

METRO home & Entertaining

**THE LOOK RIGHT
NOW: OBJECTS
THAT TELL A STORY**

**BARRIO KAPITOLYO:
YOUNG, HIP, URBAN
DESTINATION**

**ONE-POT WONDERS:
ENTERTAINING IN A BOWL**

**AROUND
THE WORLD IN
SIX GARDEN
VIGNETTES**

**Leading
innovation
in the
SieMatic
kitchen**

KITCHEN SPECIAL

**INSPIRATION AND PROFESSIONAL TIPS
FROM OVER 30 KITCHENS
FROM EUROPEAN COUNTRY TO TRADITIONAL FILIPINO
FROM RUSTIC TO MODERN**

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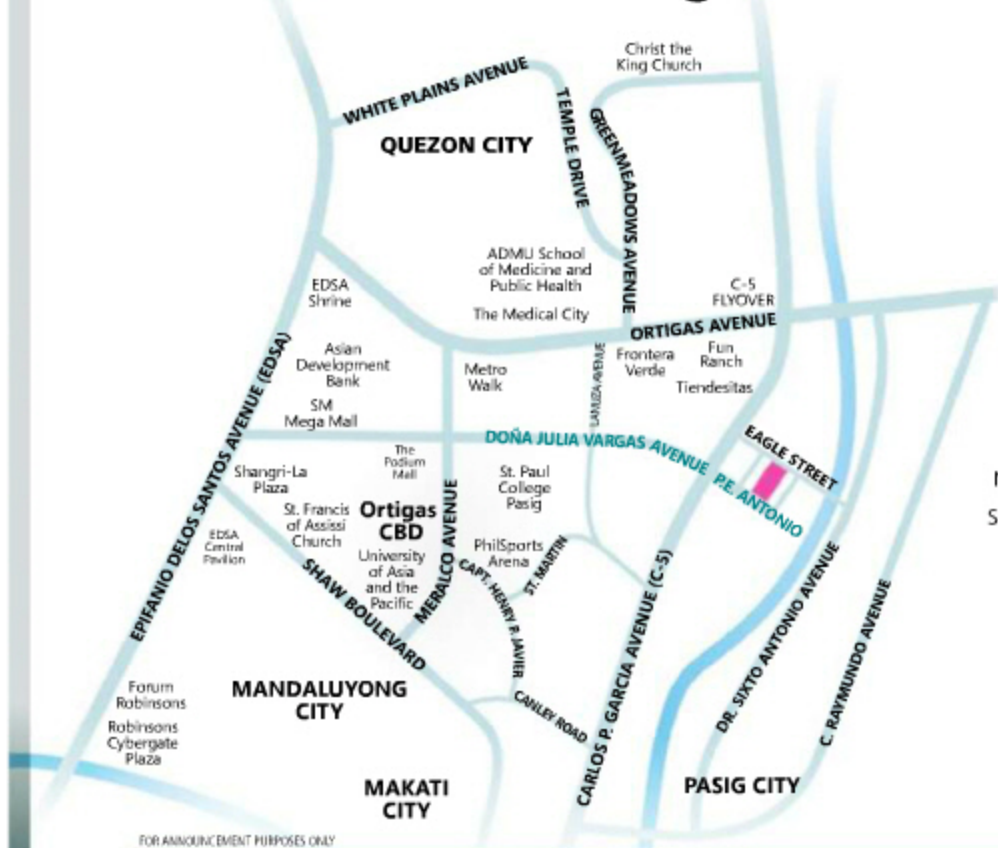
ON THE COVER
SieMatic's BeauxArts Kitchen

