



Opposites attract

> Modern day interior designers and industry experts introduce a new concept on what gets



PHOTO: VIRALFOREST.COM

GONE are the days when one was clear about what matched or corresponded and what did not. These days, there seems to be a very thin line between black and white or even what is right and wrong for that matter. It looks as though the world has become such a complex place to live in, then again perhaps it is a "grey" era we have chosen to make of it ourselves. However, anyone with an open-mind could look at this perception in modern day light, as a creative ideology, a higher understanding, or a liberal or creative perception of what goes well together.

Bowled over on this insight, *theSun* explores some of today's unconventional matches (some say, made in heaven) and the concept that creativity really has no boundaries. After all, according to research, each individual is unique and sees things differently.

In the world of architecture and interior design, while all is questionable, at the same time unquestionable, in the creative domain, many claim beauty lies in the eye of the beholder. While one will agree that stripes and dots just don't jibe, another may consider this crazy idea as a fusion of eclectic style.

METAL AND WOOD

The use of metal and wood in interiors has been around for some time now. However, in more recent times, especially in Malaysia, we have noticed a lot more of these two unlikely materials being paired up in a space and sometimes even conjoined together in one piece of furniture or paraphernalia.

Some in the creative field term this marriage of two "unlikely" matters "industrial interior design". It's about the yin and yang, "adding a raw and unfinished look to the most thoughtfully designed



PHOTO: SCOUTMOB.COM

interiors" explains one. "It's about putting together function and style," describes another.

Like it or not, wood and metal are in and have found their way into many homes, offices, commercial and naturally, industrial spaces. The result - a warehouse look, an earthy yet polished appearance that exudes a sense of ease, freedom, an unrestrained feel that invites the laissez-faire between walls. Call it the most unlikely pair, you have to agree that the outcome is really somewhat appealing.

Those intending to dress their interiors in this style need not spend much as the raw look and feel allows for exposed ceilings that feature pipes and ducts, bare brackets and tubes, untreated wood fused with stained metals and

unconcealed wiring that give an unfinished look. Peeling paint, unevenly put together pieces of furniture, do-it-yourself furnishings in its slipshod assembled form ... All these and more express a functional space that is hip and stylish with hints of vintage in between.

MIX OF COLOUR

Mixes of colours that don't match can come as attractive. In fact, colours that "clash" kind of make a statement, a talking piece, as this stands out and catches the eye. Once before when no one would think of having two strong colours in the same room or space for that matter, today, you can find homes donned in blues and greens, navies and bright oranges, limes and yellows against maroons and a crazy mix of unlikely hues.

The outcome is a bold and daring space that evokes an energetic effect. Break the rules and go for strong shades for a fabulous and somewhat dramatic effect. Blend one-coloured walls with wall-papered ones, each in contrasting tones or perhaps go for a striking wall colour and theme this with loud-coloured accessories, furnishings and furniture. Imagine Cyndi Lauper or abstract art and know that yours will be a space that creates a unique look and feel.

Another idea to add to this style using conflicting colours is to decorate spaces within these walls with bespoke furniture. Here, you get to up the ante on the mad mix of hues, even in the choices of the smaller objet d'art. Use splashes of vibrant fuchsia or turquoise to create an interior space that you enjoy coming home to, one that speaks your personality or evokes your inner spirit.

MESH OF TEXTURES

Mixing textures, otherwise known as "layering", requires skill and talent, say interior designers. The effect could create depth and make all the difference between interiors simply and quickly put together or one furnished with much thought for a space with soul and substance. While some refer to such spaces as interiors with character, others may view it as a dramatically decorated home or one with personality and charm, as if "alive". Nonetheless, layering with various textures can make a difference to any wall, floor and ceiling even. The technique can also be used to "bring out" or add a buzz to upholstery, window coverings and even accessories.

It may not be too alien for one to use a variety of textures in upholstery. From a variety of different textured floor rugs and carpets, curtains, cushion covers and bedding - these are quite



PHOTO: MYDESIGNSOURCEBLOG.COM

common in many homes. One can also vary the textures used on a particular piece of furniture or furnishing, playing with something soft and easy to touch along with something more drastic, perhaps hard or even bristly. Alternate the size of the objects with textures for even more depth, and go for colours and prints of different dimensions as well.

