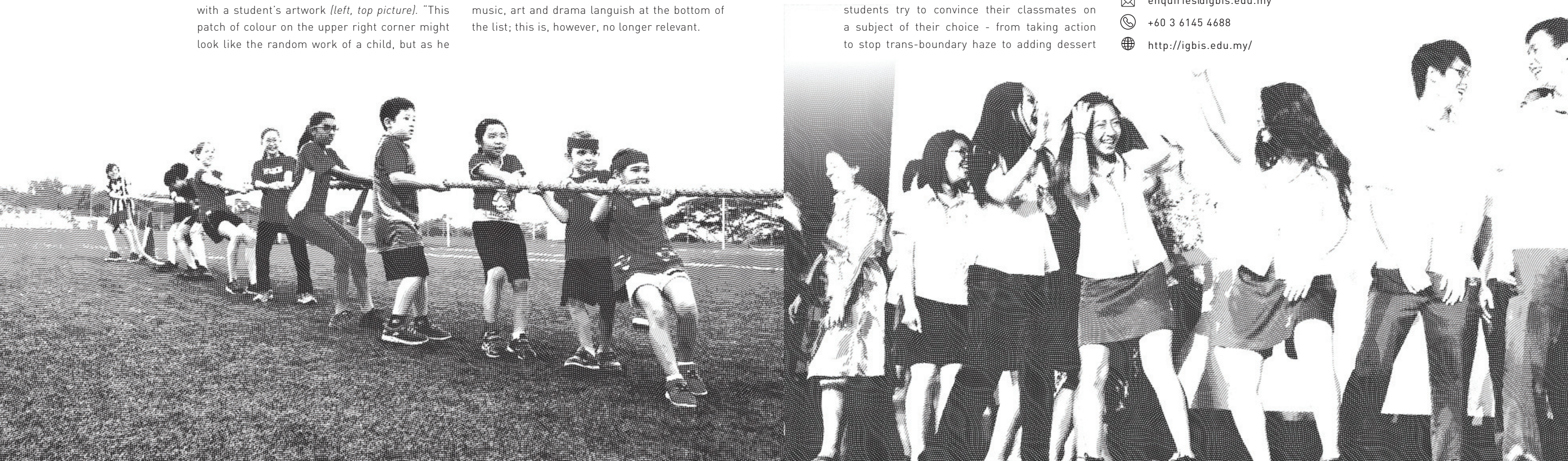
Without the pressure to excel in particular subjects only, students are encouraged to explore and, in the process, learn transferable skills. Teaching has also become fluid and flexible, and teachers are empowered to use diverse styles, methods and technology in making lessons enjoyable. The classroom walls in IGBIS are plastered with inventive lessons: one panel features an exercise in persuasion, whereby students try to convince their classmates on a subject of their choice - from taking action to stop trans-boundary haze to adding dessert

to the school cafeteria menu and advocating a longer lunch break - through written or video presentation. The exercise allows students to hone several skills at once, from practicing effective communication to critical thinking in analysing a situation.

The adage used to be 'give a man a fish and feed him for a day, teach him to fish and feed him for a lifetime'. Today, the 'man' has to keep up with an erratic ecosystem as the Fourth Industrial Revolution leads to unpredictability in the workforce; the World Economic Forum predicts that in just five years from now, one-third of skills considered important today would have been usurped by others. It is insufficient to merely prepare students to find a place in the workforce – we have to prepare them to thrive amidst the strange new world that is upon them.

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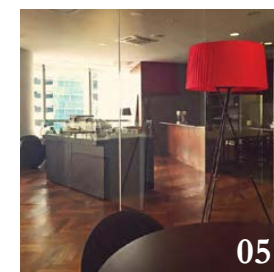


T&T EXTENDS HOSPITALITY WITH NEW LOBBY GALLERY AND RESIDENTS LOUNGE



Keeping true to the adage of bespoke homes created with the owner in mind, Tan & Tan Developments has crafted another way to get up close with discerning homeowners. Located at the ground floor of The Gardens South Tower, which is where the developer along with IGB Corporation Berhad are situated, the Lobby Gallery is a brand new show gallery featuring all of Tan & Tan Developments' current and future projects.

Four large-screen TV panels grace the succinctly laid out gallery, featuring informative videography as well as slide shows of the properties. To be further immersed, take a tour via the interactive touch screen TV. Complementary detailed scale models allow guests to explore its 3-dimensional layout, lending a tangible perspective to the actual properties at hand. Information panels



fringing the gallery also provide concise data further supporting the developments. All these are set against a vertical garden that makes a striking wall feature, a nod to the rich landscapes that are a consistent theme in all of the developer's projects.

Tan & Tan Developments also has a team of affable staff who are always on hand to answer any of your queries regarding the projects. However, for those wishing to engage in a deeper discussion, the Residents Lounge at Level 16 above is the perfect ambiance for just that. Help yourself to a cup of fresh brew from the coffee bar and relax in the exclusive surroundings. Have a tête-à-tête

or adjourn to a private room for further dialogue and presentation. Explore Tan & Tan Developments' rich history that began in the 1970s, and its numerous developments that span across the country and further afield; you will understand why the company is one of the most trusted property developers in Malaysia and each project speaks of excellence and reliability.

Drop by and take that one step further to owning that dream home of yours with Tan & Tan Developments Berhad. The Lobby Gallery and Residents Lounge are open weekdays, 10am to 5pm.

01 The Lobby Gallery on the Ground Floor of The Gardens South Tower

02 - 05 The newly opened Residents Lounge on Level 16



SOMETHING OLD, SOMETHING NEW



The Evolving Trend of Furniture & Interior Design



Jim Moore



Jim Moore, the owner of Ambiance, greets us at his latest outlet in G Village with his warm, affable charm and graciously offers us a spot of tea. As it is being prepared, we stroll around the 4,600 sq. ft. shop artfully dotted with statues, furniture, ceramic, jewellery and curios. We covet their statuesque larger-than-life cupboards, quaint Chinese wedding cabinets, immensely popular Buddha figurines, and an array of artisan soaps and candles. Specialising in antique and contemporary Oriental furniture, Jim's selected pieces are purchased and refurbished in the north of China and Mongolia. The harsh weather conditions season the furniture making it able to withstand varying degrees of climates for where the pieces will eventually call home.

Tea is ready and we are led to a prettily set-up table, no doubt adorned by pieces from his personal collection. Joining us is Sophie Buddell, an interior designer whose projects include the Khoo Family Mansion in Bukit Gasing where she helped transform a thirty-year-old family home into a more uniformed, comfortable yet stylish utilitarian abode that caters to all the four generations living under that roof. The home was featured on 'Extreme Homes : Luxury Asia', a television series.

Having been here for about twenty years, Jim recalls the time when home decor was not a hot topic in Malaysia with only a few specialists like Janine, Xtra Silk Road and Purser's Choice: "To source a simple glass vase the choices were far greater in Singapore."

A huge number of international brands have since set up in Malaysia and made an impactful difference in the field of home decor. People are now able to access and procure beautiful, stylish, contemporary items at a much more affordable price. Jim quips, "Even Laura Ashley is owned by a Malaysian now!"



Sophie Buddell

Technology has certainly impacted the way people curate their home living. Jim notes, "We entered the new millennium on the twin waves of globalisation and digitalisation exposing us to a whole world of new trends. People more and more want something that is unique, expressing their own and their family's character." Pinterest, Airbnb and Facebook have opened up the world in a way that the tastes and influences are now no longer only cultural. Sophie has had clients come to her with Instagram pictures, asking for those looks to be re-created in their homes.