PHOTOGRAPH BY
PAUL DEL ROSARIO

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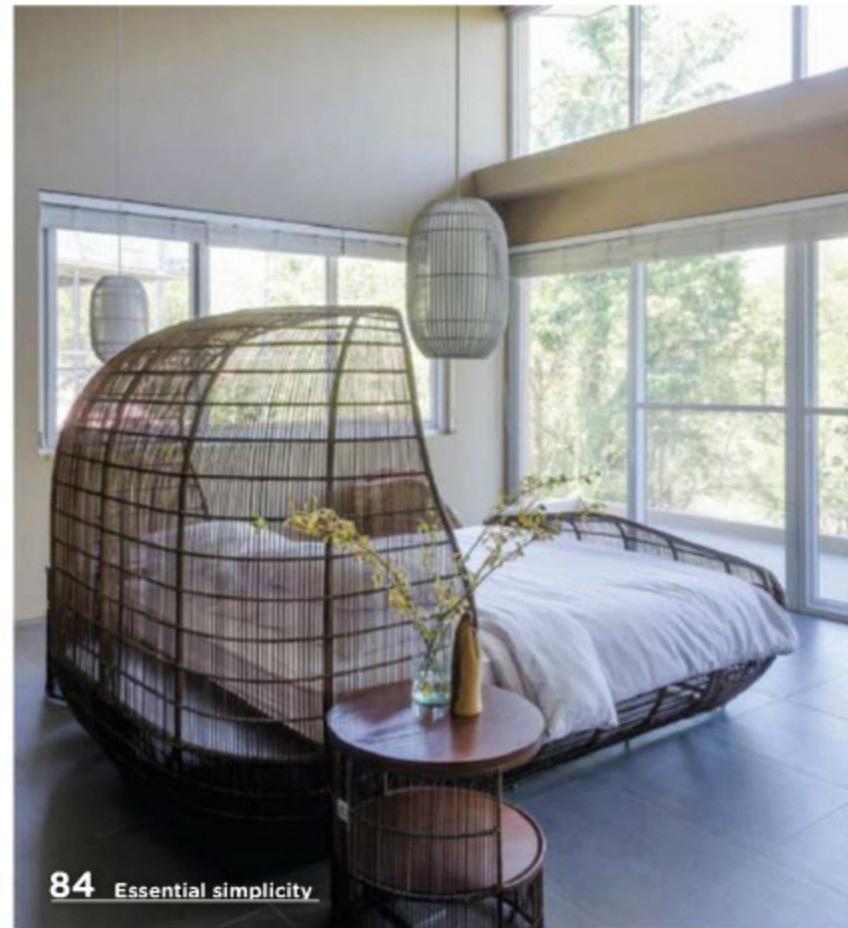
Everything a resort could ever be. Brought to life in the best way possible. Kasara. Only from high-end developer Empire East Elite.

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Chinese PLEASE!



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Farewell



BUT, FIRST, IN CONTINUATION OF MY LAST NOTE, JUST A LITTLE MORE OF WHAT I'VE LEARNED.

Over the time that I've edited this magazine, I also built my first house (maybe others are to follow, who knows?). I learned its burden, and its joy.

One of my biggest mistakes was not going to the construction site often enough and imagining each space as finished rooms, doing what they were meant to do, serving specific functions.

The mere idea of building a house was so daunting and the amounts of money going through my hands were so large for me that I preferred to keep it in a kind of mental haze. As soon as we had broken ground, I began to worry: Have I made the right decision? What's wrong with renting? Why not a condo instead? But I grit my teeth and let it happen.

Now, of course, I couldn't be happier that I have my small house on a small patch of land. But as soon as I moved in, mistakes, that could easily have been avoided had I been paying a little more attention, came to light.

Also, because I am unaccustomed to spending such large sums of money in such frequency, I was drawn to many things that were the least expensive of their kind. Huge mistake.

Now I have to put up with them until I can muster the patience to replace them.

This needs to be drilled in. Everyone knows they get what they pay for, but in the situation of making a choice, many will still go for the cheapest. Rare is the real bargain. Always best to go with the best you can afford.

We all bear an emotional relationship with money, which accounts for the way we deal with it. When it comes to creating a home, it's best to be at least aware of that bind.

Unless you're fabulously rich, with endless amounts of money, building a house requires

faith, faith that you'll be able to pay for it, that you're not going to go bankrupt, that you will continue to be able to earn. The dog of fear will snap at your heels, but you must remind yourself it is just a ghost.

A few other suggestions:
If art doesn't really move you, don't hang it on your walls just for the sake of doing so. Hang a photograph, a clock, a mirror.

Never build along the perimeter wall. You will get no crosswind.

Your house is more important than your car.
Do not decorate for effect. Choose things because they mean something to you, not because you want to make an impression.

Kitchens and bathrooms without natural ventilation, however expensive the exhaust system, are always a bad idea.

