

URBAN INCISION

A POLISHED PIECE OF SOHO ARCHITECTURE BY TAN'CK ARCHITECT RISES IN THE PERIPHERIES OF KUALA LUMPUR'S BUKIT CEYLON.

WORDS
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01-02. Ceylonz Suites' intricate grey-brown elements drive a characterful, vertically stacked composition of voids and solids.

On a sun-dappled street just off Kuala Lumpur's affluent Bukit Ceylon enclave, Ceylonz Suites sits in calm repose.

Flanked by swathes of urban forest, a 104-year-old Presbyterian church, and two high-rises – one of them the Bursa Malaysia stock exchange – the building exudes a tranquil street-level ambience, harmonious with its neighbourhood.

But gaze upwards, and its incisive architecture is revelatory.

Make no mistake, this is an articulate building for the erudite city dweller.

INHERITED CHALLENGES

For all its confident demeanour, the 39-storey development did not have the most ideal of starts.

"This was originally an abandoned







03

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Working from home today has become the norm, and with long commutes no longer a mandated necessity, Ceylonz Suites may represent the ideal in metropolitan living, a reflection of the new dynamic in this era of social distancing and self-vigilance.

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04

project. Already built up to ground floor level, it had been designed as luxury residences, two units per floor with private lifts, that was later abandoned due to bad sales,” shares the tower’s designer, Malaysian architect Tan Chee Khoo.

“When my client took over the site, they asked me to design something affordable for the market yet has a demand.

“Their idea was something similar to the SoHo (Small Office, Home Office) genre. They would call these units ‘suites’, so that they could be used for business as well as accommodation.”

For this new scheme, Tan opted to start from scratch.

“The site is shaped like a trapezium, and the previous design similarly followed that. I found that doing this doesn’t give a good form, so I went for a rectangular design,” he says.

“Five years ago people were enamoured with fantastic forms, curving here, bending there. So I thought this time, we should go for something very simple.”

The inherited substructure posed significant challenges to this concept.

While the architect did attempt a level of integration with the existing structure, it was inevitable that the building foundations had to be redone.

And though the basement and perimeter walls were retained, the lift core itself had to be hacked and rebuilt to suit the new design.

It was, by Tan’s own admission, tough.

STRIATIONS AND TONALITIES

The tower’s vertical fins, ostensibly its defining feature, are finished in a special brown tone, creating contrast against off-form concrete façade elements.

03. The building’s topmost floor brims with communal facilities: infinity pool, gym, bar, gardens and other spaces offering 360-degree city views.

04. The façades’ vertical fins appear timber-like, their appearance derived from different tonalities of a powder-coat finishing selected by the architect.



05

05. The business lounge on L36 carries the timber-strip aesthetic into its ceiling, the space a blend of contemporary design and soft-touch comfort.

Elaborates Tan on the aluminium extrusions, "My initial idea was to use timber. But in discussions with the client, they expressed their hesitation as timber is hard to maintain in our climate, especially when the building would be handed over to the buyers and purchasers.

"So I said, why don't we go for something that looked similar?"

What followed was an extensive experiment with powder coating, the process eventually yielding three complementary shades that altogether replicate the tonalities of timber when seen from a distance.

On top of heightening the building's sense of vertical movement, these custom striations lend a layer of refinement to a frontage broken down by double-height cut-outs.



TAN CHEE KHOON,
LEAD ARCHITECT,
TAN'CK ARCHITECT

In between, alternating bands of pocket gardens offer a green outdoor space with unobstructed views of the city centre, giving occupants a chance to connect with the outdoors.

On the seventh floor, a box-like conference room cantilevers outwards beside a capacious cafeteria area, reinforcing the play of solid and void within the tower mass.



06

06-08. Playful designs and lush planting define the Suites' multi-level pocket gardens, each a green space of tranquil ambience set against the picturesque backdrop of Kuala Lumpur.