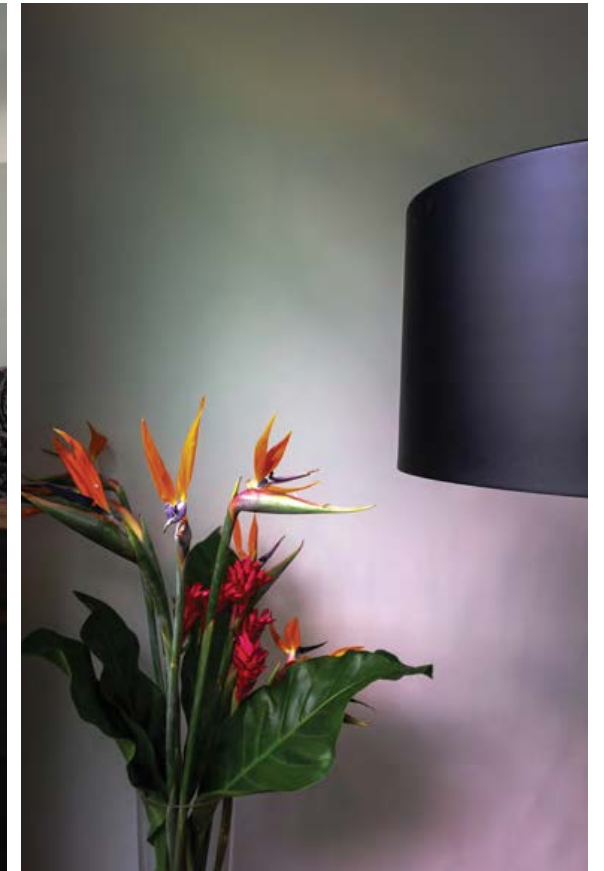
Jim gives his two cents on what people look for when selecting a piece of furniture. "Colour has made a return. We have gone through the pastels of the sixties, psychedelic seventies and greys of the nineties. People now want a pop of colour. Blue furniture is very popular right now, so are greens and neutrals," he explains.

There is little rhyme or reason in the appeal of certain designs and colour schemes to a specific clientele, but in general there seems to be a move towards soft greys, light greens, blues and natural wood finishes but with at least one bold statement piece, a memory of a time, moment or experience.

The trend, Jim notes, is however slowly changing with Malaysians. "People want new with some old in it. Old things have a story, they have more character. Heritage will be appreciated more and more." A selection of a piece factors in sentiment, colour, the newness and its exoticness. People are inspired by the picturesque mystical lands of Angkor, Bali, Borobudur, even Scotland. Antique Chinese furniture are free of hinges and brackets, a testament of unique craftsmanship. Jim encourages that people get "handsy" with their furniture. To him, texture, weight, and close inspection are important when furniture shopping.

Jim and Sophie agree that the largest changes in the way homes are utilised will be in the kitchen, dining and family rooms. The creation of the 'family room' and expanded open living means that boundaries between these spaces in the house are getting blurred with homogeneity in flooring styles. The family concept of integrating everyone and all their needs into a larger, singular living space will be more common. "You will see more floor living, bean bag living...The important thing is to always look into the needs of the family," Sophie adds.

Home entertainment will also take on a life of its own as more and more people are eager to show off their homes. Kitchen islands are moving out from kitchen spaces and into the integrated entertainment areas. Outdoor cooking, especially barbeques, will be more popular, especially with the advent of no-smoking ban in public places and with the men folk being more involved in cooking.



“COLOUR HAS MADE A RETURN”

People are also gearing into clean living and changing the way they interact with their community and the surrounding environment. Recycling, the recent implementation of trash separation, running and bicycling are further examples of how people today are embracing healthier and sustainable lifestyles. Upcycling is a novel way of injecting new life into an object that holds special sentiment. The act of refurbishing a piece and instilling more value in it is the essence of this process. In this way, people do not necessarily need to discard memorabilia which are worn, rickety or faded. One of Sophie's clients had an impressive amount of antique furniture stashed away in a room, collecting dust. "We took all those mismatched pieces and gave it a good old spray of uniformed colour. Once that

was done, we were able to incorporate those beloved pieces into their living space seamlessly."

We ask Sophie on what her take is on mass-market DIY furniture hubs such as IKEA. "I personally have pieces from them. IKEA is good for basics, especially their bathroom range and photo frames. The trick is to blend your selection with all your other furnishings for an overall flow."

Commercially, the use of spaces may be dramatically different in years to come as people yearn to see something more unique. Jim foresees that shopping malls in the future may increase art venues, galleries and open performance spaces rather than remain solely for their initial purpose. Many churches around the world have closed and been converted to residential and commercial use while preserving their original spectacular architecture, Jim reminds us. The way we live and the nature of a building's purpose may be even more skewed in the future.

Explore Ambiance's collection of antique and contemporary oriental furniture in its outlet located on the First Floor of G Village, Jalan Desa Pandan.



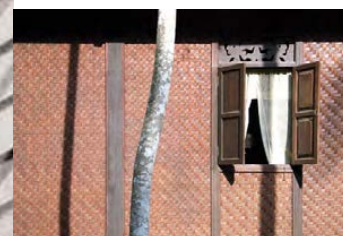
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THE REVOLUTION WITHIN FOUR WALLS

THE CHANGING AND UNCHANGING
CONCEPTS OF HOMES



Isabella Bird, a nineteenth century indefatigable traveller and writer from England, visited the Malay world in 1879, when it was still under British rule, and painted the lifestyle of its people in idealised literary strokes. She described the well-spaced kampong houses in Malacca and Selangor, which were built under the shade of fruit trees for relief from the Sun:

“Each dwelling is of planed wood or plaited palm leaves, the roof is high and steep, the eaves are deep and the whole rests on a gridiron platform supported on posts, from five to ten feet high, and approached by a ladder in the poorer houses and a flight of steps in the richer,” she documented. The raised architecture protected the home from wild animals and flooding, and improved ventilation.

More than a century later, we are still building homes to mitigate the effect of the elements. “There are two things that will never change when it comes to designing homes – weather and comfort,” renowned Malaysian architect, Ar Kam Pak Cheong, of BEP Akitek says. “In the old days, Malaysian houses had verandahs, deep overhangs, courtyards and terrazzo floors to keep cool, and cross-ventilation designed in.”

The home has however changed in many other ways since the halcyon days described by Bird and Kam.

“Somewhere along the way, people travelled and saw others living in glass boxes and decided to bring the style back to this region. But it didn’t suit the heat so we ended up relying on air-conditioning, which then cuts out the wind that cools the atmosphere. Then, at one point, the

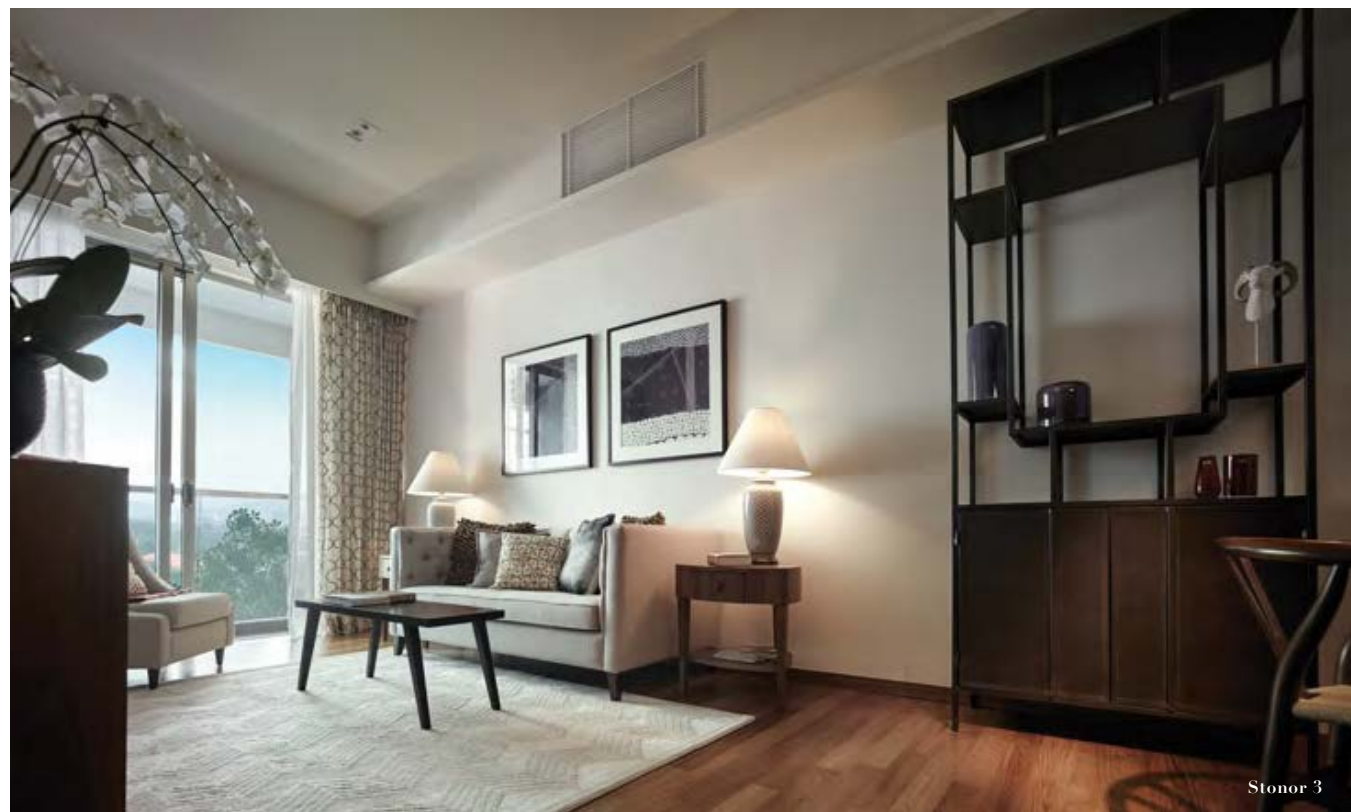
Balinese style became fashionable and that suited our weather well, but that trend faded as well,” says Kam.