If a house depends on lighting to look good, it is a bad design. A space should be just as beautiful by daylight as it is at night.

Living things, like flowers or a plant, can change the whole character of a room. They can bring it to life.

But this issue's editor's note is ultimately meant to wish you well, to hope that you continue to dream and be inspired and to strive to make your surroundings beautiful, because to do so is to be alive, to value yourself and inspire others.

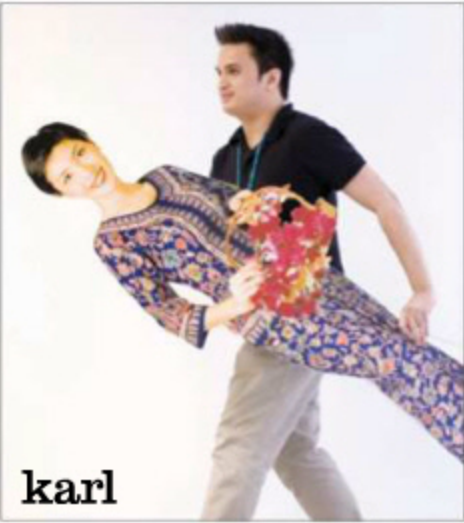


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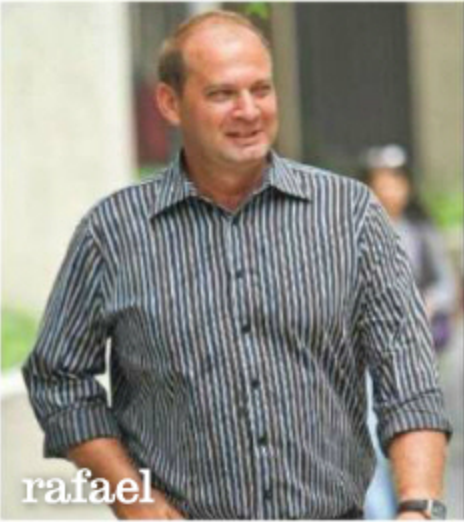
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Karl Fredrick M. Castro is an independent graphic designer who loves books and movies. He focuses on identity and editorial design, working with university presses, cultural institutions, and independent writers and filmmakers. He has won numerous awards, including two National Book Awards, for his book design work. He is currently the art director of *Vault* Magazine, which was adjudged Best New Magazine and given an excellence award for design at the 2012 Asian Publishing Awards. He completed his film studies at the University of the Philippines Film Institute. For this issue, he styled mood boards for kitchen materials (“Building Blocks,” p. 40).

Barry Vilorio graduated with a journalism degree from the University of the Philippines, Diliman. Before becoming a full-time magazine writer, he was a writer-reporter for ABS-CBN News Online, for its sports and lifestyle sections. He is now the deputy managing editor of *Vault*. His first-time contribution to **Metro Home** was “definitely a challenge” for Barry, to put into words his awe at the house in “Serene grandeur” (p. 106).

Patricia Tumang was recently awarded a 2012 Arts Writers Grant from the Andy Warhol Foundation to write about the lives and work of contemporary Filipina artists. Since relocating to Manila in 2009 on a US Fulbright fellowship, she has regularly published articles, reviews, and catalogue essays on the Philippines’s foremost artists, museums, and art events. Before moving to Manila, she resided in Oakland, California, where she earned an MFA in English and Creative Writing from Mills College in 2006, and received a Hedgebrook Residency for Women Authoring Change in 2007. For this issue, she writes about dancer-choreographer Ligaya Fernando-Amilbanga’s home and dance studio in Antipolo (“A Rhythm of its Own,” p. 62).

A passion for designing closets and kitchens is what drives **Rafael Calero**. An industrial arts graduate from San Francisco State University, Calero’s career spans over 20 years of kitchen expertise. He works with a select clientele through his firm, Kitchen Studio. He is the author of the book *25 Kitchens*. With our readers, he shares the wisdom of his experience in 25 tips for designing kitchens. (“Twenty-five things I learned in my 25 years as kitchen designer,” p. 37.)

At the age of 12, **Jheff Ryan Hsu** already had a clear vision of his life as a writer. He is now the editorial assistant of *The Buzz* magazine and most recently joined the team of *Vault* magazine. His work has appeared in a number of ABS-CBN publications. This is his second contribution to **Metro Home**. “Working with the team has taught me a lot, not only in terms of writing, but also about what it takes to shoot a home, which can take long hours,” he says. For this issue, he writes about a home in Nasugbu, Batangas (“Essential Simplicity,” p. 84).

