

BY ALYSSA OON

Modern meets simple sophistication

SCANDINAVIAN design embodies modern-contemporary black and white furniture, similarly coloured walls and flooring, with an added pop of colour from decorative items. Characterised by its minimalism and function, it is the go-to design for those who love calm, open spaces.

HISTORY

The term “Scandinavian design” emerged in the 1950s. It described a minimalistic design style that originated from in the Nordic countries like Denmark, Norway and Sweden.

The year was 1947, and the “La Triennale di Milano” exhibition was going on in Milan, Italy. On display were furniture, glassware and home accessories from Nordic countries. These were the highlight of the show.

From here, the fad grew, creating a hype that led to the “Design in Scandinavia” show going on tour around the United States and Canada from 1954 until 1957. In the era where the current trend for home decoration revolved around luxurious and ornate designs, which only the rich could afford, the Scandinavian design put “function over frills”, soon gaining favour as “affordable” for all, rich or poor.

According to research, the design style was the outcome of living conditions in that region, where winters were long and harsh. Warmth and comfort was priority, as the winter kept everyone inside their small houses. Homes needed to feel cosy yet airy, and exude as much ambient light as possible.

There are a few basic principles that identify with the Scandinavian design, which makes it easy for anyone to pick up, from first home owners to experienced interior design buffs.

> Scandinavian design exudes simplicity, aesthetic design and functionality



PHOTO: BLOG.FROY.COM

ALL ABOUT THE BASE

Just as every artistic masterpiece started with a blank canvas, so did every beautiful room begin with plain walls and floors.

According to the Scandinavian theme, walls should be painted in light or neutral colours such as white, off-whites, light blues or greys. No patterned wallpaper is needed, as the whole purpose of light-coloured walls is to exude calm, giving the room a bright and spacious feel. Wall paintings and decorations can be added later on, depending on the amount of space as a room will feel smaller, cluttered even, if items are placed upon a patterned background.

Hardwood flooring is the choice

of many modern Scandinavian homes. It brings a very strong sense of nature into the home, and will suit many tastes with the various colour and wood-type options in the market today. Go light on the stains and varnishes to maintain a feeling of airiness and choose light-coloured hardwood. Floors can also be painted the same colour as the walls, then decorated with rugs or even nature-related motifs stencilled on.

Malaysians are known to be a reserved lot, which is why we put up thick curtains against our windows and heavily secure all doors and windows. Scandinavian layouts call for well-proportioned windows – no curtains needed – to allow generous amounts of light to stream in. While ceiling-to-floor windows are ideal as it allows much light in, it may bring up security and privacy concerns. Instead, use sheer or translucent fabric as curtains. These allow light in, yet filter the brightness and provide some measure of privacy. Avoid thick and dark treatments, as it contradicts the purpose of larger windows for more natural light.

As for artificial lighting, go for fixtures with simple, modern forms to avoid visual clutter. Naked bulbs are a prominent fixture in Scandinavian home designs. Include



PHOTO: NORTHPROGRUMMNA.COM



PHOTO: SEEKAYEM.COM

a few spaced out bulbs instead of one prominent light source. Another option is to use standing or table lamps.

FURNITURE FAIR

Scandinavian furniture pieces are functional works of art that last a lifetime. They are crafted to absolute perfection, usually exhibiting clean-cut lines and smooth curved edges.

Once again, wood plays a key role in Scandinavian furniture. It induces a sense of warmth and oneness with nature, and is needed in Nordic countries throughout the bitter winter months. Choose wood-carved pieces as “anchor” furniture, such as the living room sofa legs, bed frames in bedrooms and countertops in kitchens.

In the living room, the sofa is the “heaviest” item due to its size. A sofa in dark colours can “absorb” the ambient light, which is why it is better to use natural materials such as cotton and linen in the upholstery. The surrounding furniture should follow the colour

code of white/off-white/light blue/light grey and such. These help balance out and make up for the light that has been “absorbed” by the couch.

