

In A Decade



Lifestyle Homes By Nic & Wes Builders



Founder's Message

Jude and I have always wanted to make the somewhat complex process of home creating and building, simple and enjoyable. Thus, creativity and providing a platform of simplicity in building Lifestyle Homes has been the foundation of Nic & Wes in this past decade.

Time flew by so quickly... a fruitful one at that. It honestly began with taking one little step at a time to creating the next waypoint. The path was unclear with no end point in the distant horizon, just a general direction to head towards. Ten years later, and while the destination has become a little less foggy, the journey thus far has been filled with remarkable growth. Looking at the Real Estate market as a whole, it is too huge and diverse to fathom a real end point.

The past ten years of Nic & Wes has allowed us to provide and improve the Design & Build procurement, proving its efficiency as an effective main point of contact alternative to the conventional pathway by hand-holding clients from the start to the end journey through the somewhat perilous process of home building. The strength of our company comes mainly from a solid and cohesive team working with one end point in mind - to create not just great houses but beautiful and functional homes with the addition of a "wow factor".

It is true that "no man is an island", and Nic & Wes will not be where it is today if it weren't for an important group of people.

Firstly, my wife and life-long partner, Jude who has been the soul of Nic & Wes since it was a seedling, who has an extraordinary flair of transforming nothing into something spectacular with her constant pursuit of perfection.

Communication and control of the whole procurement is the cornerstone to a successful build, and the consistency is to use as much of the build force under our direct employ. Having my great friend and business partner, Roy, who continually challenges and creates new pathways to extend our boundaries of efficient and

effective service, has helped to bring our company to new heights. We are also blessed and very fortunate to have with us an operational team of loyal long-term staff including Eileen, Jeffrey, Somu, Palani and Rajan who work hand-in-hand to co-ordinate, schedule, build, design, decorate and furnish the Nic & Wes Lifestyle Homes, and together with our in-house realtors led by Randell who source, buy and sell homes that allows us to offer a one-stop shop building experience. Also an integral part of our business family is our crew of foreign nationals, many of whom have been with us since inception, whose loyalty, good-naturedness and hardworking attitudes have brought the Lifestyle Homes designs to reality. On top of the in-house team, the architects, engineers, suppliers and sub-cons who have built a good and reliable working relationship with us have also effectively contributed to our vision of Lifestyle Living.

While it was initially a challenge to convince clients to embark on the Design & Build route, it is with the support of the clients through the years who have put their faith in Nic & Wes that too have played a huge part in growing our seedling of a business into a fruiting tree.

Last but not least, our two children, Nicole and Wesley, who are our inspiration to create an effective platform for growth while providing a legacy for generations to come. And without whom, this book would not have materialised – Nicole, who took charge providing the essence for this coffee table book through her flair for writing and growing knack for architectural photography, as well as Wesley providing the creative direction and innate talent for photography.

We want to take this opportunity to thank all for their contributions and continued support as we celebrate Nic & Wes in a decade.

Brian and Jude Kow
Founders of Nic & Wes

Nic & Wes

BUILDERS PTE LTD

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SEATED FROM LEFT: Brian Kow, and Jude Kow
STANDING FROM LEFT: Nicole Kow and Wesley Kow

About Us

Incorporated in 2002, Nic & Wes Builders Pte Ltd is an established Singapore-based builder specialising in private residential houses with a forte in the design and build procurement. At Nic & Wes Builders, our purpose is to bring to life the concepts of our clients' houses through unparalleled workmanship and high-quality materials. Empowering our clients with the ability to individualise their homes according to their needs and personality, we pride ourselves on our honesty and integrity in every aspect of our work to make our clients' dream homes a reality.

With a strong focus on providing a myriad of building solutions, we offer a one-stop shop platform by managing our clients' homes from start to the handover. Our customer service engagement is first-class as we adopt an open communication line between our team of dedicated professionals and the clients.

While performing as the conductor in this orchestra, Nic & Wes Builders also controls the design aspect to ensure that it not only incorporates both practicality and aesthetics but also meet the clients' expectations. With a strong foundation and understanding of the constraints and rules that come with building structures, our skill in space-planning and attention to detail are fundamental in constructing glamorous, yet functional homes. We strive to build not just houses, but Lifestyle Homes; a sanctuary for homeowners to relish returning home at the end of the day.

From its humble beginning, Nic & Wes Builders has grown from a small, yet dedicated workforce of eight to its current pool of forty personnel passionately working in unity towards the same goal – Designing and Building Lifestyle Homes To Be Proud Of.

With years of building an impressive property portfolio under our belt, Nic & Wes Builders thrives on the principle of upholding an honest business front to establish a reputable enterprise providing reliable services to the best of our abilities.

In recognition to the company's flourishing success in the industry, Nic & Wes Builders is honoured to receive the Successful Entrepreneur award for 2010 as well as the 2011/12 Circle Of Excellence award by Asia Business Brands.



Colonial Elegance

Inspired by the colonial black and white bungalows, this majestic home went through a major reconstruction to mimic the style of a 19th century house. An array of black and white houses around Singapore is the perfect sources of inspiration for the look and feel of this home. Its classic colonial design with contrasting monochrome façade distinctively sets this home apart in the estate. Equipped with a generous amount of land space, its luscious garden of plants and flowers creates its very own eco-system.

Elegant verandas are proudly supported by solid old-style pillars with black and white detailing overlooking its botanical garden. The soothing trickle of water from its nearby turquoise dip pool complements the back-to-nature feel within the home.

While the exterior closely mimics that of a black and white colonial home, timber strip flooring and vintage-restored definitive pieces help to further exude that old world charm.

DESCRIPTION

Work done:	Reconstruction
Type:	Bungalow
Concept:	Colonial
Land size:	5,100 sqft
Built up:	4,500 sqft
Rooms & Features:	Bedrooms 4 + 1, Study Den, Living and Dining Area, Kitchen, Pool, Luscious Garden

BELOW: A double volume ceiling keeps the dining area spacious while connecting the second floor with a tranquil overview of the pool.





ABOVE: Repetitive retro style precast concrete blocks create a unique lace-like background amidst the light cascading water feature. Terracotta tiles, a common feature in colonial architecture, pave the exterior circumference of this home.



ABOVE: A hint of classic oriental flavour is infused with its toiletry fixtures, such as its sink bowl, cabinet, Chinese coin towel hooks and painting.

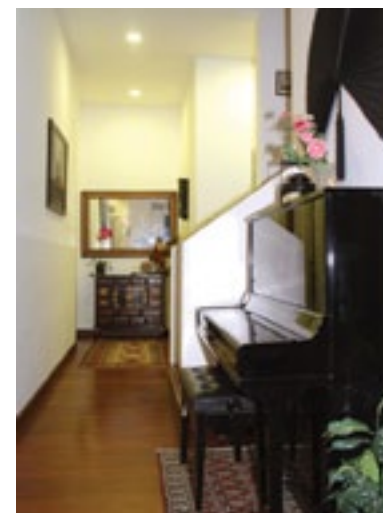


ABOVE: An Anna Sui-inspired bathroom adds the right touch of glam with its bold colour palette.



FAR LEFT: Strategically placed masculine pillars ooze a majestic splendour that is characteristically distinctive in colonial style bungalows.

LEFT: Thick screening plants borders the home to create a private sanctuary.



FAR LEFT: Instead of installing windows, French doors are incorporated in the interior, allowing natural winds to keep the home cool while giving it a very open and airy feel.

LEFT: Rectangular fanlights located above windows and doors maximise the flow of natural light into the home while illuminating the interior at night.

Peranakan Charm



Located in a tranquil setting where old Peranakan shophouses still line the street, this modernist Peranakan home breathes new life into this historical estate with its original retro post-war fittings setting the backdrop. With its attention-to-detail concept, the retro style fittings of the old era play an important part in bringing the Peranakan feel to life while minimalist detailing gives it a tinge of fresh and modern vibe.

Modeled after a typical Peranakan shophouse, the façade incorporates three bays with the centre window designed at full length, while the two windows on either side are carved at waist height to allow room for a decorative stucco panel below.

This beautifully designed home is also a contrast from the chromatic hues of tradition and makes the exterior a pleasing scene right out of a black and white postcard. A lush, yet compact garden space balances out its monochromatic exterior while a traditional iron gate further accentuates the look.

Unlike its exterior, the interior oozes with jewel tone hues of traditional Peranakan glamour. Distinct features of its antique state remain, but are now restored back to its former glory.

DESCRIPTION

Work done : Makeover
Type : Intermediate Terrace
Concept : Modern Peranakan
Land size : 1,900 sqft
Built up : 2,400 sqft
Rooms & Features : 4 Bedrooms, Living and Dining Area, Family Space, Patio





LEFT: Traditional colour hues and floral accessories play an important part in setting the Peranakan theme throughout the home.