Mark Steven Perez is one the founders and principal interior designers of the design firm Empire Designs (theempirestyle.com). He also handles the firm’s furniture division, which produces modern and customized pieces, playing on the use of stainless steel, glass, mirror and wood. He styled this issue’s cover story and created visual pegs of current trends in kitchen design in “Designer Ingredients” (p. 50).

Ornamental narratives

LOADED WITH EMOTIONAL APPEAL, OBJECTS THAT TELL A STORY ADD A DIMENSION BEYOND THE VISUAL

BY ANNA M. ROSETE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOVEL LORENZO
AND WILLIAM ONG



1
Carrés d’ assise,
price upon
request, Hermès.

2. Lemon juicer, P350, A11. 3. Console table, P22,995, Phoenix Home at Crossings. 4. Bug accent cushion, P1,100, Space Encounters. 5. Blue Margarita basket, P945, and orange Rosa basket, P1,100, La Pomme. 6. Vietnamese lacquered boxes with animal figures, P1,749.75, L'Indochine. 7. Silver Cambodian trinket box, price upon request, L'Indochine. 8. Angel time cup, price upon request, Pylones. 9. BANG dish, P500, Space Encounters.



10. Silkscreened print, P2,500, Space Encounters. 11. Globetrotter ceiling lamp, Price upon request, Pylones. 12. Printed wood coasters, P1,000, Space Encounters. 13. Lightweight fabric bowl, P650, La Pomme. 14. Madison chair, P14,995, Phoenix Home at Crossings. 15. Thai bolster with pom-poms, P8,999.75, L'Indochine.



Wild West, exotic East



SPACE COWBOY
The Wild West is won with Space Encounter's new collection. Designed by Wilmer Lopez, Space Encounters' signature mid-century modern silhouettes are given a facelift with distressed finishes combined with the feel of Americana and sun-drenched colors. Smoking gun, cowboy and desert graphics mark some pieces. *Space Encounters, Unit B Mezzanine, Padilla Condominium Bldg., F. Ortigas Jr. Rd., Ortigas Center, Pasig. Call 910 8031, 0917 7956739, email info@spaceencounters.net. -AMR. Photographs by Jovel Lorenzo.*

BATHROOM MADNESS

American Standard goes on sale nationwide. "Bathroom Madness" Promo runs until July 31, offering discounts of up to 25% on selected bathroom products. Visit americanstandard.com.ph or customerhelp@amstd.com. You can also call their Help Center at (632) 893-8681, (63) 922-8858030 or (63) 917-9442828.



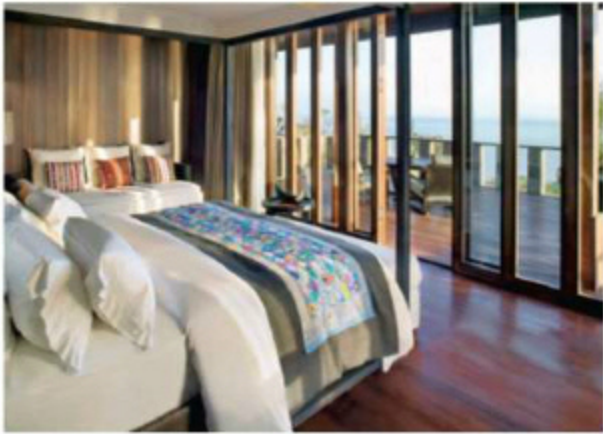
ONE-OF-A-KIND EXOTIC PIECES

Hand painted Benjarong boxes and bowls from Thailand, richly colored home and fashion accessories from the hill tribes of Chiang Mai, Khmer silver décor pieces from Cambodia, modern lacquerware from Vietnam, brass bowls from Myanmar—these are some of the exotic unique pieces that await the adventurous shopper in the recently opened lifestyle retail store, L'Indochine, at SM Aura. Handpicked by Leona Panutat and Charlene Carlos, many of these items are handmade by skilled craftsmen trained in techniques passed on from generations. These special pieces can each take anywhere from a week to a hundred days to produce. Each visit to the store is an opportunity for the customer to unearth a new and exciting find. *L'Indochine is located at the 3rd floor of SM Aura.*



