

METRO

VOL. 10 NO. 2

home

HOW TO! & Entertaining

UPGRADE YOUR
ROOMS INSTANTLY
REVAMP A KITCHEN
DESIGN YOUR GARDEN
CALCULATE FOR
YOUR SPACE NEEDS

Cosmopolitan Cocooning
in Megaworld's Sarasota
Residential Resorts

GLOBAL CHILLING:
Cold dishes for hot times

PHILIPPINE ART
AND CULTURE'S BIG
SHOWS IN FRANCE

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Living room of a one-bedroom unit at Sarasota Residential Resorts by Megaworld

PHOTOGRAPH BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO

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What I've learned



THIS IS THE SECOND to my last issue as editor of this magazine.

I want to take the time to go over what I've learned over the 10 years that I've been running it.

Sometime in the beginning, I had a conversation with an architect. I asked him, what is it clients primarily tell you they want their home to convey as a design? He said the articulations were varied, but the answer was essentially the same. Most people want their homes to showcase their "success."

I say now that this is the first mistake to be made in creating a home. If your aim is to impress, you're headed in the wrong direction. If the regard of others is so important to you, I suggest you reconsider.

Fortunately, even homes built as status symbols must bend to the specificities of its residents' lives. Where the design of these homes does comply with reality rather than fantasy are usually the most interesting parts.

There are so many other things design can aim for other than to show off. What about comfort? What about pleasure? After 10 years of looking at houses, if I were to tell an architect now what, if anything, I would like my house to do, it would be to make me feel real.

Another thing I've learned is that by the time most people have the money to build the home they've been dreaming of all their lives, the idea that they have in their head may be kind of dated already. You can see this in big developments, which took years to plan, finance and construct. By the time the thing is built, the design looks like it was once, not too long ago, a fashionable idea.

I think what's to be taken from this is you need to avoid clinging to ideas and to be completely open to new ones. Also, you need to build in some flexibility in the design of your home so that when you tire of the look it won't be too difficult to change. Of course that's not always so practicable. Perhaps it's

enough to bear in mind that unlike in the past when houses would keep a look for at least a generation, today interior design has become subject to fashion. What's cool changes, not as quickly as fashion, but change it does nonetheless, and the changes can make one's house look tired and unoriginal. As we show in this issue, it is possible, however, to refresh a room without subjecting it to radical transformation.

Over the last several years, as I myself have become a homeowner, I've been repeatedly taught how poor service is in the Philippines. It's the merchant's market here. "We accept landscaping," says the garden company. "We accept catering," says the restaurant, almost begrudgingly, as if it were a favor on their part were they to accept your order. And that is the attitude usually brought into the service. The customer is not king, but defenseless supplicant. In many cases, it doesn't matter whether you threaten to take your business elsewhere as often the business owner won't care, only cares to make a sale when convenient for him.

A more passionate attitude would be indicated by: "Let us create an Eden in your backyard," a landscaping service could say. Or "Don't sweat. And throw a lavish feast," a caterer could advertise.

Of course this isn't uniformly true. Many of the more successful companies have customer service and networks of repair crews. But then that's probably why they're successful. They had the passion to achieve growth, and they paid attention.

Hopefully, I did too.

Carlo
carlo_tadiar@abs-cbn.com

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Dodo Dayao writes, films, paints and programs. He lives in Quezon City and is always working on something. He writes about the new Blanc gallery space in this issue.



Cyrene de la Rosa is known to her friends as The Walking Zagat, as her passion for food knows no boundaries. She will go anywhere, anytime, and anyhow to try something new or interesting. She is currently a Freelance Event Consultant and Project Manager specializing in Lifestyle and Sports related events and also maintains a weekly online food column called Chow Buzz on InterAksyon.com. She also regularly contributes food stories to our sister publications *Food* and *Vault*. In this issue of **Metro Home & Entertaining**, Cyrene explores some traditional cold dishes that are perfect for summer.

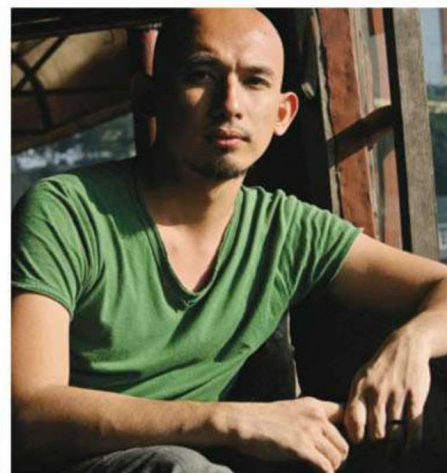


Rachel Mayo is a freelance art writer who has been covering Philippine contemporary visual art since 1990. In this issue, she writes about an artist talk held at the Lopez Museum and Library. The talk featured contemporary artists Toym Imao, Josephine Turalba, and Eric Zamuco as they discussed their processes, choice of materials, subject matters and the challenges of their respective installation works in the exhibition "Grounded".

Ian Castañares is a self-taught photographer specializing in still life. His career in photography started when he landed a job as staff photographer for **Metro Magazine**. From there, he started developing his expertise with product and portrait photography. Aside from being a freelance photographer,

he is also a part-time faculty member in the Photography Department of School of Design and Arts in De La Salle-College of Saint Benilde. He shot the feature on cold food for this month's issue of **Metro Home**.

Christian Regis debuts as the new Associate Editor of **Metro Home**. Before he got on board, he worked as a photographer and writer in Manila, Singapore, and Hong Kong. He still shoots and blogs for his photography company, The Creative Brewery Photography & Design, which he co-owns with his fiancée Angela Duldulao, an art director in ABS-CBN Publishing. For this issue, he was assigned to explore trends in local nautical lifestyle at Sea-Expo 2013. When not shooting and writing, Christian and Angela climb mountains, which is currently on hold because of preparations for their upcoming wedding.



The new Opulence

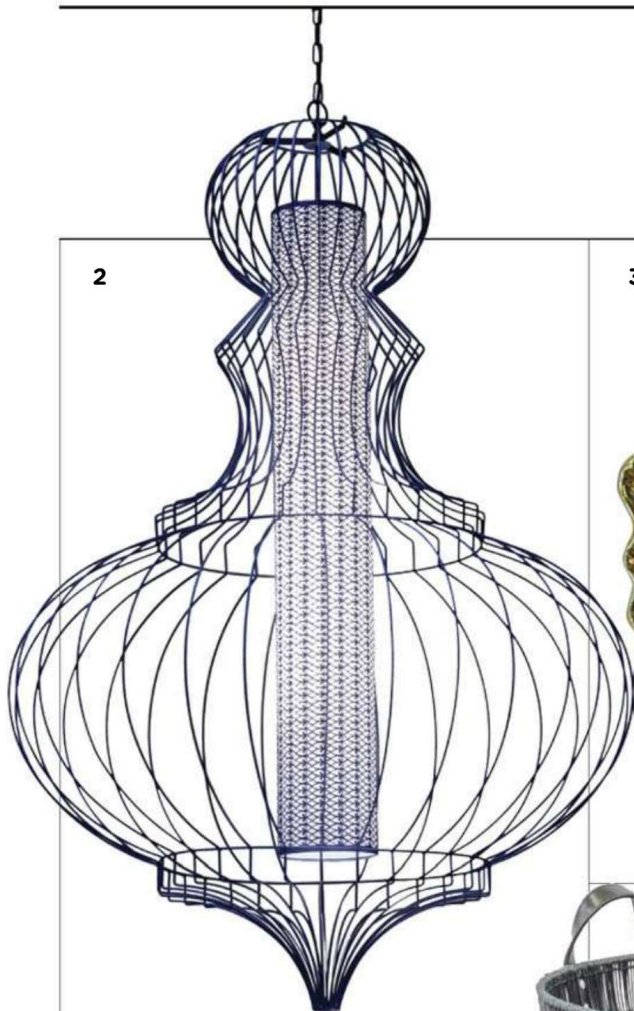
IN BROODING BLACKS AND GLORIOUS
GOLDS, A TREND TOWARDS
THE ROMANTIC FLOURISHES

BY **BARBIE PARDO-TIANGCO**
PHOTOGRAPHS BY **WILLIAM ONG**



1
Cherub mirror,
P185,000,
ac+632.

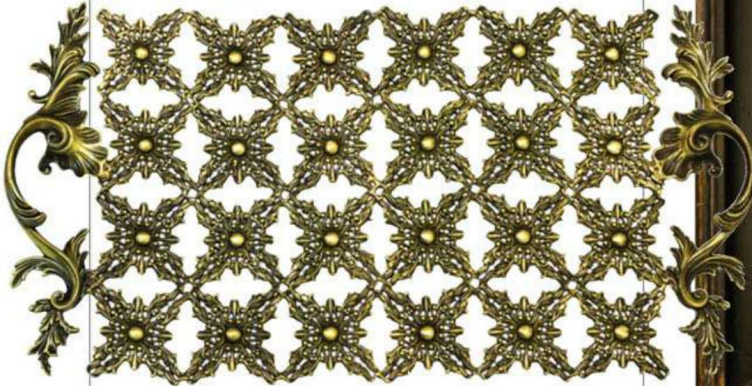
2. Aviza Bishop Pendant by Azcor. 3. Brass keyhole, Gecar Metal Solutions. 4. Black door stop, P780, Firma. 5. Tray with mother of pearl inlay, P18,500, Firma. 6. Metro tray made of buri palm, Hacienda Crafts. 7. Octopus Candle, P980, Firma.



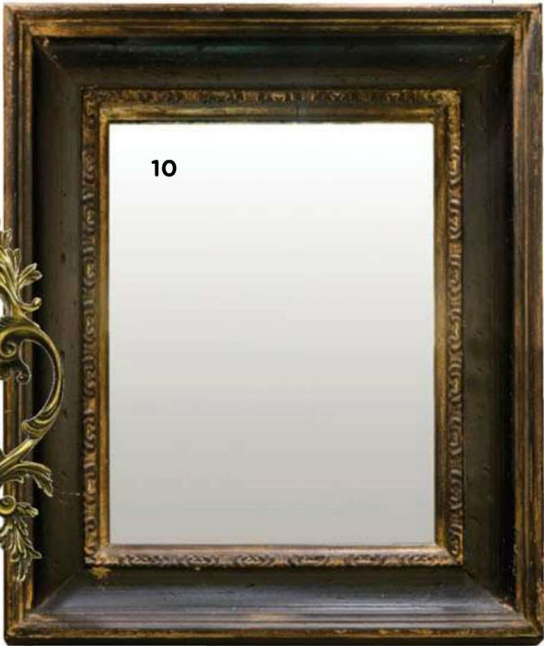
8. Magnolia floor lamp, Vito Selma. 9. Brass vanity tray, Gecar Metal Solutions. 10. Black mirror, P8,800, ac+632. 11. Husky lamp by Industria. 12. Brass escutcheon, Gecar Metal Solutions. 13. Floral tray, P3,380, ac+632.



8



9



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11



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13





DID YOU KNOW?

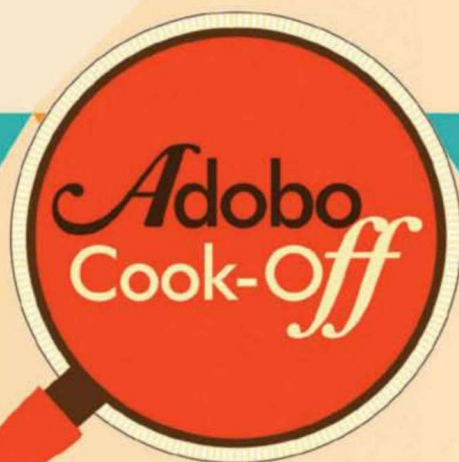
THE WORD '**ADOBO**' CAME FROM
THE FRENCH VERB '**ADOBAR**'
MEANING TO "DRESS A KNIGHT IN ARMOR."
IN SPANISH IT MEANS
"TO DRESS MEAT" OR TO "MARINATE."

SOURCE: "THE ADOBO BOOK," R. ALEJANDRO AND N. LUMEN

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NOVAMOBILI, one of the top Italian furniture companies in Europe, formally launched its flagship store in the country. It has seven showrooms in Asia, and more than 1,000 showrooms around the world, mostly in Europe. It presents new solutions for even the most compact spaces. It appeals to a range of tastes, be it refined or informal, classic or contemporary, minimal or modern. Novamobili products are Greenguard Indoor Air Quality-certified, the most stringent international certification on chemical emissions. *The Novamobili showroom is at the 2nd Floor, Building 6, 11th Avenue, Bonifacio High Street, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig. Call +632-7382430 or email info@novamobili.ph.*



SAMSUNG LAUNCHES LOVE@HOME

SAMSUNG RECENTLY LAUNCHED “Love@Home” at the Rockwell Tent in Makati City to unveil its new array of technologically advanced appliances. The stars of the evening were the refrigerator with innovative features that preserve food longer, the washing machine with its tangle-free Wobble Technology, and the air conditioners with advanced Smart Wi-Fi—all with Digital Inverter Motors to maintain energy efficiency. “These appliances make household chores easy to manage, and helps you to save time and money for your family,” says Joey Hidalgo, business unit head for Samsung Digital Appliances. *Christian Regis.*



MODERN THAI CUISINE AT CELADON

NEWLY OPENED Thai restaurant Celadon, owned by Ching Cruz, along with Maritess Lopez, Ivy and Cynthia Almario, Ditas Lerma, Glenda Barretto, Tanya Chua, Agnes Huibonhwa, and Cheryl Pineda, was designed by renowned interior designers Ivy and Cynthia Almario. Celadon has beautifully decorated interiors with green walls decked with fluttering butterflies and statement light fixtures. Chef Cheryl explains that the decorative butterflies on the walls signify rebirth and, along with Thai ware, recalls the royal feasts of yore. *Celadon is at the ground level of Power Plant Mall in Makati.*



RELISH GOURMET COMFORT FOOD

RELISH HELLO HAPPINESS is a new restaurant in Quezon City designed as a home. Interior designers Ivy and Cynthia Almario imagined it in a countryside orchard, and created a cozy and pleasant setting using an unusual color combination of taupe and white, normally a winter palette. They added sunny Parisian bistro chairs, topiaries and a host of charming, elegant accessories, all aiming for an atmosphere of, well, happiness! The kitchen specializes in gourmet comfort food, including Slow Roasted Beef Belly, Artichoke Dip, Roast Chicken, Baked Salmon, Wild Mushroom Truffle Pasta, and Braised Lamb Shanks. *The restaurant is at 74 Scout Limbaga Street, Quezon City. Call 352 0774, 352 5492 or 0926 6959 885. Open every day, from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m.*

PHOTOGRAPH BY WILLIAM ONG

PIXELATED PANACHE

Bisazza tiles have long been lauded for being just the right addition to add pizzazz to a space. As backsplashes for the kitchen, in bath applications and even murals, these coveted Italian glass mosaic tiles now have a dedicated showroom in Manila. Sharing space with the Kitchen Studio showroom by Rafael Calero, the varieties of Bisazza mosaic glass tile applications can now be appreciated in one space. *Distributed by Ric Atienza's iMaverick International Corp., Bisazza's tile range is showcased at unit 6, Ground Floor, One McKinley Place, 26th cor. 4th Ave., Bonifacio Global City, Taguig.*



PHOTOGRAPH BY ALDWIN ASPILLERA



EXCLUSIVE BAGUIO RESIDENCES

THE RESIDENCES At Brent condominium emphasizes privacy and exclusivity. It is located at Brent Road, Baguio City, within the forested area of the Brent International School, with the aroma of pine trees, the cool breeze, and the sweet chirping of the birds. Hamilton Hall, the first of seven buildings to be built, is ready for occupancy. It houses 16 units that are 2-bedroom units or 3-bedroom penthouse units. All come with an electric fireplace and maid's quarters. *Visit www.theresidencesatbrent.com or call 0999-8853715 and 0927-4664442.*

Beach life

IN NEARBY BATAAN,
THAT ISLAND FEELING

BY RAPHA KIEFER



ABOVE LEFT: Camaya Sands Hotel. ABOVE RIGHT: Infinity pool at Camaya Sands Resort. LEFT: Aerial shot of the vast Camaya Sands property



THERE IS NOTHING LIKE A DAY at the beach to destress after a week at the office. Unfortunately, distance to the good spots from the big city makes that much deserved weekend getaway complicated, especially if the whole family tags along. This is about to change, thanks to Camaya Coast, a premium beach resort and residential community in Mariveles, Bataan. It is a mere 1 hour and 30 minutes via sea, or a short three-hour drive from Manila.

Welcoming visitors are gentle slopes that overlook an idyllic cove with a private white sand beach, easily comparable to some of the most beautiful in the country. Majestic Mt. Mariveles is the backdrop while the blue horizon on the West Philippine Sea completes the view on the other side. The property has waterfalls, cliffs, lush tropical greenery and a river that runs

through the forest. The development will have its own access road to the highway, and a truly hassle-free boat ride that leaves from Manila Bay and drops you off right at the cove.

Camaya Coast is a prime residential area and tourist haven that encompasses 450 hectares containing six residential subdivisions, townhouses and condos, recreational facilities and amenities.

Eagerly awaited is Camaya Sands Resort, managed by Fuego Hotels and Properties. The resort is opening a 40-room hotel within the year, making it possible for non-residents to experience the beach and all the good things the resort has to offer. 📍

For inquiries and reservations, visit their showroom at G/F Prudential Bldg. Annex, No. 31 EDSA, Mandaluyong City or visit www.camayacoast.com.



ABOVE: The Kencana-Palangi Clubhouse LEFT: Lobby at Camaya Sands.



Green innovations

MORE EFFICIENCY,
LESS COST

BY CHRISTIAN REGIS

CLIMATE CHANGE is happening, and electricity cost is going up. That's why homeowners and businesses are looking into environment-friendly and energy-efficient products. With green revolution comes green innovation.

Hayes DC Ceiling Fan can save up to 70% power consumption. It's noiseless, remote controlled, and has a selectable upward and downward mode to maximize ventilation. *Prices start at P7,000; distributed by DC-TEK Concepts, Inc. and available at Wilcon Depot.*

Greyscale Specialty Concrete Finish is a special plaster that can be applied over concrete, plywood, fiber-cement, and painted surfaces. Instead of adding gallons of paint, Greyscale can be smoothened, roughened, or colored to achieve



ABOVE AND INSET: Greyscale concrete finish in a bathroom and in two swatches of differing effects. BELOW: CPAC Monier concrete roof tiles.



either a natural concrete finish or thematic design finish. It's more flexible to use as compared to normal concrete. *Prices depend on quantity and design; manufactured by Industrial Surface Finishing Corp and available at MC Home Depot.*

Centurion, Elabana, and Prestige Concrete Roof Tiles from CPAC Monier can reduce heat retention, resulting in cooler homes and lower energy costs. The Centurion has a slim, Roman-style roll. The Elabana Bold Roll has a glossy coating finish. The Prestige Flat has a smooth and modern design. All come in a variety of colors. *Costs from P48 to P90 for each tile with 10.5 tiles per square meter. Available at Wilcon Depot or MC Home Depot.*

RIGHT AND INSET: Sky Tunnel Daylight illuminates without electricity.



Sky Tunnel Daylighting Systems by SG Eco Inc. is a tubular lighting technology installed inside roofs, transmitting sunlight all-day long to dark areas within buildings. An acrylic dome on the roof collects sunlight, which bounces off the tunnel's highly reflective surface down towards the room ceiling. An acrylic diffuser then distributes light evenly in the room without the use of electricity. *Prices start at P14,000. Available at Maximum Solutions Corporation with tel. 552-2958.*

The game changer underneath

SOLAIRE'S 'SECRET' IS AN ATTITUDE TOWARDS PEOPLE

BY CARLO TADIAR



Luxurious sense of scale at Finestra, Solaire's 'signature' Italian restaurant. Tufted pale green sofas are paired with armchairs upholstered in pink and pale green. Glittering chandeliers add drama.

IN ITS WIDESPREAD publicity campaign, the much-talked-about US\$1 billion Solaire Casino and Resort repeatedly refers to itself as a game changer. For the glamorous crowd gathered at the opening of the facility, "game changer" would firstly have been the dazzling setting itself.

The hotel has two casual and four extraordinary "signature" restaurants surrounding the gaming floor. At the opening, each was serving its luxurious specialties in an endless flow. The younger crowd seemed to have congregated at Finestra,

the gleaming, pastel-toned Italian restaurant. The fashionable squeezed themselves into the pale green tufted sofas and thronged the marble bar. Overhead, massive chandeliers of glass bubbles refracted the afternoon sun.

By the time guest of honor President Benigno Aquino had begun to give his speech, it became clear that "game changer" referred as well not just to the vast number of jobs created by the development, but to its having lured back some 500 OFWs. By offering them raises in pay and rank, Solaire was able to

repatriate Filipinos who had distinguished themselves at similar establishments in Macau and Las Vegas. Mr. Aquino thanked Solaire owner Enrique Razon for having made it possible.

For some of us who had the privilege two days before the opening, as it was hastily being finished, "game changer" came to be more fully understood by a tour of the remarkable subterranean level of the casino-resort. It is a world unto itself.

Through vast corridors, Solaire's thousands of employees of different races in an almost innumerable variety of costume

RIGHT: The glamorous marble bar at Finestra. (Finestra photographs by Tom Epperson, courtesy Solaire). BELOW AND BOTTOM: The subterranean restaurant, where employees eat for free from a constantly renewed buffet of Filipino, Western and Asian favorites.

wend their way through the complex. In one concourse, their own restaurant has three buffet stations: Filipino, Western and Asian. It is always open and employees eat for free.

"We've found that when you have happy employees, you have happy customers," said Joe Valdes, Solaire vice-president for development and planning, guiding our tour. Like a few other modern, enlightened companies, Solaire realizes that it's most valuable asset, its prime capital, is its people.

Not much further off was something like a giant robot that dresses the thousands who work here, the Autovalet, a computerized electric and mechanical system that delivers uniforms individually to each employee through slits in a wall. A scanner on monitors outside the slit reads barcodes on employee ID cards and sets into motion gears to serve the employee his or her uniform, in a set or by piece. At the end of the work shift, the employee also surrenders his soiled uniform to the system, which reads the chip imbedded in each piece. According to Joe, this system was first used at Disneyland.

There is a computer hub, where employees can deal with attendance records and leaves and other matters of employment, and an in-house bank where, say, a winning gambler's tip in chips might be cashed in.

There is a butcher's shop and bakery. Things don't arrive onto the property pre-packaged. They are made on the premises (wine and other liquor clearly being exceptions). Breads and

pastries are made fresh. Meat arrives in primal cuts that are sectioned off here, beef, for example, into varieties of steak, roasts, ribs and grades of grind.

This system not only saves immensely on the hotel's costs, it drastically reduces waste, and it creates more jobs.

This is also the level from where room service emanates. By one wall, there is a double-decker row of black boxes with temperature gauges in front. They look like safes. These are food warmers, in which food is packed underneath a folding-table trolley, which is wheeled into the guest's room.

Joe points out that it's unimportant to the guest whether the hotel has 20 or 2,000 rooms. What's crucial is that room service arrives in under 30 minutes. The huge labor force in Solaire, and its intricate, hidden systems are all geared towards making this standard of service possible in such a vast setting.