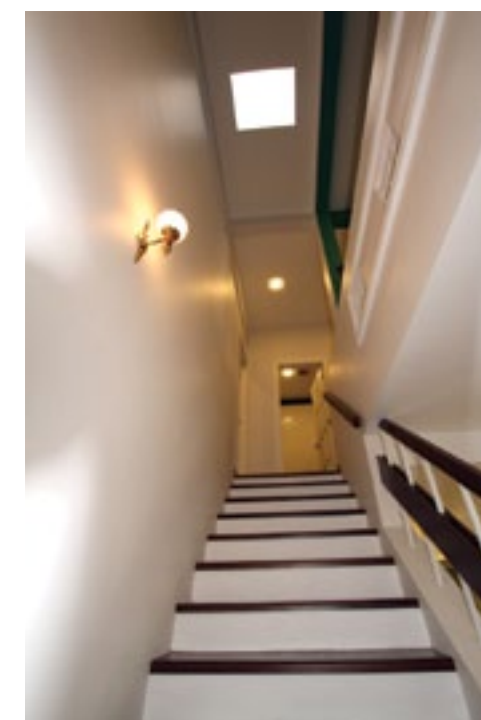
ABOVE: The classic wooden divider adorned with stained glass panels instantly adds a hint of Peranakan rustic charm at the entrance.



LEFT: A private patio at the back of the home provides a tranquil view of the garden, making it a perfect setting for an afternoon tea break.

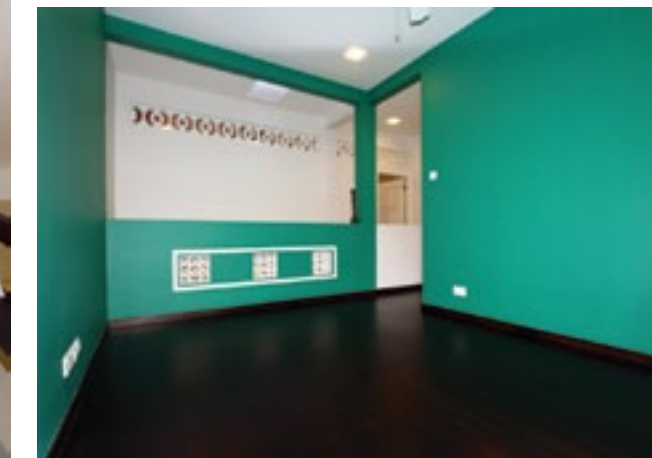
RIGHT: Hints of European colonial influences in Peranakan architectural history can be found in this bathroom.

FAR RIGHT: Timeless square mosaic tiles, which were popular back in the day, re-create the vintage look in the modern 21st century. A Peranakan-inspired dressing table was also customised to include a sink.



LEFT: The original state of an existing wooden banister is reused and given a thorough polishing to look brand new. A lightwell is installed to brighten a dim area.

BELOW: Pre-cast concrete airbricks run through the whole house to induce that rustic charm feel.



ABOVE: The use of double-shutter doors in the upper floors allows for air to flow through the rooms while maintaining the privacy of the room. The grey and white hues give a cool aura while minimalist detailing enhances the contemporary look.



Eclectic Infusion

This eclectic semi-detached home has undergone a few facade changes over the years, and is the epitome of how slight refinements can give the overlook a complete revamp.

From its initial tropical concept, this home has transformed into a modern black and white abode full of class and style. With only a fresh coat of paint and minor detailing required, the front façade was quickly revitalised into a modern and elegant home perfect for any family. With the infusion of monochromatic concept, the lush pop of greens becomes the essential addition to add a dash of nature to the home. A tea room overlooking the vast garden space makes a convenient patio complete with a lightweight polycarbonate sheet for the perfect shade during harsh sunlight or rain.

Threading along the colonial era, the interior, consisting of vintage pictures as well as timeless lighting and furniture, mirrors a balanced combination of class and colonial living. The creams and mocha colour palette adds a fresh dose of heritage era in the focal rooms.



DESCRIPTION

Work done	: Makeover
Type	: Semi-Detached
Concept	: Modern Black & White
Land size	: 4,200 sqft
Built up	: 3,400 sqft
Rooms & Features	: 6 Bedrooms, Kitchen, Two Living Rooms, Dining Area, Garden, Jacuzzi, Tea Room

OPPOSITE PAGE: Create a spa within your home with the acquisition of a jacuzzi underneath an attap cabana for that traditional elegance.



LEFT: Rough feature walls, Palimanan carvings and dark stained wooden furniture add to the tropical feel. Wooden laminate floors can be used as an alternative to parquet flooring.



ABOVE: To imbue a feeling of grandiose, a combination of two living rooms create a massively open atmosphere that continues to flow through to the dining room.

BELOW: Light mocha accented walls create a subdued canvas for the safari theme prints to stand out. The beautifully crafted wall detailing also help to bring this concept to a colonial safari of a bygone era.

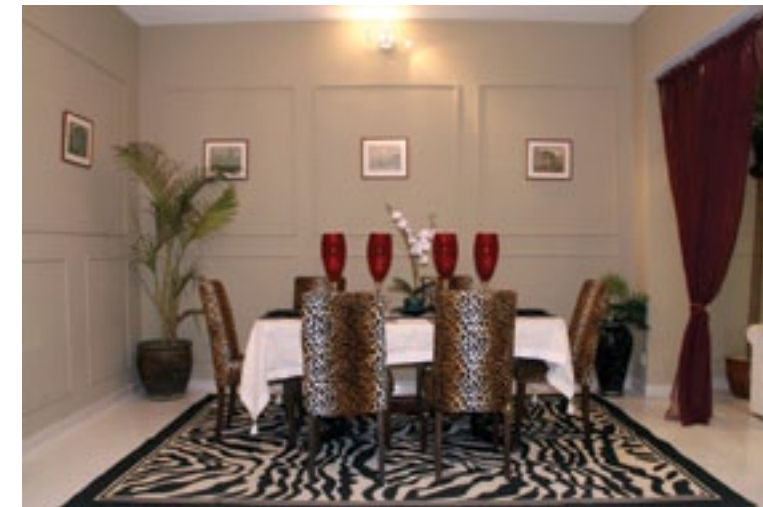
BELOW: Complementing the front façade, the kitchen similarly sticks with the monochrome concept. For a fresh look, cabinet doors were replaced for a more modern look.



FAR TOP: Bathrooms that lack high ceilings can be tiled up to the ceiling for an elegant effect. A black granite table top adds a hint of luxury to the tropical themed bathroom. Sturdy outdoor water-resistant woods such as Balau or Chengal are used in the bathroom to further enhance the tropical feel without affecting the quality of the materials.

ABOVE: While essential, a water closet is best hidden behind a feature wall to ensure that the view of the bathroom remains appealing. An illuminated trough and artificial tall stalks are added for visual appeal.

CLOCKWISE FROM RIGHT: With each bedroom having its own design concept, the house contains an eclectic mix of themes that suits the individual's own personality. This ensures that each bedroom can express its own creativity without affecting the main idea of the home.



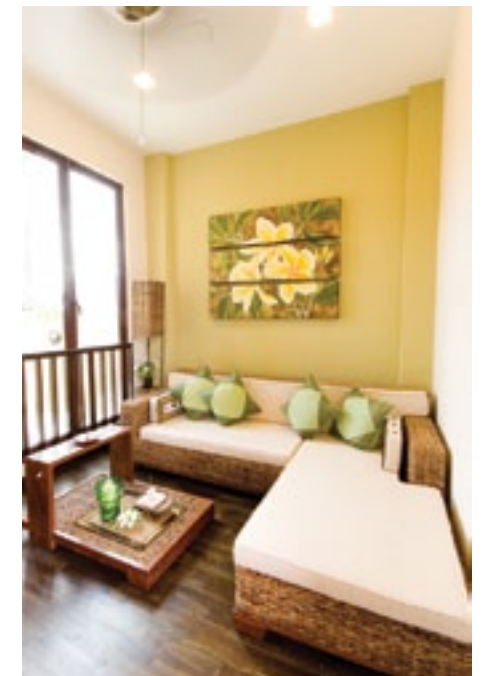
Balinese Allure



Beautifully built with a strong fusion of modern clean lines and tropical features, both the interior and exterior of this home incorporate a wide variety of natural elements. Dark stained wood plays a distinct accent throughout the home in detailing and furniture pieces. Other natural elements, such as stone, greens and water hyacinth, become crucial components that bring out the contrast and balance with the woods. Chromatic palette of earthly tones trends through the home to induce a soothing and relaxing ambience.

With land constraints and a narrow frontage, working upwards allows for the space practicality of accommodating a family unit. As intermediate terraces are built wall to wall, it is crucial that the outdoors is designed to be part of the house. A towering double-volume rock air well becomes the central indoor feature of the home that encompasses all the elements – earth, water, wind and fire (in this case light).

Roof terraces situated at the front and rear of the home are transformed into a substitute garden and entertainment area. Situated at the top, the view of the estate is a sensational sight during sunset.