Place a wooden coffee table or light-coloured metal table, and a simple standing lamp to maintain the spaciousness of the living room. The same principle applies to bedrooms. Remember to keep in mind that Scandinavian interiors promote a clutter-free environment, so, keep the simplicity and function in its furniture.

POP IT UP

Now that the canvas and “skeleton” are in place, it is time to add some pomp to the room! Dress up those plain walls with some prints, throw a blanket on the sofa for extra comfort, place a rug for added colour, or even decorate the room with edgy statement pieces to inject life into the room.

Picture frames on walls are a lovely way to fill-out empty spaces on walls. Photos can be anything from landscape snapshots of forests and streams, to close-up impressions of the animal kingdom. However, one could choose to stay simple with minimalistic graphic prints and typography posters. Organic and floral patterns also go well with wood accents in the furniture.

Geometric patterns and shapes in bright colours can also bring vibrancy to muted interiors. Use patterns on throw pillows for the couch or the floor rug in the living room or under the bed. A trend at the moment is the use of geometrical vases, placed on side tables or centre coffee tables, for a more contemporary look.

Add some “zen” by including small potted plants within interiors. These should be placed on shelves or tables. Another alternative is to incorporate tall bamboo in the hallway or by the entryway.

Lastly, keep in mind that you do not get carried away when adding in decorative items in a Scandinavian-designed room. This can overwhelm the whites and neutral tones and wreck the whole plan and purpose of Scandinavian design.

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PHOTO: HOME-DESIGNING.COM

Shades that influence

NIPPON Paint Malaysia Group recently unveiled the second phase of its “Trend Beyond Colours” prospectus. Nine key colour palettes were introduced across three inspirational themes – “We are One”, “New Eco” and “Wonder-Lust”. These shades are expected to be the trending colours of 2016 and 2017 across various industries.

Earlier this year, design professionals, colour experts and enthusiasts from all over the Asia Pacific region congregated in Japan to participate in the Asia Pacific ChromaZone Colour Forecasting Workshop organised by Colour Marketing Group (CMG), in collaboration with Nippon Paint.

Made by Asians for Asians,

“Trend beyond Colours” is made by interior designers and architects across Asia Pacific to develop the trending Asian colour palettes.

“As the Total Coatings Expert, Nippon Paint continuously pushes the boundaries of paint and colour to pioneer and redefine the Asian palettes, inspiring consumers to rethink paint and recreate possibilities on all surfaces. Colours form a very big part of the Asian culture and Asia is one of the fastest growing continents in the world. This further reinforces the reason why it is important that Asia forms its own unique colour palettes to drive the trend in terms of colour application or expressions,” said Nippon Paint Malaysia group managing director Yaw Seng Heng.

The three new themes for

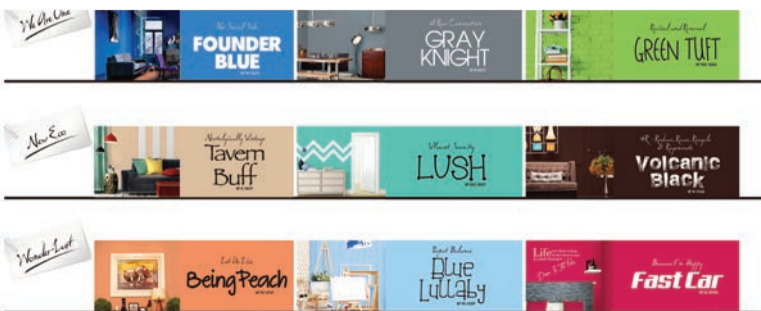


The 50 design professionals who selected the nine colours for 2016/2017.

2016/2017 feature three unique colours that allow consumers to express their imagination. The shades under each theme are:

- We are One: Modern colours (Founder Blue NP PB 1527D, Gray Knight NP N 2001T and Green Tuft NP BGG 1666A).
- New Eco: Simplicity of Mother Nature (Tavern Buff NP N 1876 P, Lush NP BGG 1605T and Volcanic Black

- NP N 1918A).
 - Wonder-Lust: Big, bold and bright (Being Peach NP YO 1219T, Blue Lullaby NP PB 1550P and Fast Car NP AC 2076A).
- According to Yaw, the colours are carefully curated by noting how behaviours are influenced by different colours and the environment.
- For more information, visit www.nipponpaint.com.my



For the love of nature

> Eco-sustainable designs and concepts of S P Setia's KL Eco City

WITH environmental degradation still a major issue around the globe, *theSun* commends and highlights a couple of property developers and their development projects that have received recognition and won awards for adopting various processes, designs and concepts that do not negatively impact the environment.