The exactingness of the standard, the thought that went into systems to maintain that standard—this creates a benchmark, which others are forced to reckon with. And that's the real game changer. **11**



Millennial Manila

AN EXPLORATION OF TOMORROW'S HOME IS SHOWCASED AT F.A.M.E.

BY **BARBIE PARDO-TIANGCO**
PHOTOGRAPHS BY **WILLIAM ONG**



EXTREME
LEFT: Hall chair
by Betis Crafts. LEFT:
Moustache chair by
Kristin. RIGHT: A portion
of the Millennial Home,
curated by Kenneth
Cobonpue and
Budji Layug.



RIGHT:
Various local
products showcased
in the Millennial Home,
a representation of the
market crossroads between
the Baby Boomer and
Millennial consumers.
EXTREME RIGHT:
Moustache table
by Kristin.



folio

ART / DESIGN / PLACES / INSPIRATION

**'Bululs' or rice deities up to
500 years old at Paris' Musée
du Quai Branly, page 22**



Photograph by Gautier Deblonde, ©Musée du Quai Branly, courtesy of the museum

Best of Philippine culture in France



THIS MONTH, IT'S A BANNER YEAR for Philippine culture in France. A historic exhibition of Philippine pre-colonial artifacts is being held at the prestigious Musée du Quai Branly (www.quaibranly.fr/en/) in Paris. French Prime Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault graced the opening. Titled "Philippines: archipel des interchanges" the exhibit gathers objects from collections all over the world, many of them rarely seen and dating to as early as the 15th century. The exhibit runs through July 14.

At the same time, the Fondation Alliance Française in Paris is having an exhibition on Philippine culture. Every year the foundation focuses on a particular country in the Alliance's global outreach to showcase in Paris. This year, it's the Philippines.

And a first-time exhibition of Philippine contemporary art in a French museum is simultaneously being held in the city of Sete, at the Musée International des Arts Modestes (MIAM, www.miam.org). Curated by the Philippines' most internationally established artist,

Manuel Ocampo, the show "Manila Vice" gathers the work of 23 well known names in the Philippine avant-garde.

The spotlight on the Philippines in France is in part the culmination of the surprising, historic visit last October of the French Prime Minister, the first visit of a French national leader to the Philippines since diplomatic relations were established between the two countries 66 years ago, in 1947. The prime minister brought with him a 130-person delegation including the minister of foreign trade, as well as members of parliament and businessmen. The visit aimed to develop economic, political and cultural cooperation between the two countries. The Musée du Quai Branly show was instigated during the prime minister's visit, in an agreement signed on it before him and his host, President Benigno Aquino.

By the museum's own account, it is the most important exhibition about the Philippines in France in the last 20 years. The exhibition is co-curated by Constance de Monbrison, curator for insular Southeast

UNPRECEDENTED EXHIBIT OF NATIVE
TREASURES AT THE MUSÉE DU QUAI BRANLY
IN PARIS; GROUNDBREAKING CONTEMPORARY
ART AT THE MUSÉE DES ARTS MODESTES

BY CARLO TADIAR



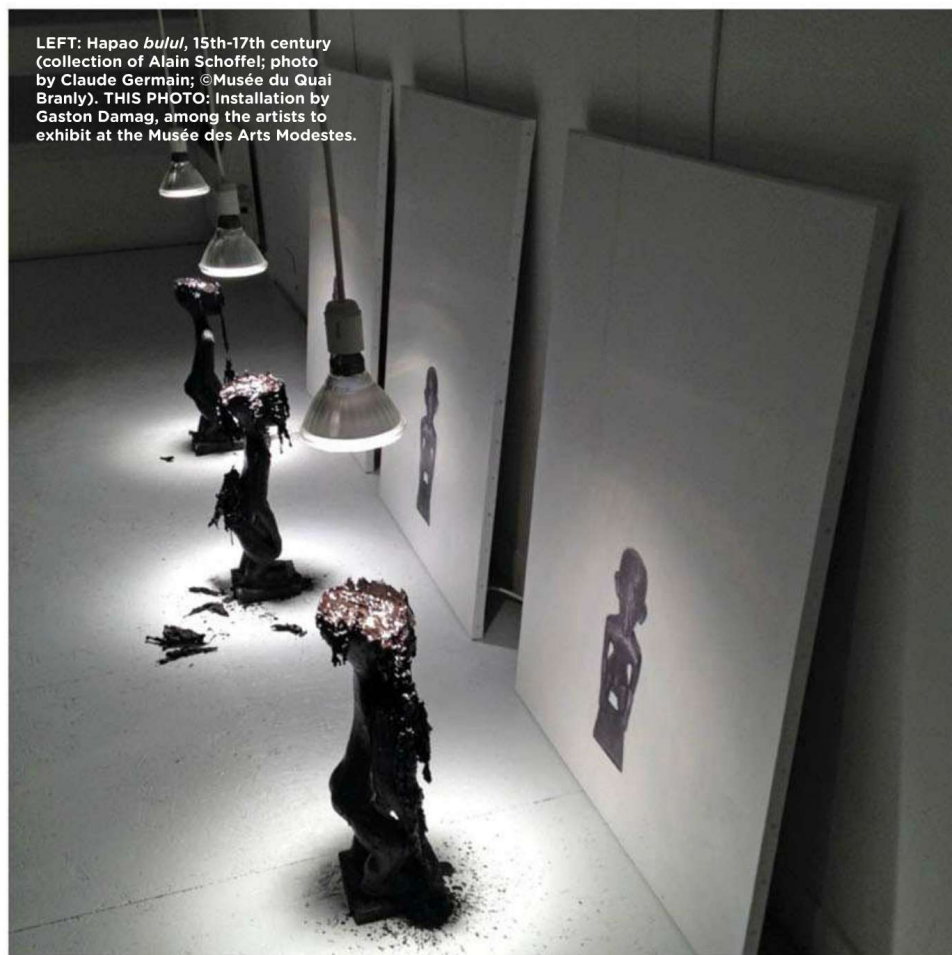
FROM FAR LEFT, OPPOSITE PAGE: Ifugao *bulul* with bowl from Cagayan Valley dating to the 15th century (©Musée du Quai Branly; photo by Hughes Dubois). Royal sword, circa 10th-13th centuries, Butuan (collection of Luis Antonio and Cecile Gutierrez; photo by Neal Oshima). Manuel Ocampo in his studio. Family returning home from foraging, Palawan (©Pierre de Vallombreuse). Artifact images courtesy, Musée du Quai Branly. Contemporary artwork images courtesy, Manuel Ocampo.





CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Lamp in the form of a *kinnari* fashioned out of a 22-ct block of gold, 10th-13th century, called the 'Treasure of Surigao' (Ayala Museum collection; photo by Neal Oshima). Kalinga warrior's axe, 20th century (photo by Calude Germain; ©Musée du Quai Branly). *Kankanai* architectural element, 18th-19th century (collection of Lilian and Michel Durant-Dessert; photo by Michel Gurfinkel). Head ornaments fashioned out of cock's feathers, cotton and beeswax, 19th century, Gaddang or Kalinga (collection of Alain Schoffel; photo by Claude Germain; ©Musée du Quai Branly).





LEFT: Hapao *bulul*, 15th-17th century (collection of Alain Schoffel; photo by Claude Germain; ©Musée du Quai Branly). THIS PHOTO: Installation by Gaston Damag, among the artists to exhibit at the Musée des Arts Modestes.

Asia collections at the Musée du Quai Branly, and Cora Alvina, former Director of the Philippine National Museum.

The treasures that will go on exhibit include Ifugao granary god figures called *bululs* dating to as early as the 15th century and of remarkable vigor of form. There is the “Treasure of Surigao” from the collection of the Ayala Museum, an exquisite lamp dated from the 10th to 13th centuries, fashioned out of 22-carat gold. Beautiful jewelry, elegant instruments of war and funerary arts culled from many indigenous peoples throughout the archipelago. What a breathtaking trove it is.

The Musée du Quai Branly houses the vast majority of the collection of the Musée de l’Homme, Paris’s natural history and ethnological museum. It also inherited the collection of the Musée des Arts Africains et Océaniens.

For a long time, there was a widely understood divide among the kind of cultural objects that went into the Musée de l’Homme and those that deserved to be in the Musée du Louvre. Into the latter went art and into the former went the fetishes and objects of worship of the primitive or uncivilized. (Similarly, New York has its Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Museum of Natural History, which also showcases extensive collections of primitive art.) Now, however, this distinction has become absurd. Not only did so-called primitive art exert immeasurable influence on 20th century art, the privileging of a Western perspective is now seen as crude prejudice.

Founded only in 2006, the Quai Branly takes great pains to eschew

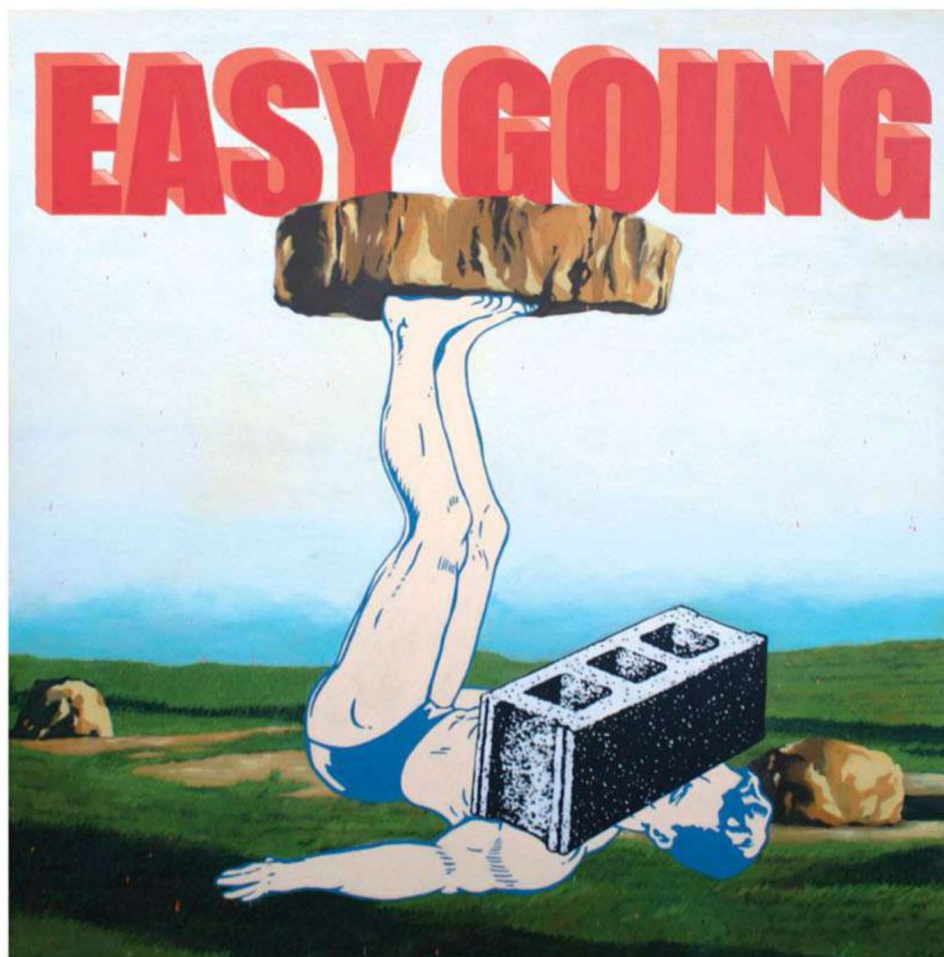
prejudice in its presentation of other cultures’ artifacts. In “French Museums Atone for a Colonial History” (November 25, 2011), *New York Times* critic-at-large Edward Rothstein argues that the curatorship is excessively cautious. But he describes the items on display as a revelation, of “stunning beauty.”

And they are presented in a way Rothstein sees as guided by “the desire to create a dramatic contemporary effect: You thought the only beautiful objects were Western artworks? Take a look at these!”

Rothstein thinks the Quai Branly too apologetic about the West’s colonial past. But for those of us who have only seen the Philippine artifacts, it is about to display largely in isolation, in disparate contexts or only in pictures, the museum’s epic survey and eye for beauty promise the show of a lifetime.

The French initiative has finally brought state assistance to the iconoclast Manuel Ocampo. For the past few years, the artist has been quietly bringing Filipino artists to the West to show in genuine venues for the exhibition of art, rather than, say, as part of a trade fair, and with bonafide members of the international art community in attendance, rather than retailers of handicraft and local politicians. The French Embassy in Manila has thrown its support behind Manuel’s latest expedition, co-presenting the show in Sete.

It may have taken the French to offer government support for art that could not possibly be shown at a trade fair or diplomatic event. At a press conference for the show, Manuel emphasized it was not a



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE LEFT: 'Freight of the Century' by Dina Gadia. 'Ayun' by Dexter Fernandez. 'Frogboy's Dissertation into a New Karaoke Cult' by David Griggs. 'Who's Afraid of Pixels' by Poklong Anading. 'Social Real-Lee-Sm' by Romeo Lee.

survey of Philippine contemporary. The cast is "artists I like," he said. "I chose these artists because there's a sense of humor in their work, and something challenging in it, something that disturbs us, and challenges our perception of what kind of function art should have—at the same time, it makes us question ourselves. It raises disturbing issues, because we live in an age where certain questions should be raised."

For Manuel, these artists comprise "the crème de la crème" of contemporary Philippine art. Their art "can function in different places, speak to different people, but there's definitely something Filipino in their work."

The museum where they are to exhibit stands as a kind of response to the polarity created by the Musées du Louvre and de l'Homme. The Musée des Arts Modestes focuses on art it considers vibrant and interesting and comes from traditional centers of art, in other words, the world's artistic peripheries. The Philippine show is titled "Manila Vice," a riff on "Miami Vice," the title of the 1980 American hit TV show. The title was chosen for the Philippine show because it presents the truthful opposite of the bogus glamour created by the TV show set in Miami. In "Manila Vice," there's "misery, failure, the pathetic sublime—but, I think, presented with a certain irony," says Manuel. "I don't want to promote Manila. I want to promote what's going on in Manila."

The founder of the museum is an international art star and an old friend of Manuel's. A pioneer of street art in France, and a counterpart of New York's Keith Haring, Kenny Scharf and Jean-Michel Basquiat,

Hervé di Rosa was born in Sete. He's traveled the world over, working with traditional craftsmen, as one biography recounts, participating in the making of voodoo flags in Haiti, lacquerware in Vietnam, baskets among the Zulu, icons in Sophia, among many other adventures. Evidently, he's had a lifelong attraction to "low" art. His work is at once urban and folk, pop and tribal, and has had a seminal influence in Europe.

Hervé was a guest of Manuel's in Manila in December 2011, the subject of a one-man show at the former's Department of Avant Garde Cliches gallery. At a dinner in his honor, Hervé seemed keen to impress on those present what he must have felt was sorely underappreciated. "How is it for you," he asked, "that someone of Manuel's international stature has returned to the Philippines to help bring international attention to Philippine art?" What was there to answer? We owe him a debt, to be sure, and to the French, too, who continue to remind us of the importance of culture. ①



The nautical lifestyle

MORE FILIPINOS
ARE TAKING TO THE SEA

BY CHRISTIAN REGIS
PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOVEL LORENZO

One Esplanade provides the best venue for the sea expo. The floating dock accommodates boats of all sizes, from small sailboats to luxury yachts. Visitors can experience the free yacht cruise on the nearby Jetty Terminal. BELOW: The interior of Lagoon 500 is equipped with GPS, TV, a complete galley, and comfortable lounges with wood furnishings.



THE THREE-DAY Premier Nautical Lifestyle Summer Expo or Sea-Ex was held last March at One Esplanade in Pasay City. Described by organizers as the “only boat show in the Philippines,” it featured top local and international names in the marine and tourism industry.

Compared to its Asian neighbors, the Philippines has a small but developing nautical lifestyle industry, said Sea-Ex chairman Angelo Olondriz. According to him, Filipinos are buying boats “and what’s pushing that are the big coastal developments in the country like Hamilo Coast and Anvaya.”

Many resorts near the coastal developments offer docking and shelter for boats. Angelo says that Filipinos prefer buying smaller boats, but there’s also a noticeable trend of Filipinos buying yachts.

One of the main features of Sea-Ex was a docked Lagoon 500 Catamaran Cruiser called Double Trouble. The 51-foot yacht is a sleek modern machine built for around-the-world cruising in comfort and style.

The boat’s captain, Armando Valendez, showed us the upper deck. The cockpit has a commanding 360-degree view. Beneath the cockpit are the saloon and galley. There are three cabins and the owner’s suite,



CLOCKWISE FROM BELOW: The Isla Leticia has a low platform at its stern for getting into and out of the water. The solar panels at the stern of the Lagoon 500 provide the yacht with a sustainable source of electricity for propulsion and nautical tracking. Double Trouble is 51-foot Lagoon 500 Catamaran Cruiser—a luxury home and a machine capable of sailing around the world.



all luxurious and equipped with their own washrooms and heads (the nautical term for “toilets”).

The British owner of Double Trouble, Robin Wyatt, who is also the managing director of Europa Yachts, predicts: “I think the Philippines is going to have a great positive boat business in the next few years. With the big marina opening by Mall of Asia and Solaire Casino, people will buy boats for more casual use—status symbols, sunset cruises, corporate entertaining.”

There is also a growing popularity of smaller leisure speedboats and fishing boats. Addressing this is Martin and Marie Garcia of Rayo-marine, distributor of Chaparral Boats.

“Boating is great for family bonding,” says Marie. “Aside from leisure and fishing, we also have an extreme line for wakeboarding. The kids love it, especially if they hear music from loud speakers coming from the boat!”



Black is the new Blanc

POPULAR GALLERY
MAKES DRAMATIC MOVE

BY DODO DAYAO



IF YOU'VE BEEN TO ANY OF THE THREE Blanc galleries before, white was always the favored color code. Blanc, after all, is an iteration of "blanco," the Spanish word for white, and phonetically connotes the English word that signifies the primordial state of all art. It's the most succinct signifier that, after seven years, changes are afoot.

Yes, the new Blanc gallery will be all decked out in black. And yes, the new Blanc gallery will be the only functioning Blanc gallery. "Technically, only one space will be shut down, the Salcedo and Shaw spaces will still be used as backroom galleries although I have plans to convert both into studios for artists," says owner Jay Amante, as he gives me a tour of the new facilities.

The new place is huge enough—it can be subdivided into three separate spaces and still have enough room for a foyer area for guests to mill about. There's also another room that can double as both office and exhibit space. The plan is for Blanc to still have at least three openings every month. But all on the same night. "Three openings a month, on different dates, is no joke," Amante says. "This will be much better for everyone."

He talks about the glut of galleries and artists that practically exploded with each year since he started Blanc. Centralizing everything in one space will hopefully help optimize attendance and curb gallery fatigue. "A lot has changed in seven years," he says, "but my aim is still to be the best conduit between artist and collector. This is a step in that direction."

The gallery aims to be operational at its new location in May. **Blanc Gallery, 145 Katipunan Ave., St. Ignatius, Quezon City. Call +63920-9276436. Email jay.amante@blanc.ph.**

TOP AND BELOW: Artist's perspectives of Blanc's new home, designed by Architect Carlo Joson.



Literate in the 10th century

NATIONAL MUSEUM
UNVEILS PERMANENT
EXHIBIT OF NATIVE SCRIPT

BY CES RODRIGUEZ
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO



COUNTERCLOCKWISE
FROM LEFT: Stone inscribed
with native script once
unknowingly used to wipe
off mud from shoes at an
elementary school. Ancient
syllables etched on the
museum walls. Gallery
devoted to the collection.

FOR YEARS, THE STUDENTS of Rizal Elementary School in Monreal, Ticao Island, Masbate, used a 50-cm. rust-colored stone slab with squiggly etchings found inside the school compound to wipe the clay-clogged soles of their shoes, especially when it rained.

It wasn't until the school principal, Virgie Almodal, attended a conference and was shown the *baybayin* alphabet that things clicked in her head. She had her students use nails to pry loose dried mud embedded on the stone and retrace the grooves that had been worn smooth through the years. She then made a few inquiries until National Museum representatives visited last year. They looked over the limestone slab and decided it was an artifact that deserved further study.

Now ensconced in a glass case at the National Museum, the slab, the bigger of two retrieved, shows the curvilinear grooves of the ancient Filipino alphabet called *baybayin*, which consists of characters representing syllables.

It is one of a few artifacts now on permanent exhibit at the museum's Metrobank Hall. Also called Baybayin, the exhibit, which was funded by Senator Loren Legarda, includes materials like stone and metal, books, and implements inscribed with traditional script.

Baybayin is an alphabet that dates to the 10th century. Spanish fri-

ars promoted its widespread use six centuries later. Discovering that the natives had their own script, the friars attempted to hasten the spread of Christianity by translating common prayers and publishing religious texts in *baybayin*.

In spite of this, the use of the old alphabet began to wane in the 17th and 18th centuries. "There were very few sounds," said Acting Assistant Museum Director Angel P. Bautista. Explaining the *baybayin*'s limitations, he points out that "E" and "I" are the same, along with "R" and "L," "D" and "R," and "O" and "U."

Few of the writings survived, as the script was written on leaves and bamboo. Prominent in the exhibit are the Monreal stone, shards of pottery, an inscribed copper plate that dates back to the 10th century and discovered in a gravesite in the Lumbang River in Laguna in 1986, and the Spanish books. Common household containers and musical instruments etched with the script are also exhibited, but these are from the Hanunoo-Mangyan tribe of Oriental Mindoro, who still use the script to this day.

Today, *baybayin* (more commonly referred to as *alibata*, which Bautista says is possibly Hindi in origin unlike the native *baybayin*) has reappeared in the seals and logos of Philippine cultural agencies, the new 50-peso bill, and on various body parts of precocious tattoo fans. **1**

Grounded trajectories

AT THE LOPEZ MUSEUM, ART TAKES FLIGHT AND REMAINS ANCHORED AT THE SAME TIME

BY RACHEL MAYO



THE LOPEZ MUSEUM AND LIBRARY'S current exhibition, "Grounded, a Museal Nuerosis," ongoing until August 3, is composed of installation works by contemporary artists within a maze of small exhibition spaces that incorporates the museum's famous collection of Philippine classical and historical objects and paintings.

The show's concept, according to artistic director Claro Ramirez of Back to Square Juan, revolves around the question "How is it that art can be seen as a means to take flight while remaining anchored at the same time?"

With this in mind, participating artists Alma Quinto, Goldie Polador, Eric Zamuco, Josephine Turalba, Toym Imao, Barbara Hlali,

Ahmed Al Shaer, and Khaled Hafez transformed their spaces into areas of artistic discourses. They touch on a variety of social, political or personal issues that link their past, personal and artistic experiences to their present works.

To further their dialogue with their audience, artists Toym Imao, Josephine Turalba, and Eric Zamuco presented their brief artistic backgrounds and the reasons behind their works in an Artist Talk held last March 9.