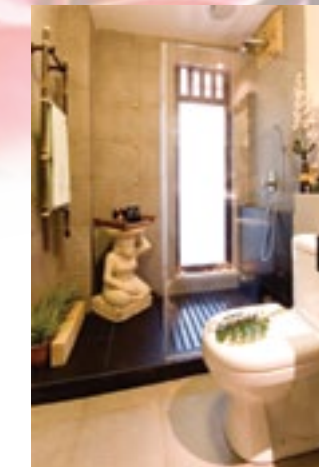
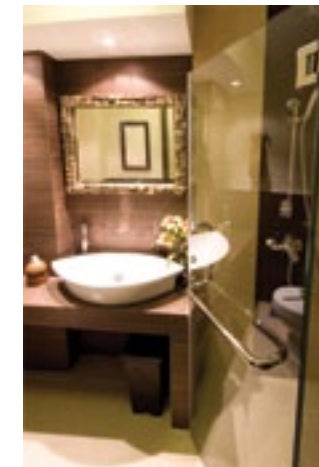
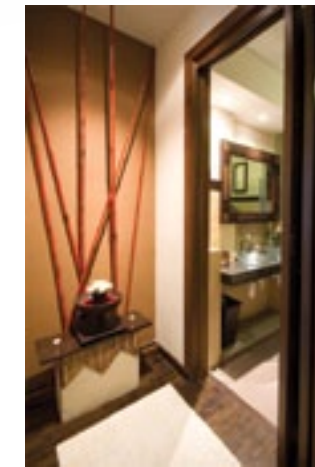
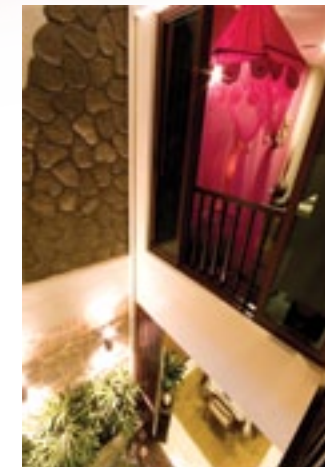
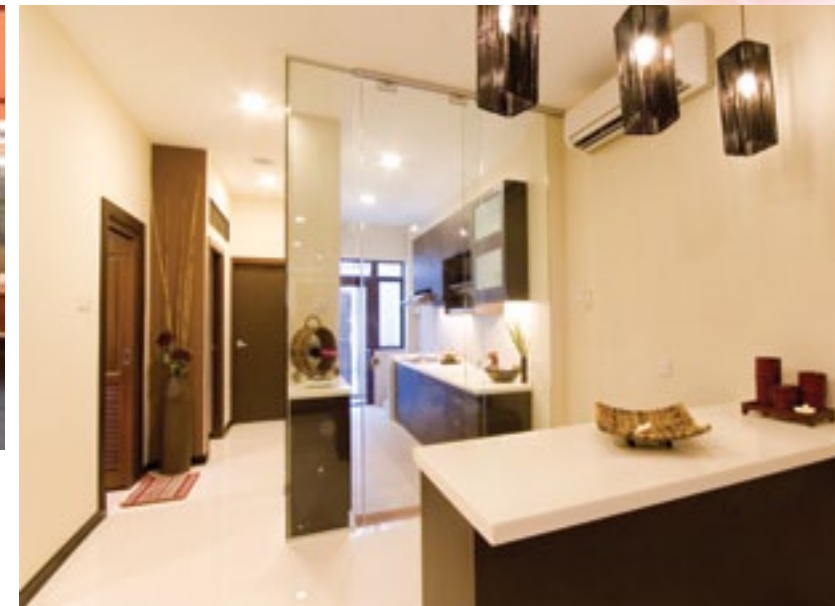
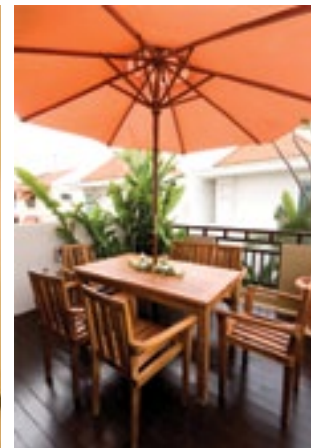
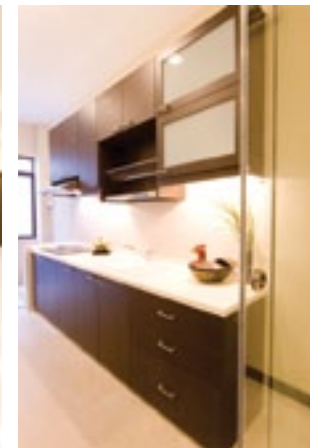
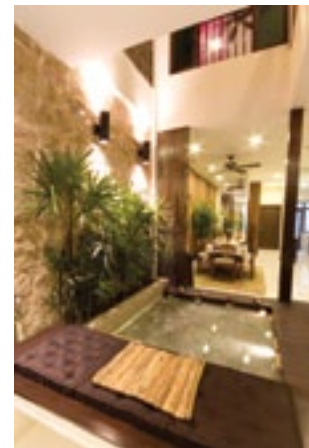
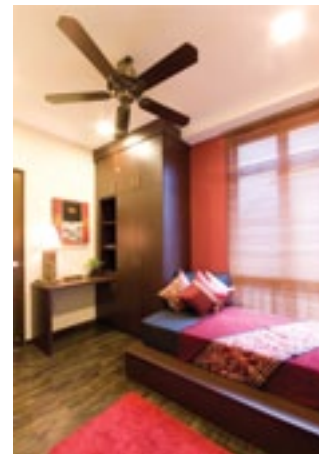


DESCRIPTION

Work done : Reconstruction
 Type : Intermediate Terrace
 Concept : Modern Tropical
 Land size : 1400 sqft
 Built up : 3000 sqft
 Rooms & Features : 5 Bedrooms, Formal Living and Dining Area, Air well, Indoor Pond, Open Rear Dining Area, Roof Terrace

OPPOSITE PAGE: Contrasting coffee hues break the stark width of a bare wall while defining the living room space.

ABOVE: Columns do not have to stick out like a sore thumb. Two columns supporting a wall can frame a painting perfectly.



ABOVE: With deck seats strategically placed around the indoor pond, the beautiful reflective light movements dancing on the trickling water makes for the perfect setting to unwind.

ABOVE: Wooden outdoor furniture, coupled with tropical plants to provide the natural backdrop, makes for a low-maintenance outdoor dining area.

ABOVE: Elegant dark brown tones keep the tropical feel flowing through the clean lines of modern minimalist cabinets that enveloped the kitchen.

ABOVE: French windows overlooking the airwell allow the interior to stay well-ventilated and airy.

ABOVE: The use of strategically placed Palimanan carvings successfully enhance the tropical feel amidst the luxurious brown hues of this bathroom.

Tranquil Retreat

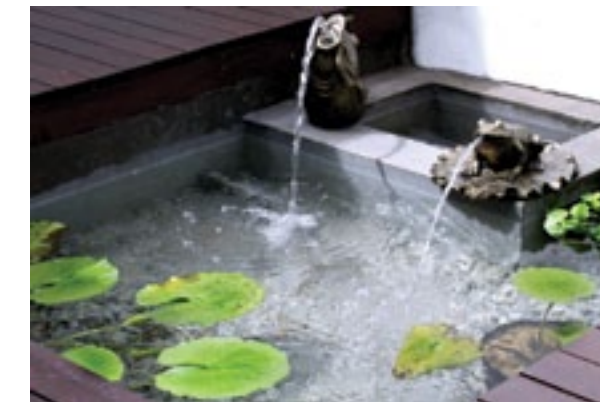


There is a certain charm that lingers after having a relaxing vacation. Such charm is usually difficult to be replicated at home, but the rustic beauty of this intermediate terrace ensures that the holiday charm lingers even after stepping out of the house.

This modern and stylish home incorporates hints of nature amidst the clean and streamlined design. While working around the elements of a laidback concept akin to a holiday beach retreat, the design embraces a sleek and contemporary concept that has been structured on the instructions of good feng shui.

A splash of dark chocolate on the exterior brings a bold gesture to the traditional choice of whites and creams. While detailing interior generally takes a higher precedence over the exterior, a statement exterior creates a long-lasting first impression.

A beautiful marriage between the modern and resort elements, each part of the home carefully embraces each concept to reveal a balance of this hybrid design. Taking advantage of its minimalist canvas, this home paves way for an art piece of an open-riser stairway which rises in unity from the first to the third floor to reveal a spacious balcony perfect to take in the view.



OPPOSITE PAGE: Brick effect walls adds a tinge of urban living while breaking the monotony of smooth white walls.

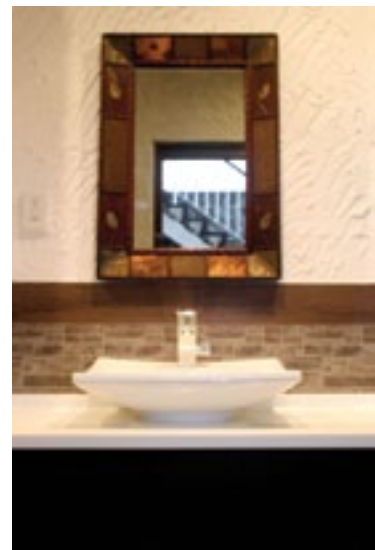
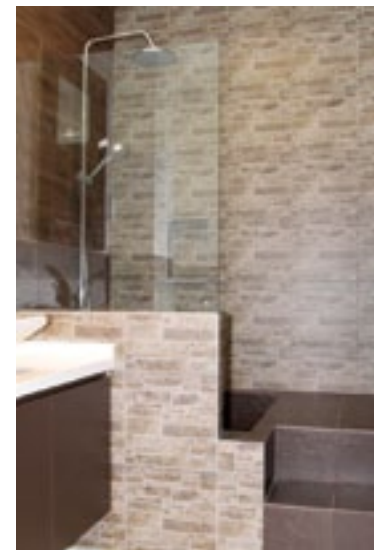
LEFT AND BELOW: Substituting a garden with a deck provides a stunning ambience for an outdoor dining area during those cool, breezy nights. The trickling from a quaint water feature adds a soothing and relaxing effect to outdoor dining.