BULGARI RESORTS BALI

Stunning locations in harmony with the surrounding area, contemporary design and superior service are the elements that characterize Bulgari Hotels and Resorts. The Bali resort boasts of 59 villas with sophisticated facilities. An incomparable setting and contemporary interpretation of Balinese architecture make this an exclusive destination. *Bulgari Hotels & Resorts, Bali - Jalan Goa Lembeh, Banjar Dinas Kangin - Uluwatu, Bali 80364 - Indonesia - Tel + 62 361 8471000 - Fax + 62 361 8471111.*



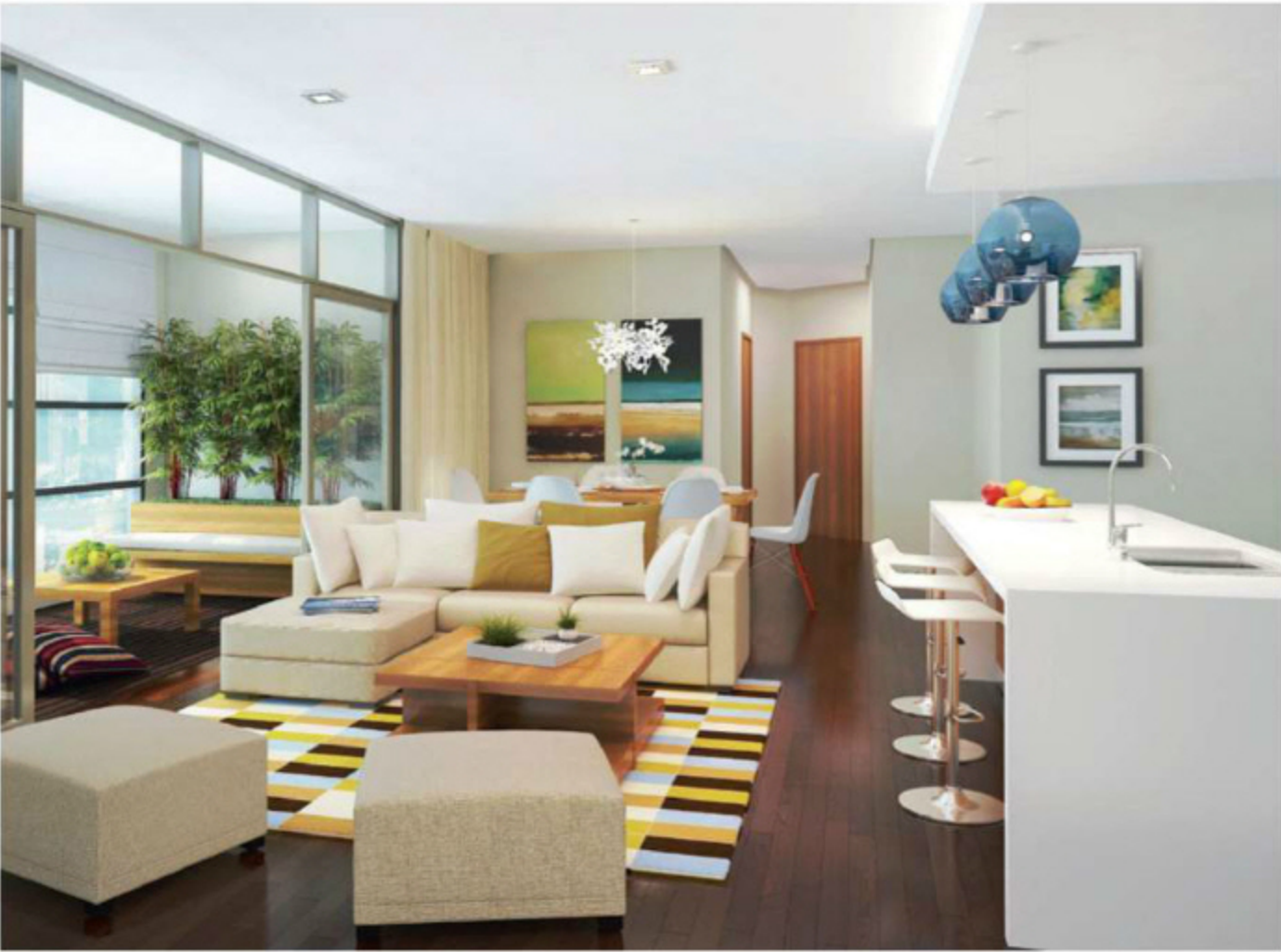
THE COUNTRY'S FIRST VINEYARD RESORT COMMUNITY