“Trends are cyclical, you’ll see. These architectural characteristics will find their way back into new homes soon enough,” Kam predicts, and he has more than 50 years of architectural design experience to back him up.

One unchanging circumstances is that the state of the economy will always influence lifestyles, and that includes home trends. “Generally, large homes sell well when the money is rolling, but when the downturn comes, those spaces cannot get rented out”, Kam notes. “Density limitations imposed by authorities do encourage developers to opt for larger units, maximising space allowance with serious design, while also taking into consideration market compromises. Conversely, when



Ar Kam Pak Cheong,
BEP Akitek



Stonor 3



Sierramas West Clubhouse



Seri Ampang Hilir

Deep overhangs keep homes cool in warm climates.

developers maximise the number of small units to the allowed density, other issues will become relevant."

Zerin Properties, one of the country's leading property agency and consultant, noticed that despite the state of the economy, there is demand among clients for high-rise spaces of the two extremes – the very large or the very small.

"Luxury condominiums over 3,000 sq. ft. are in short supply, yet these are the type of spaces that people who downsize from large landed properties are looking for. They still want enough space to accommodate their children and grandchildren when they visit," Zerin's CEO Previndran Sighe says. "Besides, the maintenance of a landed property, with the cost of gardeners, pool maintenance, et cetera, is about the same as the maintenance fee of a larger condominium unit."

At the other end of the spectrum are those

who have no need for or cannot afford the superfluous space. Kam observes that middle-aged families will have strong preferences when it comes to certain spaces, like the bathroom for the men, kitchen, utilities or wardrobe for the ladies, but for the younger buyers, locality is of primary importance. "And Malaysia is largely a young population," he points out. "The limited affordability of these buyers means they often sacrifice space for location."

Fauziana Siebel-McKenna from Zerin's Private Wealth – Real Estate Division believes that even though small units will be in demand, it will be those with two or 1+1 bedroom configurations that are preferred. "People don't mind well designed smaller units as long as they have private spaces within them," she says.

With decreasing space being an irreversible issue, developers are looking into more creative ideas to optimise every part of the development. "Co-living will be the next

buzzword in the property sphere," Fauziana predicts. "It stems from the co-working concept that became popular in recent times, when entrepreneurs and start-ups would share office space."

The same concept is now being applied in new residential developments. In the co-living concept, the private space will encompass just a room, an en-suite bathroom and perhaps a basic kitchenette, but other facilities, such as living areas, entertainment spaces, kitchen and dining areas, and other daily amenities will be shared.

"This concept will encourage interaction amongst residents as members of society become increasingly detached," says Fauziana. "The quality and comprehensiveness of the shared facilities are therefore very important in this kind of development."

Previndran adds that the concept will appeal to residents of any age, not just the young;

it fulfills the need of even matured buyers, who do not need the extra space. "Rather, you will find that it will be the demographic of income, not age, that determines the type of residents in co-living residences."

The emerging sharing economy is changing the modern lifestyle in more ways than one, and appears to be fashioning the way we live in the future. With the advent of Internet of Things connecting disparate individuals with similar needs to available resources, the latter can be fully utilised. Sharing platforms have already entered many aspects of life, including the home and namely Airbnb.

According to Previndran, the success and alternative rental option offered by Airbnb has already changed the investment perspective of buyers; after procuring the property and before finding a tenant, owners can rent it out in the interim while others use Airbnb as a source of long-term rental yield.



(left) Previndran Sighe and (right) Fauziana Siebel-McKenna of Zerin Properties



01 "Each dwelling is of designer wood, fittings and high-tech toilets..."

02, 03 Buyers appreciate subtle details, such as how the door feels when opening it and a warm, inviting floor.

"An acquaintance of mine owns five properties in Kuala Lumpur and rents them out through Airbnb. She personally attends to the rental properties, the customers and turndown service," Previndran says. "I have also heard through the industry's grapevine that a investor from Belgium bought 24 units *en bloc* with the intention of renting them out through Airbnb."

"Income from holiday rentals may be uncertain, but it is certainly higher, if calculated on a per day basis. But the success of a property as an Airbnb rental – its demand and rental rate – is highly dependent on location and tied to the tourism industry," he adds.

The sharing economy will also influence the number of car park spaces in future developments. Presently, local building regulations require multiple car park spaces to one residential unit. "Moving forward, though, with car-sharing becoming a norm, there will be more residential units to a single car park space, ideally four to one," says Kam. "We see it happening in other countries and it will happen here. It's inevitable."

Airbnb and car-sharing are but a few of the global trends that are changing the way local investors and

homebuyers choose their properties. "The young are more widely travelled and tastes are getting more sophisticated and discerning. They see through gimmicks and look for actual value for their money," Kam says.

He elaborates, "They will appreciate the subtle details that the developer puts into the building that one might not even realise, like the way the car parks, driveways and guardhouse are designed; the way the unit is built; how the door feels when you open or close it, how the hinges move with the weight of the solid wood; the position of light switches at the entrance, bedrooms and bathrooms; the proportions of the foyer as well as the way spaces are used effectively. Only external aesthetics won't do anymore.

"High ceilings do not necessarily feel good, by the way, but the proportion of the space is more important." Kam's last observation leads back to the fundamentals of good design, which should remain unchanged even as other trends come and go.

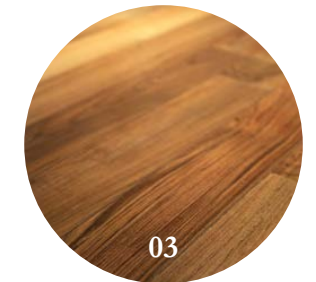
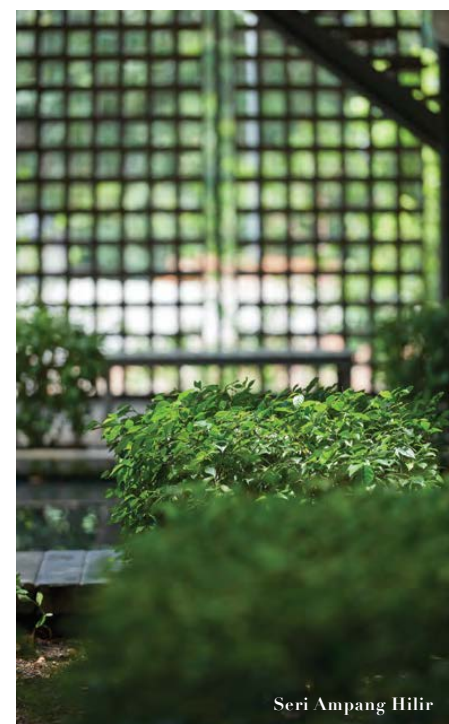
"Architects now use software and technology to help design a building and layout and it is certainly much faster, but I still subscribe to the good old-fashion

method of pencil and paper," says Kam. "There is nothing like drawing layer and layer of a building, from the ground up, to get a feel of the final outcome, and then the machine can take over!"