DESCRIPTION

Work done : New Erection
Type : Intermediate Terrace
Concept : Holiday Retreat
Land size : 1,500 sqft
Built up : 2,600 sqft
Rooms & Features : 5 Bedrooms, Living and Dining Area, Air well, Indoor Pond, Open Rear Dining Area, Roof Terrace





LEFT & TOP: Concrete cast bathtubs are unique and highly customisable, aiding to accentuate the tropical flavours of rustic tiling. Earthly toned textured tiles are typical, yet essential pieces that cultivate the retreat feel.



LEFT: The beauty of this hybrid concept is the ability to broaden the spectrum of creativity. Unlike other bathrooms, this strict minimalist bathroom leans towards a very modern concept, yet still blends with nature through its dark tile accents, keeping it well in tune with the design of the rest of the house.

RIGHT: Natural light beautifully flows into this open-concept bathroom allowing for real leafy plants to grow well within the home to add an ambience of back-to-nature.



TOP: The open concept kitchen, complete with breakfast counter, further supports the open and roomy feel of the first floor.



RIGHT & TOP RIGHT: A reading corner overlooking the balcony on the top floor can be an ideal spot for peace and quiet. With full-length folding doors covering the width of the balcony, the two areas easily merge into a single ideal place to relax during any time of the day.



ABOVE: Open riser staircases create an airy feel with an abundance of light. Strategically placed, this staircase is a focal feature majestically rising in unison to the top of the home like an art installation.



Tropical Allure



The essence of lifestyle living is easy to grapple once the feeling of longing and ideology are set. This modern tropical home encompasses the concept perfectly. This beautiful intermediate terrace not only meets the needs and wants of the family, it has also been aesthetically and practically customised to mirror the personality of the residents.

Balinese villas stem the seed of inspiration for the conceptualisation of this modern tropical home. Situated on an unusual plot of land, its original state was indeed an unpolished diamond. Set on high ground, the plot lengthens downwards creating a natural basement. Woods and browns are focal elements that the home uses to accentuate the desired rustic Balinese feel. With much attention paid to detailing, the car porch's roof matches the very feature that Balinese villas and hotels have at the main entrances.

Creating the atmosphere was key to bringing this home to life. A turquoise fibre glass pool coupled with a lazy pool and a man-made rock wall stretching the length of the home's basement creates the perfect tropical rainforest setting for the exterior view of the two linked bedrooms.

On the top floor, the roof terrace houses an array of flora and fauna surrounding a wooden teak gazebo that stems from a spa retreat tucked away in the middle of a tropical forest. The design truly achieves the luxury of a resort, with an in-house gym and movie room spanning through part of the second floor. While a daunting and perceived out-of-reach task, lifestyle living works on imparting imagination with functionality.



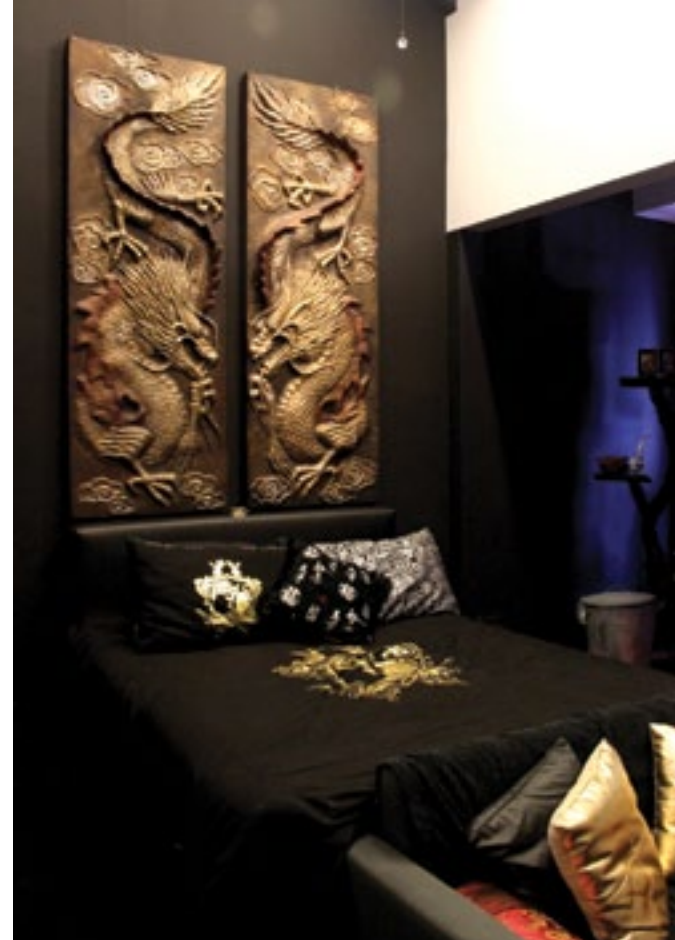
DESCRIPTION

Work done	: Reconstruction
Type	: Intermediate Terrace
Concept	: Modern Tropical
Land size	: 2,500 sqft
Built up	: 5,400 sqft
Rooms & Features	: 5+1 Bedrooms, Kitchen, Living and Dining Area, Pool, Gym, Movie Room, Roof Terrace

OPPOSITE: A tropical design does not necessarily equate to only using rustic aspects of natural materials. Hints of reflective décor pieces give this resort villa a unique touch of elegance.

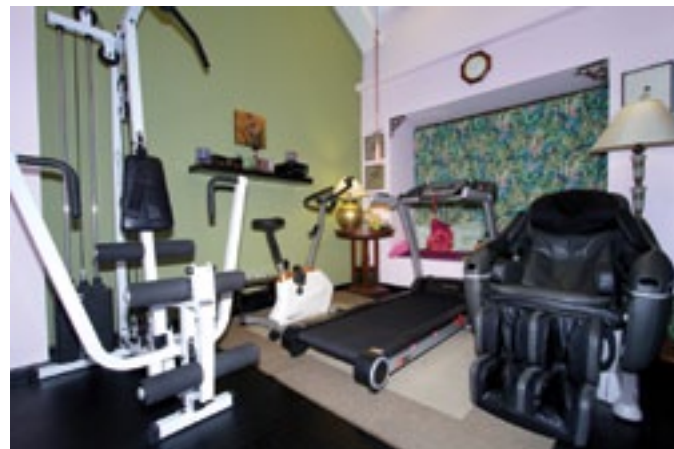


LEFT & FAR LEFT: Tiled roof terraces and balconies tend to be underutilised as they are not suitable to be used during hot weather. Thus, creating a garden with a variety of tropical trees and carpet grass cools the area naturally, making it a more conducive environment to relax and unwind. To further accentuate the tropical theme, a wooden gazebo and palimanan stones are used as well.



LEFT: Another distinctive concept, a masculine oriental theme focuses the mythological dragon as the focal point of the room. Large artwork dresses the plain walls for a design statement.

BELOW: Space can be used to create a tranquil tropical scenery. The pool area with its man-made rock wall and lush plants becomes the backdrop of a natural rainforest that the bedrooms in the basement open up to.



ABOVE: Similarly, a gym can be created at home with careful space planning to accommodate the required gym equipments. Home gyms do not have to look conventional. Coloured walls instead of white ones can be used to suit personal taste.



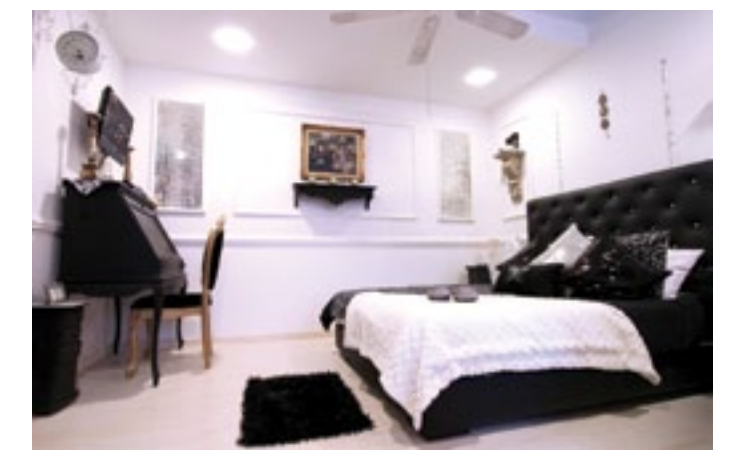
ABOVE: A plain room is transformed into a movie room with just a few key elements - comfortable sofas, a projector and state-of-the-art sound system. Pin-up posters along the walls further adds to the home theatre feel.



ABOVE LEFT & BELOW LEFT: A rustic take on the Balinese theme, the master bedroom is surrounded by the feeling of the outdoors opening out to a private garden space. Dark woods are used throughout the room, and the textured walled bathroom with palimanan stone carvings further accentuates the ambience of a tropical retreat.