Choose a variety of fabrics from light and translucent to something heavier and thick, with designs on brocade, velvet or silk, paired with knotted braids and needlework for a sense of opulence. Frills, flounces, ribbons and laces are often used, as these, if applied cleverly, can bring about warmth and a calm and pleasant feel to interiors.

Last but not least, while being creative can give rise to unconventional and fresh ideas and concepts, try not to go overboard in inter-blending. Then again, if the outcome is pleasing to the eye of the inhabitants and brings harmony to the soul, why not?

DID YOU KNOW

Incorporating and combining even the slightest bit is considered a regular and reasonable thing to do. A perfect example is the architectural and interior style that is relevant in today's era, called the "eclectic style". It is explained as a fusion style that combines culture, technology, style, shape, even the "time". The style is said to offer everything, with no rules that limit creativity combining modern elements with classics, old with new, high quality with flea market and such. The main point is not freedom but harmony in taste.

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PHOTO: SOFAWORKSHOP.COM



PHOTO: SOFAWORKSHOP.COM



PHOTO: ETSY.COM



Discovering Negri Sembilan PART 1

> A series exploring the state that recorded the most number of residential units sold

THE real estate market outlook for Negri Sembilan is reported to be positive. In fact, since 2015, prices have been ascending, along with a record number of transactions. Although the property market is currently reported to be going through a “soft” period in general, below is a residential “snapshot” focusing on the housing market in Darul Khusus, the Arabic honorific title which means “special abode”.

Negri Sembilan borders Selangor, Kuala Lumpur, Pahang, Malacca and Johor. It lies on the western coast of the peninsula. Popular towns include Port Dickson, Bahau and Nilai.

The state has historical ties with the Minangkabau from west Sumatra, Indonesia, the reason its traditional architecture and spoken language has significant traces of Minangkabau features and words.

SEREMBAN IN BRIEF

According to records, the area with the most number of residential units sold is Seremban. With that, we take a quick look at this city and probe reasons it has found favour among buyers and investors of residential property.

Briefly, Seremban is located some 50 kilometres from Kuala Lumpur.

With its close proximity, and the convenience of rail/commuter trains connecting the town with Kuala Lumpur (KL) city, many in the workforce commute daily between Seremban and KL, mainly because property is cheaper in



Seremban compared with KL city.

Another reason that could explain the rise in the number of residential property transactions in that part of the country could also be due to the fact that Nilai, a town that is gaining popularity especially among the airline industry folk, is situated some 20 kilometres away from the KL International Airport (KLIA) and kliaz, and some 50km away from KL city – convenient for those working with the airlines and supporting industries.

ON THE WHOLE

Considered a stone's throw away from KL city, Negri Sembilan is fairly well connected via rail and road. In fact, the North-South Highway heading down south from

KL is often laden with heavy traffic on weekends.

This is said to be due to those who have bought properties in Negri Sembilan, who return home every Friday night or Saturday morning, apart from those who “balik kampung” almost every weekend due to the short distance, to visit their parents, indulge in home-cooked food and other comforts that come with going “home”.

There are also those who seek solace in the outskirts and venture out to the smaller states while indulging in authentic local food from the area, in the case of Negri Sembilan, the famed Seremban siew pau, beef noodles near the Seremban wet market, Haji Shariff's cendol, masak cili api, rendang and its gulai dishes and daging salai.

Besides the above-mentioned, the KL-Singapore High-Speed Rail marks Seremban as one of five stops along its route. This will boost connectivity of the state besides giving the reason for property prices and real estate transactions to escalate.

While some have moved to Seremban and other small towns in Negri Sembilan due to its slower lifestyle pace and lower cost of living – with the influx of people shifting to this part of the country, these reasons could soon become null and void. What more



The Minangkabau Residence.

with the on-going and up-coming commercial developments in the state's and government's blueprints and infrastructure plans.