Toym Imao, known for his large scale public monuments and historical shrines, talked about his background in the classical forms as a take-off for his artistic endeavors. He shows a more playful approach

FROM OPPOSITE PAGE: 'Ship, Shift, Strip' by Toym Imao, 'Not of Water Flesh and Blood' by Eric Zamuco, 'Scandals' by Josephine Turalba.



in his contemporary expressions such as his own version of "action painting" that utilized explosions onto his paintings. His works utilized his propensity for these classical forms by employing the services of craftsmen to produce perfect hands that have been incorporated into his playful sculptural compositions that touch on mythology and social issues. "Diyos, Choose, Dues" is a huge floor-to-ceiling composition that depicts man's destiny and his Creator. "Ship, Shift, Strip" is a tight surreal composition that combine hands, armaments and ship parts as a commentary on the recent incident in Tubbataha Reef involving the USS Guardian.

Josephine Turalba is an interdisciplinary artist who, in 2007,



walked around the city wearing a 20-kilo garment made of 17,000 bullet shells. "My artistic career began with trauma," she says. "Last September 2006, my father was brutally murdered..."

Turalba's art mostly involves bullets, as seen in her interactive installation work "Scandals" that prompts her audience to wear sandals fashioned out of bullet shells. You walk on a wooden platform while viewing glass negatives of images taken during the American period in a multi-layered discourse on the exploitation of women and violence as she gives a critical reflection on identity. The heavy metal slippers made of spent bullets reflect her main concern regarding personal and political violence, and the need to understand the self, death and grief amidst these conflicts.

Eric Zamuco also takes off from trauma and talked about his personal experiences of dislocation while living and studying in a foreign land. He probes the issues of identity, space transcended, isolation and dislocation, and how these affect one's work. His seven-year stay in the US has dramatically challenged his sense of being as a racial slur. "What's up, brownie?" reverberates within his psyche. His work "Not of Water, Flesh and Blood" is a ceiling installation composed of red and white plexiglass plates that conjure liquidity and formlessness produced by gestural imprints. The viewer must look up to see the work and experience a sense of displacement to the otherwise normal view of art, what the artist calls "reclaimed space, so as not to be in anybody's way..." ①

Davao diary



RICH HISTORY, SOPHISTICATED CULTURE, STUNNING NATURE IN THE SPRAWLING SOUTHERN CAPITAL

BY CARLO TADIAR

BELOW LEFT: Mt. Apo, the Philippines' tallest peak, photographed by Annie Arcenas, whose family owns Forest Springs, a resort halfway up the mountain. BELOW: Weaver in traditional dress at the Tadeco Home Decor showroom in the Pearl Farm Marina (photograph courtesy of Stratworks).



MEMBERS OF THE PRESS WERE FLOWN into Davao from Manila and Cebu to attend the March 22 grand opening of SM Hotel and Convention's latest property, **Park Inn by Radisson** in Lanang. The smart, hip hotel stretches the SM group's portfolio through the length of the archipelago now, from Luzon and Visayas to Mindanao (see "Extra edge through design," page 52).

As part of the hotel's hospitality, we were brought around to as many attractions in the Philippines' third largest city—by some accounts, the largest city in the world in terms of land area—that could be squeezed into a two-day stay.

Expectably, we were first toured around the neighboring SM Premiere mall. It has the distinction of a view. One side is devoted to restaurants on two levels. They're lined up along a vast terrace on both levels gazing out onto primeval Davao landscape.

The mall also has a rooftop garden with restaurants, called Sky Garden, similar to SM North Edsa's Skywalk. There we dropped by for a uniquely local specialty, durian coffee and pastry concoctions at **Blugre** (www.blugre.com), a stylish café, founded in 1998 by husband and wife, Gatchi and Larcy Gatchalian.

A few of the Manila visitors could not overcome durian-phobia and adamantly refused to sample anything unfamiliar. I found the Durian Gatchpuccino a revelation. The combination of the bouquets of Arabica coffee and durian, in pulp at the bottom of the cup and in the foam on top, was intense, deeply floral and rich. Durian Larcepuccino is the cold version of the drink.

Blugre's very first franchisee is Manny Pacquaio. He has two branches in his native GenSan.

From SM, we went to the city headquarters for **Puentespina Orchids** and **Malagos Farms** (www.orchid.ph), where we were introduced to the founder of the business, Charita Puentespina and her enterprising daughter Olive, both legends in their own right.

The Puentespinas own a complex of interrelated businesses that started with orchids, a hobby of Charita. Today they are one of the biggest names in the cut flower industry nationwide, an international-standard supplier with two Manila outlets, under the name **Waling Flowers**





from **Davao**, at the Manila Seedling Bank in Quezon City (where the flowers are stored in a huge walk-in chiller, the only one of its kind in the Bank), and in the flower market off AH Lacson (formerly Gov. Forbes) in Manila (also referred to as Dangwa, it's along Dos Castillas Street).

At their Davao head office, we were treated to some of their newer products, artisanal cheese made by Olive. Particularly impressive was a Camembert-style variety. "It's my version of a Camembert," explains the cheese maker.

"I was inspired to make cheese by all the goats at my house," she recounts. "My husband is a vet."

She studied cheese-making on her own in the beginning, then went on to extend her knowledge and skills with similar artisanal makers in the US. Today, the variety of cheeses they produce is quite wide, but always in an artisanal scale. Her chevre is a particular hit and is sold under the Malagos brand exclusively at Rustan's.

Malagos is the name of one of their farms, part of which, upon the urging of friends, they have converted into a now popular garden resort (www.malagos.com). The brand also produces an artisanal chocolate from cocoa it grows itself. Like all their products, Malagos Premium Unsweetened Chocolate is international-grade.

We were all delighted by the sight of the location for dinner, an old white house decorated all over with intricate wood work. Lit up against the night sky, it glowed like lace.

The newly restored house was built in 1929 by Alfonso Oboza, first municipal mayor of Davao. On the second story, in an elegant space

dominated by dramatic archways, is **Claude's Le Café de Ville**, serving Continental cuisine.

On the ground floor is **Cellar de Oboza** (Oboza House, 143 J.P. Rizal Street, Davao; tel.no +6382-303-5183) co-owned by Tricie and Vince Arcenas and Carlo Lorenzana, our hosts for the evening. Tricie comes from a family of gourmards and chefs, the Pengsons (Chef Rob is a brother). Carlo is a wine connoisseur-turned-importer/distributor. Because of familial connections to that country, he specializes in Argentinian wines, which he took upon himself to serve individually to our large group that evening.

The restaurant is a casual, homey yet elegant space with a mid-20th-century look evoked by vintage style wood chairs in natural finish. A pale palette gives it a pristine feel, warmed up by wood furniture.

"I'm not a trained chef," Tricie demures. She does, however, share in the family's talent in food. The restaurant specializes in traditional Filipino-Spanish favorites, all well executed. There were a Shrimp Ceviche that was particularly good, and also fine Chicken Croquetas and a unique Vegetarian Pancit.

Asked where he would bring out-of-town guests, Carlo recommends a couple of beach destinations, one a private island that can be rented. He kindly listed his recommendations (see boxed article). Vince also firstly thought of the beach, but we asked him for destinations mountainside. It just so happens his family owns and runs a resort on Mt. Apo, the tallest peak in the Philippines and a defining feature of the Davao landscape.



Forest Springs (Kapatagan, Davao del Sur; inquiries can be coursed through Edwin L. Arcenas +63 928 346 9911 or + 63 82 2341985) is halfway up the famed peak, some 4,000 feet high, says Tricie. The resort has three cottages for rent. Each sleeps from two to five persons. Also available for rent are two rooms, sleeping two to three persons each, in a longhouse, above the shared dining and kitchen facilities of the place. Campers who want to pitch their own tents are welcome, too.

It's a 5-ha. property, says Tricie, and the cottages are widely spaced apart for more privacy. "Outside the property there are ziplines, hiking trails, mountain bike trails, kayaking and a very nice park with large artwork from Davao's local artist Kublai, who made the Davao City Park," she adds.

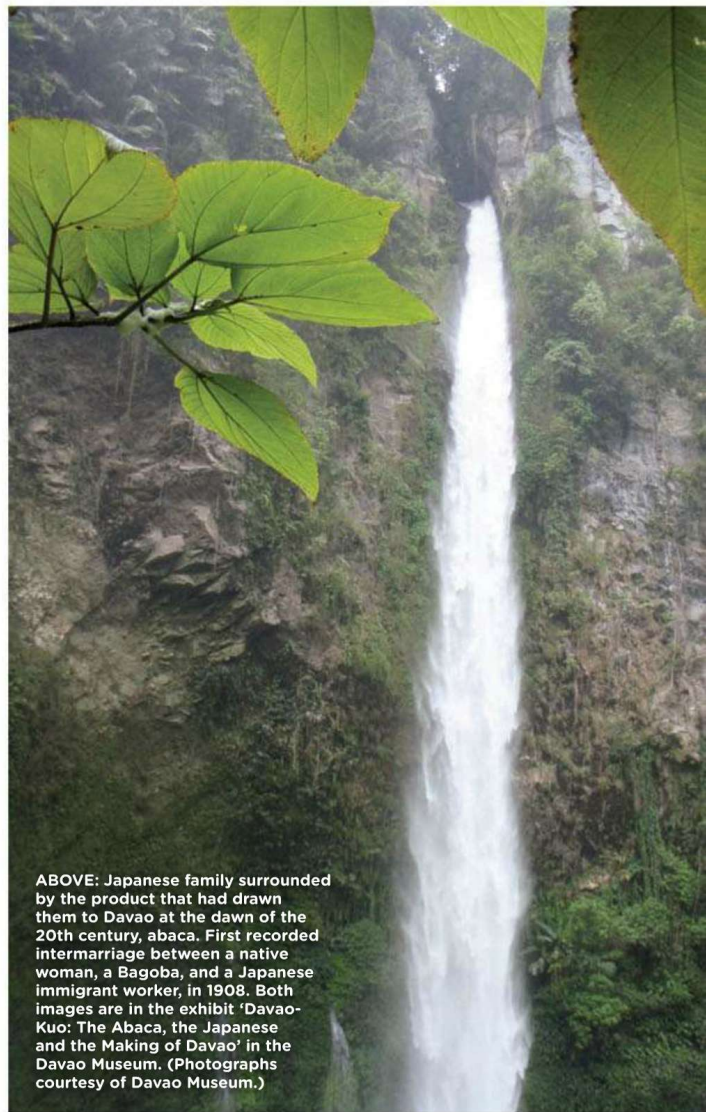
The restaurant has a sister establishment in Cellar de Boca in SM Lanang. Both restaurants have been consistently praised for good food and affordable prices.

The next day, we were brought to the **Davao Museum** (113 Agusan Circle, Insular Village Phase I, Lanang, Davao. Open Mondays to Saturdays, 9 A.M. to 5 P.M., and on Sundays by appointment. Admission is P100 per person. Call +6382-233-1734, +6382-233-1734).

Ongoing at the museum is a brilliant exhibit about the Japanese who had settled in Davao before the war. "Davao-Kuo: The Abaca, The Japanese and the Making of Davao" is a thorough, thoughtful, affective and clear telling in words and images of the complex story of the Japanese who had originally gone to Davao at the dawn of the 20th century to work on hemp plantations and eventually settled there, growing as

CLOCKWISE FROM OPPOSITE PAGE, FAR LEFT: The city's newest hotel Park Inn by Radisson Davao in Lanang. Camp Sabros Zipline near Forest Spring on Mt. Apo (photograph by Annie Arcenas). Mid 20th century style at Cellar de Oboza, and the restaurant's Shrimp Ceviche (photographs courtesy of Tricie Arcenas). Artisanal blue cheese by Olive Puentespina for Malagos.





ABOVE: Japanese family surrounded by the product that had drawn them to Davao at the dawn of the 20th century, abaca. First recorded intermarriage between a native woman, a Bagoba, and a Japanese immigrant worker, in 1908. Both images are in the exhibit 'Davao-Kuo: The Abaca, the Japanese and the Making of Davao' in the Davao Museum. (Photographs courtesy of Davao Museum.)

a community to become a fifth of the local population, some becoming plantation owners themselves. "Davao-Kuo" by which the place had come to be known, might be translated as "Davao, Little Japan."

Curated by May Cruz on the invitation of Davao Museum Executive Director Sylvia Lorenzana, the exhibit recounts how the Japanese radically improved the agriculture and technology for the propagation of abaca and manufacturing of hemp, and how they turned Davao into a global source for the product. They had varying relationships with the local people as individuals and a group. On the one hand, the Japanese were admired and respected, sometimes even emulated; on the other, they were regarded with suspicion and hostility. They married native women, but that was sometimes seen as a way of gaining the right to own property.

Davao was charted to become a city with officers appointed, expressly to prevent the Japanese from trying to control political power.

When the war broke out, the Japanese were interned. When Japan vanquished the Philippines, the Japanese of Davao were released and they retaliated at those who had incarcerated them.

In the end, no matter what their history was in Davao, all Japanese had become the enemy during the war. Today, were it not for a few monuments, there would be no visible evidence of their having once had a place in Davao.

But there is one remaining survivor of that extinct community, 91-year-old Hiroyuki Mizuguchi. He arrived in Davao as a young boy in the 1930s. He studied at Davao Elementary School and Davao High School. He was interned at the outbreak of the war, then conscripted into the Japanese Army, was captured and made a POW. He tells his story in *Jungle of No Mercy* (Anvil). He lives with his wife in Davao's Skyline Subdivision.

On the second floor of the museum is a small but excellent collection of artifacts of the various indigenous peoples of Davao, including beautiful clothing of intricate decorative work, exquisite weaponry and jewelry, textiles and brassware.

At the **Tadeco Home Décor** showroom (www.tadecohome.weebly.com) in the Pearl Farm Marina (the jump off point to the famous resort), the merchandise is all made from the original product of ab-



CLOCKWISE FROM FAR LEFT: Tudaya Falls near Forest Spring. A Forest Spring cottage. (Both photos courtesy of Annie Arcenas.) Local delight: Durian Gatchpuccino, a heady blend of Arabica coffee and Mindanao's favorite fruit. (Photograph courtesy of Stratworks.)

aca fabric. T'boli weavers in their beautiful clothing weave the fabric on site. Bolts of the traditional fabric are available for sale along with modern versions and applications, as bags, cushion cases, placemats, even furniture. The modern applications are designs of Maricris Floirendo Brias, a member of the groundbreaking design group, Movement 8. The home décor company is actually a livelihood development program of Tagum Agricultural Development Company (Tadeco), one of the biggest companies in Mindanao, founded by one of the giants of the island's history, Antonio Floirendo. Tadeco is the flagship company of his conglomerate Anflo, which also owns Pearl Farm. The Tadeco Livelihood and Training Center brings supplementary livelihood to Tadeco employees at the same time that it seeks to promote and keep alive native arts and crafts. The products have an inherent polish of style and a proven international appeal that make it unnecessary to mention their social benefits to market them.

After shopping, lunch was at Swiss Deli and Restaurant (www.swissdelidavao.com), similar to Manila's Santi's chain, a purveyor of European delicacies, and further proof of Davao's cosmopolitanism. 🍷

My Davao hotspots

BY CARLO LORENZANA

BUENAVISTA IS A PRIVATE ISLAND you can rent all to yourself (www.buenavistaislandresort.com). Another nice beach resort that I recommend is in Talicud Island, **Leticia by the Sea** (leticiabythesearesort.com).

If you would like a simple day trip to the beach, I recommend **Chema's by the Sea** on Samal Island (+63922-882-9333). Paradise Island (www.paradiselanddavao.com) is even more affordable. It's a nice, no-frills resort that offers good barbecue. A lot of locals go there for breakfast because it's very convenient to go there.

For amazing seafood, I recommend **Marina Tuna**. Go to the original location in Sasa instead of the mall because food there tastes better (maybe because charcoal is used). Their bestsellers are Swordfish Belly, Kinilaw, Imbao Soup, and Tuna 10-ways, in which every part of the tuna is made into a dish, including the *bagaybay* (gonads), *bihod* (roe), *panga* and the *buntot*, which is served crispy.

Check out **Ahfat**, too. It's a Chinese seafood restaurant. Some people say MSG is a mainstay, but who cares? The food is still fresh and great. There are three Ahfat branches (I, II, and III), all close to each other. You must try the *pigik* (freshwater fish that always has roe in it), their green beans dish, the slipper or rock lobsters, the *alimango* (I like the deep fried, salty and spicy one), Pata Tim.

For a more upscale restaurant with beautiful ambiance, check out White House (www.north-pointdavao.com/white-house.html). Like Cellar de Oboza, it's in a prewar house that's recently been restored. It offers Japanese-French fusion food.

For fabulous wine, *tapas* and savory South-American inspired dishes, check out Cellar de Boca. It's a special collaboration between me, Bobby Tenchavez and the Arcenas couple, Vince and Tricie. It's in SM Lanang Premier. I'm the "Ca" in Boca while Cellar is represented by Vince and Tricie. A few of the must-try's: Black Rings, Sun Made Paella Fried Rice, Boca Angus Steak, Tricie's Salpicado, Angus Beef Belly Sisig, Sun Made Steak Rice, Chorizo Jam, Imbao with Chorizo.

By the way, the best Philippine made artisanal cheese is from Davao. It's called Malagos Cheese. You will find it in most, if not all, hotels and high-end restos in Manila including the business class of PAL international flights. It's made by Olive Puentespina.

Extra edge through design

SM HOTEL'S NEW PARK INN BY RADISSON IN DAVAO IS FULL OF COLOR

BY CARLO TADIAR



TOP AND TOP LEFT: Vivid hues in the lobby lounge areas.
ABOVE: The chic RBG (Red and Black) Bar and Grill.

NEWLY OPENED PARK INN by Radisson Davao is a smart, hip, vibrant and affordable hotel. It is the first Park Inn in Asia.

The motto of the midscale brand of the Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group is “Adding Color to Your Life.” Vivid shades of mint green and mustard yellow pop in the lobby. A rainbow array of gerberas dots the space in white bud vases. In the rooms, the gray is used as a foil to make even more intense the grabbing pockets of color that seem to glow with an energy of their own.

The design is a consummate part of the hotel’s strategy to distinguish itself in the midscale range. It banks on a youthful modernity in its look and a simplicity in its set-up. There is only one restaurant in every Park Inn. It metamorphoses from bright sunlit space in the day to sexy bar and grill at night.

“We use color as an edge to our competitors,” said Simon Barlow, president of the Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group (Asia Pacific), which owns the brand. He was speaking at a press conference immediately prior to the formal opening of the hotel in March. Describing the character of the product, he said they are “branded, affordable, value-for-money hotels” given an extra edge through design.

At Park Inn by Radisson Davao the vital color is amplified by genuine art by Filipino artists supplied by Vita Sarenas of Finale Art File, one of the most important art galleries in the Philippines. This is art that was not mass-commissioned for the hotel, but was selected from a bonafide gallery’s collection. The works include canvases by Davao’s

Kublai and even the avant garde Nilo Ilarde.

The hotel is a property of SM Hotels and Conventions Corp., which partnered with the Carlson group in what seems to be a marriage made in heaven.

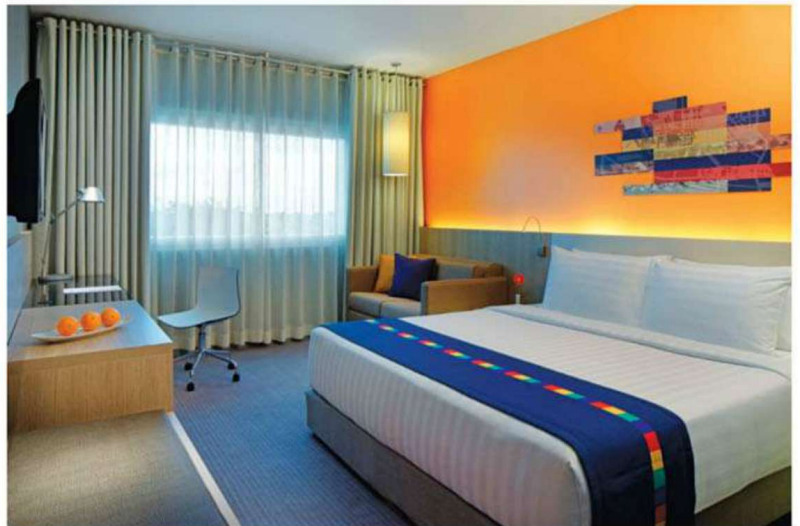
Barlow said that the Carlson group belongs to a “dynasty, not dissimilar to SM.” The group was founded in 1960 by a second-generation Swedish-American immigrant, Curt Carlson. His fortune began in his creation of a loyalty program through stamps for a grocery chain. Barlow said the dynasty to which the Carlson hotel group belongs is now in a state of transitioning from one generation to the next.

This is not the first time the SM group has partnered with the Carlson group. In Cebu they have a Radisson Blu, another brand of the hotel.

At the press conference, SM Hotels and Conventions Corp. president Elizabeth Sy explained her company’s niche as that of the urban hotel, which takes advantage of a “synergy of being located next to an SM mall and SMX Convention Center.”

She described the Park Inn brand as a “business hotel with fun and an element of surprise,” in perfect alignment with the SM group’s strategic devotion to creating “affordable luxury.” Future Park Inns by Radisson will rise in Clark, by SM North Edsa in Quezon City, and in Bacolod and Iloilo. 📍

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: Sitting area in a junior suite. Uplit orange wall in a guest room. The second-level swimming pool. Neighboring SM Lanang Premier, which has an SMX Convention Center. The Bar by night.



Made to measure

HOW TO DO THE MATH FOR YOUR INTERIOR DESIGN PROJECTS

BY ANNA M. ROSETE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOVEL LORENZO



A RESPONSIBLE HOME-OWNER verifies quantities and measurements made by their contractor. In the end, doing the math on your own omits the guesswork, and makes for informed, intelligent interactions with your contractor and design teams. Best of all, this allows for accuracy in budgeting. Here's how:

For tile quantities:

Determine tile quantities by the area of the surfaces on which they will be laid. The simplest formula is Area = Length x Width. Measure the length of the wall or floor surface. Multiply this by the wall or floor width, which will yield the surface area. Next, calculate the surface area of your tiles. Divide the area of the surface on which they will be set by the area of the tiles to give you the number of tiles needed for that space.

Tile liners are usually employed as borders. Hence, you will only need to divide the length of the surface by the length of the tile liner to figure out how much you will need.

It is helpful to allow for wastage or overage when quantifying tiles. Contractors typically add on 5% overage to the total quantity. If extras are needed for

future use—unsightly cracks and chips over time—allow for 15% overage or more, depending on the usage of the surface and its likelihood to wear.

For cornices and base moldings, chair rails and casings:

For looks that are transitional to traditional, these moldings mark the space.

Cornices (or crown moldings) are attached at the top of walls to conceal where they meet ceilings.

Base moldings conceal where the floor and wall finishes meet. Sometimes, another piece of molding, called the “shoe,” is used to adorn the base to enhance a space's detail.