An award-winning development to take note of is KL Eco City which was awarded the BCA Greenmark Gold certificate. The development project also won an award under Best Green Development at the Southeast Asia Property Awards 2015 held at the Shangri-La Hotel in Singapore in Oct 2015.

WHERE PEOPLE AND ENVIRONMENT CONNECT

KL Eco City is a mixed development project which is helmed by the S P Setia Berhad Group. The development is under way and sits on what was the former Kampung Haji Abdullah Hukum village. Said to be a "world-class city-within-a-city exuding extraordinary architectural boldness", the landmark development, once completed, will boast:

- ▶ three residential towers;
- ▶ a serviced apartment tower;
- ▶ three corporate office towers;
- ▶ 12 boutique office blocks; and
- ▶ one retail podium featuring public and private gardens with amenities, retail, parking, a mosque and a relocated cultural building that combines with the Mid Valley and Gardens developments.

Spread across 25 acres of prime land, KL Eco City is renowned as the first integrated green luxury development anchored by prime commercial offices, high-end retail outlets, world-class serviced apartments and plush residential towers. The design blueprint is the work of internationally-renowned Jerde Partnership International, which has its headquarters in the

US. The company focuses on creating places where people love to go and want to come back to. Unique is Jerde's design approach, named "co-creativity" – briefly explained as an experiential environment where people connect and experience the place. Other architects working on this project include GDP Architect, GRA Architect and BEP Akitek.

THE SETIA BRAND

Holding the reins to this project is S P Setia. It has under its belt, projects all over the country – in Selangor, Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya, Penang, Johor and Sabah, as well as abroad in Singapore, Vietnam, Australia, China and the United Kingdom.

Having established a sterling reputation in the property development sector, S P Setia is famed for its commitment in creating environments that balance out the four areas of human activity – live, learn, work and play. Its developments all centre on this concept, yet can be segregated into three "ranges" depicting mass townships under the "Setia" label; an up-market segment under its "Duta" tag; and its "green" offerings as in KL Eco City, that carry the "Eco" title.

S P Setia Group has been a harbinger of environmental issues. In 2008, the company began commemorating World Environment Day (WED), intending to create public awareness on critical environmental issues. It has since formed partnerships to champion the green cause, even engaging its property development buyers and communities outside its

developments through its "Eco Runs" to increase awareness on environmental degradation and sustaining the environment.

S P Setia also upholds its corporate social responsibility

(CSR) charter in which it declares its commitment – "Building sustainable communities for all". This is carried out through its various social and charity-based works via the S P Setia Foundation.



S P Setia's Vogue Suites 1.

KL ECO CITY

There are three residential towers under the company's KL Eco City label. These consist of Vogue Suites 1, 2 and 3. Vogue Suites 1 is expected to be completed in January 2017. It offers a 60-storey tower comprising 708 residential suites, complete with luxurious lifestyle facilities across four levels and 90,000 sf. From one-bedroom to one-plus-one and two-bedroom suites, to lofts – these choices of living spaces range from 650 sf and 3,800 sf.

The master plan Jerde created for KL Eco City features a vibrant destination that integrates transport hubs and walkways with links, high density mixed-use spaces all in an open-air landscape that reflects Malaysia's rich ecosystems. The tower elements are said to be lifted off the podium and made to create shade and stimulate natural ventilation which help moderate the climate through the communal green terraces that link throughout the entire development project.

Its central location also creates social synergy, integration, convenience and efficiency of shared transport. The development combines diversity of uses to create a lively, complex and rich city district that is easily accessible, created to optimise views, vistas and open spaces. Simple yet elegant built-forms facilitate carefully considered infrastructure, modern recreational amenities and sustainable utilities. Lush greenery and tropical gardens are included wherever possible in the blueprint – at street levels, on podium roofs and elevated decks within the towers even.