A LARGER VIEW

Touching on state and government plans for Negri Sembilan, it has been less than a year that Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Mohamad Hasan announced the enforcement of some policies pertaining residential housing projects. In June last year, after discussions with the Real Estate Housing Developers' Association (Rehda) Negri Sembilan, new housing policies were enforced. These include:

- ▶ Fifty per cent of every new housing project must consist of affordable landed residential units in dimensions not less than

- ▶ 20ft x 60ft;
- ▶ of the 50% of affordable houses, 15% must be priced at RM80k or below; 15% at RM250k or below; and 20% at RM400k or below; with the remaining up to the developers; and
- ▶ Bumiputra ownership quota has been raised from 50% to 70%.

In terms of number of transactions, refer to the chart on the top 10 areas, as listed by brickz.my below.

Follow our column next week for more on Negri Sembilan, along with interesting property development projects within the state.

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NEGRI SEMBILAN RESIDENTIAL SNAPSHOT (January - September 2015)

	Building type	Area	Project / neighbourhood
Most transacted	Terrace house (2,494 sold)	Seremban (303 sold)	Bandar Springhill (91 sold)
Highest average per sq ft (RM)	Condominium (RM143 psf)	Kota Seriemas (RM210 psf)	Green Beverly Hills (RM455 psf)

Source: brickz.my

TOP 10 AREAS (By number of transactions)

Location	Number of transactions	Average price per sq ft (RM)
Seremban	303	195
Nilai	236	187
Senawang	197	121
Seremban 2	176	115
Rasah	174	106
Port Dickson	172	105
Ampangan	165	102
Setul	162	100
Labu	150	97
Teluk Kemang	147	72

Source: brickz.my



Green Beverly Hills, Putra Nilai.



Discovering Negri Sembilan **PART 2**

> Exploring various residential property developments



Sendayan Merchant Square.

PHOTO: WWW.SENDAYAN.COM



Eutelia, D'Mayang Sari.

PHOTO: WWW.SERIPAJAM.COM.MY

and kliaz, which are a mere 20-minute drive away. Kota Seriemas is also said to be the preferred choice for those working in KLIA, Putrajaya and Sepang due to its network of well-planned roads and

highways like the Kuala Lumpur - Seremban Highway, Elite Highway, Putrajaya/Cyberjaya-Dengkil Highway and Lekas Highway. Another development project in Nilai to take note of is D'Mayang

Sari by Seri Pajam. Those looking for landed property, convenience and who enjoy the outdoors and open spaces should not let this development pass by without looking it over. Within this 64-acre development is a lake, maze garden, kite lawn, linear park plus a shaded playground. Four-bedroom, four-bathroom double-storey terraced houses come with freehold titles in a guarded residential area. The development is also situated just beside Nilai town and easily accessible via the Lekas and North-South highways.



PHOTO: WWW.SERIEMAS.MY

SEREMBAN

Nonetheless, the area that registered the highest number of residential units sold was Seremban. During the first nine months of 2015, 303 transactions were recorded. In fact, Seremban, with its exciting developments and



Cempaka Seri 2 town house, Kota Seriemas.

PHOTO: WWW.SERIEMAS.MY



Maple, Bandar Springhill.

PHOTO: WWW.BANDARSRINGHILL.COM

WHILE last week we looked at Negri Sembilan and Seremban in a nutshell, this week, we delve into a couple of appealing residential developments, beginning with a township called Bandar Springhill, previously known as Lukut, situated in the district of Port Dickson.

With Seremban part of the Greater Klang Valley Conurbation, the rise in property prices and number of transactions makes sense. Below are snippets of information retrieved from iProperty.com's report, along with views and comments from iProperty Group CEO and developers on their development projects.

PORT DICKSON

Between January and September 2015, Bandar Springhill recorded the "neighbourhood with the most number of residential property transactions in Negri Sembilan". The township covers some 200 acres. Interesting projects that are on-going include construction of the UCSI International School, the UCSI University Medical Teaching Hospital, along with the five-star UCSI Resort Hotel and Convention Centre.