ABOVE & RIGHT: A distinctive theme that separates itself from the rest of the home, this bedroom stylishly trends along modern baroque. Intricate detailing with soft curls and carvings keep this room elaborate yet feminine at the same time.





Bohemian Flavour

An eclectic home with a bohemian charm, the rich flavours of this apartment draw favourable warmth while breaking all the traditional rules of neutral hues.

Bold walls at every turn, this home exudes rich colour hues and a vast array of textures. The installation of stone walls and ceilings alongside salsa red paint with a flow of dark-stained parquet represents a mix of Mexican charm with a dash of Asian fusion.

With a dollop of contrasting taste, this home takes a pinch of rustic, retro, glam and urban elements, transforming each room into a good mix of themes while blending with the overall theme of the apartment. Like a buffet spread, picking different themes with comparable similarities allows for a smooth overall blend.

DESCRIPTION

Work done : Makeover
Type : Apartment
Concept : Rustic
Built up : 1,200 sqft
Rooms & Features : 3+1 Bedrooms, Living and Dining Area, Kitchen, Balcony

RIGHT: The thought of using colours and textures on opposing walls may be intimidating, but this bold design results is a vivid statement.

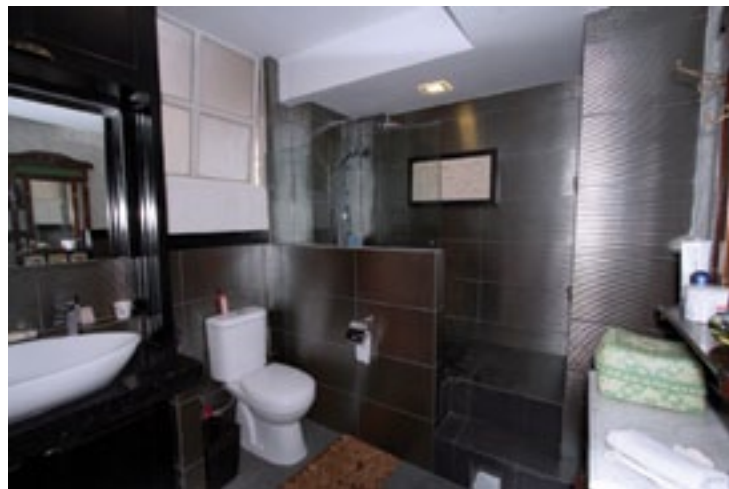




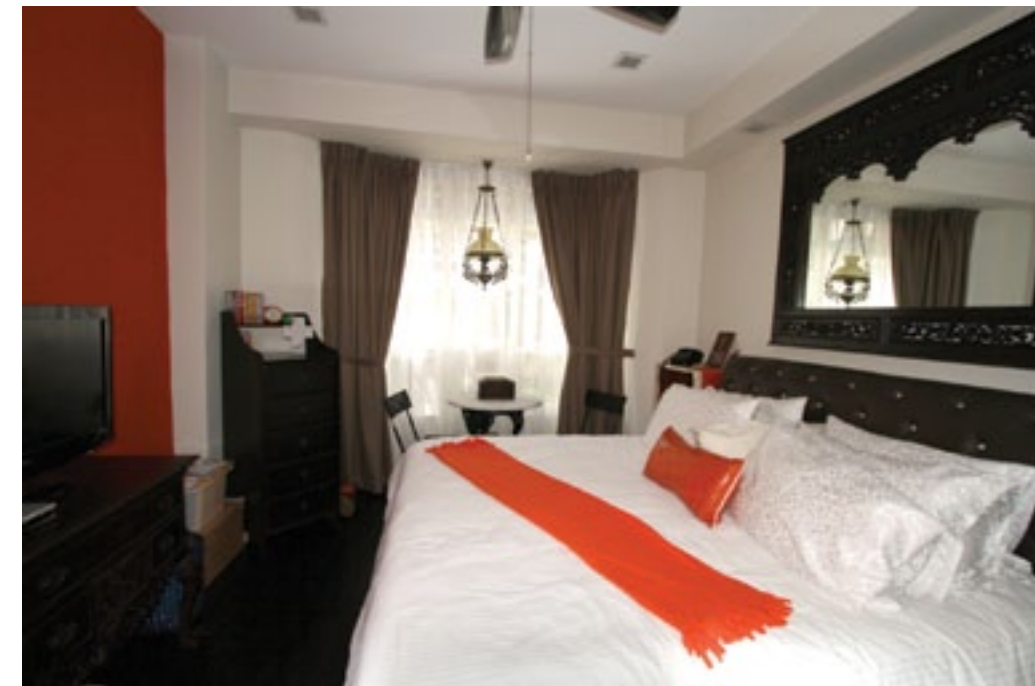
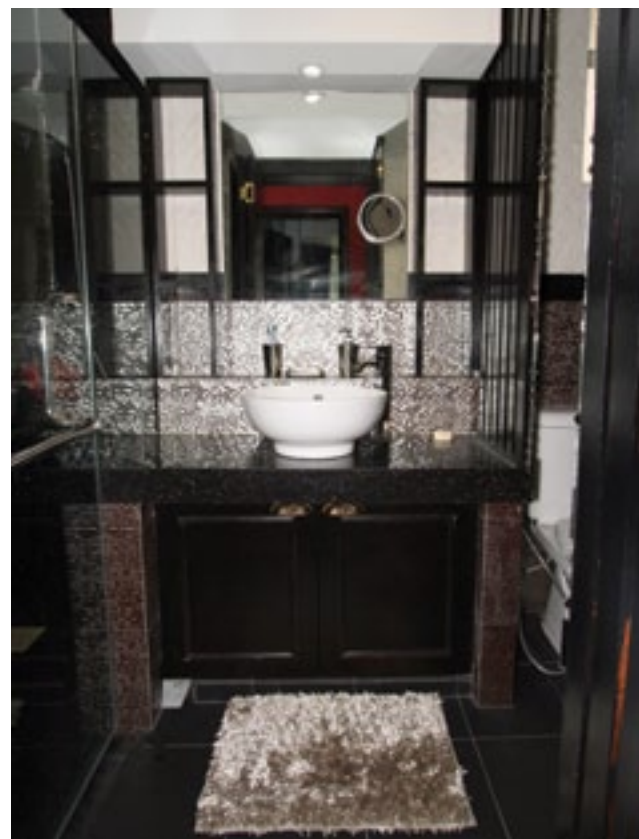
ABOVE: Red, mosaic tiles induce a retro vibe while perfectly blending with the design of the rest of the living and dining room concept through its colour hue.

RIGHT: A concrete sunken bath allows the flexibility of tranquil relaxation of a long soak or the choice of a quick shower.

EAR RIGHT: The use of metallic mosaic-like tiles makes this bathroom stand out on its own. Wooden shelving and doors are tone down the statement pieces of metallic tiles within the bathroom.



RIGHT: A stalky divider instantly creates privacy within a balcony without overstepping any structural regulations.