Previndran concurs that property buyers will also become more conscientious of design and believes that they will become more fastidious towards details when making a purchasing decision. "The word that best describes this new trend is *cognoscenti*. People will choose very specialised architects, interior designer, and brands and material that cater for niche clients, not the mass market," he says.

By inferring from these upcoming and unchanging trends in the property industry, this is how we imagine Isabella Bird might describe a Malaysian home today:

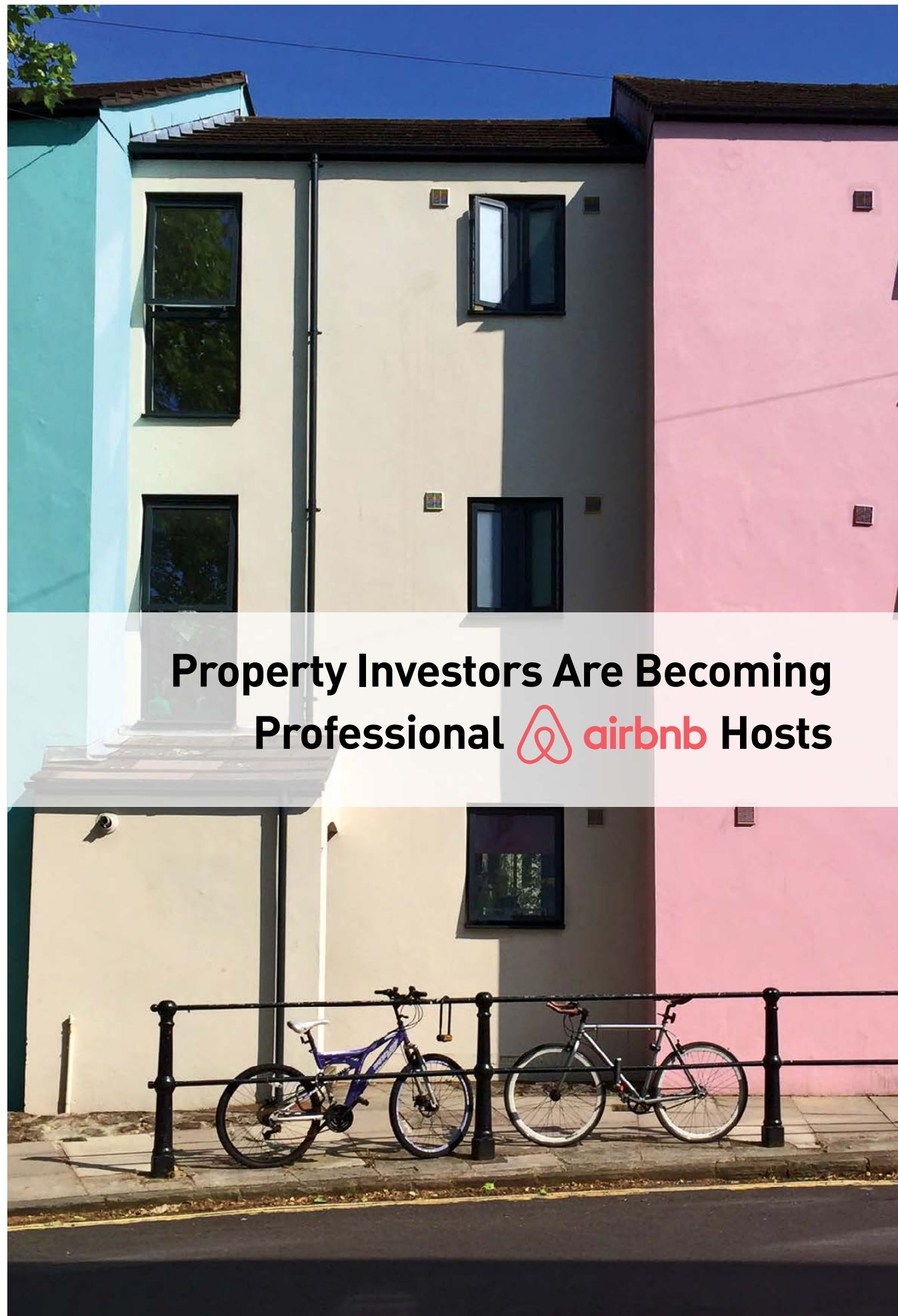
"Each dwelling is of designer wood, fittings and high-tech toilets, the entire building is fronted by a façade fashioned from trees to keep the heat out, the roof is more than 40 storeys high, and the whole rests on floors of shared facilities, from leisure spaces to luxurious gardens, and approached by a magnificent entrance in the richer."



CO-LIVING: THE NEW WAY MILLENNIALS LIVE

The co-working concept offered flexible offices, minimal fuss and great locations. A similar approach has been adopted for living arrangements as the younger and less affluent are priced out of choice locations in the city; others simply want a hassle-free living arrangement or a sense of community.

Millennials seek convenience, immediacy and sociability, all of which are on offer inside co-living residences. Inside these buildings are thriving micro-societies. Private living accommodations are leased out on a flexible contract, from as short as one month; the units are usually fully furnished, and equipped with a kitchenette and at least one bathroom. Outside these private spaces is where it gets interesting. The building comes with a host of shared facilities, including gymnasium, cinema, spa, games room, library and entertainment spaces. Some residences have a community manager on staff to plan activities for the inhabitants, from fitness classes to karaoke nights. It is akin to the best elements of student housing, hotel and social club being combined in one place.



Property Investors Are Becoming Professional **airbnb** Hosts



Evelyn wakes up in her Victorian flat in the neighbourhood of Leytonstone, in northeast London. She tries to be quiet as she unloads the dishwasher; a Swedish couple holidaying with their little boy are still sleeping in one of the larger rooms in the three-bedroom abode.

The other solo traveller had left earlier in the morning, leaving the keys behind on the dining table;

business centres where hotels tend to congregate. Guests who opt to stay at an Airbnb rental appreciate a different kind of experience, one in which they can immerse in authentic culture and meet locals which they might otherwise would never have crossed paths with.

Airbnb churned the data that it collected in 2015 and released a list of cities, out of 150 countries,



"MORE THAN 40 MILLION GLOBETROTTERS STAYED IN AIRBNB RENTALS IN 2015"

Evelyn peeks into the vacant smaller room to check the state that it has been left in. She will have to 'turn down' the room later as she has to rush to the other side of London, to another property, to prepare it for a group of travellers arriving later that day and staying for a week.

Since leaving her fulltime marketing job two years ago, Evelyn has been making a living renting out her spare rooms and several other properties – all of which she owns – through Airbnb, the online platform that connects people looking to rent out a spare room or property with people who are looking for holiday accommodation. She joins the growing number of people around the world who are relying on holiday rentals as a source of income, and they are more than eking out a living.

More than 40 million globetrotters stayed in Airbnb rentals in 2015; contrary to what might be expected, 74% of Airbnb properties were located outside of downtown areas, away from commercial and

which are surging in popularity amongst travellers; appearing in third place on the list is Malaysia's own Brickfields, after Chuo-ku, Osaka and Banglampoo, Bangkok. Brickfields is Malaysia's official Little India and a thriving residential neighbourhood outside of Kuala Lumpur city centre; it owes its reputation as a favoured tourist destination as much to the animated streets and shops, with wafts of curries and spices emanating from the Indian eateries, as its proximity to KL Sentral, the city's central transportation hub.

Last December, Airbnb collaborated with the Multimedia Development Corporation, the International Trade and Industry Ministry and the Tourism and Culture Ministry to conduct a pilot project in Malacca, helping list 130 village homestays and giving them the visibility, which they could not have been able to achieve by themselves. Speaking to *The Star* in July, an Airbnb representative pronounced Malaysia as an "exciting growth market". Presently, the large majority of Airbnb hosts in Malaysia rent out their spare rooms or their homes occasionally



for some extra income; but the idea of using Airbnb to rent out their homes commercially, as Evelyn does, is catching on.