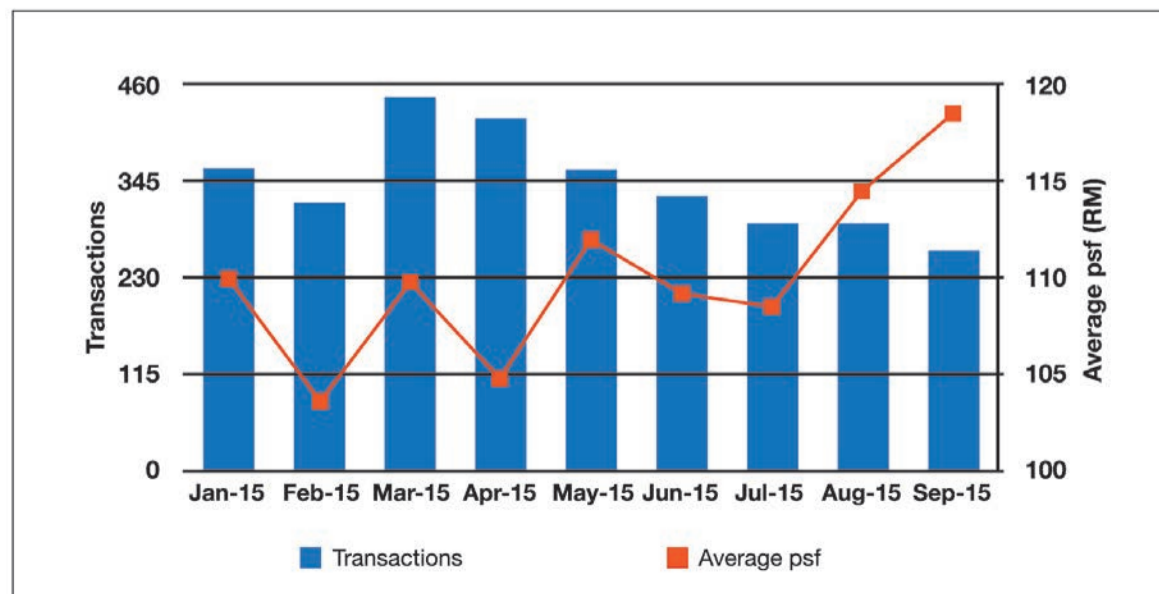
It is said that good pricing contributes to the popularity of this township - more affordable than other thriving areas in the state such as Seremban. Average prices reported for a bungalow in Bandar Springhill ranges between RM380,000 and RM420,000.

KW Associate Architects Sdn Bhd managing director Datuk Kevin Woo, who is also the architect in charge of designing boutique homes in Bandar Springhill, mentioned an upcoming project he is working on - Phase E7, offering boutique double-storey terrace houses. He also mentioned plans for Bandar Springhill, to become an educational township, being the one said to fuel the partnership between UCSI Group's Datuk Peter Ng and MUI Group's Tan Sri Khoo Kay Peng.

NILAI

In the same period last year, Kota Seriemas in Nilai was recorded as the area with the highest average price per sq ft in residential properties. This is said to be largely due to the township's close proximity to transport hubs KLIA

NEGERI SEMBILAN LANDED TRANSACTIONS AND AVERAGE PRICE PER SQ FT (January - September 2015)



*Source: brickz.my

Klang Valley's rising residential price tags, is considered by double-income professionals/couples and young families as "the ideal place".

An interesting township located in western Seremban is Bandar Sri Sendayan. Developed by Matrix Concepts Holdings Bhd, the 5,233-acre township is self-contained with ample amenities and facilities. Construction of shopping complexes and a specialist hospital are in the pipeline. New under the Bandar Sri Sendayan project is the construction of double-storey terrace houses in an area called Ara Sendayan. Housing units here start at RM650,000. There is also an industrial component tied to the project called Sendayan TechValley. This has attracted a number of companies from Japan, France and Germany among others. Other attractions of the Sri Sendayan project include the Matrix International Pre-School, Matrix International School and Matrix Private School.

END POINT

iProperty Group CEO Georg Chmiel shared his view on the state's thriving property development scene. He said, "Negri Sembilan has emerged as the country's latest investment hotspot by fully leveraging on its geographical advantage.

Its prime location between Kuala Lumpur and Iskandar Malaysia, the gateway to Singapore, the availability of much developed land at relatively low rates and a well-established infrastructural support have drawn much potential to this state."