07

CEYLONZ SUITES

LOCATION
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

SITE AREA
0.23 hectare

BUILDING AREA
1122.18 m²

GROSS FLOOR AREA
30,560.3 m²

COMPLETION
2020

ARCHITECT
Tan'ck Architect

LEAD ARCHITECT
Tan Chee Khoon

DEVELOPER
Exsim Development

CONTRACTOR
Taghill Projects

C&S CONSULTANT
WPA Partners

ME& CONSULTANT
Zeal Perunding

QUANTITY SURVEYOR
Perunding SL

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT
Landart Design

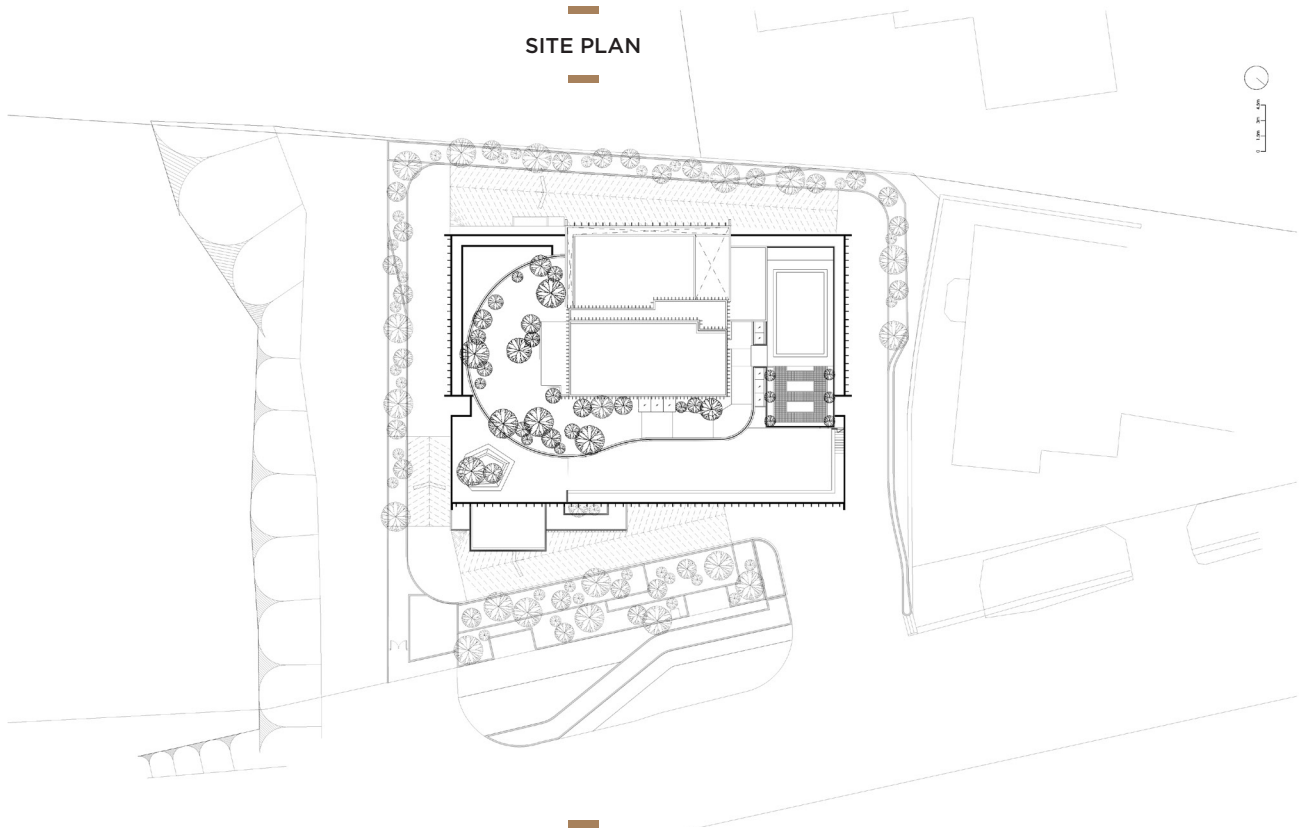
SANITARYWARE BRANDS
Johnson Suisse

AWARDS
German Design Award
Winner 2018, MIPIM/
The Architectural
Review Future Project
Awards 2017, The
International Property
Award 2021