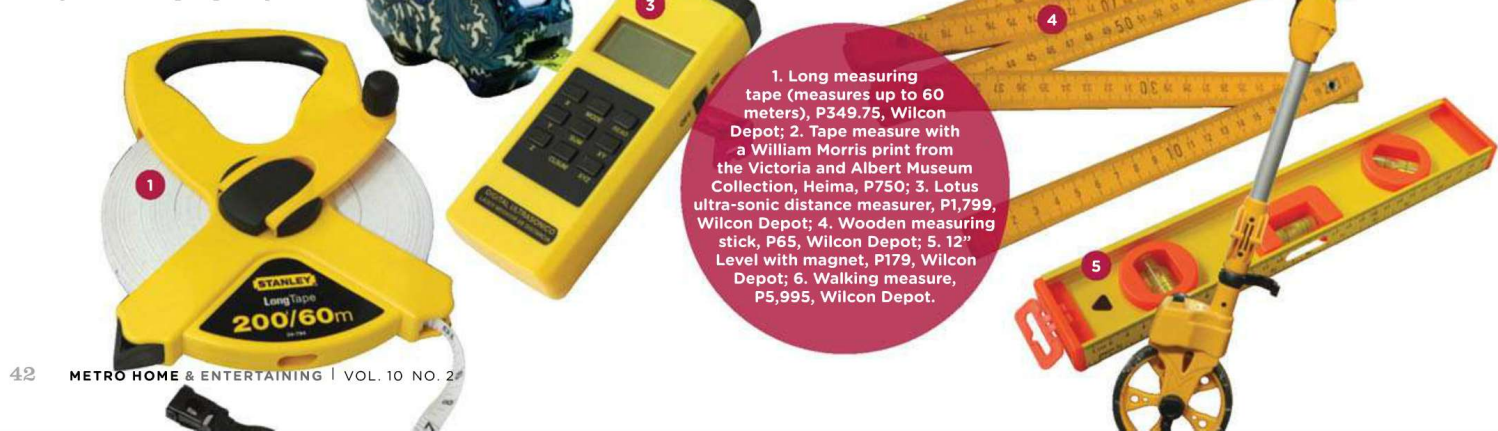
Chair rails are moldings typically employed at 30” – 36” above the finished floor, traditionally to prevent chair backs from scratching the walls.

To calculate, get the width of the surfaces on which these moldings will be installed. Allow for at least 4” extra, for cuts and joints. Casings are used to hide where the door or window jambs meet walls. Simply add the lengths of either side of the door and window jambs, plus the width, to determine the amount of casing you will need. ⑩

Sample Calculation for Floor Tiles (for 3 meter (L) x 3 meter (W) space, 300 mm x 300 mm tiles):

- Convert all units to one common unit:
3 meters= 3,000 mm
- Get area of space by using formula, Length x Width:
3,000 mm (L) x 3,000 mm (W)= 9,000,000 sq. mm.
- Get area of tile using formula, Length x Width:
300 mm (L) x 300 mm (W)= 90,000 sq. mm.
- Divide area of floor by area of tile:
90,000,000/90,000= 100 tiles
- Calculate for overage:
for 5% overage= 100 x .05= 5 tiles
for 15% overage= 100 x .15= 15 tiles
- Calculate for total tiles needed.

Fun tools



1. Long measuring tape (measures up to 60 meters), P349.75, Wilcon Depot;
2. Tape measure with a William Morris print from the Victoria and Albert Museum Collection, Heima, P750;
3. Lotus ultra-sonic distance measurer, P1,799, Wilcon Depot;
4. Wooden measuring stick, P65, Wilcon Depot;
5. 12” Level with magnet, P179, Wilcon Depot;
6. Walking measure, P5,995, Wilcon Depot.

Savvy Spruces

GIVE TIRED ROOMS A BOOST WITH THESE DECOR REVAMPS

BY ANNA M. ROSETE
STAGED BY MARK PEREZ
PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOVEL LORENZO



On the sofas: Plain blue and plain orange accent cushions, P 2,500. Pillows with ethnic patterns, P3,000 each, Firma. Trellis pillow, P466.75, zalora.com. Basilisa coffee table, price upon request, KISH. Angular vase, Masterpiece. Pumpkin bowl, P1,480, Firma.

- Give your living room a face-lift with some simple additions. Choose accent cushions that are bright counterpoints to the sofa's neutral background, or vice versa. Furniture and accessories with geometric patterns add spatial depth to the room, as in the Ari Screen by Vito Selma in the background.
- With living room sofas that have a linear or L-configuration, break the rigidity of the room's layout by introducing a center piece with a shape that tends towards the organic.
- Choose accessories that echo the form and patterns prevalent in the room in order to enhance the visual unity of the space.



More options:
1. Hanging lamp, P9,500, Sifra. 2. Picture frame with shells, P1,900, Domicillo. 3. Coral shape bowl, price upon request, Masterpiece. 4. French Rug, P750, ac+632. 5. Yellow vessel, P1,495, Dimensione.

- Add white accessories in a bedroom in a dark color. These not only make the space look crisp and clean, the combination becomes a cohesive scheme for the entire room. As a secondary color to the white and dark scheme, add a third color to serve as an accent. Here, it's orange.
- Choose bedding that is neutral so that it serves as a backdrop to dresser accessories.
- Incorporating an element of whimsy makes the bedroom a more personalized space.

Papier maché deer head on the wall, Heima. On the bed: bed linen set, P16,000, Rustan's. Sheridan gray pillow cases, P2,590, Rustan's. On night stand: bone china tea light holders, P650, Heima. In the foreground: White Lira chair, P18,898, Dimensione.



More options:
1. Saigon bamboo lantern, P2,395, Dimensione. 2. Porcelain deer head, P495, Rustan's. 3. Framed print, P4,100, Heima. 4. Turntable, P11,100, Heima.

On the table: Oval planter with wavy edge, P795, Dimensione. Clear goblets with blue accents, P695 each, Rustan's. Clear goblet with red accent, P695, Rustan's. Multiple Choice dinner plate, P332.50, Rustan's. Multiple Choice soup plate, P297.50, Rustan's. Lanterns, Firma. Basilisa Ottoman, price upon request, Kish. On ottoman: Pillow by Empire Designs, P466.75, Zalora.com

● In the dining room, toss out formality in favor of eclecticism. Create a fun, whimsical mood with an all-embracing collection of pieces that has been mixed and matched. Here, festive, colorful goblets share the table with romantic lanterns. For tabletop accessories, a merry mix of dainty patterns with bold lines.

This story was staged in a condo unit of Architect and Interior Designer Evelyn Q. San Juan. The unit is for sale or lease. Please contact urbanrealtph@gmail.com or visit www.urbanrealtph.com



More options: 1. and 5. Multiple Choice bone china sugar and creamer, P645, Rustan's. 2. Plate charger, P1,800, set of 4 ac+632. 3. and 4. Multiple Choice bone china cup and saucer, P445, Rustan's. 6. and 7. Napkin holder, P1,680 each, ac+632.

Bling in the bath

EASY SOLUTIONS FOR THAT MOST PERSONAL OF SPACES

BY ANNA M. ROSETE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM ONG

AS IT IS the most personal space in a home, the bathroom needs to be immaculate, orderly and fresh. Here are a few tips to make this personal sanctuary a continuously pleasing haven:

1

Update your fittings. Dispense of tired faucet and shower handles and explore what's new in the market to update your bathroom's look. In some cases, you may find these fittings to be the perfect inspiration around which to assemble your bathroom theme.

LEFT: IMO fittings by Dornbracht RIGHT: Memento fittings by Villeroy and Bosch
BELOW LEFT: PVD Faucet by Kohler



Add some irony. Design may be for naught without a sense of humor. Try adding a bit of quirk and character by employing a jolt of color, or enlisting a mascot to coax a grin on grumpy mornings.

2

CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: Mr. Suicide tub stopper, P1,750. Mr. Cold liquid soap dispenser, P1,963. Mr. Otto floss dispenser, all by Alessi from Conlins Elements



3

Maintaining order is key. No matter how meager the bathroom space, a sense of tidiness will keep it pristine. The right compartments and accessories do wonders to keep the clutter out of sight.



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: Acrylic organizer, P250. Zurich 4-tier shelf, P5,295. Toilet brush and tissue holder, P795. Polka dot folding trolley, P9,295. Soho trolley with 4 drawers, all Dimensione.

4

Exercise visual discipline. As in the rest of the spaces at home, designing around a theme keeps a visual vocabulary that is uniform. This can be done through a number of ways: color, motif and form. Choose bathroom accessories that portray a consistent design theme.



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: Penguin pump, P1,280 each. Orino soap dish, P280 each. Bird's eye over-the-door hooks, P1,600, all by Umbra. Rock soap dishes by Feel Good Home, P172.50 (S), P282 (M), P422.50 (L). Umbra jewelry tree, P400, all from Dimensione.

COSMOPOLITAN COCOONING

ON-TREND DESIGN OFFERINGS COUPLED
WITH UNPARALLELED AFTER-SALES SERVICE
ENHANCE CONDO LIVING

BY **DAHL D. BENNETT**
PHOTOGRAPHS BY **PAUL DEL ROSARIO**
STYLED BY **MARK PEREZ**

OWNING A CONDO is now seen by many owners as a long- and short-term investment. Units can be leased, with the rental fees covering payment for amortization, or units can be resold for profit. Other owners plan to eventually sell when they move on to the next phases of their lives. Making such a major investment promises a win-win scenario.

Megaworld takes the lead in catering to this niche of buyers, creating a service that will see the value of their client's investment through, from purchase to long after turnover.

"Mr. Andrew Tan, Chairman and CEO of Megaworld, envisioned a full-service company that would assist clients from the time they choose to join the Megaworld family to long after they have moved in," says Donna V. Racho, Vice President for Sales and Marketing of Prime Properties Investment Group (PPG), a division of Megaworld Corporation. Megaworld PPG specializes in handling after-sales services for Ready-For-Occupancy units. With an eye towards meeting the needs of unit owners and building loyal relationships, Megaworld Prime Properties Investment Group was created to handle this exclusive segment of the business.

Meticulous after-sales services

Megaworld PPG offers five services covering the often daunting details that come after purchasing a unit—interior design, turnover, maintenance, leasing and resale management.

"Each service handholds unit owners through their living experience, from planning their living space to turnover and long after they have moved in. Leasing and Resale Management allow unit owners to consider the option and convenience of managing the business of their property through the expertise of Megaworld PPG," explains Donna.

Putting a premium on a Megaworld residential development is its location in a prime property called Townships, which refer to a thriving, accessible community that provides an aspirational lifestyle for its dwellers. Currently, Megaworld has four strongly-branded Townships in Metro Manila: Eastwood City, McKinley Hill, Forbestown Center and Newport City.

Newport City boasts of a cluster of Mediterranean-themed mid-rises, one of which is the Sarasota Residential Resort, named after a resort city in southwestern Florida, on Sarasota Bay off the Gulf of Mexico. It is a short, breezy walk to bustling Resorts World Manila and includes amenities such as tennis and basketball courts, swimming pool, a courtyard of commercial establishments and 24/7 security. Just outside the gate is the Shrine of St. Therese of the Child Jesus.

Sarasota Residential Resort offers showflats that are furnished to the last detail—the owner simply needs to show up at the doorstep with his luggage. The interior designs have the feel of a hotel *and* a home and, indeed, it can be considered as both. The Megaworld PPG design team covered all bases, providing not only a completely decorated space but also appliances and basic necessities just short of the owner's personal clothing.

If the owner intends to have the unit leased or resold, then after-sales services will include looking for the ideal tenant or buyer and walking the client through the often complex paper work.

Five modern design themes

Megaworld has five modern themes for their clients' different personalities—Filipino, Contemporary, Industrial, Zen, and Victorian.

No matter the preferred theme, the feel of elegance is a common thread that runs through each showflat's design, says in-house senior

Megaworld PPG's contemporary showflat gets a touch of whimsy with the mix of florals, bursts of soft greens and modern accents. Wooden side table from Kish, metal coffee table, and Oriental pillows are from Firma, sunburst wall decor from Haute Design, and floral pillows from Kish.





ABOVE LEFT: The modern Victorian treatment in the dining area lends an air of elegance to the space. The dining table was especially supplied to Megaworld PPG by furniture makers from Pampanga. **ABOVE RIGHT:** The brown backdrop makes the dainty yet quirky accent pieces stand out, reflecting a hip vibe throughout the room. Throws and rocking robin chair by Liliana Manahan are from ac+632. The bed is tailor-made for the size of the room, according to senior design head Andie R. Buenavista.



LEFT: Megaworld PPG's ready-for-occupancy showflats puts a premium on the term fully-furnished, providing all the basic necessities needed for moving in, from kitchen appliances to cutlery.

design head, Andie R. Buenavista. Modern chandeliers, quirky accent pieces, and customized furniture all fall into place with a designer's professional eye. A dolphin-gray wall serves as a backdrop to easily adapt new twists and additions as the design unfolds.

"I find their Modern Victorian design a timeless style. I personally enjoy the sophistication and lux it evokes once you enter the unit," says Sarasota condo owner Imelda del Rosario, one of Megaworld's increasing number of clients who prefer fully-furnished and decorated showflats. "The design fits my personal taste but as an afterthought, I had to pull out some femme decors since my son will be using the unit." Del Rosario's son is a pilot, making Sarasota an ideal home, since it is near the airport.

Attention to detail is emphasized no matter how small or big the area is. "We want all our pieces to stand out in such a way that wherever one is seated, there will always be an accessory or furniture that will catch your attention," says Buenavista.

Design themes are flexible and can be customized according to the owner's aesthetics. With the help of Megaworld PPG designers, palettes can be adjusted, furniture pieces added, and new appliances installed.

Customized and sustainable designs

Design consultation until the rendering of a perspective is an after-sales service free of charge. Once the design is approved, service extends to helping the client look for suppliers and contractors, and taking care of other requirements in implementation of the design.

"We collaborate with the clients to translate their design aesthetic using the five design palettes. Upon approval, the unit owner has the option to work with us for the implementation, or choose to work with their preferred contractors or suppliers. Either way, we can check up



The Modern Filipino showflat features whole furniture sets made from Pampanga. Modern yet local, the dining table is made from laminated mahogany chip woods. The same style is used as accent for the dining chairs. The bullhorns from Hive give the whole place an edgier look. **BELOW:** Consistent with the furniture pieces used in the living and dining areas, the Modern Filipino showflat features a bedside table also made of laminated mahogany chip wood. The richly textured headboard and throws give the entire space an elegant, hotel feel, an ambiance that Megaworld PPG wants to project for all its interiors. On table: Hurricane lantern, brass candelabra, wooden hexagonal tray, rectangular tray, wooden salt and pepper shaker, all from Triboia Bay. Resin horns, Hive. On bed: Lamp, and weave pillows, ac+632; throw pillow with tassel, Firma.

on the implementation to ensure it meets the desired objective of the client,” elaborates Buenavista.

The design team also looks into the sustainability of their resources. The Modern Filipino showflats gave them an opportunity to showcase what is local, handmade and sustainable. Their supplier belongs to a family of second-generation furniture makers from Pampanga, thus making the craftsmanship distinct to this province more accessible to condo unit owners.

“We want to give our clients a feel of our culture,” says Buenavista.

The showflat features modern furniture pieces punctuated with native accents. These pieces are ordered in sets, giving the entire space, from living room to the dining area, a look that is put-together yet not overly-done.

The furniture is customized to fit the specific size of the unit, another convenience that Megaworld PPG in-house designers provide to give the entire space a personalized look as opposed to bringing in furniture that are ill-suited for the area’s measurements.

Such details are often an afterthought for many new homeowners, giving them unnecessary headaches in the process of moving in. Megaworld PPG’s comprehensive after-sales services are designed specifically to nip such problems in the bud for a smoother turnover to homeowners, and for the investors’ satisfactory returns.

Sarasota condo owner Del Rosario points out, “It is this experience that makes us continue to consider Megaworld as our primary partner for our real estate requirements.” **■** For information on Megaworld Prime Property Investment Group’s ready-for-occupancy units, call (02) 696-3774 or (0917) 626-3774, e-mail primeproperties@megaworldcorp.com or visit the website at www.megaworldprimeproperties.com



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A 'bibliothèque' look for a den
in *Bold and Beautiful*, page 54



BOLD AND BEAUTIFUL

FEARLESS USE OF COLOR AND PATTERN IN A COMBINATION OF LUXURY AND WHIMSY

BY **CES RODRIGUEZ**
PHOTOGRAPHS BY **PAUL DEL ROSARIO**





Living room of a four-bedroom house designed by Ivy and Cynthia Almaro. Black, white and gray help to temper the bold kelly green of the walls. OPPOSITE PAGE: Across living room sitting area, a trio of tall slim stainless steel shelves holds books uniformly covered in black, photographs in black frames and accessories strictly in black and white, creating a very polished and tailored effect. The black lacquered trays on the coffee table in the foreground are painted on the inside to match the bold color on the walls.





The chairs in the dining area were adapted from a Frances Elkins design and made to order by the Almaríos. The lights overhead are from Pietro Collection. LEFT: Bold kelly green continues into kitchen.

THE WALL COLOR IS KELLY GREEN. Vibrant and described as “grassy,” it was the standout decorating color in 2012.

Cynthia Almarío of the interior design studio Atelier Almarío likes that “kelly” recalls a certain bag from Hermès, too.

In fact, the spanking new house that sits on a 360-sq. m. corner lot in Portofino Alabang is replete with references to luxe fashion.

Certainly, the house mirrors many of the high-end projects Atelier Almarío produces, from glitzy hotels and homes to restaurants, and the love of the open style and feel that’s very California, where Cynthia and sister and interior design partner Ivy lived and practiced for 15 years before their designs took Manila by storm.

Hip and highly aspirational

The “girly-girl room,” one of four on the second floor, is inspired by Tory Burch. Or Kate Spade, if that’s what you like. The roomy master’s bedroom with handpainted walls is “an ode to Ralph Lauren.”

“When I envisioned the interiors, I really wanted it to be very hip and highly aspirational,” says Cynthia.

The den, beside the foyer, is a picture of colorless calm, wrapped in wallpaper with a quirky bookcase design that plays off the stainless steel-and-glass tables. It can also double as a study or a library, or be converted into a guest bedroom.

It begins the minute you pull up in front of the house. Unlike the Italian-Mediterranean-style of architecture required of Portofino homes, the Atelier Almario home isn't in ochre or terra-cotta. Neither does it have a tiled roof.

In fact, points out Rachelle Almario, Cynthia's sister-in-law who oversaw the construction of the house, it's the only house in the subdivision with a black roof. The exteriors are also done in trendy "greige," a cross between gray and beige.

"We got away with it," Cynthia says. "Because we've been designing a lot of model units for (Portofino), we have a very good working relationship with the developers. We're bringing another style to the community. It's the next generation. It's Mediterranean but, at the same time, it's Californian. It's no longer very Italian Mediterranean."

The style, insofar as the neighborhood is concerned, is also "more transitional."

"When we designed the exterior, it was very Restoration Hardware," adds Cynthia, referring to the trendy American furniture and furnishings chain. "It's what's happening in the States. It's a gray house outside with black, and it's really a very California house."

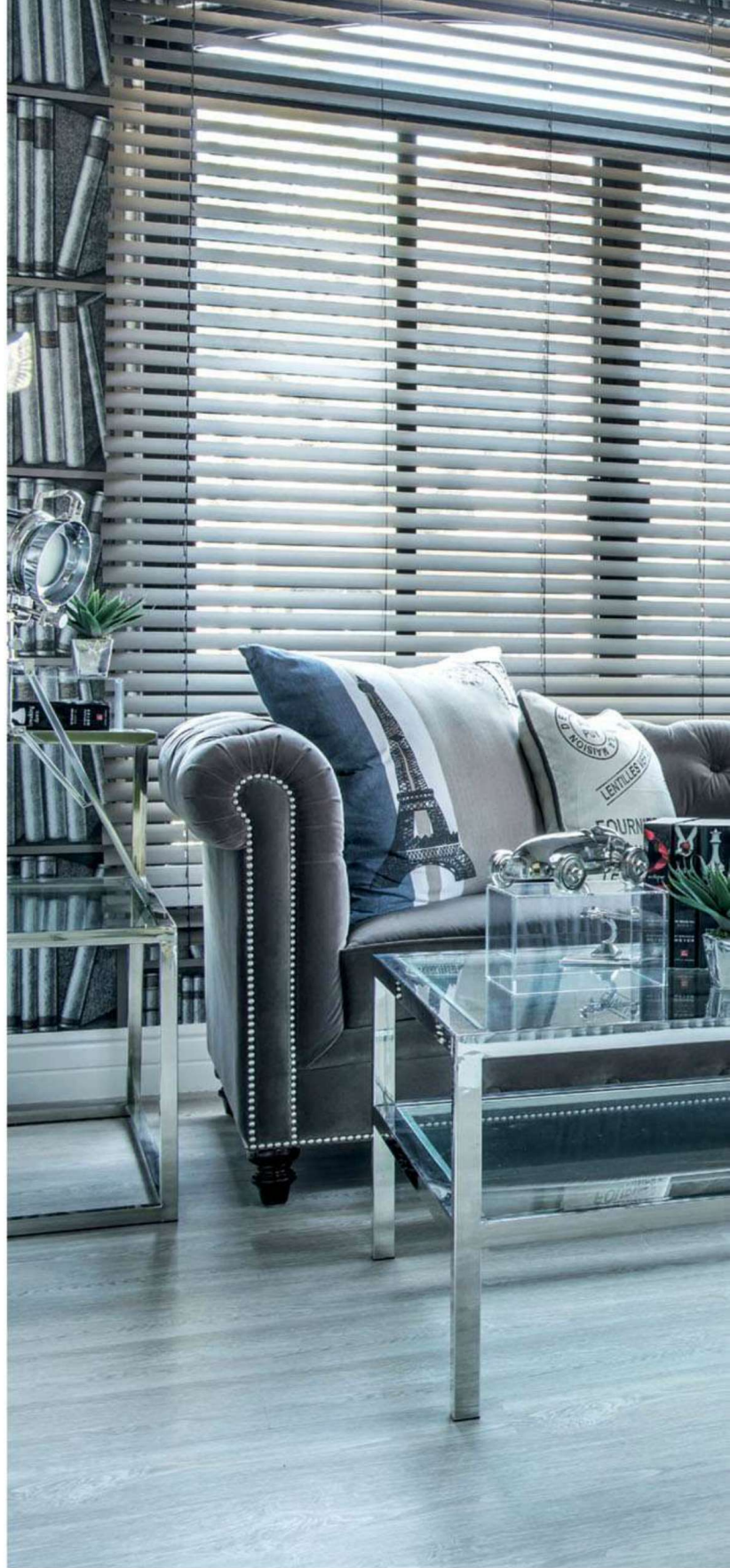
Extravagant kelly green

While the house stands out for being less florid than its neighbors, it is also low-key on its own—a set-up for the bedazzlement that awaits you inside.

The foyer, marked by a dramatic rattan-framed mirror hoisted above a bespoke console studded with nail heads, leads to a sumptuous double-height living room framed by an extravagance of kelly green.

With an open floor plan, the shade permeates the dining room area next to the living room and shows up on the kitchen walls.