Energy efficient escalators and elevators are expected to be installed within the development. Said to be able to take loads up to 50 stories in 50 seconds, this is only one of many state-of-the-art engineering, energy-efficient and high-performance smart technologies incorporated in the development design.

BCA GREEN MARK

A benchmarking scheme aimed at achieving a sustainable built environment by incorporating best practices in environmental design, construction and green building technologies. Buildings are rated according to key criteria which are:

- 1) energy efficiency;
- 2) water efficiency;
- 3) environmental protection;
- 4) indoor environmental quality; and
- 5) other green/innovative features that contribute to improved building performance.

There are many benefits in choosing a "green home". While the BCA Green Mark scheme helps reduce water and energy bills, improves indoor environmental quality and healthy living, and reduces potential negative impact on the environment – there are social and economic benefits to choosing a "green home" too. Follow our column next week on another "green icon".



An artist's impression of S P Setia's KL Eco City.

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CONTINUING from last week's article on S P Setia's KL Eco City, an integrated GBI-certified (Green Building Initiative) property development, this week we look at a few other similar award-winning residential projects that champion and incorporate environmental sustaining designs and systems in its blueprint.

First, we identify the characteristics that make a "green" development or township. The criteria should include:

- 1) reduced or eliminated use of fossil fuel;
- 2) adoption of sustainable building practices;
- 3) promotion of "green" space and clean air quality;
- 4) implementation of energy-efficient and widely/easily available public transport;
- 5) pedestrian-friendly and "walkable" designs/landscapes; and
- 6) well organised mixed-used neighbourhoods that combine living, working shopping - or that similar to the Setia brand's "live, learn, work, play" concept.

KEN RIMBA RESIDENCES

A development known for adopting "green" principles and environmental-friendly methods in its design - Ken Rimba Legian Residences need no introduction where Mother Nature is concerned. Having won the Fiabci Malaysia Property Award in the Sustainable Development category, the development project also received the BCA Green Mark Gold award and is GBI-certified.

It also employs a rainwater-harvesting technology, said to be able to harvest 450 gallons of rainwater which it uses for landscape irrigation and car porch cleaning, apart from homeowners living there having to pay very minimal water charges.

Louvred windows in its design also "catches" the north-south wind, receiving a constant wind flow of fresh air, therefore decreasing the need for air-conditioning. These windows are also adjustable, and help keep the interiors of the home cooler and breezier.

The more recent Ken Rimba Jimbaran Residences also adopt this louvred-window principle in its design but also uses cavity blocks said to be able to reduce thermal heat transfer from the exterior to the interior of the homes. These apparently reduce the heat within and keep interiors cooler than homes made with

For the love of nature

> Exploring residential projects and developments in the name of 'green'



The Light Collection water villas.

conventional bricks. Recycling bins are also said to be placed at convenient locations while low volatile organic component paints are used so as not to emit unhealthy fumes and last longer than conventional paints. Lighting with sensors is also installed to reduce electricity consumption.

IJM'S LIGHT COLLECTION

Another property developer known to utilise green-related technologies in its design is IJM Land Berhad. It was reported that the company spent 5% of its construction costs in green design mechanics for its The Light development series. Phase One of The Light Collection includes The Light Linear and The Light Point which both offer residential condominiums built according to "green" standards.

Apart from tapping into natural lighting and cross-ventilation of buildings in The Light waterfront

project, its basic and passive design also cuts its reliance on using high-technology products in its construction. One way the developer reduced its use of materials in its project is by using optic cables which is said to tremendously lessen the use of copper cables, at the same time provide better "service" to occupants. Recycled pavers and composite timber are just some of many other green construction materials the developer uses in its design.

Other green methods include rainwater harvesting, recycling of household waste, use of energy-saving lights and air-conditioners with in-built inverter technology, a centralised vacuum system to reduce airborne particles that may be reintroduced in habitable spaces and more.