Megaworld Global Estate, Inc. is building Twin Lakes, the country's first vineyard resort community. A 1,149-ha. development stretching from Tagaytay to Taal Lake, Twin Lakes has five features: commercial and retail hubs, residential villages, university park, nature parks, and vineyards, which will be overseen by Avelino Lomboy, winemaker with 41 years experience, in collaboration with Bodega San Bruno S.A., which was recently acquired by Emperor Distillers. -*Christian Regis*

FOOD WASTE DISPOSAL

At the touch of a button, InSinkErator Food Waste Disposer deals with food wastes hygienically and instantly rather than leaving it in a bin to encourage smells, bacteria, and insects. It offers not only a practical and contemporary convenience in dealing with food wastes but also provides an environmentally sound answer to the growing problem of food waste. It is safe to operate as the grind ring does its work in seconds, and there are no blades. Visit the *Focus Global Inc. showroom on Reliance cor. Pioneer Streets., Mandaluyong, or call +63(2) 634-8587*





A LIVING BREATHING ENVIRONMENT

Garden Towers is a two-tower residential community that begins with a seamless integration into Palm Promenade, Glorietta's landscaped concourse. Continuing throughout the towers are sky gardens, 20-sq.m. pockets of green that gives residents an uncommon park experience high above the city. In place of the traditional balcony is a new sunroom concept, with floor-to-ceiling windows. The waterproof wooden deck encourages you to keep in touch with nature. Visit www.avalalandpremier.com, email ask@avalalandpremier.com or call (632) 908.3908.

140 YEARS OF KOHLER

From humble beginnings led by founder John Michael Kohler in Wisconsin, USA in 1873, Kohler's dedication to excellence helped forge the enterprise into one of the oldest and largest privately held companies in the United States. The company marked its 140th year recently at Solaire Casino and Resort, debuting its latest collection, highlighted by Moxie, a speaker shower head, and Numi Plus, a tablet-powered toilet. Solaire is one of the company's biggest projects. Kohler fixtures are used throughout the luxury property. Call +639178589071 or visit kohler.ph. Photo below shows Kohler President for Kitchen and Bath for Asia, Larry Yuen presenting the Numi Plus toilet system.



ALTHEO'S DECORS

Altheo's Decors is a furniture and antique store owned by Ma Alda Demata and her husband. For 13 years, it was on Kamias Road, before relocating across Edsa, to Kamuning. Altheo's has an extensive collection, with clients that include politicians and celebrities. There are thousands of pieces, including chandeliers, lamps, chests, kitchenware, dressers, cabinets, tables and chairs, and some advertisements. Clients have different designs to choose from—classical, Victorian, French, oriental, contemporary. Most pieces are made of glass and ceramic as well as wood and metals. 103 Kamuning Ave., Quezon City; open from 8:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m., Call 352-2950. Text and Photo by Christian Regis.

Bed and beyond

VISUAL IMPACT, LUXURIOUS COMFORT AND NEW LINES FOR TABLE AND KIDS

DWELLSTUDIO is a leader and innovator in bedding that expanded into home furnishings, including lines for table, baby, kids, and travel.

The bedding is produced at one of Europe's finest textile mills, a family-owned factory in Portugal that uses time-honored techniques as well as cutting-edge technology. All bedding is in luxurious 400-thread count percale and sateen fabrics, with an exquisitely soft hand feel.

Following the success of the adult collection, the baby collection was launched as a separate high-end specialty



Modern and traditional style patterns and designs for bedding with dramatic visual impact from Dwell Studio.



brand that has grown to include crib accessories, stuffed animals, bibs, towels, toys and stroller accessories.

With the introduction of Kids and Travel, Dwell Studio has grown into a true lifestyle brand.