"It's a very young color," Rachelle says, "and it's really only just one color. All the rest are neutrals: black, white and beige."









In the master bedroom, luxurious handpainted wall decoration dominated by a deep blue echoed in the beddings and their hand-embroidered monograms. Four-poster stainless steel bed is draped in gauzy white, adding a sense of romance to the luxury.



Indeed, in the living room, the vividness is tamped down by white lamps, black coffee and side tables and upholstery in a zigzaggy pattern of black, white and gray. In the dining area, sliding doors to the lanai sheathed in gauzy white curtains serve the same purpose. And the kitchen's white cabinets and black-topped counters and center island amazingly mute *and* magnify the color.

"We wanted to make it modern glamour. When you enter, don't you feel that it's very sophisticated? So we just wanted to give a spin," says Cynthia. "You know the brand Tory Burch, it's kinda like the house if we were to brand it."

Burch's billion-dollar clothing line was described by one stylist as "professionalism with a touch of whimsy." And Atelier Almario's "transitional" Portofino house has it in spades.

A shallow alcove at the top of the second floor stairs resembles an expedient space for scribbling to-do lists for the day, if that activity wasn't such an analog throwback. Instead, it's a gift-wrapping center and where the kids can do arts and crafts.

Secret compartment

The first of four bedrooms (each with its own toilet and bath) is a nautically-themed boy's room, with a pair of laddered bunk beds, a "secret compartment" cupboard separating the two, and two extra pull-out beds for friends or cousins sleeping over.

ABOVE: In a corner across the bed in the master bedroom, a tufted sofa crammed with overly large pillows, enhancing the room's sense of sumptuousness. **OPPOSITE PAGE:** The embroidered fabric on the long pillow and chair seat formed the basis of the palette for the girl's room. More expensive fabric of this kind can be used sparingly yet still have plenty of impact when underscored by other elements in a room.







LEFT: Maximizing space, two bunk beds were lined along one side of the nautically-themed boy's room. Trundle beds under each one allow the room to sleep six. **ABOVE:** Across the beds, in an alcove between closets, charming accessories reiterate the seaside theme.

In the girl's room, as bold and bright as the downstairs space, Cynthia points to a floral pillowcase. "This was the DNA of the room, where I picked up the turquoise and the green," she says. Rachelle mentions another feature important to a teen, "Lots of closet space."

Beside it, what Cynthia calls the "Paris room," could not be any more different. Done mostly in camel and dusty tones, the room has double beds, and a wide window with an obstruction-free view.

Finally, the master bedroom is the point at which all that's aspirational, professional and whimsical in the house converges. The walls are intricately hand-painted in a repeating pattern of boughs and birds. The four-poster bed has hand-embroidered beddings. There are plush armchairs flanking a round table, where tea and morning coffee can be served. There's a luxury of windows that allows cross-ventilation, and a long walk-in closet leading to a wide bathroom.

The house is also "a story of color," says Rachelle, from the grassy green downstairs to the upstairs rooms in nautical white, turquoise and green, khaki, and the traditional royal blue of the master's bedroom.

More than pleased with how the house in Portofino turned out, Cynthia and Rachelle expect to work on more such residences in the near future. **11**

THE GREAT KITCHEN MAKEOVER

HOW DAPHNE OSEÑA-PAEZ
MODERNIZED HER KITCHEN
WITHOUT CHANGING THE CHARACTER
OF THE 40-YEAR-OLD FAMILY HOME

BY **CHINO DE LA TORRE** / PHOTOGRAPHS BY **PAUL DEL ROSARIO**

IT WAS A PROJECT that took years getting off the ground and much patience seeing through. But now that the kitchen in this 40-year-old house has finally been renovated, no one could be more pleased than the homeowners, celebrity host and blogger Daphne Oseña-Paez, TV news executive Patrick Paez, and their three children.

The kitchen makeover project finally got the green light in July 2012. There were a lot of hesitations because it entailed a major upheaval for the family. “We had to relocate our kitchen appliances and equipment to different areas of the house, like in the garage, just so we have a working kitchen,” explains Daphne.

Furthermore, the house, which Patrick inherited from his parents, has a very distinctly Filipino design, difficult to add on to.

As a producer and host of the popular home design show *Urban Zone*, Daphne met a lot of designers, suppliers, and architects. These interactions helped shape what she envisioned for her kitchen. Still, it required a lot of thought.

“I did a lot of research and eventually decided on a theme,” Daphne recounts. The result is a country look with a subtle Filipino feel. “I wanted a kitchen with an updated feel but, at the same time, wouldn’t veer too far from character of the house.”

The newly renovated kitchen evokes a pristine farmhouse with white cabinetry from Kitchen Studio, Inc. and white countertop from Rockstone Solid Surface. Droplights above the counter are from Pietro Collection. A stable door (it's halved into top and bottom panels that can be opened or shut independently) is original to the space but was painted white to match the theme. The new wood floor chosen for the kitchen comes up to the old wood floor of the dining area adjacent.





White, bright and light

With the help of her contractor, Cesar Ali, and supplier Rafael Calero of Kitchen Studio, Inc., the outdated kitchen is now an open, beautiful well-lit space with an efficient modular cabinet system. “The original cabinets, made of narra, were beautiful but they were also falling apart and some were even hard to open. For the new kitchen, I opted for a lighter look. I chose a white countertop and white cabinet doors with a distressed finish in line with the theme,” Daphne explains. The narra slab countertops have been saved for future use.

“The house was too brown as it was, and a white kitchen breaks the monotony somehow. We also replaced the hanging cabinet above the nook area with droplights, to maintain the open airy feel,” she adds.

The kitchen area was small but, with proper planning, Daphne maximized the space. By closing off a door on the left wall, she extended the kitchen counter. This allowed her to relocate the stove in the middle and create more storage space.

The ceiling was also removed, exposing the structural beams and contour of the roof. This helped make the space look bigger. A new ceiling of wood board was installed following the contour of the roof, and the beams were given a white ash finish, similar to that of the wood boards.

Gorgeous wooden floors

Wooden flooring was installed instead of the originally planned tiles.

“Rafael suggested that I use wooden flooring, and I’m glad I listened. It looks gorgeous matched with the white cabinets. And since it’s treated, I don’t have to worry too much about the maintenance,” says Daphne.

The original capiz and antique glass windows were replaced with large panels of white vertical sliding PVC windows from Fourling, allowing natural light to come in. Bisazza mosaic tiles were used for the backsplash.

“We wanted white mosaics that most resemble what capiz looks like to tie in the character of the house,” Daphne adds.

The star of the kitchen

Undoubtedly, the star of the kitchen is the Kohler Whitehaven apron sink, paired with the Hi-Rise bridge type faucet that was ordered from Kohler and shipped to the Philippines.

“Two months into the renovation, I originally settled for a square-ish Ikea sink. When the opportunity with Kohler came up, I took it! It’s what I’ve always wanted for my dream kitchen. I waited three months for it to arrive, but it’s definitely worth the wait,” Daphne exclaims. “The kitchen was practically done, and the apron sink was the last integral piece that completed the look.”

“It’s becoming the new favorite place of my family,” says Daphne with a smile, as daughters Sophia, Lily and Stella climb up the stools by the counter, straight after school, for a bit of a snack and conversation. ①



OPPOSITE PAGE: Glass panels in the overhead cabinets reveal contents for easier searching. White mosaic backsplash from Bisazza echoes the original capiz windows. The kitchen is equipped with a six-burner stove with oven from Elba with customized stainless backsplash and hood. "I prefer gas over the electric ones. It matches well with the kitchen," says Daphne.

ABOVE: The white-on-white kitchen is a fitting foil for the rest of the heirloom house. A farmhouse sink from Kohler is one of the space's highlights.

RIGHT: Dining area next to the kitchen. At the head of the table an original Marcel Wanders chair, and on one side, a pair of Kenneth Cobonpue chairs.



Daphne's kitchen tips

FROM CONSULTING THE EXPERTS TO SOURCING ON YOUR OWN, ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

1. Talk to professional kitchen designers. It takes a pro to bring a 2D design to life. I insisted on my own preferences, but Rafael Calero of Kitchen Studio, Inc. gave me lots of options. He was like my third eye.

2. Build a temporary or second kitchen. Ours functioned as our main kitchen during the renovation process. There was very little disruption in terms of function.

3. Find an excellent and trustworthy contractor through referrals from satisfied clients.

4. Do the sourcing yourself. I wanted an apron-front sink, but the Kohler Whitehaven kitchen sink wasn't available locally. Luckily, I met with Kohler representatives who were willing to ship one from the US.

5. Storage is key. Many of my appliances are small and packed away in under-the-counter storage. Make sure your drawers are easy to maintain and organize. We went with a modular kitchen system with Blum mechanisms and dividers.

6. Lighting can make or break a room. Your kitchen lights must be both functional and attractive.

7. Choose a window system that builds on the design personality of your kitchen. We had white PVC windows custom-made by VEKA from Fourling.

8. Raise the ceiling. To make my kitchen appear larger, I tore down the original plywood ceiling and exposed the roof with the structural beams and all.

9. Exhaust system is important, especially in enclosed small kitchens.

10. Safety should be of utmost concern when dealing with electrical, gas and plumbing issues. Work with the most reputable gas company to install proper gas pipes with the right regulators and safety features if you plan to pipe gas into your home.

11. Go customized. In the Philippines, having things custom-made isn't a big deal, budget-wise.

12. Be open to compromise. I had a giant refrigerator. A practical solution would be to bore a hole into the wall but that would mean losing prime closet space. So we got a large energy-efficient Samsung inverter refrigerator that's a bit out of place design-wise.

13. Wooden floors are the most practical flooring system for us. There will be spills, scratches and stains—all the crazy textures that make wood glorious as it ages.



TV host and blogger, Daphne Oseña- Paez. Make up by Patrick Alcober.

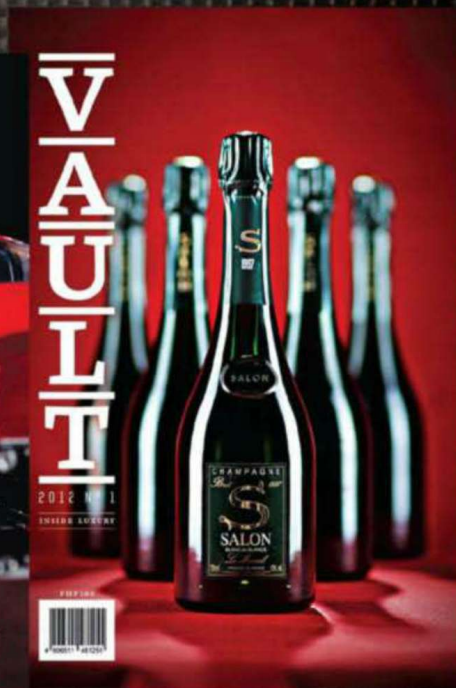
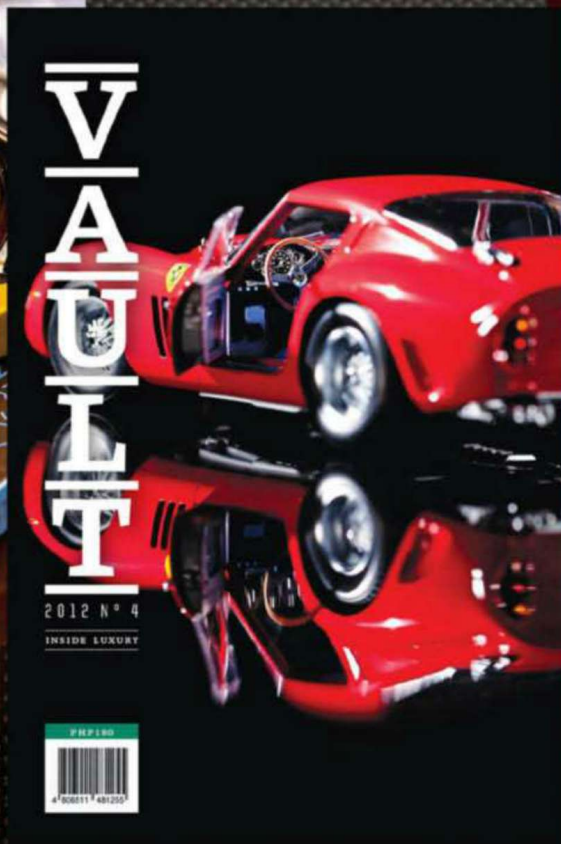
14. Break the rules. Everyone told me I was crazy for putting an air-conditioner in my small kitchen, but I wanted to be comfortable every time I cooked. So I chose an energy efficient inverter Samsung split-type air conditioner.

15. A kitchen must be functional so consider the main functions of storage, food preparation, and clean-up. The kitchen sink, refrigerator, and stove—the three kitchen

features used most often—should be arranged in a triangular pattern.

16. Choose a countertop that looks good, is practical and easy to maintain. I went with high performance acrylic polyester resin from RockStone Solid. It is homogeneous, ensuring that the original color and texture remain consistent regardless of wear. Unlike natural stone, damaged sections are repairable. ⑩

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OVERRIDING INSTINCT

OVERCOMING GNAWING DOUBT, A COUPLE ACCEDES TO THEIR DESIGNER'S RECOMMENDATIONS—AND GETS A HOUSE BEYOND THEIR EXPECTATIONS

BY **CAL TAVERA** / PHOTOGRAPHS BY **WILLIAM ONG**



ABOVE LEFT: Under glass roofing, in front of the house, water gently cascades from a pillar made of stones.
ABOVE RIGHT: An ingenious idea: PVC pipes jut out of a wall and serve as pots for herbs and other greens.



Architectonic pendant lights hover from a double height over the living area, which looks out onto the front garden. In the rear is an office cum study walled in glass. The chair in front of it is Kenneth Cobonpue's iconic Dragnet.





TO WORK WITH GOOD ARCHITECTURE is always promising, but to collaborate with an architect from the start is an interior designer's ideal. In the case of this six-bedroom house in Quezon City, designer Wilma Reyes secured her recommendations before the original final drawings turned into reality. Her clients requested for a modern home.

What Wilma delivered was beyond their expectations: a three-story contemporary home with open spaces, abundant amount of natural lighting and a well-thought furniture plan. Glass elements are incorporated throughout the house, even replacing walls and embellishing doors to allow light in.

Polished interior detailing

Wilma and the owners' family friend, Architect Ka Kuen, worked together to produce this simple yet polished interior.

"Sometimes, the architect and interior designer have conflicting ideas," says the owner. "We were fortunate that ours got along. Wilma revised all the areas after the architect worked on them. Good thing our architect was accommodating. He honored whatever we preferred."

The couple did not fuss with the floor plan, giving their designer full control. The only thing they requested was to alter the designated bedrooms. At the time of construction, the wife found out that she was expecting a daughter.

"The original plan was to place the master bedroom on the second

ABOVE: The desk in the office can be extended to serve as a table. **RIGHT:** Multiple pendants hung low over the table create a dramatic statement in the formal dining room. The chairs at both ends are by Kenneth Cobonpue.







OPPOSITE PAGE: Casual dining area in the kitchen. Instead of a backsplash, an extension of the windows that look out onto a pocket garden. **ABOVE:** Behind a frosted glass wall over the counter across the windows, a TV elegantly concealed.

floor along with the bedroom of my three boys,” she says. “The top floor was meant for the family room and hall. When we found out about the coming baby, we moved the boys to the third floor, and the nursery now occupies the room near ours.”

The homeowner adds, “The direction was to keep things simple. I’m a practical person and nothing is too flamboyant. Every furniture piece is affordable enough to be replaced when we tire of the modern theme.

Shopping in China

“We could not find anything that we liked locally so we visited China even for our lighting fixtures. We traveled with Wilma to China for items to dress up our home. There is this area in Shenzhen where they sell several nice products. There were two buildings crammed with lighting options. We spent five days visiting the stores. We would be there as soon as they open and stay until they close shop. We had to make fast decisions while we were there. Wilma specified everything down to each lighting accessory.”

Everything in the house is new. The items from their previous Mediterranean-inspired townhouse will feel like outsiders with the new home’s modern theme. Even the master bed frame did not meet the designer’s approval.

“There were several instances we could not visualize the space, relying instead on our designer’s judgment,” the owner says. For the



Living area in the master suite. Behind the sofa, streamlined closets keep clutter out of sight. OPPOSITE PAGE, TOP: A soothing palette of dark neutrals in the master bedroom. OPPOSITE PAGE, BOTTOM: Eye-grabbing round shower stall, paved in a glittering mosaic tile, divides the ensuite master bath from the walk-in closet.



dining area, the couple was doubtful initially about the table bases Wilma recommended when they came across them on their shopping trip. According to the wife, they seemed too small, but the designer convinced the homeowners in the end. The stone bases now hold up a tempered glass that allows dining for 12.

"We entertain people a lot. Every day, we have several visitors. Aside from my guests, friends of my children come over to play. We are constantly eating. We even ordered a teppan table from France and rented a tempura cook one time. I think that is why the friends of my children enjoy coming over. We spoil them with food," the wife says.

The rooms upstairs

While they were throwing around ideas for the nursery, the mother-to-be requested for a design that would stay relevant for a long time. The designer agreed. What they did not agree on was the color scheme. "I could not imagine how this particular king-sized bed would fit in the whole design or any of the other pieces. I did not even appreciate the wallpaper swatch. Pink and yellow floral prints for the walls? Why would anyone combine those two colors?" the owner recalls, laughing. "I felt that the only redeeming factor in the whole concept was the whimsical lampshades that I personally love. In the end, I had to hand it to Wilma for bringing all the elements together. My daughter, who is two years old now, can still enjoy her surroundings."

The three sons stay in one of the three bedrooms on the top level. The couple wants them to remain close growing up but they also made





The boys' room on the third level. Across the beds, built-in shelving with pull-out desks. BELOW: The boys' bathroom. BELOW LEFT: Baby sister's bathroom.



Surprise addition. At the time of the construction, the lady of the house found out she was to have a baby girl. For her daughter's room, the mother wanted a room that would stay relevant beyond infancy. The rose pattern on the walls is echoed in the bed linen and tempered by the geometric patterns in drapes and upholstery.





provisions in case they decide to have their own private space.

For their personal study desks, Wilma incorporated a ledge they can pull down from an existing bookshelf design. For bigger study groups with classmates, a conference table was set up in the family hall outside their room.

The owner says, “We prefer that their friends and schoolmates come over so we can also get to know them.”

Practical matters

The wife says, “I do not really invest in art, but my friends persuaded me to stop being too pragmatic. I’m a late bloomer when it comes to art appreciation. I only started buying pieces recently like this Cacnio sculpture for the console. I like the Ivan Acuña painting in the living room because it fits the modern theme and has touches of red. I’m wary about buying too many expensive things that my children can easily break. We have to consider that as well.”

The original plans also called for a swimming pool outside the living room. However, after finding out news about their baby girl, the couple decided against it to avoid any worries.

ABOVE: The third level is the boys’ domain. Outside their bedroom, a table devoted to study. **OPPOSITE PAGE:** Across the study table, an entertainment area. Beside it, behind glass panels that can conceal it, a pantry and sink.

The wife’s favorite room in the house is the kitchen by Siematic where she prepares meals for her family whenever she has free time from working in the family business. She used to work on weekdays but since becoming a mom again, she now only reports for certain clients, giving her more time for personal interests such as cooking.

“I love my kitchen. I also have my organic garden where I plant basil, oregano and other spices,” she says. “This is my realm, but for the house design and everything that goes with it, we were fortunate to work with an interior designer like Wilma.”



STAR LIGHTS

IN A ROOM'S LOOK, TODAY'S LAMPS
TAKE A LEADING ROLE

PHOTOGRAPHS BY **PAUL DEL ROSARIO**





Retro on the floor

The latest floor lamps take plenty of inspiration from the design of the mid-20th century.

Tripod lamp with a shade of bent wood slats that can be fanned out to enclose the bulb or pulled back to reveal it, Vera Floor Lamp, Triboca Bay Living, P14,766.26. Streamlined Cube lamp, P33,318, Bo Concept. Whimsical lamp with green shade and "branch" resembles a tree: Finola, Locsin International, P19,000. Wood tripod Andes lamp with wood shade, Triboca Bay Living, P19,725.21. Lamp with shade of cones has a very 1960s feel, Beehive lamp, Locsin International, P18,000. Like a traffic cone, floor lamps with handles to facilitate mobility: Desa lamps by Pierre Charpin for Ligne Roset, P38,418 and P57,338. Recalling an artist's easel, Architectural Floor Lamp, Triboca Bay Living, P12,782.25.

A touch of "low-tech" in a stand with ridges that allow adjustment of height. Joshua Floor Lamp, Triboca Bay Living, P12,782. Characteristic of the designer's aesthetic, low-lying and voluminous: Breola Lamp, OMO by Milo Naval, P14,000.





Back to the future

Desk lamps look to the Space Age and the libraries of yore.


The look of a futuristic crane: Bo Concept, P33,318. An early 20th-century style, Pietro Collection, P7,375. Modern mini tripod, Bo Concept, P17,688. Classic look interpreted in a modern way, Bo Concept, P21,498. Another traditional look from Pietro Collection, P7,060. Reduced almost to a line, Plate Desk Lamp by Florian Brillet for Ligne Roset, P45,438. A similar idea but executed in warm wood and on a more dramatic scale, Windsor lamp, P16,000, OMO by Milo Naval. Horse-saw table desk, OMO by Milo Naval, P78,000.

A photograph of a modern tropical home. In the foreground, a swimming pool reflects the sky and the surrounding greenery. A wooden hammock is strung across the pool area. To the right, a covered patio area features a wicker armchair, a blue lounge chair, and a white patio umbrella. The house has a balcony with several potted plants, including a large pink bougainvillea. A large palm frond hangs from the top left corner.

CHIC TROPIQUES

FRENCH FAMILY SETS ROOTS IN MANILA
AND CREATES A PARADISAICAL HOME, COMBINING
GALLIC NONCHALANCE WITH ORIENTAL FLAIR

BY CAL TAVERA / PHOTOGRAPHY BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO

A photograph of a modern tropical residence. In the foreground, a large, two-story gazebo with a dark, multi-tiered roof and white railings stands over a swimming pool. The pool is filled with clear blue water and has a wooden deck around it. In the background, a house with a similar dark roof is visible. The scene is surrounded by lush tropical plants, including a large potted plant with red leaves and a blue ceramic pot. A black metal lantern hangs from a pole in the foreground. The sky is clear and blue.

The residence was built around a large pool tiled in Indonesian lava stone from Costa del Sul. It was never intended to look like a resort; the result simply evolved organically. "We designed everything as a couple," says the wife. The gazebo rising out of the center of the pool has a bar underneath it. Lounge chairs in front of the living room are from Costa del Sul. The hammock is from Indonesia.



AFTER YEARS OF TRAVEL between France and Asia, this French couple decided to put an end to their transcontinental lifestyle and establish a life in the Philippines. “He,” says she, “worked in Manila, Cebu, Hong Kong and all around Asia. It was difficult because he spent six months in Asia and less in France so we decided that I would move to the Philippines and we would build a life and home here instead.”

With children from previous marriages, they dropped anchor on a 1,400-sq.m. lot in Parañaque and created a tropical idyll.