While The Light Waterfront was recorded as the first to have a marine ecosystem in a residential

precinct, The Light Collection, along with The Light Linear and The Light Point are certified with provisional GBI certification.

SUNWAY SPK DAMANSARA

A joint-venture development project between Sunway City Berhad and Sharikat Permodalan Kebangsaan Berhad - 3 Harmoni is the first low-rise residential development to be awarded the provisional GBI certification and BCA Green Mark award.

Featuring well planned modern garden homes, the development project incorporates the five pillars of LOHAS (Lifestyles of Health and Sustainability) in its design concept.

The gated and guarded development offers harmonious and spacious townhouses on freehold property accessible via the Sprint, NKVE, LDP and Penchala Link highways. Moreover, a fully equipped clubhouse provides the means for healthier lifestyles offering various facilities and amenities via a gym, swimming and wading pools, children's playground, relaxation pavilions, jogging track, reading and karaoke rooms and more.

Besides these, there is the sky garden, a linear garden, recycling and composting hubs, plus day-to-day operations that use environmental-sustaining methods of working as in rainwater harvesting, photovoltaic cells, solar heaters, water booster pump, motion sensor lighting, applying cross ventilation of wind, et cetera.

While ecological design features are reflected in the buildings' architecture, Sunway SPK 3 Harmoni also caters to the young and disabled population.

THE HAVEN LAKESIDE RESIDENCES

The renowned condo-resort hybrid development is also touted as one of the finest eco-resorts in Malaysia. The Haven Lakeside Resort Residences offers short-term rentals and is operated by the Best Western International hotel chain.

Having received bountiful numbers of awards to its name, the development is also known for its "green" features, especially in harnessing natural energy resources. Rainwater harvesting, solar energy and using a windmill turbine help reduce the development's carbon footprint. Situated next to the virgin forest in Tambun in the state of Perak - the flora and fauna within are conscientiously maintained and preserved. Moreover, no fogging is allowed, instead, the use of pandan and lemongrass to keep the mozzies at bay. Fireworks are also not allowed within the compound.

Other than providing residents with breathtaking views of the scenic natural lake and amazing limestone hills, the luxurious condominium project also offers landscaped water gardens, a jogging track, swimming and wading pools, barbecue areas, a gymnasium and sporting facilities, many leisure spaces to relax in, including a spa.

In 2014, The Haven was conferred Best Green Development. This was just one of many other awards. This year, The Haven won some 10 over awards, including Malaysia's best, Asia's best and world's best.



The Haven Lakeside Residences.

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For the love of green

> Developer that embraces 'green' concepts and nature-inspired designs

In continuation of our "green" theme, we feature, this week, two more developers offering properties that offer a "greener" environment. While some question the characteristics of a "green developer", we put aside all precepts and judgments as to what constitutes the makings of a "green developer", instead we highlight developments that offer lots of greens and adopt practices that care for Mother Nature.

NILAI ARIF PROJECT

One such developer is Nilai Arif Sdn Bhd, a subsidiary of Hunza Properties Berhad, Hunza in short. Somewhat reflective of a new development by Nilai Arif, the name Hunza refers to the Karakoram Mountains of north Pakistan that borders with China called the Hunza Valley. Here people are said to enjoy an average lifespan of 120 years. It is also this area that is said to have inspired author James Hilton, who depicted the vision of Shangri-la in his novel called *Lost Horizon*.

In view of this, we highlight Alilaz, depicted as an alluring haven, "Where bliss is more than just a state of mind" states its brochure. Somewhat "heavenly" claim some, Alilaz offers contemporary designed spaces to call home, built across wide and open areas that harmonise with the mountains and the sea in none other than the upscale neighbour of Tanjung Bungah in Penang.

Promising breathtaking views and enchanting landscaped gardens alongside modern-inspired condominium units that come with a host of luxurious amenities and conveniences - location is another gem, where this development project is concerned.

Offering low-density living spaces of just five units per floor, there are more than eight various unit types to select from ranging between 1,905 sf and 5,789 sf. Spread across two towers on 9.8 acres of freehold land, Alilaz offers 270 housing units in total. Deemed "bungalows" or "semi-detached" homes in the sky, this development offers total privacy and comfort.