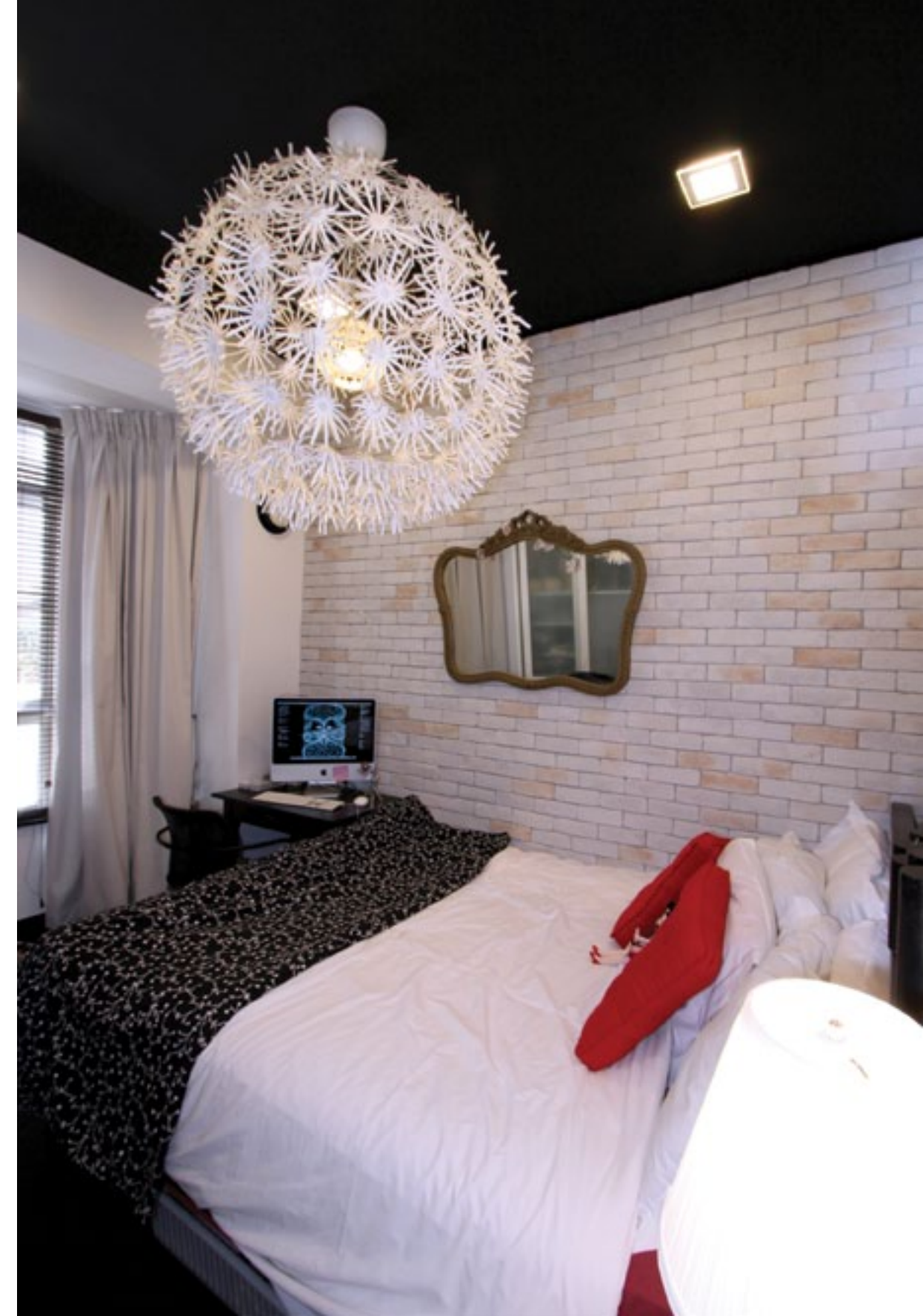


ABOVE: A brightly painted orange textured wall amidst dark-stained furniture adds a warm contrast to the feature wall inducing a Mexican style resort.

RIGHT: A compact bedroom can be given an appealing look. A combination of cream brick feature wall and contrasting black ceiling adds that raw European artsy style to the room while the ball light of flowers brings a hint of femininity.



LEFT: A mirror lining the entire passage ceiling leaves the illusion of infinity of height and reflects the bold hues from the red walls.



Oriental Fever



This semi-detached home has been revamped from its previous 1980s façade to a more modern oriental makeover. Instilled with a semi-closed front terrace, strong concrete feature walls strategically line the front portion of the home akin to remnant pillars of an ancient civilisation.

Wooden slats wrapping part of the second floor's exterior enlivens the rather block-like upper floor making for a more appealing façade look. The interior grasps oriental hues of royal reds and gold. Decorative pieces cements the whole look together, while having simple furniture keeps the concept fresh and modern.



DESCRIPTION

Work done : Makeover
 Type : Semi-Detached
 Concept : Modern Oriental
 Land size : 3,500 sqft
 Built up : 3,000 sqft
 Rooms & Features : 5 Bedrooms, Kitchen, Living and Dining Area, Outdoor Dining

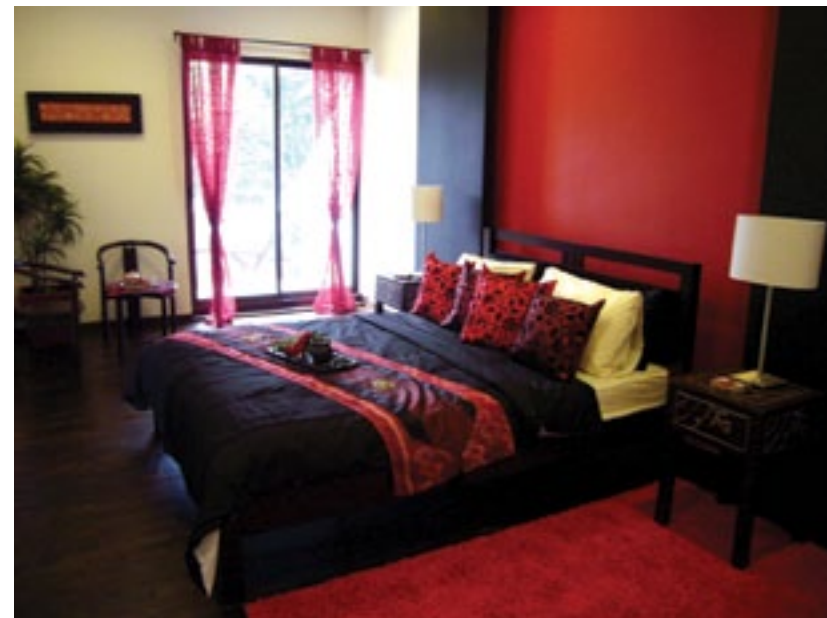


ABOVE: Interval pillars produces privacy for the porch while still connecting the area with garden space.

OPPOSITE PAGE: Mustard walls represent the imperial gold that complements the marble flooring, inducing a touch of contemporary vibe in the traditional-based design.



ABOVE : A split level breaks the monotony of a wide area that naturally distinguishes the space.



RIGHT: Black in bedrooms need not be taboo. When cleverly paired with red, it can provide a modern twist to the oriental charm. Match the bedding with the room's pantones for an overall richness.

FAR RIGHT: To add purpose to odd pillars in the bedroom, transform them into shelves to create a functional space.

ABOVE: The zen theme of rich browns and whites alongside minimalist layout and accessories encompass a serene take on oriental design.

TOP RIGHT: The side garden makes the perfect setting for the optional outdoor dining during a clear night.





Lofty Inspirations

The advantage of a maisonette is that it overlooks the space constraint that many single floor apartments face, thus allowing it to be a playground of creativity. While its original exterior may not be appealing, infusing its present day interiors with old world architecture sparks a unique and inspiring fusion. Conserved apartments are similar to antiques that with care and a little work help these rare jewels sparkle.

A focal point at first sight draws you to the clean lines of monochromes that flow throughout the first floor. Minimalist chic with a touch of glamour, the interiors are styled to ooze the allure of an urban apartment. A contrast from its humble conserved exterior, the surprise is inevitably unexpected.

The main floor's space planning focuses on the ability to accommodate a decent-sized family unit as well as the ability to entertain a small party of guests. An open concept connects the living room, dining room and kitchen to create a massive use of practical space.

Following the refurbished spiral staircase to the second floor, the space is designed to give the family unit privacy from the first floor while still providing a congregative family space for after dinner bonding.

DESCRIPTION

Work done : Makeover
 Type : Walk-up Apartment
 Concept : Modern Contemporary
 Built up : 1,800 sqft
 Rooms & Features : 4 Bedrooms, Study Room,
 Family Room, Kitchen, Living and Dining

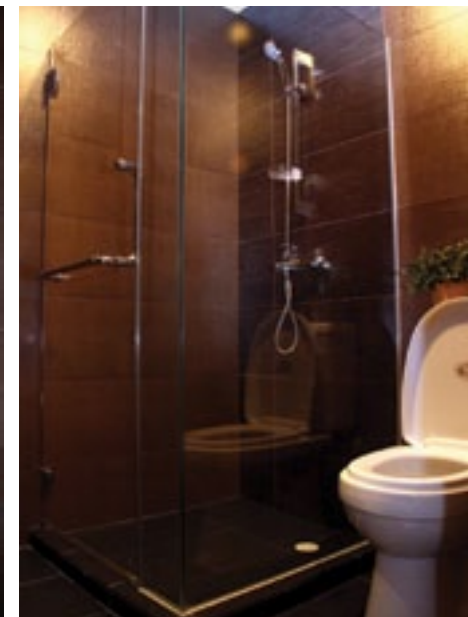
OPPOSITE PAGE: Wooden beadings that lined and camouflaged with the wall's colour act as a subtle border that gives the inner ebony hue a three dimensional statement effect.





LEFT: A central space converted into an inviting family area encourages congregation for quality time between parents and children.

ABOVE: A contrasting toffee wall warms the overall monochrome vibe while a translucent curtain divider defines the dining area without giving it an enclosed feel.



ABOVE FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Cascading lights flowing from the ceiling add the right touch of illumination to keep the journey upstairs brightly lit.

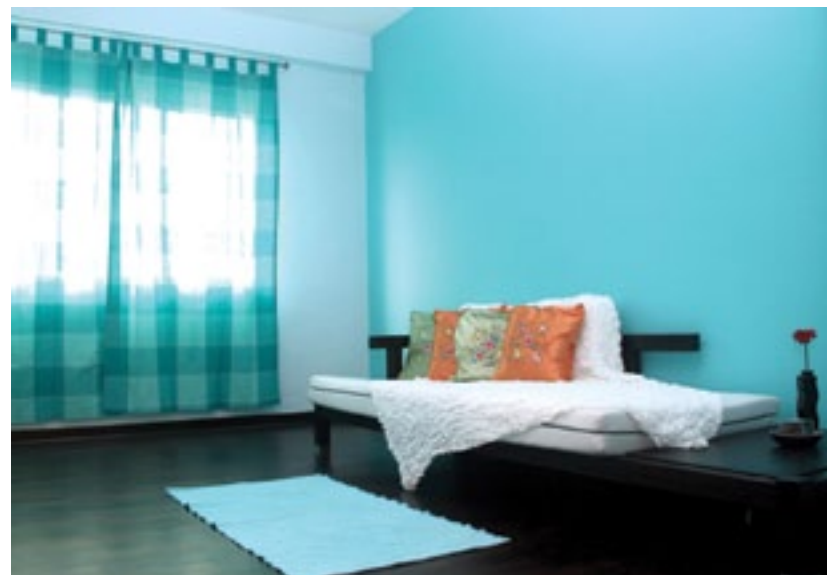
A refurbished spiral staircase creates a picturesque feature within the home.