‘Cottage bedrooms’

They laid out the residence in courtyard fashion, rooms surrounding a vast swimming pool bordered by a lush garden. With 12 children between them, they needed several bedrooms. Each opens onto its own terrace facing the pool. It was an organic collaboration between husband and wife, remarkably without the aid of an architect. It did not take too long to plan since both are veterans in the design industry. She studied at the Ecole des Beaux Arts. The result is an accidental beach resort.

ABOVE: Bedrooms surrounding the pool have their own terraces and are linked by pathways through the garden. **RIGHT:** The living room is open to the outdoors. The residence takes full advantage of tropical weather, and merges the indoors with the outside. The checkerboard stools, tray tables and child’s chair are all from Costa del Sol. The leaf sculpture in the corner was designed by the couple.







Looking into the living room from outside. A sofa from Costa del Sul is set against a wall of books. The oversize armchairs in a basket weave are from Indonesia. The Persian rug was acquired in Dubai.







TOP: “We love to cook and eat in this family so we spend a lot of time in the kitchen,” says the husband. Their cookbook collection and wide array of French kitchen implements adds to the charm. The recycled wood with whitewash finish seen throughout the house is seen here as well. Terracotta tiles from Bulacan reiterates a rustic look. **ABOVE:** Adjacent to the dining room is a sizeable wine cellar kept in constant cool. **LEFT:** When the antique Louis Philippe sideboard by the wall arrived from France, its deep wood patina just didn’t go with the rest of the dining room so it was subjected to the same finish.

“When we were conceptualizing the house and landscape, we did not pattern it after any resort, but everyone asks why we chose this look. All we wanted was a beautiful garden, and that’s it. Our previous home in France had a wonderful backyard. Since everyone is commenting that our house now looks and feels like a vacation getaway, I am thinking that my next business should be designing resorts,” she says laughing.

Although in a tropical setting, the interiors have a distinctly French nonchalance, punctuated by many pieces from the French-owned Philippines-based Costa del Sul line of furniture made from recycled wood. The previous lives of the pieces of wood surface in the newly made piece of furniture, in nicks and grooves, emphasized by a weathered finish, a deliberately, uneven handmade quality and rustic touches. The couple is attracted to the aged texture, deeming it more interesting. Certainly, it’s pragmatic as well in a full house that includes two dogs and two cats.

That Costa del Sul look held such sway that it ended up recasting an important heirloom the lady of the house had shipped from France, a Louis Philippe cabinet. When it arrived, she realized its rich veneer simply didn’t go. She brought it to Costa de Sul for refinishing.

This is one way she keeps a sense of cohesiveness among disparate pieces of different styles or era, by using the same or similar finishes.





Outside the kitchen is the lanai. The furniture is from Costa del Sul.



For a safari theme requested by one of the sons, the mom painted giraffe spots on tree roots she acquired in Indonesia to create a unique headboard.

OPPOSITE PAGE, TOP: The luxurious master bathroom is under open sky. The stone tub and lavatories from Costa del Sul were handpicked for the bathroom.

OPPOSITE PAGE, BOTTOM: Similar bathroom on a more modest scale for one of the children.





Sitting area under a chandelier in the bedroom of a daughter who requested a French look. RIGHT: The wife shares, "We ask our children what colors to work with for their personal space and we get inspiration from that." In the case of their youngest daughter, pink and green were the colors of choice. The teepee is one color, the desk and chair, the other.



Tropical luxury

The entire residence is on the ground floor with the exception of the master suite, where the bedroom was placed over an office and the bathroom. That is the only thing they would change if they decide to design a new house. The wife says, "If we were to build another home, it would be exactly like this except for the office. Having one in the bedroom is not a good idea at all because when you decide to take a nap, somebody will knock on the door after 30 or 45 minutes. You will not be able to get some rest."

The master bathroom, however, is a paragon of tropical luxury. Half of it is outside. You shower under an open sky.

Carved out of a single block of stone, the bathtub makes a sculptural statement.

Mother knows best

Each of the children were asked how they wanted their rooms to look.

"My mother would ask what colors we wanted and she would incorporate them," says one daughter. "She was more than happy to fix our rooms. I trust her because this is her job, and she knows what good design is."

For her own room, the daughter brought in a few statement pieces, a chandelier and accent mirror, but entrusted the rest of her bedroom design to her mother with the request to make it more "French country."

"If I were to build a home, I can only hope it would turn out as nice as this one," says the daughter. ❶



RARE LUXURY

STATE-OF-THE-ART TECHNOLOGY
AND THOUGHTFUL PLANNING ENHANCE
LIFE IN AN IDYLIC SANCTUARY

BY CAL TAVERA / PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM ONG



Living room of a young family faces a sprawling backyard. Glass panels frame the view of the swimming pool while keeping the cool from central air-conditioning. The modular sofa is from Molteni, the coffee table from Restoration. The solid wood stools were picked up on a trip to Baguio.



HONKING JEEPNEYS AND BELCHING commuter buses create chaos not far away. But here, in the southern metropolis, stands an oasis of tranquility. The house is a resort-inspired sanctuary in a neighborhood that has escaped the urban bedlam.

Family and privacy

"I have always wanted to raise a family in the South," says the man of the house. "When we would visit the area, we noticed the air seems cleaner. Now, our other family members are based here, living only one or two minutes away from each other."

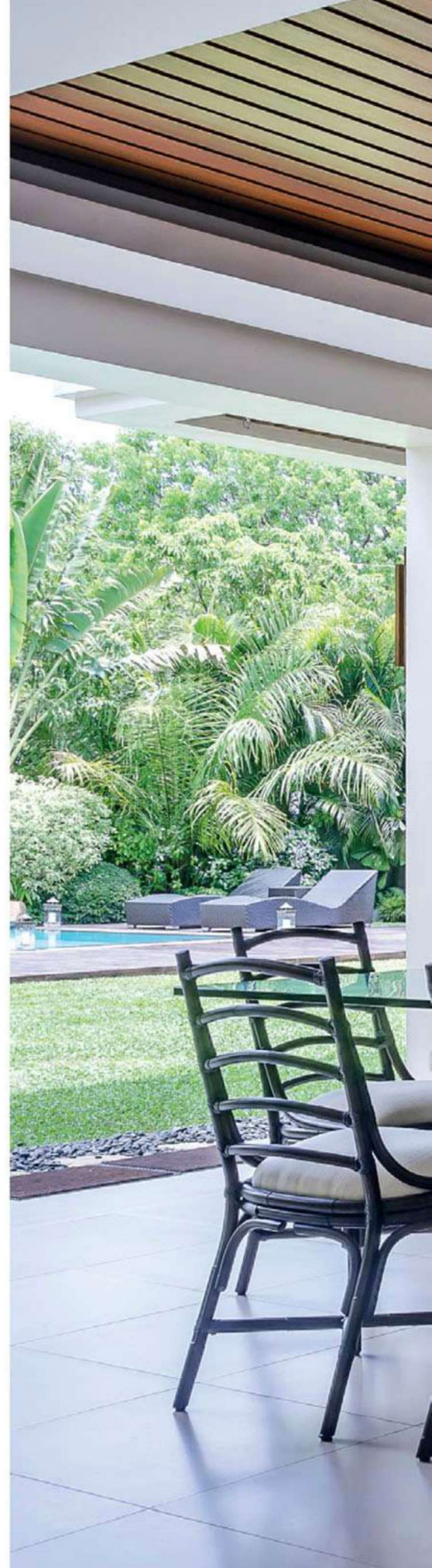
The wife adds, "When we first transferred to this neighborhood, we were just renting. For years, there was this corner lot we had our eye on, but it was elusive. We contented ourselves with wistful thoughts until one day, the owners put it up for sale."

The rest was history. After acquiring the 1,250-sq.m. property, the couple laid out the groundwork for their new home, working with Architect Ramon Gonzalez and contractor Conmech Construction and Development Corporation to incorporate a green design into their home.

The husband says, "We had many consultations with Architect Gonzalez on the layout of this house. It was not a one-shot deal although we basically knew what we wanted for the home and our family."

As parents, the couple requested for an arrangement where they would be accessible to their children's activities. The priority of family time served as a compass for plotting the layout. The husband says, "We required a separate den that opens up to a small dining area and kitchen where we can bond as a family. Everything else in the house had to revolve around that prerequisite."

ABOVE: Sitting area in the lanai adjacent to living and dining area. The furniture is by CME Interiors. **RIGHT:** Dining area in the lanai. The set is from E. Murio.









THIS SPREAD: Dining area, kitchen and entertainment center in the family's private area. The space can be sealed off from the common, formal spaces when there are guests. "We want to be involved in our kids' activities," says the mom. "On a typical day, we're all there watching television, playing games or sleeping." **ABOVE:** The kitchen is by SieMatic. The cabinetry conceals a SubZero refrigerator. **RIGHT:** The entertainment area is adjacent to a computer section. The sofa is an old piece refurbished, arms adjusted to update it. **OPPOSITE PAGE:** Between the entertainment area and the kitchen, another informal dining area. The set is also by E. Murio.





Emphasis on privacy was a significant consideration as well. By the entrance to this private family space are the stairs leading to the bedrooms on the second floor. A huge narra sliding door, which conceals the access to the next level, is locked at night for safety. Placing the stairs close to the private family space allows family members access to it without being seen by visitors. The wife says, “The children can come and go as they please even in their pajamas.”

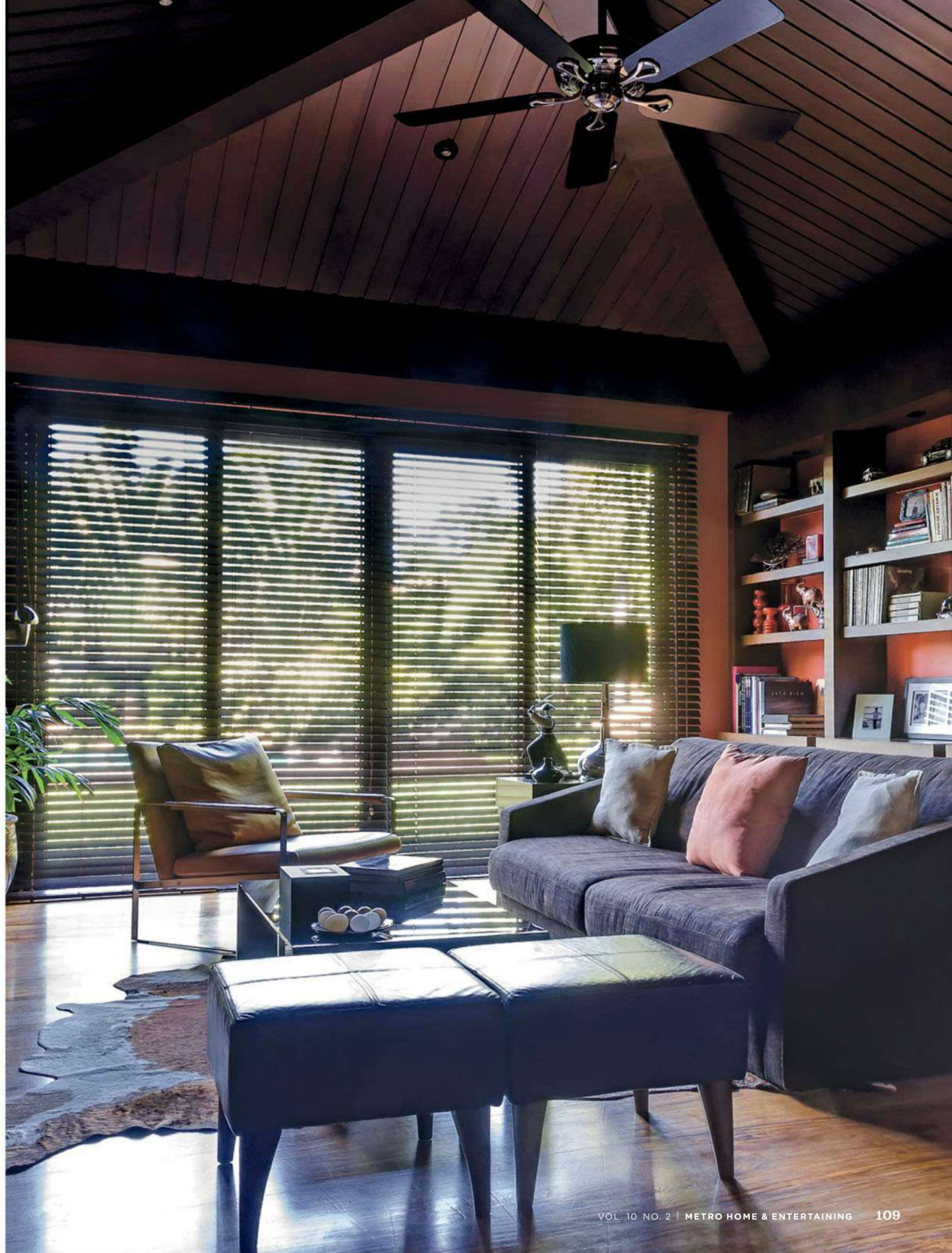
The husband has his own den on the ground floor, while the wife has her own sitting room by the master bathroom.

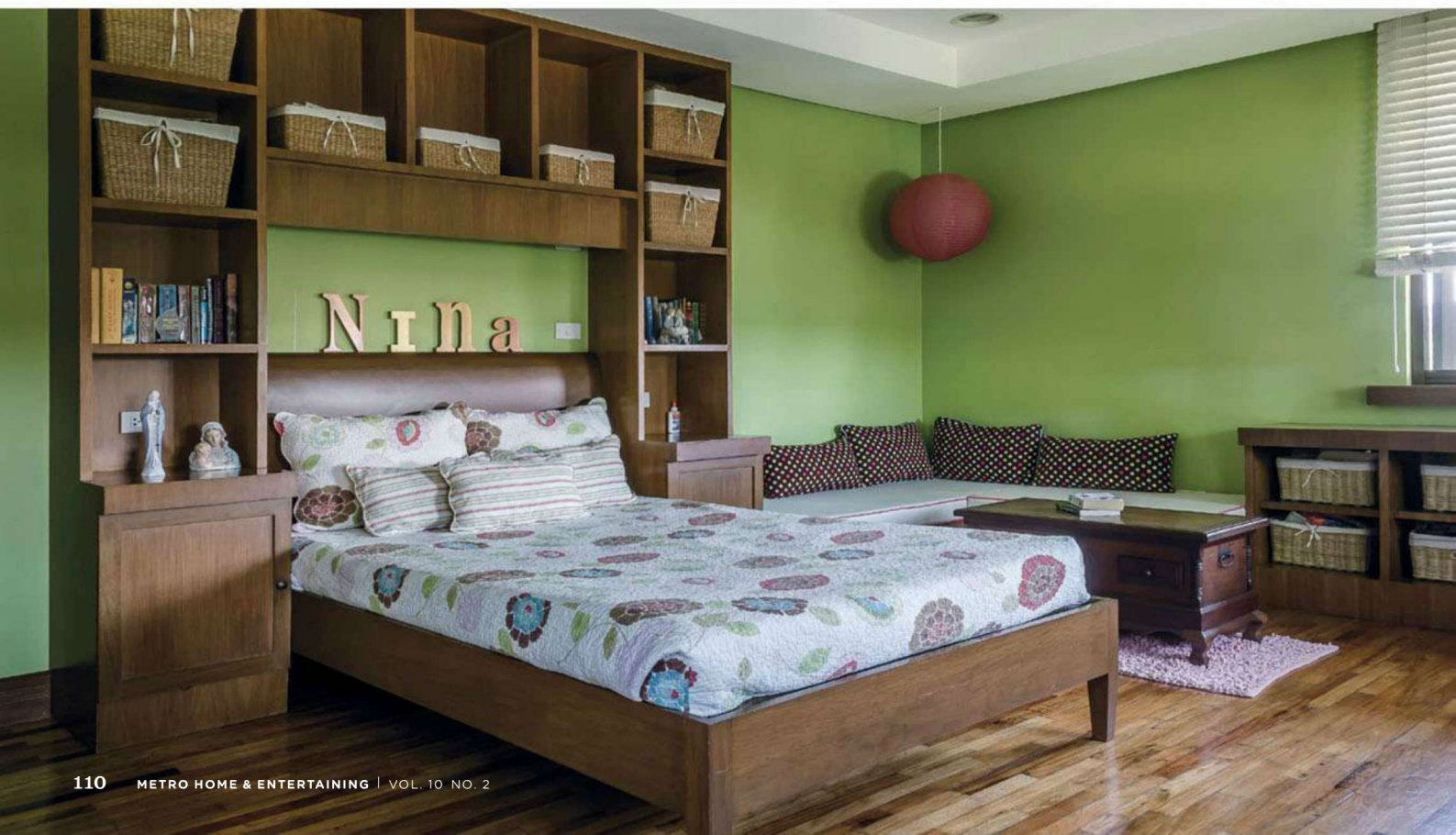
The formal living and dining areas, which face the sprawling backyard, in contrast, are devoted to entertaining. The wife says, “Since my husband has a big family, it’s usually a full house when they come over for Sunday lunch.” For a more casual setting, dinner is sometimes served in the backyard.

The wife adds, “We worked with landscape architect Ed Santiago to create this garden. Since we also have a swimming pool, our children get to invite their friends over to use it. It is much better than sending them off to the mall.”

The house was planned to host even bigger parties. A separate entrance by the driveway admits guests into the garden without touring them around the house. Another entry by the cabana allows caterers to go in and out discreetly. The wife says, “We want things clutter-free and clean. It just makes everything feel and look more relaxing. We want our home to feel like a retreat.”

ABOVE: Formal dining area. The wood base of the table was a find from Baguio.
OPPOSITE: Husband’s den has a dramatically pitched ceiling. The leather stools, which came from the old wine bar Shiraz, were gifts from Architect Gil Coscolluela. The leather and steel armchair is from PLC 107.







THIS SPREAD: The children's rooms. **CLOCKWISE FROM OPPOSITE PAGE, TOP:** Musical instruments and decor in one son's room. Plenty of play space in between two built-in beds of a pair of younger sons. Daughter's room. The mom says, "This is a fun green room. Since she has so many things, we brought in boxes to make it look more organized." An old chest doubles as a coffee table for a sitting area.

Eco-friendly solutions

For the common areas on the ground floor, the house has a rare luxury: central air-conditioning. Conmech implemented a ceiling-ducted air-conditioning system with two air handling units strategically concealed in a storage area upstairs. The husband says, "We don't see or hear anything. We just feel the air going through the living and dining room." To cool the air in the storage area where the air handling units are located, the contractor used a heat pump water heater (HPWH) that amazingly cools the air. More energy-efficient than conventional water heaters, it takes the hot air in the storage area and dumps it at a higher temperature into a tank to heat water. For the rest of the rooms, air conditioning inverters help save on electricity bills.

A system for recycling water was also implemented by Conmech. The house has two tanks: one serves the main house; the other tank, located under the cabana, collects water through blind drains set in the garden. The blind drains are a type of drainage that brings water into the tank using only the power of gravity. The water is then recycled to water plants and wash the homeowners' cars.

Since the property is located on the highest point of the road, Conmech followed the contour of the road for the natural flow of water. This allowed them to build the basement without the usual conventional pump, giving the homeowners one less thing to worry about. Since the position of the sump (the lowest point in the basement, where water seeping in from the outside would gather), where a submersible pump would have been put, is higher than the drainage line of the subdivision, it was easy to tap into the drain of the road.

Another luxury of the house is the potable water that flows from all taps and showers. The water undergoes three stages of water filtration. The first stage helps clean sediments, the second gets rid of microor-



ABOVE: Tension-edge swimming pool surrounded by solar-powered hurricane lanterns. For evening parties, these torches are placed under the sun for the day. **RIGHT:** Sitting area in the pool house, which has a built-in wet bar mounted on the lone wall, which conceals the bathroom and a utility room.

ganisms and the third stage goes through a water softening system. The husband says, “We noticed that our laundry sheets are softer, and the water tastes better, like bottled water.”

The vibes of color

The house is simply furnished to complement the taste of the owners. The L-shape beige sofa in the living room from Molteni is paired with a coffee table from the owners’ previous home and wood stools from Baguio. Wicker pieces from E. Murio Inc. and PVC furniture from CME Interiors are in the outdoor lanai. A neutral palette is key to picking these modern furniture pieces.

Together with the help of interior designer Ana Olondriz, the house transformed into a cozy, welcoming home where statements come in rust orange and warm red. The husband’s mother and sister also helped to bring the details together.

The wife says, “While we appreciate clean lines and modern features, we don’t mind splashing a wall with color. They bring about happy vibes and promote relaxation, depending on the shades. We are big fans of warm colors in particular because they’re visually interesting. You should see my daughter’s room. It is a really colorful space. We give the children creative license in designing their rooms. We happen to have a similar design aesthetic, and the relaxed resort look reflects our personal style. As a child, my family and I spent a good deal of our vacation trips by the beach.

“While the home is a constant work in progress, I am happy with its current state. The house took a year and a half to build, but we’re taking longer with the interiors. It transforms every so often because I like to take my time when shopping for the right item for the house.”

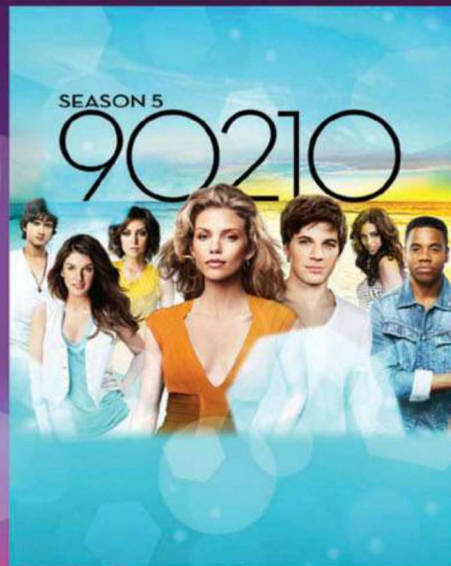
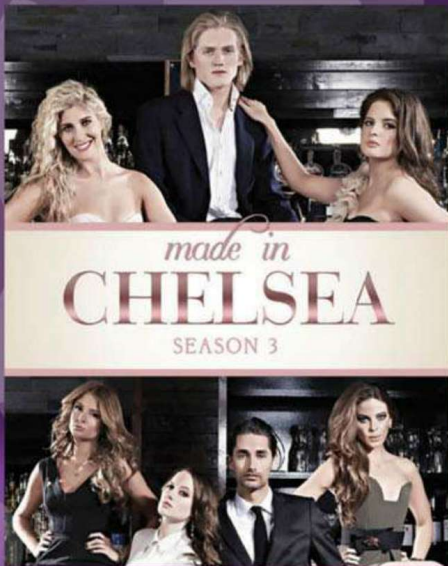
In the living room, a Lito Carating artwork took her almost a year to decide on. During that whole time, she could not keep herself from thinking about it. When she learned it was still available, she knew the artwork belonged to them.

She says, “With our home, we prefer not to rush things. We believe everything will come together organically, in its own time.”





FRESH. FIERCE. FEISTY.
THREE FIERY NEW SEASONS.
ONE RED-HOT SUMMER.