Chmiel also highlighted the rise in the number of large scale projects in the state and properties in Seremban, Nilai and Senawang enjoying good capital appreciation. He also mentioned that property experts expect a lot of changes to the property landscape in Negri Sembilan in the next five years.

Follow our property section next week on residential development projects in Pajam, Nilai, Seremban and Senawang, Negri Sembilan Darul Khusus.

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WHILE the state may have been famous for its paus, noodles and gulai dishes, recently its real estate has been gaining popularity. Shared iProperty Group CEO Georg Chmiel, "Experts believe there will be tremendous change in Negri Sembilan's property landscape in the next five years where there will be a greater influx of investors and developers as land acquisitions in the state are relatively cheaper than KL. The High Speed Rail (HSR) transportation link will also have a multiplier effect on Negri Sembilan."

Sharing quite the same sentiments is Tey Soo Leng, director of property development firm Seri Pajam Development. "There has been positive growth demand especially from Klang Valley buyers. In fact, strong sales have been recorded for our landed projects in Pajam, Nilai, Seremban and Senawang."

With that, *theSun* explores on-going residential projects of Seri Pajam in Negri Sembilan.

SERI PAJAM SIGNATURE

There are some distinctive characteristics that are purposefully incorporated into the design of Seri Pajam houses. These reflect the Seri Pajam "brand" which caters to the lifestyles of the inhabitants. Says Tey, "Rather than fancy facades, we focus on the needs of those living in the house."

Signature features include:

- ▶ design layout that is practical and maximises on living spaces;
- ▶ premium finishing so as to minimise renovation after handover;
- ▶ innovative space creation that provides for fully extended balconies, car porches and buildings;
- ▶ utilising vertical spaces to maximise on space, allocating higher than the usual ceilings – 11ft to 15ft high;
- ▶ creating sustainable designed residential spaces that incorporates transplanting of trees, minimising maintenance for common facilities, using natural ventilation and sunlight in building design where possible etc; and
- ▶ strategic project location with easy access via major highways.

The above are some of the "trademarks" of residential units under the Seri Pajam label. They not only help save time, cost and the hassle of carrying out renovation work (which many home owners are often faced with) but see to the environment as well.

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS

On-going housing development projects in Negri Sembilan by Seri Pajam include:

- ▶ Citra Hill spans 144 acres in the town of Pajam. Perhaps like Nottingham, Citra Hill, located in the north part of the state, bordering Selangor, is catered to those who crave for a tranquil and refreshing lifestyle. Some words that reflect the character of this freehold and guarded township include charm, ideal, tranquil, refreshing and accessible. Double-storey units offering five bedrooms and six bathrooms are ready for viewing.
- ▶ Nada Alam is built upon 160 acres and is also situated in Pajam. This development is established on green living and



Exploring Negri Sembilan

PART 3

> A look at development projects by Seri Pajam

Nada 3 semi-d.



The Eco Lake at D'Mayang Sari.

the sustainable lifestyle concept. The project is separated into five precincts, each with green spaces spanning 5.26ha. There is also a mini wetlands area and a 7km jogging track among other nature-inspired features. A significant trait of housing units in Nada Phase 2B and 3A is their larger-than-usual roomy areas. From car porches to ceilings, balconies, lanais and backyards, these areas are all fully extended. Housing units are ready and await tenants.