Tucked to the corner of the second floor, a study room becomes an easily accessible, yet secluded spot to catch up on work.

Keeping with the glamour concept throughout the master bedroom, the bathroom's bronze and metallic accents in masculine textures incorporate the urban flavour of city dwelling.

RIGHT: Purple and green accents add that touch of glamour to the master bedroom. This room presents a unique way to dress up walls by installing a pair of slim mirrors to reflect different aspects of the room and sunlight bouncing off to add a twinkle to the room.

RIGHT: The use of sliding glass provides a fluidity of space while keeping the dry and wet kitchens separated. Keeping the heavy cooking enclosed minimises the fumes during cooking while still allowing for an open concept feel.





Posh Grandeur

Reinventing a terrace home can be more challenging than a bungalow due to its space constraints, but once correctly done, the results are generally astonishing. An originally odd layout, this house was structured below road level, leaving little room for a car porch, with a stairway as the only access down.

Remodelling the premises requires an out-of-the-box approach. A suspended driveway is hashed out to the second level to allow a more practical access to the home while also equipping it with the ability of accommodating a car. This unique space-planning approach converts the 5-storey home to provide residents with a more accommodating journey. Entering the interior of the house through the main entrance via the second floor will lead to a flight of stairs giving access to the rest of the house. Strong straight lines with black highlight accents accentuate the overall stark white while bringing out the features of the home.

Keeping to the minimalism of whites and blacks concept throughout the home imbues a posh vibe. Chandeliers and hints of reflective textures exude hints of an old world regal classism. An open riser staircase slithers in a fluid motion coiling loosely around a towering palm tree from the basement as it stretches its leaves through the lengthy air well.

Converting the previously second floor into a first floor gives the home a self-sufficient basement area that provides the needed privacy and room for the entertainment of guests. With a strategically located turquoise fibreglass pool including a cascading waterfall, the basement overlooked lush oasis with an abundance of natural light flowing through for a unique ambience.



DESCRIPTION

Type	: Intermediate Terrace
Concept	: Modern Black & White
Land size	: 1,800 sqft
Built up	: 4,100 sqft
Rooms & Features	: 6+2 Bedrooms, Kitchen, Living and Dining Area, Air well, Pool

RIGHT: To create a focal point, a false wall panelling centralises the focus of the area. The addition of clever lighting then creates a subtle illumination from the side of the panel.



RIGHT: A private reclusive to relax, a streamline linear pool works well in homes that lack width. With the incorporation of a waterfall, the sound of cascading water injects a resort getaway ambience throughout the home.

BOTTOM LEFT& CENTRE: A basement becomes the perfect area to entertain friends while keeping the rest of the home private. The area also opens to the swimming pool for a pleasant scenic view.



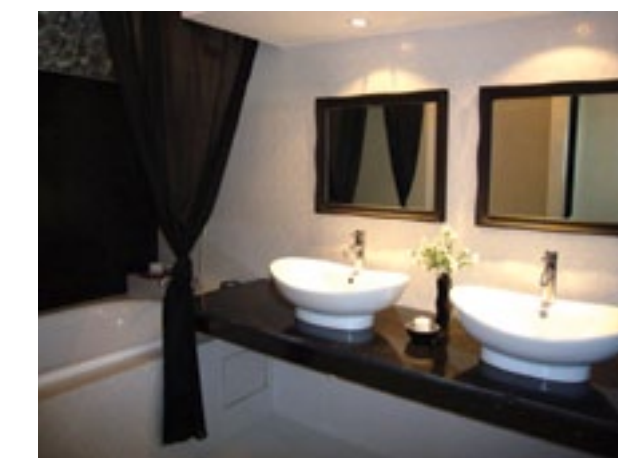
ABOVE: Walls are not necessary to define a space. Keeping the kitchen and dining rooms easily accessible with a breakfast counter as the defining border between the two rooms ensures the home remains spacious and open.

BOTTOM LEFT: A full kitchen can easily be separated into a wet and dry kitchen with the installation of a sliding door. Clear glass door keeps the space whole while preventing fumes from spreading to the rest of the home.

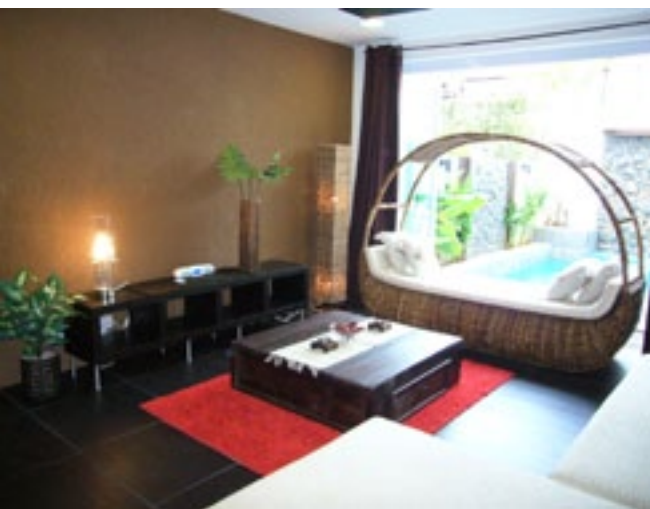


ABOVE: A staircase built within the air-well maximises usable space, while the placement of a stalky tree brings a touch of the outdoors in.

BELOW: Subtle hints of Victorian charm details from the tiles and mirror frames complement the clean modern lines to reflect an eclectic boutique hotel charm.



BELOW: Rooms on the top floor have the option of exposing the roof rafters instead of just settling for a plain ceiling.



Design & Build — 101

Over the recent few years, Design & Build has become an increasingly popular direction

when it comes to building. Traditionally, the first point

of contact is to engage an architect who, more often than

not, opens the project out for a tender, thus welcoming

various contractors to quote before the owner selects his

or her choice. A Design & Build company, on the other

hand, becomes the point of contact from the first meet.

Conceptualising, designing and building summarise the

scope of work that is covered. Project management of the

whole building process is made easier for owners when

they only have to deal with one person for discussion

and clarification.

Conceptualize

During the first meeting, an idea of the owner's needs and wants are discussed and formed based on their wish list. This initial meeting may also involve the discussion of the architectural plans, structural plans, survey plans, Sewage Interpretation Plans (SIP), Road Interpretation Plans (RIP) and Drainage Interpretation Plans (DIP). Getting a TOPO survey and soil test done would be an especially useful information to bring if the construction plan require an extension or rebuilding works. From there, a vision for the home will be conceptualised before moving on into the design phase.

Design

Based on the information gathered during the conceptualisation phase, a first draft of the home will be converted into a computer-generated plan for the following meeting. For the next couple of meetings, discussions will involve various changes to the designs and constant approvals by the owner. Once the major part of the concept and design is settled, a quotation will be formed giving the owner a breakdown of the construction costs as well as the estimated provisional sums, thus providing a realistic figure of the total cost to be incurred for the project. This breakdown allows the owner to make an informed decision without worrying about the possibility of any "hidden costs" along the way.

Build

After agreeing to the quotation, the design will be handed to the architect and engineer to draw up the official blueprint and make the necessary submissions. This process generally takes an estimated three to four months. Once Building and Construction Authority (BCA) sends the approval, construction of the building will begin. An on-site project manager from the Design & Build company will oversee the time and overall on-site work management. The most crucial part of the whole process is having a good working relationship among the builder, architect and engineer to ensure a smooth-flowing process with minimal to no hiccup. It takes approximately 10 to 12 months for the completion of a major reconstruction and rebuild. The duration is slightly less for a makeover. The builder will be in regular contact with the owner for updates on the work progress of the home. Once the home is close to completion, the builder will inform the architect that the home is ready for inspection. Following which, a TOP inspection will take place a week after application. Once TOP is approved, the house is ready for handover.

Making A Wish List

Ready to build your dream home but not sure where to begin? Organising your thoughts will be useful to to help you visualise what is needed and wanted in your home. We always recommend to clients to come up with a wish list. A wish list will give you and your builder an overview of the road map towards the journey of your dream home.

Grab a file and keep a list of images and ideas that you would like to achieve when building your home. Above that, follow our wish list template to achieve the basic ideology of your needs and wants in creating your very own dream home.

Demographics

Understanding the needs of the home will form the basis of the rest of the wish list. Firstly, how many persons will be living in the home? And secondly, who will be staying in this home?

If there are children, how old are they? For children up to five years old, a child-safe layout will be the essential aim of how the space-planning of the home is done. For instance, concrete staircase would be a more appropriate choice for family units with toddlers as compared to an open riser staircase.

If senior citizens are living in this home, locating their room on the main floor will allow easy access to the main areas of the home. If that is not possible, installing an elevator might be an option for them to travel from floor to floor.

Concept

What kind of look do you wish to have for your home? Choosing a concept creates a focal design vision. Each concept has its own distinct features and detailing which helps you to achieve the feel easily. Choose from Modern, Contemporary, Rustic, Tropical, Classical, Oriental or fusion themes.