Even property developers and real estate agents, with their finger on the pulse of the property market, are noticing an emerging trend amongst investors: there are purchasers who buy with the sole intent of renting out through Airbnb, and investment buyers are less anxious about finding a tenant because they can find short-term renters in the interim.

A study by financial website, Smartasset.com, found that in some cities in the United States, hosts renting out the spare room in a two-bedroom apartment could cover more than half of their monthly rent, with only 60% to 86% average occupancy rate, depending on the city; in New York, where rental rates are notoriously high, a host could potentially earn more than half of the monthly rental; in Houston, a host could stand to cover the entire monthly rental with the Airbnb income, with some extra income leftover.

However, as with many online businesses that grow without the limits of geography and borders, they soon enough meet with pushback in the form of local governments and affected businesses, such as hotels. When speaking in a press conference late last year, Chairman of the Malaysia Budget Hotels Association (Johor), Lee Yean Fu, admitted that budget hotel operators are finding it hard to operate a viable business, with its biggest threats being services like Airbnb and homestay programmes. According to Lee, oversupply of condominiums has resulted in the addition of thousands of holiday accommodation being offered to travellers, and the

number keeps rising. In Penang, some landlords have already been slapped with fines of up to RM250 for providing homestay lodgings without a license. Other governments have chosen to adapt to the digital age, rather than hold on to existing laws. In popular global destinations - such as Paris, Milan, Amsterdam, some cities in the United States and recently the United Kingdom - laws that promote collaborative economy are already in effect. In London, one can now rent out one's home for a maximum of 90 days per year, without applying or paying for a permit.

Airbnb had clearly disrupted the hotel industry but also inadvertently changed the property investment perspective. According to Cassandra Chong, Senior Marketing Manager of Tan & Tan Developments, the trend presents both opportunities as well as cause for caution. "When certain units in a development are converted into Airbnb rentals, there are genuine concerns about safety and comfort of the other residents. I'm also acutely aware of how it can affect the brand of a development," she said. "In more affluent neighbourhoods, such as Bangsar, residents are already up in arms about it, but it has yet to be addressed properly by the authorities."

Cassandra continues, "Airbnb presents wonderful opportunities for property investors and we as developers must keep abreast of such trends, and perhaps even cater to it. Moving forward, however, I hope to see fair regulations enforced so that property investors can continue to prosper while residents can continue to reside in a safe and comfortable environment."



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Run for Red

The Mid Valley City Charity Run



Ms. Gabrielle Tan (in tutu) presenting a prize to one of the many best-dressed 'Crazy Bottom' winners.

"MVCCR 2016 has been a year in the making and the team behind it worked hard to get this off the ground. This year, a 'crazy bottoms' element is incorporated into Mid Valley City's third charity run to promote and emphasize the 'fun' in this fun run. A 'family category' is another new addition this year in which kids too are able to join in to be part of the 3,000 participants, with whom we aim to raise awareness of health and well-being towards the general public along with a further RM130,000 towards the Malaysian Red Crescent. It's great to see the positive response we got from the running community as well as the general public for the MVCCR 2016."

- Ms. Gabrielle Tan, Director of Marketing for The Gardens Mall



Last April, the 3rd Mid Valley City Charity Run (MVCCR) found runners blazing through and around the adjoining Mid Valley Megamall and The Gardens Mall. 3,000 participants took part in the initiative to raise awareness on health and wellbeing.

A Zumba warm-up session, led by trainers from Celebrity Fitness, kicked off the event, which led runners through a carnival-like atmosphere filled with fun obstacles, put in the way by, aptly, Kids e-World, a children's play gym located in The Gardens Mall. The addition of the 'Family' category this time around encouraged families to engage in healthy activities together; the 'Crazy Bottoms' theme added more than a touch of hilarity as adults and kids alike donned tutus, pyjamas and other comical outfits as part of their running apparel.

The charity run only spanned five kilometres but an impressive RM130,000 was raised. Proceeds were forwarded to the Malaysian Red Crescent (MRC), a non-profit organisation that promotes humanitarian causes; volunteers of MRC were also on standby to provide first-aid assistance.

The end of the run was far from the end of the day. A bump ball tournament, live performances, games and a lucky draw continued for the rest of the day, which were fuelled by fruits, juices, popcorn and yoghurt ice-cream, all generously donated by tenants from the malls.



BY TAN MEI SIAN,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ELEMENTS MEDICAL FITNESS



Growing up, my ambition was to be a doctor. Well, that wasn't meant to be, due to my family wanting me to go into business. But I find myself now entrenched in healthcare and wellness as I oversee and pursue all ventures of that nature for Goldis Berhad.

It is not just work for me. I live it. Every weekday morning at 7:00am you will find me coaching or training at CrossFit GTX, an outdoor CrossFit box (gym) located on the 7th floor of GTower (*Editor's note: Mei Sian is a CrossFit Level 2 Trainer, one of only nine in Malaysia*). CrossFit is known for its General Physical Preparedness training, which means that CrossFitters train for any physical challenge thrown at them. Life is, after all, about being ready for the unknown and the unknowable.

One of the reasons I like CrossFit is its focus on functional movements. For instance, a squat, when scaled back, is the same movement as sitting down; a deadlift is similar to picking something up from the floor. These everyday movements, which we take for granted when we are younger, become challenging as we age, and I have seen it happen to the older members of my family. Fitness and health is about prolonging these functions and reducing degradation, so that we can have the best quality of life for as long as possible.

Today, we have good acute care services and facilities. Yet, chronic diseases are taking over as the world's leading killers, not just in Malaysia but globally. When I speak to insurance companies, they tell me that in the last few years, medical claims have skyrocketed. This is happening in spite of growing awareness and a shift towards healthier lifestyles.



Food plays an important role here. A tomato today and a tomato yesterday are not equal. Scientific studies have found that food crops grown decades ago were far richer in vitamins and minerals than they are now; intensive agricultural farming has simply depleted soil, and the fruits and vegetables which grow from it, of their nutrients.

A healthy diet can be measured using this simple equation:

$$\text{Healthy Diet} = \frac{\text{Nutrients}}{\text{Calories}}$$

We want to pack as much nutrition into as few calories as possible. When we eat the wrong foods, which are low in nutrients, our bodies signal us to eat more to obtain the nutrients we lack. Health issues occur if we fill this void with empty calories and the wrong types of foods, and may ultimately lead to weight gain, diabetes, high cholesterol and heart disease.

Unfortunately, most would rather pop a pill than change their lifestyles. Another reason that people have poor diets is the price of healthy foods. In the United States, a burger only costs a dollar, which may only get you half a head of cabbage in the supermarket. In Malaysia, our much-loved local hawker

stalls are cheap and found at nearly every corner, while the whole foods selections here are fewer and much more expensive. Furthermore, there are many preservatives and chemicals added to our foods, which may potentially have unknown health implications to ourselves and our children. The good news is that people are generally becoming more health conscious and moving towards more natural, whole foods. What is important is education and learning how to read food labels and we ourselves selecting more nutritious foods. Even now, we can choose to forgo the *roti canai* breakfast and have eggs and a *kopi O* instead.

Amidst all these new health trends, I'm very excited about the technology that is now available, which can revolutionise healthcare. Genotyping can now reveal a myriad of health risks and conditions, and the service is exponentially cheaper and quicker than before. We can now find out how one-size-fit-all medicines and dosages would affect us personally (e.g. a person found with increased sensitivity to warfarin, a blood thinner, can be given less to avoid them from bleeding excessively if ever needed). In addition, we can find out how fast we metabolise caffeine or if we are sensitive to carbohydrates in order to guide what

we should eat, if we have fast or slow twitch muscles to guide what exercises we should do, or even what diseases we may be more susceptible to, so we can prevent these from happening in the first place. With this knowledge in hand, we can make smart lifestyle choices, whether changing our diet or exercise types to complement or enhance what nature has bestowed us.