Moreover, a typical unit comes with two parking bays, while purchase of a duplex or penthouse



offers four. Apart from all the "cream on the cake" mentioned, here are even more special features about this heavenly project that is enticing one too many housing investor and home purchaser, local and abroad, including those from Malaysia, My Second Home incentive programme:

SPECIAL FEATURES

Alilaz is not just located in an area that provides panoramic views of the hills and sea, it also stands in close proximity of TAR College and

Tenby International School. This ideally puts a "tick" on the development, a criteria where "good DNA" is concerned in land matters. An excellent choice to make home of especially for families with school-going children and, of course, those who value time with these educational institutions located within the vicinity.

Moreover, the development also ranks high for those who practise feng shui - with the verdant hill slopes overlooking the sea. Those who believe in the power of feng shui will recognise the symbolic presence of the "green dragon on the left and the white tiger on the right" - both prominent features that also appear "matured" and "strong". In addition, the gentle hills behind the property are said to symbolise the "black turtle", protector of the entire environment.

Hitting high in green aspects, Alilaz regales as a place that offers modern resort



lifestyles. Those who know how to appreciate the beauty of nature and the serenity of living by the sea will understand the beauty this gem of a development has to offer. Lush landscapes, some with trees and gardens, and some three acres of untouched hill land, bring forth days filled with awe and nature's beauty. While refreshing sights and sounds are a daily occurrence, special landscaped features just add on to the value and worth of this amazing place.

CREATURE COMFORTS

From the guardhouse leading to both towers is a path aligned with a canopy of forest trees. These provide a natural shade apart from a sight for sore eyes, additionally making way for a giant swing and cocoon seating that allow one to regale in Mother Nature's arms. An infinity pool with Jacuzzi beds, seats and aqua gym equipment are available, against a waterfall backdrop supported by an aqueduct water feature. This sets the mood and sensation of being in a waterfall area in the forest.

There is a wading pool with water play equipment as well as forest concept play appliances and contraptions for children to enjoy fun-filled times outdoors. Here, climbing trees is not prohibited. Social gatherings are also encouraged with a two-storey lounge area complete with barbecue and dining facilities, plus a "green deck" that can be used as a party platform.

Tennis courts, a half court basketball court, relaxation pockets on timber decks and hammocks, places to lie down and kick off one's shoes and just relax and take in the beauty of nature - there is an abundance of green features and nature-inspired activities specifically interwoven into this project development.

GREEN CONCEPTS

Where nature is concerned, Alilaz is designed in compliance to the stringent standards of Malaysia's Green Building Index (GBI) Certification. Both the condominium towers are designed using heat reduction methods and processes. These include shading devices, the use of glass in its design, plus reduced use of air-conditioning, yet providing cool interiors. Timers and photo-sensitive switches help lower electricity consumption yet provide light when required, bearing in mind safety concerns.

The two towers are also designed to meet the MS1525 requirements that uphold high indoor environment qualities for healthier living interiors. Smoking is also not permitted in public areas of the buildings while low VOC and environmentally-friendly materials are used throughout the project, improving indoor air quality. Build quality is also in line with the requirements of CIS7 and Qlassic standards, both that adopt environmental friendly proceedings.

Site planning and management of the development is also planned to have low impact on the environment, with large land areas, not impacting environmentally sensitive areas. There is also no sediment discharge to local water ways, plus rain water tanks specially built to retain water. Materials and resources are all "eco-labelled" and environmentally-friendly, meeting GBI requirements where possible. Recycling is encouraged, with many opportunities that encourage residents to take up this good habit including a construction waste management plan.

All water and sanitary fittings are also certified and use water sparingly and efficiently. Landscape watering is carried out using water stored from the rain water harvesting system. Moreover, the development also adopts an interesting fire protection system that uses an innovative method to recycle test water. All these reduce water consumption by more than 50%.

Follow our column next week to learn of the interior design colours that are in for 2016.



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