Quirks Marketing Philippines exclusively distributes DwellStudio, which is available in all Rustan's branches and other independent retailers. Visit www.quirksmarketingph.com, on Facebook, Quirks Marketing Philippines, and Twitter, [quirksph](https://twitter.com/quirksph).



Unique touch

BOUTIQUE HAS WORKSHOP OF ARTISANS TO CUSTOMIZE ITS CHARMING HOMEWARE

BY RAPHA KIEFER / PHOTOGRAPHS BY ALDWIN ASPILLERA



An array of assorted plates and dinnerware take center stage in Lucina Home. Furniture and decorative lighting are also available.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Vintage-style canisters share the space with crockery. Lucina Home owners, Paul Baes and Joel Salazar. Bone china fauna occupy a shelf in Lucina Home.

A UNIQUE, PERSONALIZED ITEM for the home is a rare treat, certainly worth the trip to Sta. Rosa, Laguna, where you'll find Lucina, a charming boutique.

Designers Paul Baes and Joel Salazar, the owners of Lucina (named after Paul's mother) have put their self-confessed penchant to hoard to good use. They have an evident inclination for a classic country style with a French air.

But what makes Lucina unique is its ability to custom-make. A workshop of skilled furniture makers, carpenters, restorers, artists and finishers can make anything or customize any item. They can make an old recycled piece look new, or a new piece look like something vintage or something made just for you.

The store's prices are surprisingly reasonable. "Sometimes we even give discounts, as Filipinos love the *tawad* system," says Paul.

"Lucina, I'm coming home" is written on the showroom window, and it actually feels like that. 🏠

Lucina Home Furnishing is located at the 2nd level of Paseo de Sta. Rosa, Laguna. Visit www.lucina.ph, or call (049) 576 8810 or email at info@lucina.ph.

Pop up for play

MUCH-TALKED-ABOUT FRENCH-FILIPINO DESIGN COLLABORATION DEBUTS KIDS' LINE

BY DAHL BENNETT / PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOVEL LORENZO



FORMER MAGAZINE EDITOR Apol Lejano-Massebieau held the first of a series of pop-up stores at the design gallery 10A Alabama in Quezon City, introducing the kids' line of her La Pomme brand of design based on native materials and craft, while showcasing other designers' work for children.

La Pomme is an online store Apol runs with her French husband, Pierre. The products are reflective of a marriage between two cultures with many of the designs and artwork distinctly Pinoy or French.

Together with their three-year-old daughter, Lilou, the Massebieaus recently moved to Bohol after 10 years of living in Provence, France. Apol works closely with local artisans, and is impressed with their talent and professionalism.

"I'm building La Pomme Kids to be about objects that facilitate all that fun-making. I want it to inspire the imagination," says Apol. *La Pomme is putting up several pop-up shops in urban centers, including Metro Manila, and will open one at Kish on June 21 and 22. Email lapommehome@gmail.com or visit www.lapommehome.com and www.lapommehome.com.*



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Among other kid stuff, a tablecloth-playhouse, canvas tower, hand-painted dolls by Anna Rosete, soft sculpture figures by Cez Nuñez, crocheted finger puppets by Fiona Fajardo-Hernandez

Country style

PREMIER DEVELOPER LANDCO IN BALIUAG, BULACAN



Living and dining area of the Somerset show unit.



RIGHT: American-style architecture. LEFT: Space under the stairs has room for a bar. BELOW: A cut-out screen backdrop the dining area.



A NUMBER OF WAYS to enjoy your home life awaits you in the Somerset, Baliuag's newest upscale house and lot model located in The Gardens at Waterwood Park, in Barangay Pagala and Catulinan, Baliuag, Bulacan.

The gated community is along DRT Highway, a couple of kilometers from the town proper, schools, hospitals like Baliuag District Hospital, and churches. It is 250 meters away from the famous retail landmark, SM Baliuag. You can easily make a trip to Manila, which is just 40 km away, through the North Luzon Express Highway (NLEX).

The Somerset is in a pastel-colored American style, with false window shutters, casement windows that can swing open for an unobstructed view of the outdoors, and white mouldings to highlight the design. Its second-floor balcony and backyard garden are wonderful elements that add to its leisure and resort feel. The size and layout of the house is perfect for start-up families, who want privacy, exclusivity and pride of living in an upscale subdivision.