This brings me to what I believe would be an extremely powerful health tool of the future, and one which is close to my heart – Analytics. As an example, *The China Study*, one of the largest nutritional studies conducted to date, extensively examined the diets, lifestyle, and disease characteristics of 6,500 people in 65 rural Chinese counties. In the end, the researchers found 8,000 statistically significant associations between health, diet and lifestyle. Imagine if we could harness vast medical history data such as this and use it to predict and prevent illnesses in others. We would be able to offer personalised medicine based on genotyping as well as actual historical evidence.

I find the future of healthcare very promising and exciting; at Elements Medical Fitness, I want to offer clients this future. Healthcare should cover

these aspects: predictive; preventive; personalised and proactive. We advocate functional medicine, which considers the body as a whole when diagnosing localised ailments – the cause of a symptom may not necessarily be at its location. When we discover the root cause, we treat it naturally, if possible, and refer to medical specialists when necessary.

For instance, we have had great success with our smoking cessation programme, through mind-coaching and acupuncture; there is no drug involved. Our weight loss programme has seen people shedding kilogrammes in a healthy and, very importantly, sustainable way; participants encourage and are encouraged by each other, so there is a communal spirit because of our shared health goals. This is alike the spirit of CrossFit, where we all work out together, whether beginners or advanced CrossFitters. What matters is that we go through it together and that we improve, and for this we cheer each other on.

I wanted to be a doctor because I wanted to help people. So, when I see people getting the results they want or improving their health, I feel like I am doing exactly that, helping people live happier, healthier, and fitter lives.



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The Kuala Lumpur dining scene runs the gamut of local and international cuisines, from hawkers by the side of the streets to fine dining overlooking the city's night vista. As if it was not interesting enough, new concepts keep popping up, taking away the chance for resident foodies to ever get bored.

Dining Differently in Kuala Lumpur

Speakeasy Bars

During the Prohibition era (from 1920 until 1933) in America, the production and consumption of alcohol was outlawed, and not even the threat of prosecution could separate Man and booze. Bootlegging became a lucrative business and speakeasies – bars where people could imbibe in secret – proliferated. Fast-forward to today, modern bars have appropriated – or rather, misappropriated – the term to give themselves a mysterious aura. A number of modern speakeasies have sneaked into Kuala Lumpur; though they are legally operated, they do not have a discernable façade or clearly visible entrance, nor do they openly advertise their presence. That being said, with the existence of social media today, they are the city's worst kept secrets.

If you make your way to the basement of Bangunan Menara Ming Annexe, you might come across a forbidding ventilation door that warns you against entering, in four different languages no less. If you take courage and push the door open, you will find yourself not inside an electric closet, but in **Omakase+Appreciate**, an intimate room with two mixologists behind the bar whipping up unique concoctions for their patrons.



If you prefer somewhere brighter with more breathing space, then head to **Barlai**, which occupies the ground floor of Sekeping Sin Chew Kee, a building that aptly dates back to the 1920s and has been converted into a guesthouse by Malaysia's famed landscape architect, Ng Sek San. Here, an alcoholic spin is given to local beverages, creating cocktails like *kopi-O-tini* and whiskey-laced *Milo*. Finding other speakeasies in the city is like looking for hidden gems that aren't trying very hard to stay hidden at all.

Underground Dining

Some chefs have the skill and the passion, but don't have the capital to set up a restaurant, but it does not mean that the dream has to die. Enterprising hobby chefs have found ways to turn their interests into a sort of part-time employment, by hosting dinners in their own homes or in borrowed venues, commitment-free.

Pop-Up Dining KL runs supper club-like events every two to three times a month. Themes and venues are only announced through social media a few weeks prior and seats – ranging from RM100 to RM200 each – are limited; the host restaurant or café is given a percentage of the profits for the use of the venue and kitchen. The masterminds of the events, who are also the chefs, have kept their day jobs despite the success of the pop-up dining concept.

Other aspiring chefs simply use their own kitchens and open up their homes to diners. **Huck's Café** is really a residential bungalow tucked away in Bangsar, belonging to autodidact chef, Huck Seng, whose expertise was learnt from cooking for his family.

Vintage Charm

The success of dining outlets can be as much reliant on its ambience as the quality of its food and service. A wave of nostalgia seems to have washed over Kuala Lumpur as restaurants and cafes are occupying old buildings and retaining the charm of antiquity, such as Barlai does.

Not too far away, along Petaling Street, a turquoise door stands out at the end of a block of old shoplots. It is the entrance into **Merchant Lane**, through which you enter only to be beckoned by red lights to climb up the staircase into the café; the choice of illumination is evidently a nod to the building's former vocation as a brothel in the eighties. Today, it is a popular brunch haven for KLites. Peeling walls and hints of the past are still evident, evoking curiosity about the lives that moved through this space in a time gone by. The décor is a fusion of Malaysian, Chinese and modern influences, an instagram-friendly theme that continues even in the one-page menu featuring dishes born from the same delicious fusion.

Other restaurants like **Wondermama's** outlets do not occupy old buildings, but recreate a similar ambience with a "mix of colonial design and industrial chic".

Dark Dining

When you lose one sense, the others are enhanced. The concept of removing your vision to enhance the dining experience began in Germany, and found its way to Malaysia a few years ago, with **Dining in the Dark KL** on Changkat Bukit Bintang. First-time diners are often taken aback at the pitch darkness, but it is surprising how quickly the other senses heighten to compensate.

It is not unusual for diners to abandon their utensils and revert to eating with their hands, an almost sensual experience when performed in the dark and while sipping wine which smell and taste are also enhanced. The question that often gets asked is how the servers find their way around, and like most dark dining restaurants, they are usually blind or visually impaired.

The menu remains a secret throughout the meal, and it is not unusual for dinner conversation to become a guessing game as to what you and your fellow diners are feasting on. The dishes and their ingredients are not revealed until you reemerge from the darkness, after the meal ends, and you will be surprised to discover how much you really rely on sight to discern your meals.



OMAKASE+APPRECIATE
Bangunan Ming Annexe, Jalan Ampang
Tue-Fri : 5:00 pm - 1:00 am
Sat : 9:00 pm - 1:00 am
<https://www.facebook.com/OmakaseAppreciate/>

BARLAI
3 Jalan Sin Chew Kee
Mon-Fri : 5:00 pm - 3:00 am
Sat-Sun : 3:00 pm - 3:00 am
<http://thebiggroup.co/bignightout/barlai>

POP-UP DINING-KL
<https://www.facebook.com/PopUpDiningKL/>
<https://www.instagram.com/popupdiningkl>

HUCK'S CAFÉ
22, Jalan Abdullah, Bangsar
Phone: +60 3-2282 2126

MERCHANT LANE
150, Jalan Petaling
Mon-Fri (closed Weds): 11:30 am - 10:00 pm
Sat-Sun: 9:30 am - 10:00 am

WONDERMAMA
G6, Ground Floor, Bangsar Village,
1, Jalan Telawi 1, Bangsar Baru
Mon-Thur : 9:00 am-11:00 pm
Fri-Sat : 9:00 am-11:30 pm
Sun : 9:00 am-10:30 pm

DINING IN THE DARK KL
50, Changkat Bukit Bintang
<http://dininginthedarkkl.com/>
Daily: 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm