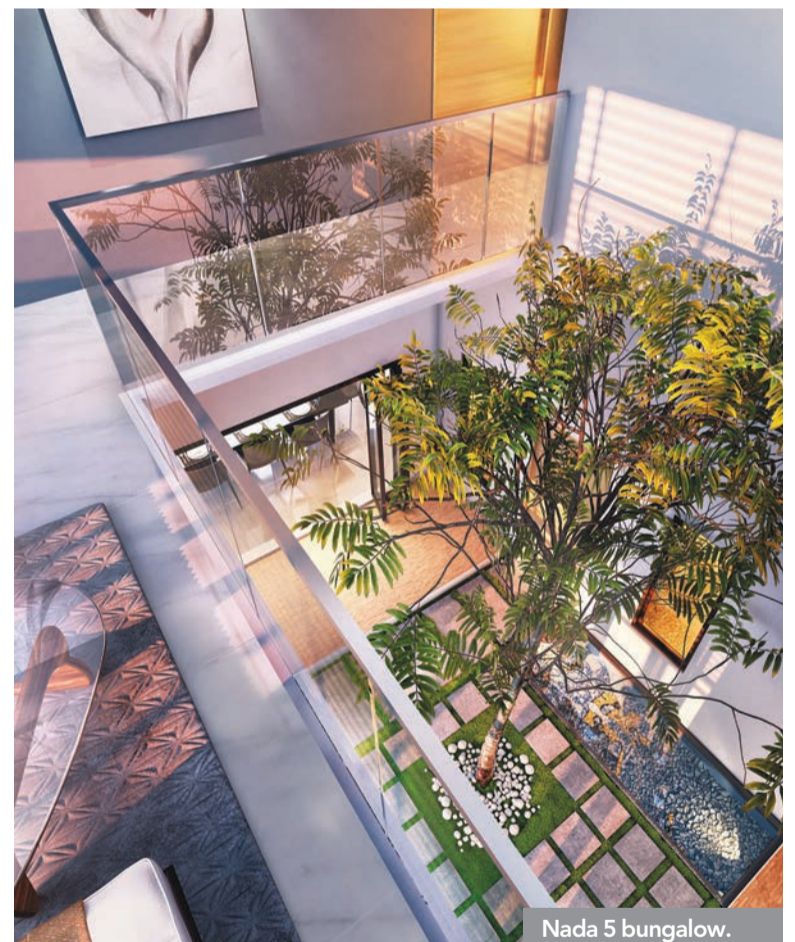
- ▶ D'Mayang Sari which is in Nilai, is surrounded by high-demand amenities. It is situated next to Nilai town and offers an idyllic lifestyle within its 64-acre green and sustainable development. 10% of this development will accommodate recreational and green spaces that encourage residents to enjoy nature, exercise and the outdoors. The Eusarca houses under this residential development project offers four bedrooms and four bathrooms, ensembles that come with attached bathrooms for enhanced privacy.
- ▶ Bandar Warisan Puteri is located in Sikamat, Seremban. The development project covers 145.6 acres and presents a serene township that is lush with greenery and amazing scenery.

Prices of housing units that are ready within this residential development project are slightly on the high side. The Topaz 1.5-storey bungalows come with five bedrooms and five bathrooms. The project is established on freehold land and will also include semi-d's and double-storey homes to be built at a later date.

- ▶ Nusa Intan is a spacious housing area nestled in Senawang. Sprawling across 300 acres, the housing project offers 16 acres of greens, has eight concept parks and three recreational lakes. The development also sits beside a forest reserve and offers quiescence and solitude in its many nooks and crannies. Residential units offered include double-storey terraced and premium single-storey terraced houses.

CREATING VALUE, PROVIDING LIFESTYLES

Of the above-mentioned residential developments, D'Mayang Sari and Nada Alam are reported to be more popular. In fact, Nada Alam was awarded the five-star Asia Pacific International Property Award, beating others in the Best Residential Landscape Architecture (Malaysia) 2014-2015 category. "Nada Alam is aptly



Nada 5 bungalow.

dubbed nature's symphony. It is an exceptional development, a gem ingeniously deliberated into the existing ecology ... a slice of paradise," Tey describes.

Known as a developer of self-contained suburban townships, Seri Pajam has spent the last 10 years developing residential and commercial properties, only to become better. "We have also set ourselves a high benchmark for our projects by making sure we are creating value by providing our customers with quality in our amenities, infrastructure and design. We want those buying into our projects to realise the value and appreciate the lifestyle that comes with each project. It is important to

us that they share the journey of enhancement with us," Tey adds.

Strong in their development projects in Negri Sembilan and Selangor, Tey informs that there are many new projects in the pipeline. "We believe that the future is very bright for Seri Pajam Development as we do not just build homes ... we create avenues for people to shape their dream lifestyles."

Watch this space next week for more on Negri Sembilan residential development projects.

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