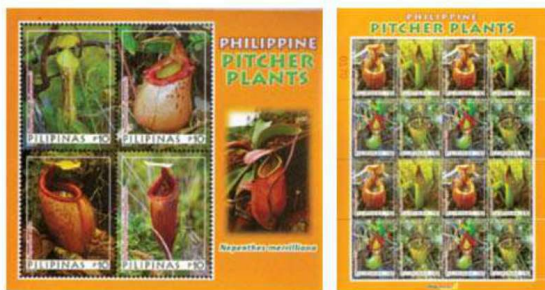
VELVET

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gardens

Coveted carnivore

For the longest time, the Venus fly trap, or VFT for short, had a dangerous reputation. Today, it has become a coveted species not only for plant collectors but also hobbyists. The VFT is now one of the favorites in the plant trade. It is easy to cultivate, provided it is kept in sunny bog conditions. *Catch the latest batch of VFTs offered at www.thegiftfarm.ph, Puentespina Orchids' online store.*



Pitcher plant stamps

The Philippine Postal Office recently issued limited edition Philippine Pitcher Plant stamps. Four designs featuring four native *Nepenthes* species come in P10 denominations. For serious collectors, a postal sheet, containing four sets of all species complete with name label, is available at face value for P160. Also, a rare souvenir sheet of additional five native species and two sets of First Day Cover envelopes can be purchased exclusively at the Philatelic Section of the Manila Central Post Office in Lawton, Manila.



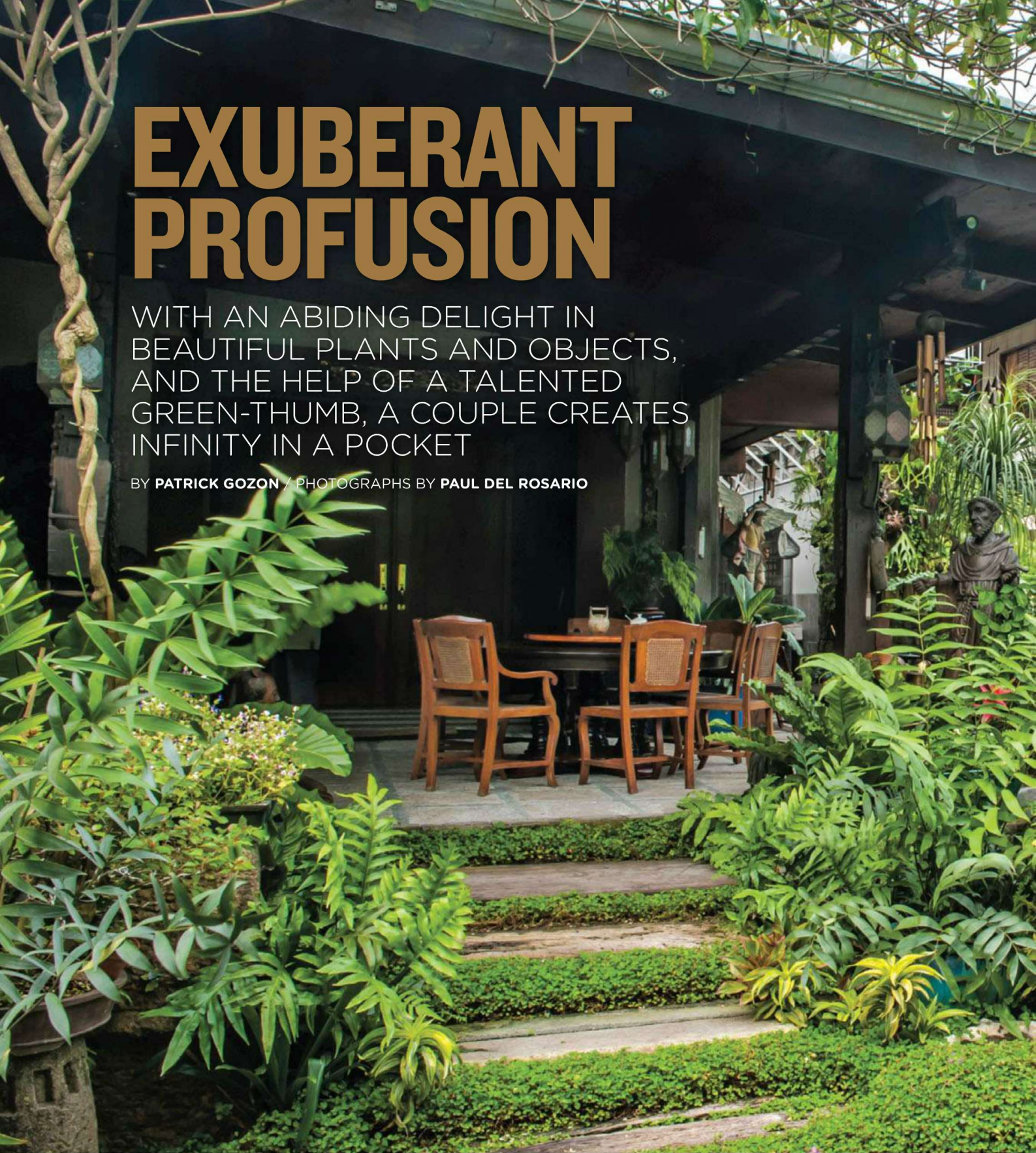
Rare orchid poster

The orchid genus *Bulbophyllum* is less popular to gardeners but sought after by collectors because of the variety in their form. There are close to 2,000 species found around the world and more than a hundred are endemic to the Philippines. Most are uncommon in cultivation. Avid enthusiast and orchid expert Wally Suarez's limited-run poster of Philippine *Bulbophyllum* features 50 species, some rarely photographed. It comes in a mat gloss finish and suitable for framing. Copies available at Purificacion Orchids in Manila Seedling Bank.

EXUBERANT PROFUSION

WITH AN ABIDING DELIGHT IN
BEAUTIFUL PLANTS AND OBJECTS,
AND THE HELP OF A TALENTED
GREEN-THUMB, A COUPLE CREATES
INFINITY IN A POCKET

BY **PATRICK GOZON** / PHOTOGRAPHS BY **PAUL DEL ROSARIO**





The garden envelops the 60's houses with a rich sea of green. The lanais are flanked with lush plant massing and vignettes of fascinating ornamentals. Rare cycad palms are very prominent, grown in oversized porcelain jars and scattered all over the premises.





The setbacks in between the two houses were transformed into a water garden. The narrow strip accommodates a shallow pond filled with carp, a Jacuzzi pool and a tropical landscape to match. The small space was also adorned with the couple's collection of Asian bric-a-brac.

"IT IS SMALL," PONCHIT ENRILE DESCRIBES THE GARDEN. "But it has lots of beautiful cycads." In fact, he uses these palm-like plants that flank the home's entrance as a landmark. "You won't miss them," he promises. We did have a little difficulty finding the house because of the identical walls and tree-lined streets in New Manila. And then the potted *Dioon* species—spectacular specimens—came into view, reassuring us that we had reached our destination.

A perfect match

The place is owned by cardiologist Nick Cruz and wife Lisa. The Cruzes and Ponchit have long been friends, so when they decided to purchase an existing house several years ago, they asked Ponchit to help fix the garden.

The couple are avid plant collectors. The doctor loves trees and shrubs, and adores bright and flamboyant flowers. The wife is a self-professed plant and accessories shopaholic. Both have a fine collection of horticultural specimens, as well as Asian objects acquired in their many travels around the country and the whole world. Their excellent taste is reflected in the elegant interiors of their home.

The Cruz residence is on two properties. They acquired the first house, a 1960s edifice, seven years ago. Instead of demolishing the old structure and building a new one, they decided to renovate it using some of the antique wood and materials they have collected. They relied on Ponchit to bring new life to the garden by improving on the limited sun-exposed outdoor space around the structure.

Three years ago, the perfect opportunity arose when the house next door—old, but of the same style and era as the couple's—was offered for sale. They immediately grabbed it for the extension of their existing home and garden.

Eventually, the wall between the two houses was brought down to join the two properties. As in the first house, they retained the structure and dressed it up with the old but beautiful and more Asian-inspired arts and crafts.

Opening up the garden created an exciting shape and a bigger space to fill with greens. Most of the garden in the first house made use of narrow setbacks. The adjoining space allowed more creativity. The lanais in both houses presented more sitting areas to lounge in, and enjoy the open air. It also generated pockets and interesting corners to landscape with plants.

A visual feast of Oriental accessories

Ponchit welcomes us into the premises. He greets us in the smaller lanai, which is the porch of the main house. This lanai and the slightly longer one in the newer house are open on three sides and give a dynamic vista of the garden.

Both lanais exude a warm ambiance with the comfortable wood furniture pieces and fascinating details of the *objets d'arts* and other vignettes. We can't decide where to look first as there is a visual feast of Asian accessories.

The old architecture of the structure is still discernible but greatly obscured by the rich detail that has been added.

Antique wooden doors and windows are the strong anchor for the new design. Trims and intricate panels are placed on walls and eaves, giving a distinct, eclectic Asian flavor. There are many wood carvings from Bali, Thailand, India, and creations by Filipino craftsmen.

An intricate sea of green

The two properties are linked together by a network of rustic *pie-dra china*. Both lanais also have *pie-dra* floors, adding a provincial feel. Large slabs of the stone in a shallow carp pond create a unique transition space for the two houses.

The virtual floating pathway culminates in an ornate Thai doorway. It is the portal to the new house, which now doubles as guest





ABOVE: Entry into the garden from the garage gives a very strong contrast from hard rigid stone surface into lush tropical green. The entry steps going into the main house is also framed with a mix of palms and more cycads. **OPPOSITE PAGE, TOP:** The second house's long lanai sports a long table with matching wooden benches. The sitting area is the perfect spot to view the large built up fountain located in the middle of the lawn area. The view is framed with brass downspouts imported from India. **OPPOSITE PAGE, BOTTOM:** A portion of the old property wall was retained to become the backdrop for the Jacuzzi. It serves as crawling space for epiphytes and more surface to hang some of Lisa's frog collection.

quarters and storage for the couple's prized art pieces.

The garden appears spacious because of the open lawn in the middle. It is hard to imagine that the place was previously smaller. It now appears seamless with the long perimeter wall providing a panorama of ornamental and curiosity plant species. The mixed sea of green is interrupted by an array of fascinating landscape decorations, from ornate sculptures to richly adorned vessels and containers.

Ponchit's prominent cycads are indeed ubiquitous. There are *Zamia*, *Dioon*, and *Stangeria* to the strange and uncommon *Encephalartos* and *Microzamia*. A pair of very rare and beautiful specimens of *Cycas debaoensis* is located in a prominent area, serving as a focal point.

Frogs and bells

Nick and Lisa Cruz join us for coffee and refreshments on the porch. Nick says he enjoys the garden so much, especially with his kids and the family's numerous pet dogs. They let the small French bull dogs run across the lawn and enjoy the open expanse. Lisa narrates to us how they acquired some special pieces on display. Both she and Ponchit have a lot of anecdotes to tell about their hunt for unique pieces.

Lisa points out the bells and chimes suspended from various points. She says she wants the garden to be lively, not only visually but also aurally. She believes the bells promote good vibes, too. Lisa has a fascination for frog figurines. Many decorate the garden. Nick even got into the habit of gifting her with some.

The Cruzes have put touches of themselves in every corner of the home. The limited space did not hinder them from continuously adding the things they love into the garden. "The garden is full of things that we love, and seeing them makes me happy," Lisa says.

Over time, the frogs and bells have become prominent features of the garden. The greens display a mix of flowering plants and, of course, the rare cycads, which both Nick and Lisa adore. With Ponchit's help, the couple have created a distinctly Asian setting that exudes their own personality, and a garden that they truly enjoy. 🐸

Elements of style

THE BASICS OF TODAY'S MOST POPULAR LOOKS

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY PATRICK GOZON

THE OLD JOB OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE is actually a new profession. Some 30 to 40 years ago, here in the Philippines, gardening was considered a mere hobby. Gardens reflected personal preferences, mostly those of the lady of the house, or they followed templates established by a few garden shop proprietors.

In the '80s it was uncommon to have a professional design a home garden. But things have drastically changed. Today, increasingly more homeowners have come to see how a designed outdoor space can greatly enhance their lifestyle.

The first local landscape architects emerged in the modern era, when architecture followed the principle of "less is more." The idea of using stronger forms and less ornamentation led to the evolution of landscape design. Classic forms and ornate lines in the hardscape, like walkways, benches, trellises and other accessories, gave way to simpler and more practical versions.

Choosing the right look for a garden should be dependent on the user's activities and lifestyle. A garden design professional can help people make the right choices and create holistic gardening concepts up to the smallest detail. To guide you in the right direction, here are some of the more popular aesthetic choices for a contemporary home garden and some basic tips to achieve them.

Minimalist

Minimalism makes the simple even simpler. It's popular because people think it's easy to maintain. But if, like most people, you tend to acquire stuff over time, it might be hard to keep the look.



FROM ABOVE: Fine-leaf plants traditionally used for Chinese or Japanese gardens are ideal for a minimalist look. Classical pieces and Filipino accessories are an unlikely combination in an eclectic garden but can be paired if they have the same color or material finish.



The minimalist garden is eye-catching. But it requires time and effort to keep it always spic and span. The upkeep can be tedious, requiring plant shaping, weeding and de-cluttering. Yet despite this, a lot of minimalist gardens are popping up, ranging from those with Asian flair to hardcore Bauhaus and even contemplative Zen styles.



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT:
Curvilinear lines are best used to promote soft and natural character of a rustic garden. Neutral colors and fine textures enhance order and simplicity of a minimalist garden. Straight lines and simple forms can be used with earth tones and natural finishes to combine rustic and minimalist.

Here are five simple ways to help you create a minimalist garden.

Straight lines and simple shapes. Landscape elements should follow rigidly straight lines and simple geometric forms like rectangles and circles. Elements could be parallel or perpendicular, emphasizing a more ordered harmony of horizontal and vertical surfaces.

Varied shades of gray. Use neutral colors in the hardscape, keeping to the natural tones of materials like masonry, stone and wood. Everything should be in simple harmony with no bright color standing out.

Natural fine textures. The materials and elements should be smooth or finely textured to contribute to the clean and streamlined look.

Fine-leaf green plants. All plants should be in almost the same shades of green to emphasize the natural, as a counterpoint to the rigidity of the design. To go with the finely textured hardscape, choose fine-leaf plants.

Less elements, less clutter. Keep ornamentation at bay. Accessories should not veer away from the clean lines and simple forms. Their presence should be at a minimum and not draw much attention.

Rustic

A more natural and organic design, a rustic look has a warmer feel. Rustic gardens nowadays are injected with Filipino, Asian, ethnic, Mediterranean or Mexican styles.

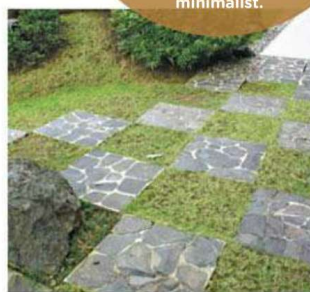
Because rustic prefers the natural, a less than perfect look is acceptable. Garden upkeep is a tad less demanding than for minimalism. The imperfections add more charm.

A rustic garden is more popular among local homeowners. It is easier to achieve, although some key elements and materials may be harder to find. Rustic can be recreated using the following guidelines.

Organic lines and natural shapes. Use curvilinear lines in the hardscape (like pathways and borders) and in planting. You can use profiles mimicking the shape of a shoreline or a mountain range. Introduce more gracefulness and less hardness and rigidity.

Earth tones plus a basic color. Use a more vibrant color palette but again drawing inspiration from natural materials, more of the drab green, brown, terra cotta red, etc. Add a basic color to the mix as accent.

Foliage plants. Use broader-leaf plants with interesting leaf shapes. A strong contrast



in plant colors can be more interesting. Gingers, heliconias, ferns and other foliage plants can give the garden a lush tropical ambiance.

Accents with strong character. Rustic can combine nostalgia with nature-inspired elements. These can be used as focal points and accents to add some design flavor.

Eclectic

A more adventurous choice. People who become enamored with a variety of things tend to go for the eclectic. Often they are collectors. They can't be limited to a single style, and so combine multiple looks. This requires greater creativity, which may be more challenging in both design and maintenance. As a rule of thumb, you can follow these tips for a more organized approach to the eclectic style.

Provide a blank canvas.

Keep the garden hardscape and staging area simple (minimalist) to conform and adapt to a wide array of styles.

Mass planting with strong contrast. A wider selection of plants can be utilized provided they are arranged in mass planting with similar plants grouped together. To avoid a "chopsuey" look and to promote stronger color and texture contrast, bigger plant massing should be employed.

Vignettes as focal points. Accessories and *objets d'art* should be arranged in interesting vignettes and strategically located around the garden.

Intriguing combinations. Different elements can be grouped to form interesting combinations. Similar-styled objects can be displayed together to strengthen aesthetics and design inspirations, and serve as worthy conversation pieces. Humor can be injected into the mix.

There are more varied and specialized styles to choose from, but the most important consideration for the garden design is the users' lifestyle. A home garden is a functional space. Its beauty and character are much more enhanced when the homeowner's personality is reflected. 🍷



AND **workingmom**
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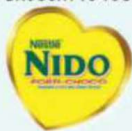
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entertaining



An elegant cold Spanish soup, a Salmorejo, made by restaurateur Juan Carlos de Terry, page 126

Global chilling

FOR THE HOT SEASON:
ELEGANT, DELICIOUS
COLD DISHES FROM
THE WORLD OVER

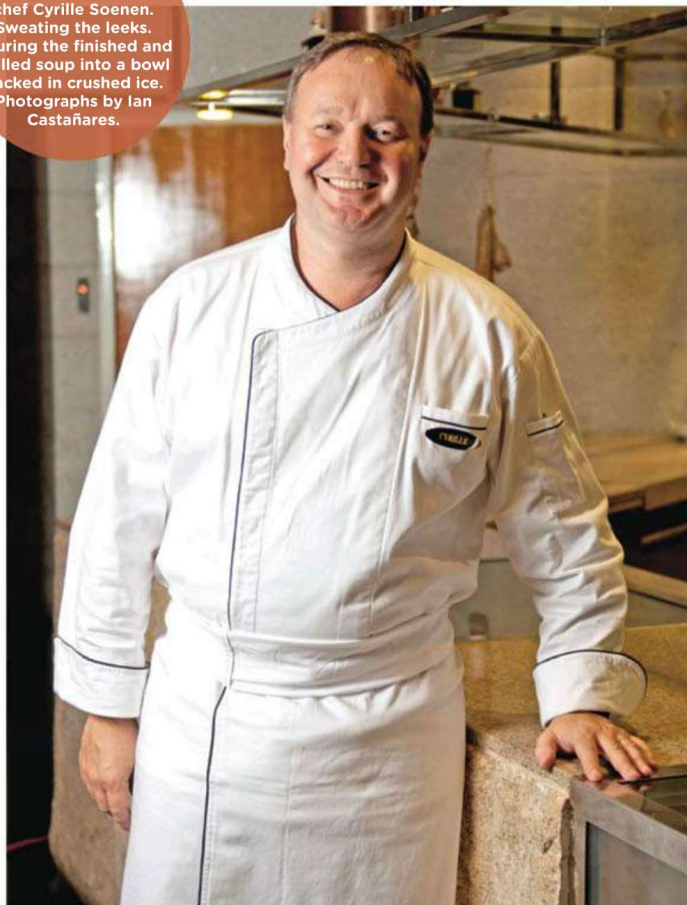
BY CYRENE DE LA ROSA
PHOTOGRAPHS BY IAN CASTAÑARES

French elan

THIS LUSCIOUSLY RICH and creamy potato-and-leek soup is the finest of all cold soups. It is believed to have been invented in America by a French chef who named the soup after the French town of Vichy.

Cyrille Soenen, the Executive Chef of Resort World Manila's Impressions Restaurant, shares the elegant yet simple version of Vichyssoise on the next page. When he was based in his native Paris, he would serve this soup to his customers at the Ritz Hotel's Restaurant L'Espadon during summers. It is also one of his favorite outdoor picnic staples.

Clockwise from right: French chef Cyrille Soenen. Sweating the leeks. Pouring the finished and chilled soup into a bowl packed in crushed ice. Photographs by Ian Castañares.





Vichyssoise

200 g leeks (white and pale green part)

400 g potatoes

1.5 l chicken stock

15 cl cream

30 g butter

5 g chlorophyll (natural food color)

Salt to taste

Chives and croutons for garnish

1. Clean the leeks and peel the potatoes.
2. Julienne or slice the leeks thinly.
3. Then sweat in the butter over a low fire to prevent discoloration.
4. Slice potatoes thinly. Do not put the

sliced potatoes in water—just set them aside in a bowl—to keep the starch that will naturally thicken the soup.

5. When the leeks are soft and ready, add the potatoes and the chicken broth, and

allow to cook further.

6. Once it boils, lower the fire and cover the pot, and simmer for another 30 minutes.
7. Then blend and strain it, and then put it on ice.
8. Add the cream, salt and the chlorophyll

to liven up the color.

9. Put it in the fridge to chill.
10. Serve very cold in a chilled bowl or in a bowl set in ice.
11. Add some croutons and chives for garnish (optional).



Salmojero garnished with jamon crisps
bacalao slivers and almond bits

Spanish flair

Gazpacho is a refreshingly cold, summertime soup from the Andalusia region in Southern Spain. It is usually an uncooked soup made from a mixture of puréed fresh tomatoes, sweet bell peppers, onions, celery, cucumber, breadcrumbs, garlic, olive oil, and vinegar. This soup can be a meal in itself and is open to many interpretations.

Spanish food and wine expert Juan Carlos de Terry of Terry's Selections graciously shares two versions: the recipe of a classic Andalusian Gazpacho, and the creamier Salmorejo from Cordoba. It is Gazpacho's richer, deeper but lesser known cousin, a cool and creamy tomato soup that is also used as a dip or sauce.

Gazpacho

Yields 20 servings

4.5 kilos ripe tomatoes
200 g onions
100 g green bell pepper
20 g garlic
40 g or 4 Tbsps rock salt
260 g bread
50 ml sherry vinegar
50 ml olive oil
100 ml corn oil

FOR TOPPING OR GARNISH:

Tomato and green pepper cubes, and chopped hard-boiled egg (5 g each)

1. Slice all the vegetables into cubes.
2. Blend all the vegetable ingredients, then strain and put the mix in a big container.
3. Add the sherry vinegar, olive oil and corn oil, salt and bread.
4. Wait 20 minutes until the bread is well soaked.
5. Blend preparation at high speed.
6. Strain preparation.
7. Chill in fridge for at least 2 hours.
8. Pour in serving bowl, and garnish with diced tomato, green pepper cubes and chopped hardboiled egg.