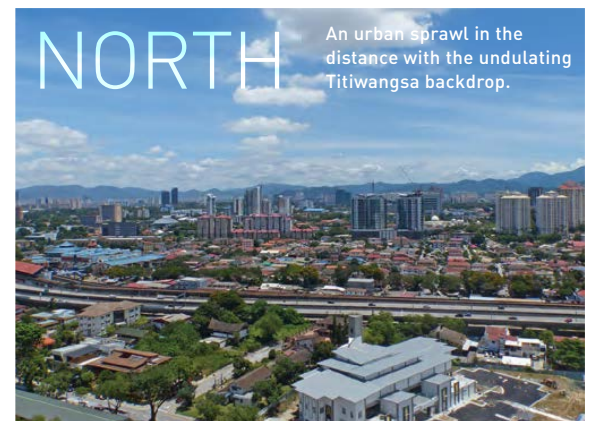
DAMAI RESIDENCE

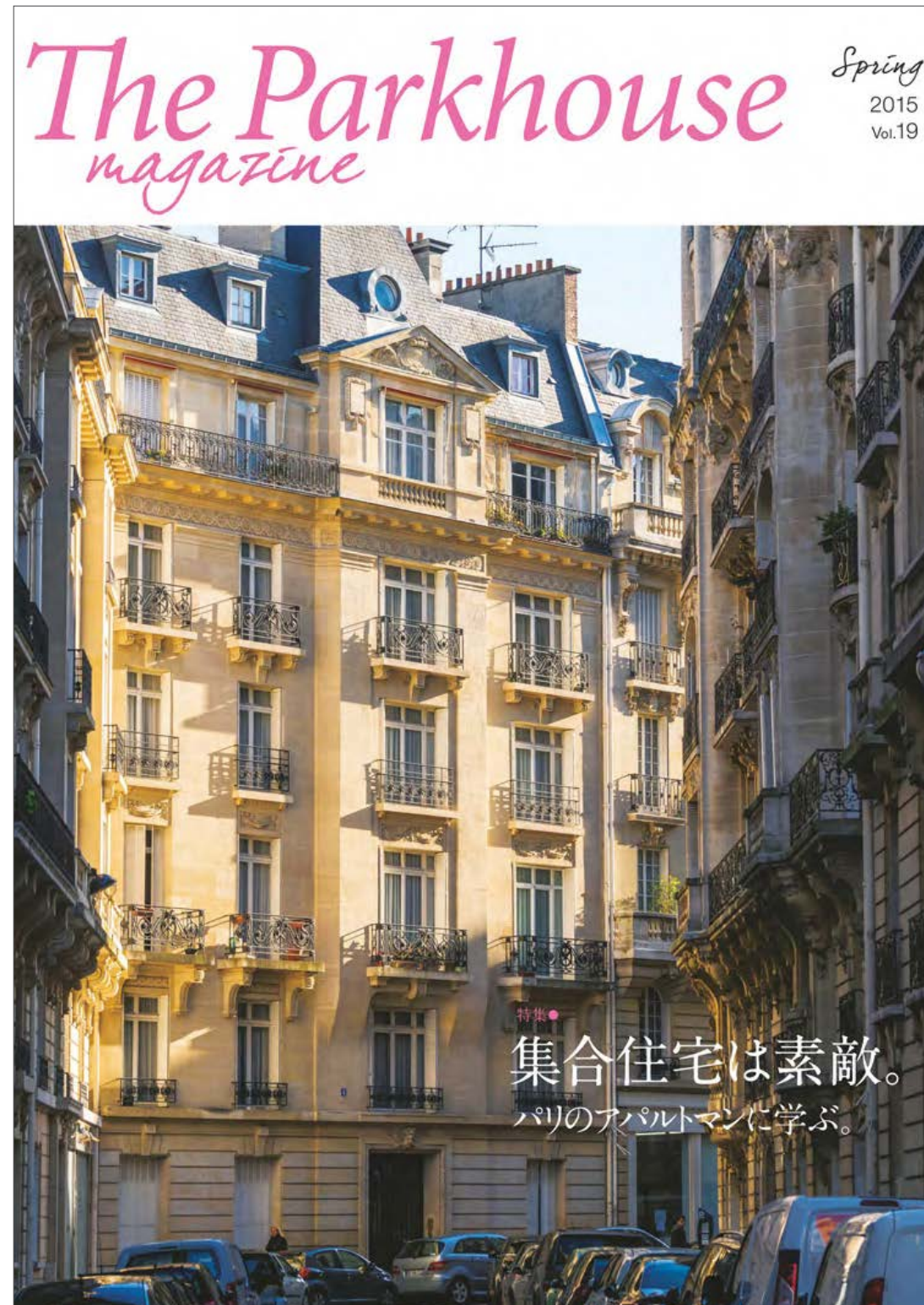
Just a Scuttle Away
from the Bustle

Damai Residence is a sleek 20-storey condominium that occupies a secluded nook just off Jalan Ampang. Situated at the edge of the city, with Suria KLCC being just two kilometres away, this freehold residence manages to be strategic while not being entirely engulfed by the bustle of city dwelling. Located all around are amenities such as Hock Choon Supermarket, Ampwalk, Intermark, Royal Selangor Golf Club, The Raintree Club, Prince Court Hospital, and Gleneagles Hospital.

Housing just 30 spacious units and a penthouse, exclusivity and privacy is prized as this gated residence has just two units a floor, with the lift delivering you to your private lift lobby. The architecture takes pride in its simplistic approach while being imbued with natural light, breeze and beautiful vistas.

RIISING ABOVE THE DAMAI
NEIGHBOURHOOD TO MAGNIFICENT
SURROUNDING VISTAS





Front Cover of "The Parkhouse magazine" 2015 Vol.19



DUAL-PURPOSE DEVELOPMENTS

A HOME AND HOTSPOT FOR BIODIVERSITY

An earlier version of this article appears in The Parkhouse magazine (TPHM), a seasonal magazine published by Mitsubishi Jisho Residence (MJR). MJR, a subsidiary of Mitsubishi Estate, is a developer that specialises in building condominiums, mainly in Tokyo's central business district of Marunouchi as well as the city's urban areas, and large condominiums in rural neighborhoods. TPHM features ongoing and completed developments and behind-the-scenes coverage, as well as modern housing trends, and tips on incorporating them into condominiums. The 2015 spring volume focuses on the Bio Net Initiative (BNI).

Tan & Tan Developments' admiration for the Japanese expertise in innovation and functionality led to its partnership with MJR. The partnership has culminated in the development of Stonor 3, a curated condominium at the centre of Kuala Lumpur.



Image of the "Area Community Program" held by "The Parkhouse Nishi Shinjuku Tower 60"

In Japan, MJR develops high quality condominiums under The Parkhouse brand, which pursues ideal living environments for its customers. In 2015, MJR launched the Bio Net Initiative (BNI) Project to preserve the biological diversity in places where The Parkhouse projects are located. Diversity and unique life thrive within parks and gardens in the city; birds and butterflies carry seeds and pollen from neighbouring towns, giving life to the next generation of plants.

MJR seeks to promote these flourishing systems by adopting BNI in its property developments, essentially converting its condominiums into biodiverse hotspots by incorporating lush greenery; these pockets of greenery take into consideration the biodiversity that exists in their larger surroundings. Residents enjoy the consequential benefit of being able to participate in and observe the green spaces, utilising the five senses to appreciate the beauty of nature and learning to preserve the lifecycle of the ecosystem.



Artist's impression of "The Parkhouse Chitose Karasu Yama Glorio Southern Court"



Artist's impression of "The Parkhouse Nishi Shinjuku Tower 60"

The BNI subscribes to five principles: to protect; to nurture; to connect; to use, and to reduce.



TO PROTECT...

The BNI embraces the concept of preserving the original. The Glossy Privet tree, for example, has a tendency to invade other existing plants; it is therefore usually not a choice when it comes to deciding which trees and flowers to plant.



TO NURTURE...

This refers to researching and cultivating native plants to ensure an environment that is conducive for both people and nature to thrive.



TO CONNECT...

The idea is to "connect" all The Parkhouse condominiums, so that birds and butterflies can fleet freely within this network, and rest in the green spaces provided by The Parkhouse developments; these life forms can interact freely with the existence of this network.



TO USE...

Cutting of tree branches and limbs are kept to a minimum, in order to preserve and "use" the natural form of each species. The use of pesticides is also limited, as it would have an effect on worms and microorganisms indigenous to the area. Planting management within the residences adheres strictly to the rule of preservation and the use of what is native.



TO REDUCE...

By selecting plants and trees that have lower risk of disease and pest-infestation, the use of pesticides can be "reduced". Furthermore, by using shrubs and groundcover plants to surface the soil and by choosing low-maintenance trees, there will be a reduction of rubbish comprising fallen leaves.