Rooms

Based on the intended number of persons living in the home, that would settle the basic number of bedrooms. On top of that, will there be a guest room? Within the bedrooms, do wish to include an ensuite and/or walk-in wardrobe?

Essential rooms that will be included in the home are the kitchen, living and dining room, store room and the number of bathrooms.

Other rooms to consider would include a study room and/or play room which can be added features of the home.

Furthermore, it is essential to take into account approximately how much space is required in each room.

Floors

Once an idea of the number of rooms becomes clearer, juggling between the floors will eventually piece the jigsaw puzzle together.

Features

Embarking on building or rebuilding your home does not happen every day, so why not take the opportunity to create a unique abode? If space permits, a pool can be a special feature in your home for everyone to enjoy.

Are you a gym fan? All it takes is the right machinery to turn an empty room into a personal fitness zone. Or how about bringing the family together after dinner to bond in a cosy and conducive roof terrace or movie room?

Lifestyle living does not have to necessarily break the bank. Feature rooms can be achieved on a realistic budget with the forethoughts of smart space planning.

Budget

When determining the amount of work intended to be done, it is critical to ensure that you have a budget in mind and, more importantly, the budget has to be realistic.

Getting quotes from a selection of builders and contractors can vary to either extremes. Always bear in mind that the cheapest does not translate to the best choice. Make sure that you study the quotes and understand what will be provided. Ask for a breakdown of construction costs and provisional sums. Construction costs is the overall cost of building the home while the provisional sums include the needed accessories that go with the home but not necessarily part of the construction cost.

The First Impression

When driving through the various residential neighbourhoods, it is easy to be fascinated by a façade of an interesting house without even stepping in. Typically, we judge a house based on its exuberant interior detailing. However, subconsciously, the first impression of a house is what leaves an everlasting imprint. Thus, although it is more often than not overlooked, the exterior design of a home is undeniably important when it comes to creating that good first impression.

For instance, would you imagine a white box with mismatched windows to be the entrée to interesting interiors? I doubt you would. The exterior façade is equally, if not more, important than the interiors of a home. Similarly, dressing for an event is second nature to most, so why should dressing the home's exterior be any different? It is, after all, the face of the home which creates the most crucial perception, which is the first impression. Here are some basics features to take note of when designing your front façade.



Proportions

At the beginning, proportions are the blank canvas for the look of the house. Depending on the house type, the structure will vary.



Intermediate terrace houses are confined by their widths while allowing maximisation of height. Due to this, it is essential to adjust the height with details to prevent a cold-looking façade. Adding a balcony to an upper floor can break the flatness of the front. Similarly, adding a gable roof above the car porch adds dimension.



Semi-detached houses allow use of space on one side of the home. It is possible that a semi-detached house can look somewhat askew due to only one side being detached. However, it is still possible to balance the look by levelling the space. Utilise the detached side with a polycarbonate sheet to shade a decked area for outdoor dining.

Bungalows allow a 360 degree use of space. Although that may give you the flexibility of space planning, it is important to note that it can give the structure a possible boxy effect. Creating a full length glass wall feature corner to the façade or a split level layout will give interesting dimensions to the layout.



Columns

The basic skeleton that holds the house together can sometimes stick out like a sore thumb. But with the right design tips and tricks, this common problem can be solved. Odd columns can still fit in with a little improvisation. Two closely located columns can be converted into a divider with wooden slats carefully positioned in between. This is especially useful for tropical and contemporary style houses. The correct detailing of columns in classical and colonial styled homes will add to the mouldings of the design.



Windows

Although most see it as just a feature, windows play a fair share in the making or breaking of a house. Too many windows can crowd the room, while too little can make a house look cold and uninteresting. A wide sliding door or even French windows not only keep a house well ventilated, it also gives a slight preview to the home as well. Casement windows, on the other hand, make nice additions to a house façade and they are versatile for classical, contemporary and modern styles.



Roof

There is a wide variety of roofs to choose from. Tiled or metal roofs are the two main materials commonly used. When it comes to styles - hip, gable and shed roofs make up the popular choices. The trick, however, is getting the right combination between material and style.

The theme of a home helps determine which combination of roof will suit the house best.



For instance, tropical-styled homes would do well with tiled hip to gable roof combinations.

A modern home, on the other hand, would look appealing with a metal shed roof. Like a hat, the roof needs to fit with the rest of the house, rather than look like a mismatched ensemble.



Colour and Texture

The most eye-catching element to an exterior façade would probably be the colour. Like the other elements, it's all about blending the look of the different elements together. Whites, off-whites and creams tend to make the list for foolproof options. However, bold colours can still be used for the exterior front façade.



Modern homes can opt for shades of grey to work well with the style.



Contemporary and tropical houses, on the other hand, allow a blend of earthy tones such as mustard and browns.

If bold colours are too loud of an option, trimmings such as wood, tiles, culture stone and carvings easily enhance the façade.



Greenery

While greenery may not exactly be part of the façade design, it can help tone down the coldness of the concrete structure. Tall plants add that contrasting pop of colour for a back-to-nature effect. Plants have the power to make a house more homely.



Design is ultimately a subjective matter, but the blending of different elements is essential to make any house stand out. Having a theme or concept in mind will allow the elements to fall in place more easily. It is one thing to create just a house but why not leap further and go for something unexpected or even slightly bold? After all, it is your home – your piece of art, be proud of it and it will have passers-by turning their heads at your home while in your estate.

The Future Of Building – Self-Sustaining Lifestyle Homes

The familiarity of traditional building has become the adherent method to most companies in the industry. Brick and mortar, cement and steel have crafted the basic building blocks of a large majority of homes. However, placing awareness that this planet we call home too has a lifespan and the constant demands of exploitation of our natural resources will, in the long run, damage and destroy planet Earth. With the green initiative well underway in many countries around the world, many parts of Asia are still left behind. Sustainable building is, whether at a faster or slower rate, an inevitable part that needs and will be integrated into design and building.

While the idea of green living will not happen overnight, Singapore has identified the magnitude of this importance by starting with the commercial sector. In February 2012, the Building and Construction Authority (BCA) is tasked to set up initiatives and incentives to encourage green building. Similarly, the National Environment Agency (NEA) has revealed a line-up of schemes to boost the reduction of energy usage and carbon emissions by building owners - all in-line with the forthcoming Energy Conservation Act. Through the years, the industry too has begun to grasp the green way of building. From a small group of 17 buildings earning the Green Mark in 2005, the figure has escalated to a whopping 948 in 2011.

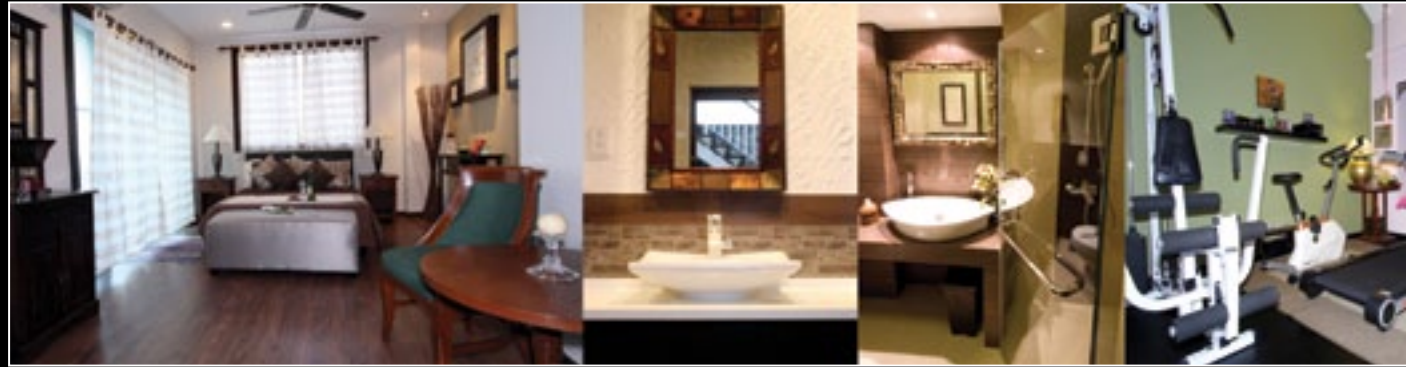
The commercial sector thus far has been more welcoming to green-building, which unfortunately is not the same for the residential sector. With pricing playing a major factor in the decision-making between traditional and green building methods, the journey to green living may be a long one.

However, working with nature rather than exploiting it is the way to go in the long run. While it is understandable that the initial pricing may not seem attractive, it is the long-term investment that ultimately counts. Fortunately, the relative prices of photovoltaic have fallen significantly over the past few years, making it more viable for consumable use.

Over the years, we at Nic & Wes have been identifying, researching and understanding different aspects of more environmentally-friendly methods of Design & Build. It is clear that this is the way to progress. In order to live comfortably for the generations ahead, we have to take actions into conserving and protecting the planet.



Over the past decade, we are humbled by the inspirations we have garnered, the insights we have gained, and the belief bestowed on us by our valued clients. We are honoured to dedicate this book of our compiled achievements to them, and we look forward to more decades in the making.



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