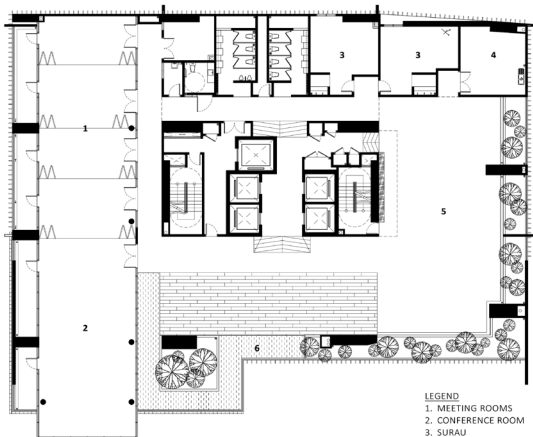


08

SITE PLAN

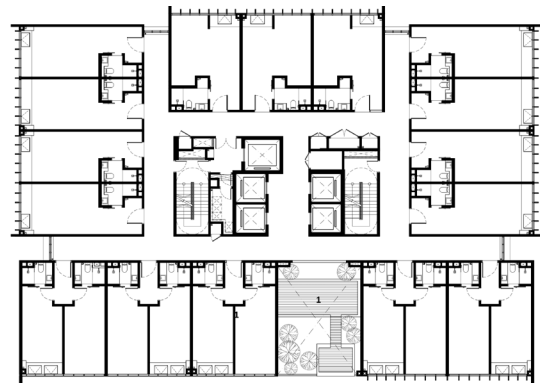


FLOOR PLANS



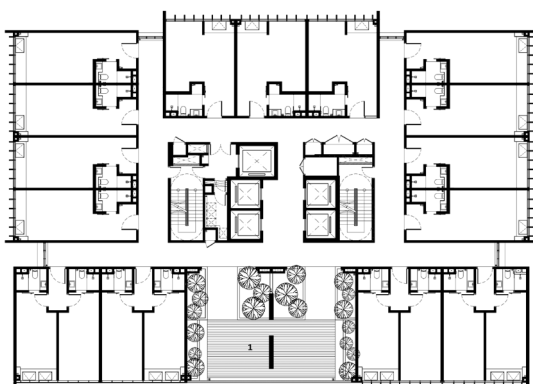
7TH FLOOR

- LEGEND
- 1. MEETING ROOMS
 - 2. CONFERENCE ROOM
 - 3. SURAU
 - 4. KITCHEN
 - 5. CAFE
 - 6. ECO POND



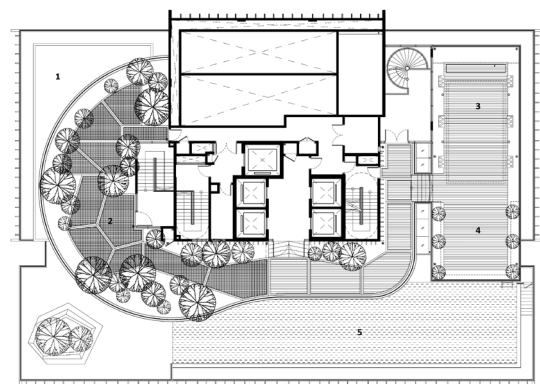
20TH FLOOR

- LEGEND
- 1. CHILL OUT LOUNGE



31ST FLOOR

- LEGEND
- 1. FITNESS LOUNGE



ROOF GARDEN

- LEGEND
- 1. GOURMET KITCHEN
 - 2. ROOF GARDEN
 - 3. BBQ PAVILION
 - 4. EDIBLE GARDEN
 - 5. SWIMMING POOL



WORK – LIVE – PLAY

A SoHo programme bound to architecture invariably encourages time spent not just in one's unit, but also outside of it.

The tower's social activities reach their crescendo at its imaginative two-tiered roof level.

On the lower half, building users gain access to a pool deck, bar and two levels of gym/yoga space; at the highest peak, a freeform crown holds a lush roof garden and deck.

Through its broad spectrum of spaces and services, the tower avails itself to maximum utility and habitability.

For enterprises, the availability of in-house conference and meeting rooms, not to mention breakout areas, means having the convenience to work anywhere in the building.

For short- or long-stay guests, the living and lifestyle environments proffer in equal measure home comfort and escapist respite, without leaving the premises.

09-10. From a crowning roof garden open to the sky, to cool, shaded exercise decks, the tower is designed with human wellbeing in mind, particularly relevant in today's stay-at-home climate.



Working from home today has become the norm, and with long commutes no longer a mandated necessity, Ceylonz Suites may represent the ideal in metropolitan living, a reflection of the new dynamic in this era of social distancing and self-vigilance.

It ticks all the right boxes of privacy, accessibility, proximity to the CBD when needed, and the all-important connectivity crucial to today's virtualised society.