THE GARDEN WARRIOR

EDIBLE GARDENS HAVE BEEN AROUND SINCE THE TIME MAN HAD A PATCH OF EARTH AND LEARNED TO CULTIVATE. IN THE PAST, IT WAS COMMONPLACE TO PLANT FRUIT TREES, HERBS AND A VEGETABLE OR TWO IN THE AVAILABLE SURROUNDING LANDS NEAR OUR HOMES. SKIPPING FORWARD TO TODAY'S URBAN ENVIRONMENT COUPLED WITH LAND SCARCITY AND RISING FOOD PRICES, EDIBLE GARDENS HAVE GAINED A NEW RESURGENCE AMONGST URBANITES. WYNNEE GOH, AN AVID HOME GARDENER, IS HARDLY A NEWCOMER TO THE SCENE. MANAGER OF WYNNEE'S HOME FARM IN KLANG, SHE HAS HONED HER ADMIRABLE NURTURING ABILITIES FROM THE WEE AGE OF SEVEN. GROWING UP IN A KAMPUNG ACCORDED HER A LOT OF LAND TO INDULGE IN PLANTING GREENS, WHICH SHE DID VEHEMENTLY, INCULCATING THE SAME HABITS AND DISCIPLINE EVIDENT IN HER HOME FARM TODAY. BACK THEN, THE FRUITS OF HER LABOUR WERE HARVESTED BY HER FAMILY AS WELL AS HER FATHER'S WORKERS FOR THEIR OWN CONSUMPTION. TODAY, WYNNEE ALSO SHARES AND EXCHANGES HER PRODUCE BESIDES SELLING THEM.



Looking at her prolific outdoors, it is easy to assume that a lot of time is spent here. Various pots and raised beds dotting the landscape, garden walls covered with an intricate network of pumpkin vines and flowering creepers, sturdy trellises supporting heavyset wintermelons, all bear evidence to such dedicated craft. Wynnee humbly describes this as a passionately pursued hobby. The farm was initially tended to mainly after work at night or on the weekends. She then decided to further embrace her love for gardening and took a payout which allowed for fewer days at the office and more time doing what she loved best.

The entire home garden ecosystem is self-sustainable as Wynnee believes in natural pest control by means of symbiotic relationships and companion planting. “The water hyacinth plants attract frogs which in turn will eat other insects and help control the snail population. Besides, a plant that is under attack by any predators will give me a good indication that it is weak, as critters only go after plants that emit a certain ‘hormone’ to indicate susceptibility,” she explains. Honolulu creepers attract bees and the tiny, aquatic azolla plant, or more commonly known as water fern, traps nitrogen from the air and disperses it into the water, making it a powerful biofertiliser.

Wynnee also staunchly opines that the key to a perpetually healthy plant is healthy soil. In general, two methods of fertilisation are used at her home farm; ground fertilisation using compost and aerial fertilisation using spray. While both methods are used - aerobic and anaerobic - anaerobic composting is preferred as less space is required to do it and one can add in even cooked foods and meats. “Composting promotes sustainability. About 30% of our waste is food waste and anaerobic composting allows you to compost nearly all of it with the exception of big whole bones, liquids and rotten foods.”

Wynnee has savvily converted a nondescript plastic bin to be equipped with a raised platform and a drainage hole that fits a tap, thus creating a vessel to contain her anaerobic compost. She then sprinkles her own compost starter, *bokashi*, which is Japanese for fermented organic matter; it is made up of rice bran, molasses and effective microbes, layered in the bin with compost matter, then repeating the process before letting it ferment for two weeks before transferring it to further compost another two weeks in the ground.

Through all these means of natural fertilisation deployed in her home farm, no form of chemical fertiliser is necessary. “It [chemical fertilisers] can give lushness immediately, however



WHITE BRINJAL



WYNNEE



MASUI DAUPHINE FIG



BOKASHI COMPOST BIN



BURGUNDY CUSTARD APPLE



CURLY KALE



LACINATO KALE



RED AMARANTH



ROUND CLUSTER LEMON



WHITE BITTER GOURD



BATIK TAPIOCA



AZOLLA



WYNNEE'S HOME FARM



CABBAGE



STINGLESS BEE



OKRA



HONOLULU CREEPER



WINTER MELON

year round as compared to their native soil,” Wynnee enthuses.

Our conversation with Wynnee is interspersed with arrivals of other gardening enthusiasts. We ask about her interaction with these individuals and also how it extends to online support such as forums and Facebook groups. “Those who pay a visit will seek advice about their pest problems, non-thriving fruits, or ask how I manage that particular plant in my garden. Some will bring pictures for further analysis. For the online community, I will post pictures from my garden to inspire them, to show them that is doable.”

We also ask how people living in high-rise buildings could also indulge in this edible garden effort, despite the obvious lack of land; Wynnee suggests, “They can start by planting herbs or even the tiny Brazilian spinach. As long as there is a balcony with full sunlight, it should be sufficient. One can always plant in pots or even attempt vertical planting. In fact, grafting has produced smaller, dwarf-sized fruit trees that can easily find a home in an apartment as well.”

Wynnee and her home garden are an inspiration for many who wish to grow

their own food. Debunking the need for green thumbs, she is a reminder that all we need to invest is a little time and a lot of patience as plants, being living things, require our care and nurture too.

For further enquiries on composting, organic gardening or to visit Wynnee’s home farm, call her at 012-6292526.

This is an abbreviated version of an article that appears on Tan & Tan Developments’ website. To read the full article, visit www.tantan.com.

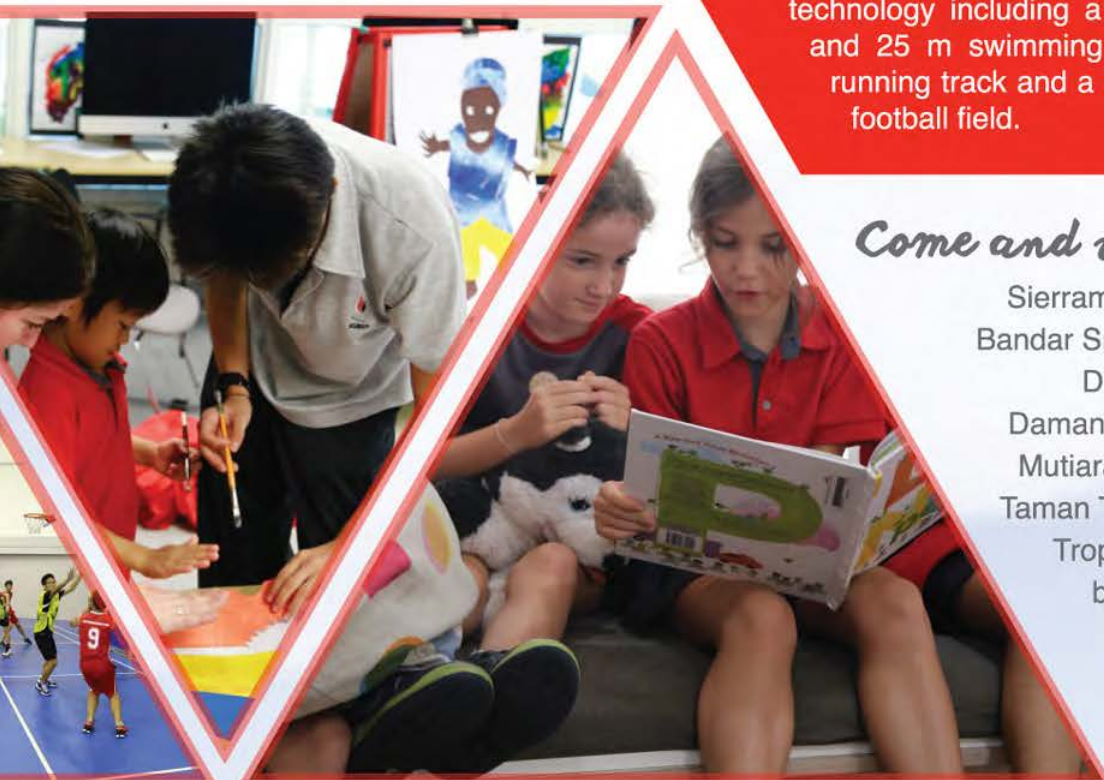
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Residents in Park Manor enjoy many luxuries and amenities, such as 24-hour security and guard patrols, a sumptuous swimming pool and private clubhouse with a children's play area and pool, all of which make this small tranquil community the ideal place to raise a family.

For more information, please visit www.tantan.com