Landco's The Gardens at Waterwood Park is a prestige address in Bulacan, and a benchmark of a premiere lifestyle development, with generous open spaces and gardens for family and kids to enjoy. Call 044-7661994 or 836-5000, email customerrelations@landco.ph, or visit www.landco.ph

LEFT: Landco Pacific Corp.'s VP for Technical Jose Antonio Xerez-Burgos, Vice-Chairman Alfred Xerez-Burgos Jr. and VP for Luxury Home Communities Gerard Marcelo lead the ribbon-cutting ceremony at the launch of Somerset.

Luxury Kasa

EXPANSIVENESS AND GLAMOUR IN A NEW TOWNHOME

BY EDA BATENGA-ACUÑA
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO

A LIMITED-EDITION LINE of luxury townhouses is now on offer at Mahogany Place III, part of the complex of developments in Acacia Estates in Taguig. The Kasa home is a modernistic glass and steel cube.

The three-story Kasa has walls of floor-to-ceiling, UV-protected, shatter-proof and sound resistant glass, making the interior spaces merge with the outdoor, and creating a sense of expansiveness as well as filling the home with natural light.

Built on 120 sq.m., Kasa has a total floor area of 288.92 sq.m. It has a carport that can accommodate three cars, plus outdoor space on each level, including a roof deck that can be used as the owner pleases, as a roof garden or a level for an additional bedroom. Bordering a side of the ground floor is space for a patio or another garden or, as in the show unit, an eye-catching water feature.

In the show unit, the dining area and kitchen are located on



ABOVE: Two sitting areas and a wet bar counter on the second level. BELOW: Structural beams and column were placed outside the structure, allowing a more seamless merging between indoors and out.



ABOVE: Dining area and open kitchen on the ground floor. BELOW: Wood bench and walkway in a water feature.



the ground floor, an expansive living area and a balcony on the second, and three bedrooms, including the master suite, on the third. Of course, this configuration is flexible.

Unlike most show units, the finishes and fixtures are all of the highest grade but not upgrades. They are the actual element of Kasa.

Kasa is a special project of Victor Consunji, CEO of VConsunji Inc., in collaboration with DMCI. He says, "I wanted to tap the market of primary homeowners. I want the buyers to live in our houses, and not just have them rented out." ■

Maximizing space and character

BY CHRISTIAN REGIS / PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM ONG

MORE ROOM,
MORE PERSONAL—
WITH A LITTLE
IMAGINATION AND
ELBOW GREASE



Living room of the one-bedroom condo unit of Jason and Nice Jose. Behind one couch is a row of stools matching the home's general palette, providing additional seating.

WITH WIT AND A DO-IT-YOURSELF ATTITUDE, Jason and Nice Jose turned an ordinary high-rise condo into a comfortable home with a design that reflects their character.

"It was a typical condo when we first saw it. Simply introducing our stuff wouldn't make it our home," says Nice.

When Jason Jose, an industrial plant assistant manager, and Erica Tioco, a BPO process architect, married in December 2010, Jason's father gave them an unfurnished single-bedroom

condo unit at Eastwood City as a wedding gift.

Demolition job

The old photos show an empty rectangular space for the living and dining rooms, a half-size kitchen to accommodate the maid's quarters, and a bedroom with no direct access to the bathroom. The ceiling and walls were white, the floors were laminate, and the windows in the main space and bedroom had louvered exhausts for the air-conditioning compressors,

which were within the apartment. Clearly, this condo needed a major overhaul.

The couple enlisted the help of interior designer Joy Valenton to demolish and rebuild the condo.

With permission from the building management, Joy had her crew rip out the laminate flooring and replace it with glossy dark gray ceramic tiles. The maid's room was dispensed with to expand the kitchen and to create a powder room. Black granite replaced the laminate

kitchen counter, and multiple shelves and cabinets were built to make space for kitchen equipment and supplies.

The door to the bathroom was sealed off, and a new door was built from inside the bedroom. A sliding door replaced the hinge door of the bedroom. The walls were painted a pale



ABOVE: Nice and Jason. Instead of cluttering the space with many picture frames, a pair of blow-ups of the couple has bigger impact. BELOW: Dining area continues rigorous palette of blacks, whites and grays.

blue, bringing out a cool modern tone. