

## Double Take from Home & Apartment Trends volume 1909



Designing the interior of a family home often has to be a co-operative process, as different ideas are taken into consideration.

In this apartment, two generations live on two levels of a spacious penthouse. The family members presented designer TDC with some interesting challenges for meeting their individual requirements, says design principal L H Chan.

"The lower level was occupied by the parents, who have a love of classical Oriental art," he says.

"Upstairs, the second generation, owners Agus and Fifi Pang, in their early 30s, wanted a sleek, modern interior.

"The challenge was to find a way to bind them together. We achieved that by using natural materials, colours and fabrics on both levels, starting with timber floors."

The Pangs' company, P T Barito Pacific Timber, is a major supplier of timber flooring in Southeast Asia. For their home, they selected American oak on the main floor, its light golden-brown colour used as a foundation to establish a warm and intimate atmosphere. Neutral colours were used on the walls, with gold and copper leaf creating focal points in several areas.

For example, the entry features an alcove decorated with gold leaf squares mounted on a black wall, providing a dramatic backdrop for a Taoist statue of the goddess of mercy.

This wall treatment is repeated in a more subtle form in the living room. The room has a formal look, but comfortable furniture and Persian rugs help to give it a relaxed ambience. Again, the art work is the focal point of the room. Chan says the design reflects the expectation that the owners will continue to add to their collection.

"Planning for our clients' future needs is an important part of our service," he says. "Throughout the design and renovation process, we pride ourselves on building ongoing relationships with our clients that are built on mutual trust and respect. That is our most satisfying achievement."

The Pangs' art collection is also featured in the dining room, where a painting of the Yangtze River hangs on a wall of copper leaf. The deeper tones of the copper are repeated in the browns and blues of the Persian rug.

A dramatic spiral staircase in the centre of the apartment leads up to the second level. Here the floor space is divided between the living area and an expansive sky garden. Half the size of the lower level, the top floor's open plan layout gives the kitchen, dining and living rooms a spacious feeling. A glass wall faces the landscaping, which becomes an integral part of the design.

"The strong, rich colour of the merbau timber floor draws the rooms together and doesn't compete with the exterior landscape," says Chan. "An accent wall of alabaster panels with pale green tones emphasises the link with the outdoors."

To create this open space, several walls were moved. At each stage of the design process, TDC worked closely with the clients, providing construction drawings, coloured illustrations and material samples. The company encourages clients to obtain independent quotes to verify that they are getting the best value for their investment.

"We offer a full service, from design through to the construction and furnishing of the interior," he says. "This is cost-effective for our clients and simplifies the renovation. They work with one company and we are accountable for managing and completing the whole project."

TDC subcontracted some of the work on this renovation, bringing in Chengtai Nursery to design the sky garden, says director Jasline Tan.

"We wanted to create a tropical landscape that would exhibit a variety of faces and points of interest to frame and focus the views of the garden from different angles," she says.

"The panoramic view of the city's skyline is also enhanced by the use of water features that create a visual surprise."

Planter boxes are built into the water sculpture, surrounding a giant ornamental jar from Myanmar on a pedestal. Built of natural stone slabs and slate, the dramatic fountain is at the centre of the view from the interior staircase.

The terrace doorway leads out to a semi-circular garden of lush tropical plants including palms, ferns and asplenium, accented by bright heliconias.

"This verdant and colourful array of potted plants succeeds in softening the transitional spaces that extend the cosy elegance of the home into the open terrace," says Tan. "They define the dining area and give the terrace a human scale."

Subtle lighting adds a sense of romance to the space and draws in the night-time cityscape, creating an elegant setting for dinner parties.

Chengtai Nursery cultivates plants on its 10-acre site in Singapore. The company specialises in the design and construction of soft landscaping, hard landscapes and water features.

The entry to this penthouse apartment designed by TDC introduces the owners' collection of Oriental art. The two-level design juxtaposes these traditional pieces with a contemporary style.