Salmorejo de Cordoba

Yields 5 servings

1 k ripe tomatoes, squeezed
300 g or 6 slices of wheat bread
10 g or 2 cloves garlic
30 ml sherry vinegar (the older, the better)
1 Tbsp rock salt
150 ml or 137 g extra virgin olive oil
1 whole organic egg

FOR TOPPING OR GARNISH, CHOOSE FROM THE FOLLOWING (PER SERVING):

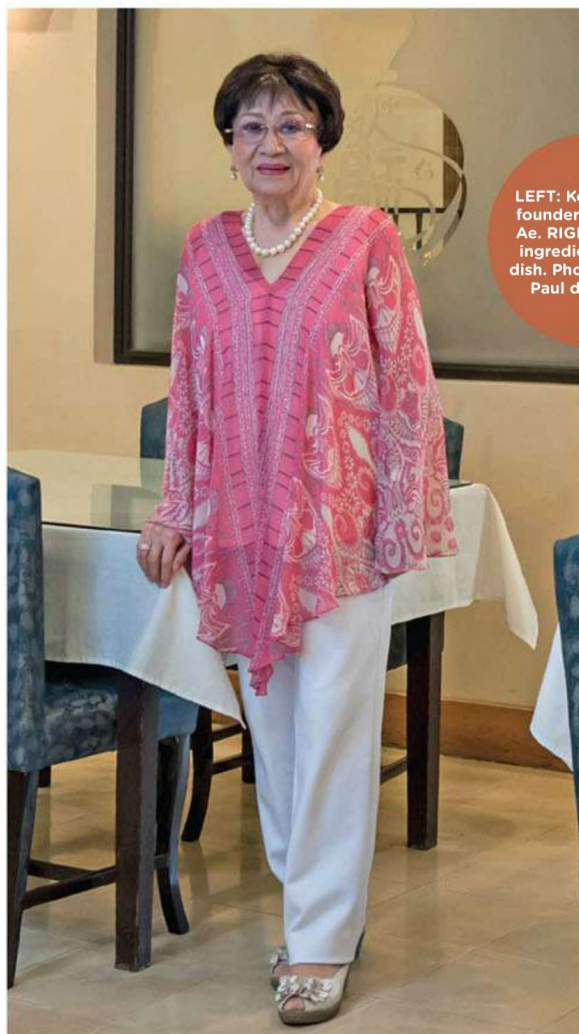
1 tsp hardboiled egg
1 tsp *jamon* crisps (small slices of Spanish ham baked till crisp)
3 paper-thin slices of rehydrated *bacalao*
1 tsp almond crumbs
1/2 tsp extra virgin olive oil

1. Slice all the vegetables into cubes.
2. Blend all the vegetable ingredients, then strain and put the mix in a big container.
3. Add the sherry vinegar, olive oil and corn oil, salt and bread.
4. Wait 20 minutes until the bread is well soaked.
5. Blend preparation at high speed.
6. Strain preparation.
7. Chill in fridge for at least 2 hours before serving.
8. To serve, pour in a bowl, top with your choice of toppings or garnish.



ABOVE:
Gazpacho
garnished with
chopped eggs, green
pepper and tomato.
BELOW, FROM LEFT:
Señor Juan Carlos de
Terry. You must use
the best fresh
tomatoes.





LEFT: Korea Garden founder Kim Chung Ae. RIGHT: Array of ingredients for the dish. Photographs by Paul del Rosario



Korean Vim

In 1952, Kim Chung Ae (later baptized as Fideliza) left her home country of Korea to marry a Filipino military officer, Rocky Flores. Whenever homesickness overtook her, she would prepare dishes from home. People eventually started raving about her Korean cooking skills, which led to her opening Korea Garden Restaurant in 1974.

After almost 40 years, Korea Garden still captures the Filipino heart and palate with its authentic Korean cooking and homemade recipes. Here's Fideliza's recipe for Bibim Guksu, a typical homestyle Korean cold noodle dish that's very popular during the summer.

Bibim Guksu

- 100 g Korean thin noodles (*somyeon*)
- 1 Tbsp sesame oil (*chamgirum*)
- 2 Tbsp vinegar (*sikcho*)
- 1/2 Tbsp soy sauce (*kanjang*)
- 1 Tbsp sugar (*soltang*)
- 1 Tbsp chili powder (*kuchokaro*)
- 1 tsp spring onion (*pa*)
- 1 tsp sesame seeds (*chamgae*)
- Scrambled egg, sliced into thin strips (*gaeran*)
- 50 g thinly sliced kimchi
- 50 g julienned cucumber (*oi*)
- 50 g Korean beef barbecue (*so bulgogi*)

1. Cook the noodles in boiling water for two minutes.
2. Rinse in cold water then strain.
3. Add the rest of the ingredients except the egg and mix well.
4. Top with egg strips to garnish, before serving (optional).







CLOCKWISE
FROM LEFT:
Kichitora chef
Shinji Nishida. Array
of toppings. Boiled
noodles about to be
plunged in ice bath.
Photographs by Paul
del Rosario

JAPANESE COOL

Hot or cold, Hiyashi Ramen or cold ramen is a very popular dish in Japan. Now available at Kichitora of Tokyo's first branch at the Atrium of SM Megamall, this unique Tokyo style version of a Hiyashi Ramen is served with cold broth. Created by Kichitora's Chef Shinji Nishida, it's perfect for Manila's hot summer months. ①

Hiyashi Ramen

Yields 2 servings

20 g chicken bone base
(available in powder form
at Japanese groceries)
5 g salt
10 g Japanese light soy sauce
800 cc (200 cc +600
cc) mineral water
4 oz to 8 oz ramen noodles

FOR TOPPINGS, CHOOSE THE FOLLOWING

Qinggengcai or *pechay*
Cucumber
Tomato
Sesame seeds
Roast pork slices (*chasu*)
Poached eggs (*onsen tamago*)
or marinated soft boiled
egg (*aji tamago*)

1. Boil 200 cc water with chicken bone base, salt and soy sauce.
2. Cool the mixture in a bowl on top of ice, and skim off the fat and other impurities to remove bitter taste.
3. Then chill chicken bone base mixture in refrigerator.
4. Meanwhile, boil the noodles until desired doneness. Chill in ice bath immediately. Drain and set aside in serving bowls.
5. Before eating, add 600 cc of cold mineral water to chicken bone base mixture and mix well.
6. Pour chilled mixture on top of noodles and garnish with desired toppings.





LEFT: Sarcia Razon, Rizza Cabarrus and Rica Ilustre take part in the HH revelry. 'Food, drinks, laughter, fun, wisdom, all combine during HH (Happy Hour.)' RIGHT: Rachelle Almario's Gambas al Ajillo.



In high spirits

WHEN HAPPY HOUR EVOLVES INTO THE PERFECT TIME TO RECHARGE YOURSELF IN THE COMPANY OF GOOD FRIENDS

BY **TINA CONCEPCION DIAZ** / PHOTOGRAPHS BY **PAUL DEL ROSARIO**
MAKEUP BY **APPLE FARA-ON** AND **DAVE GRONA**

G.K. CHESTERTON'S HAPPY HOUR ADVICE is to "drink because you are happy, but never because you are miserable." Ergo, any happy event justifies a celebratory drink but, when you do indulge in one or two, it's best to do it with good friends because they magnify your happiness and celebrate with you even the littlest triumphs in your life.

But if you're a mom with a job, a household to manage, kids and a husband to attend to, how do you find the time to sneak in some happy hour with the gang? A group of ladies apparently found the perfect formula to pull off some free time and on a regular basis at that. So how do they do it?

For one, the ladies agree that proximity to each other plays a big factor. In fact, it all started when they were next-door townhouse neighbors in the southern part of Metro Manila.



RIGHT: Hostess for this HH, Kat Gonzalez, Vicki Jalandoni and Rachelle Almario. A time to 'share insights about life, kids, love, sports, travel.'



Sangria

3 bottles of good red wine
Diced apples
Sliced oranges
Sliced lemons
Sugar to taste

Combine all ingredients in a punch bowl or beverage dispenser. Fill glass with ice before pouring in sangria. You may also mix sangria with clear soda, if preferred.



Happy at 'five-thirsty'

"When you live in the same area," explains Rachelle Almario, "your kids go to the same school. We became friends because our children were friends. More often than not, after reviewing our kids for an exam, it (our bonding) became spontaneous. I just say, 'I'm thirsty, *tara!*'" And happy hour, or HH as they fondly call it, happens in an instant.

Rizza Cabarrus agrees with her sister about how easy it is to call for an HH. "Our type of HH is healthy. Why? Because it always includes our family, our husbands join in, and the kids eat with us. They get closer to their *titos* and *titas*. At the same time, it's fun for the oldies because we get to relax with our drinks."

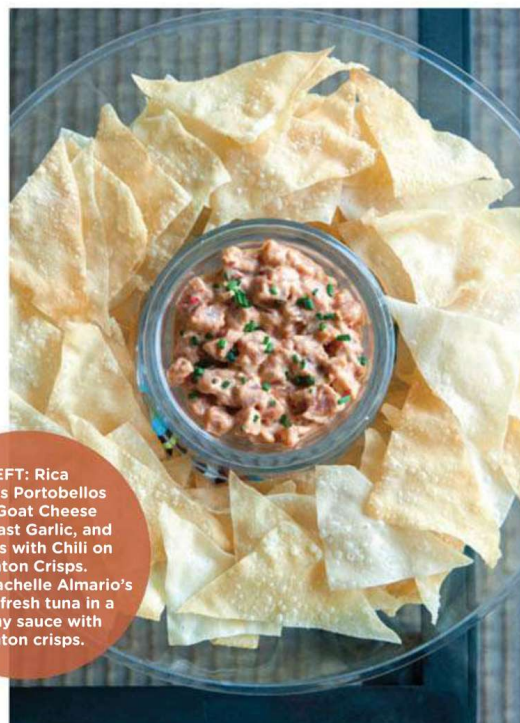
It doesn't matter if the HH commences at "five-thirsty" or later, according to Sarci Razon, because, after all, "it's always happy hour in some part of the world." And contrary to the conventional bar hopping, HH takes place at whoever's house is available. Drinks can be anything from homemade sangria to mojito or vodka. The food is simple pot luck fare yet tasteful and, most often, thoughtfully made from scratch.

It doesn't take much to get the ball rolling either. Someone can post an HH invitation on Facebook, and anyone who's a friend and free to go is welcome to come over.

This time, Kat Gonzalez plays host to the five ladies who are free for the afternoon, which happens to be the day she doesn't go to work at an all-boys clothing store. "It's not like we do this all the time, but we do make it a point to reconnect with one another when the time permits. We are all neighbors and co-parents in our sons' school, so getting together once in a while is always a pleasant experience. We also realize that all of us go through similar situations as



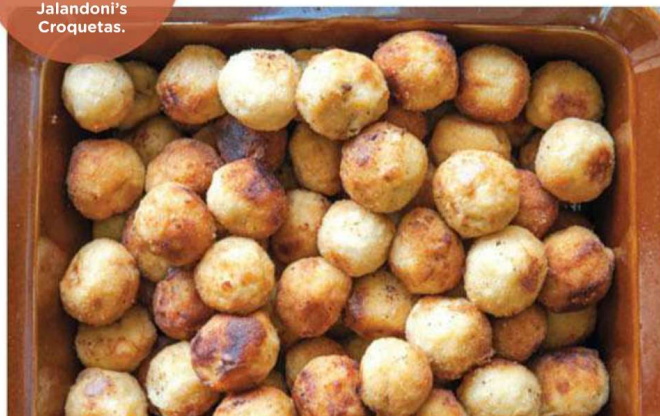
LEFT: Rica Lustre's Portobellos with Goat Cheese and Roast Garlic, and Scallops with Chili on Wonton Crisps.



RIGHT: Rachelle Almario's dish of fresh tuna in a creamy sauce with wonton crisps.



ABOVE: Rachell Almario's Cream Cheese with Pesto and Tomato Sauce.



BELOW: Vicki Jalandoni's Croquetas.

wives and moms. I think it's healthy to have these get-togethers with people who can relate to each other."

Specialty menus

The HH menu is a showcase of each one's specialty. Vicki Jalandoni brings along her Croquetas, balls of creamy mashed potatoes rolled in bread crumbs and fried to a golden color. An added bonus is her mother's specialty of Tortilla de Patatas, a truly authentic Spanish dish of potatoes and eggs cooked in a pan and flipped over to brown the top, then sliced into thick wedges.

For Vicky, HH is something to look forward to. With a household of six kids and a consultancy job at a kids' clothing store, she becomes a problem-solver, dispatcher and time manager rolled into one. So, for a few hours of HH, "I can just be a girl who has a few drinks, gossips, eats, laughs, gripes, etc., etc., etc., and I try not to think about all my other responsibilities at home. HH allows me to 'de-stress' and thus I come home a much more pleasant wife / mom / woman, ready to take on whatever comes my way with positive energy!"

Sarci seconds it and believes that HH contributes balance in her life. "HH is absolutely a positive influence on me. I am able to express myself freely with friends during HH, learned to share experiences and ultimately learn from each other. Food, drinks, laughter, fun, wisdom and knowledge, all combine during HH." She is the more adventurous and creative one among the group when it comes to bringing a different dish, and this time brings over her Sisig Wrap with Tomato Relish, individual tortilla chips laden with the crunch and freshness of sisig and tomatoes, a truly compatible drinking buddy.

Another *pica-pica* to drool over is Rica Lustre's Seared Scallops, incredibly plump and juicy jewels of the sea sitting on crisp wonton chips with a lightly sweet dressing. As if that's not enough, Rizza and Rachelle complete the seafood fest with their specialties that never miss an HH gathering—*gambas* brimming with succulent shrimp steeped in the flavors of toasted garlic and a good dose of olive oil,



LEFT: Sarci Razon and Rica Lustre
RIGHT: Vicki and Kat.



Rica Lustre's recipes

Portobellos with Goat Cheese & Roasted Garlic

4 medium portobello mushrooms
1/2 cup plain goat cheese, softened
2 tablespoons butter, softened
2 tablespoons freshly minced herbs (parsley, basil, thyme)
4 roasted garlic cloves
Olive oil
Crostini

1. Prepare garlic by slicing top part of garlic bulb to expose garlic, drizzle with olive oil and wrap loosely in foil.
2. Bake 30 minutes at 350°F. Let cool.
3. Mix butter, goat cheese, garlic (when cool), the olive oil drippings, salt, pepper, and herbs.
4. Clean mushrooms by gently washing with water. Remove stems and discard. Rub mushrooms lightly with olive oil.
5. Grill on medium heat on a gas or charcoal grill. Alternatively, they can be baked at 350°F for 20 minutes or so, turning once.
6. Spread goat cheese mixture on crostini, then top with sliced grilled mushrooms.

Scallops with Chili, Honey & Wonton

8 small wonton sheets
4 tablespoons canola oil
1/2 teaspoon finely chopped and de-seeded red bird's eye chili (siling labuyo)
4 large scallops, sliced in half
2 tablespoons honey
Salt
bunch spring onion, sliced into 1" lengths

1. Heat 2 tablespoons of the oil in a pan and fry wonton sheets until puffy and golden.
2. Set aside on kitchen paper to drain off any excess oil.
3. Heat 1 tablespoon of the oil in a pan, and sear scallops until opaque. Set aside.
4. Add another tablespoon oil to pan. When hot, add chili and then honey and a little salt. Return scallops to coat.
5. Scatter a few spring onions on a wonton sheet and place a scallop on top.
8. Drizzle the honey and chili mixture over each scallop.

and Fresh-diced Tuna Dip coated with a light dressing reminiscent of Tuna Tartare, which Rachelle pairs with Fried Wonton Chips that turn out ethereally light and crispy. Then Rachelle whips out a surprise and adds her most requested holiday dip of Cream Cheese with the contrasting colors of emerald green pesto on top and the bright red of rich tomato purée.

HH until 'we're 80'

To cap it off, Rachelle's sangria is the chosen drink for the day, good unadulterated red wine imbued with the flavors of sliced apples, oranges and lemons. Good food abounds this afternoon as much as wonderful stories exchanged by these ladies who have found the perfect avenue to spend some "me-time" and recharge themselves in the company of friends.

Their love for food and a good drink may have fuelled the start of their almost monthly tradition. But Rica voices out their common sentiment: "HH is a term that has evolved from a simple get-together for drinks and good food to a gathering of family and friends who share joys and insights about life, kids, love, sports, travel, school, etc. We revel in the fact that we live in a peaceful and safe community where families share the same values."

They've been doing their HH for eight years now and proudly declare, "We'll be doing this till we're 80!" By then, the topics would have evolved into medical and health issues (a.k.a. lipo, botox), but they'll still be together.

If there's one thread that binds all of them, it is that they are all happy women, confident in their jobs, fulfilled in their family life, and successful at juggling different responsibilities. Their HH was never borne out of a need to find company in one's misery. It's become a wonderful way to find their individuality and celebrate just about anything that happens to them.

That alone is enough reason to raise glasses for a toast to a blessed life. 🍷

Tropical bohemian

A CERTAIN ROMANCE,
NOSTALGIA AND WHIMSY

BY ANNA M. ROSETE AND CHRISTIAN REGIS
PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM ONG



Page 88 Manila home of a French family has both a countryside and beach feel.



Combo stool, P8,154, Triboca Bay Living. Blue basket, P3,900, Haute Design.



Biplane, P2,100, Haute Design.



Barca utility box, P6,611, Triboca Bay Living. Hula girl lamp, price upon request, Haute Design.



Notions blue butterfly plate, P250, Haute Design. Resin candleholder, P2,495, Sifra.

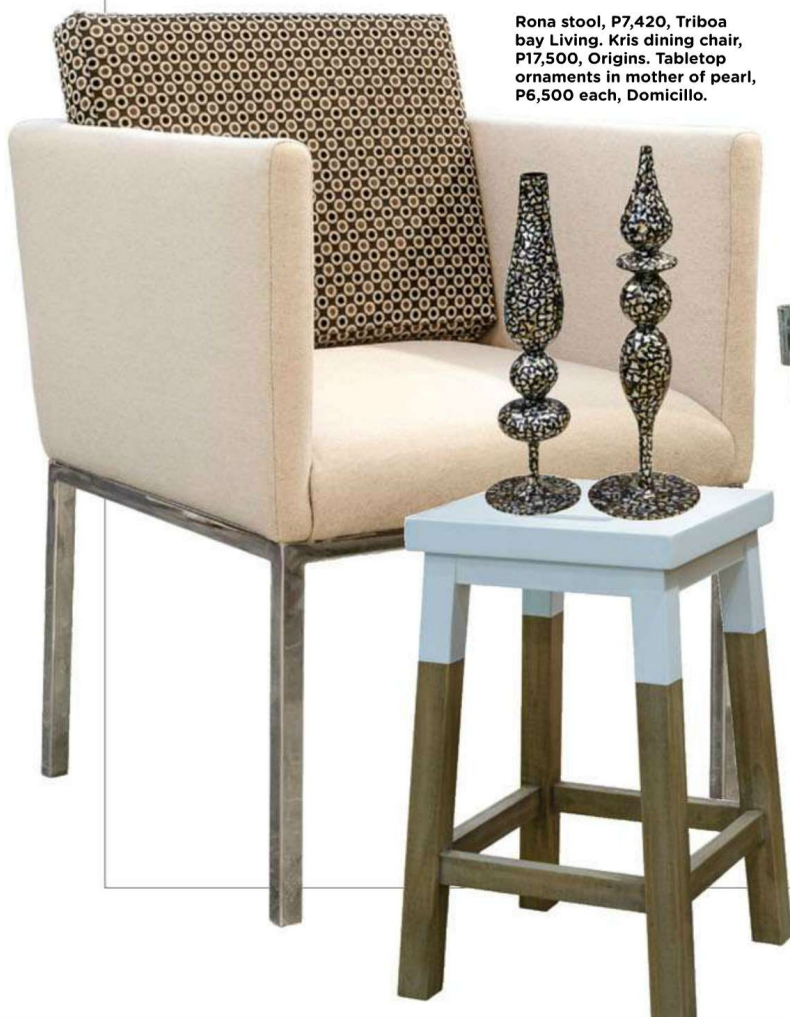


Gleaming modernity

REFLECTIVE SURFACES
AND BOLD FORMS



Page 72 A young family's new home is profusely accessorized to glamorous effect.



Rona stool, P7,420, Triboba Living. Kris dining chair, P17,500, Origins. Tabletop ornaments in mother of pearl, P6,500 each, Domicillo.

Owl lamp, P1,600, Heima. Egg drop light, P12,000, Eclectic Living. Ori light by Wataru Sakuma, P24,192, Haute Design.



ASIF brass candelabra, P9,000, Triboba Bay Living. Glass orb on metal stand, P9,500, Sifra.

Steel platter, P2,800, Triboba Bay Living.



Fresh charm

TRADITIONAL FORMS IN BOLD NEW INTERPRETATIONS



Page 54 Strong shapes and colors exuberantly mixed together.



Chippendale-style chair, P8,500, Luzon Rattan Industries; Mirror with mother of pearl crown, P9,900, Domicillo.



Faux greens in white vase, P2,275, Sifra. *First Apartment* book, P1,500, Heima. Green dining chair, P12,000, Eclectic Living. Ceramic stool, P4,500, Domicillo.



Ottoman, P8,000, Biara. Nodding pig, P3,761, Tribboa Bay Living.



Asian glamour

ORIENTAL ACCENTS, MODERN
FURNITURE AND WARM SURFACES



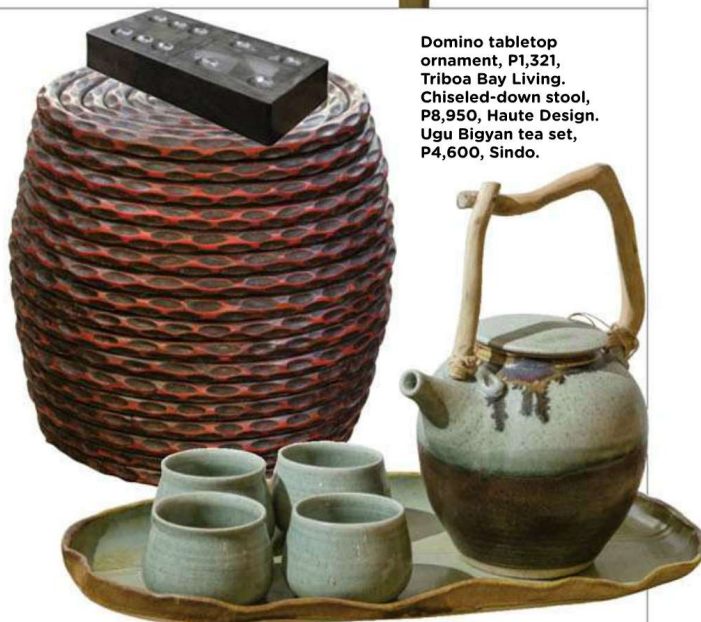
Page 102 A fine balance between
East and West in a resort-inspired home.



Abaca dining
armchair, P7,100,
Biara. Hand-
painted rice
box, P16,000,
Noble Dream
House Gallery.



Teak chair with
stainless steel,
P10,500, Sindo.
Magdalena white
vase, P9,500, Sindo.



Domino tabletop
ornament, P1,321,
Triboa Bay Living.
Chiseled-down stool,
P8,950, Haute Design.
Ugu Bigyan tea set,
P4,600, Sindo.

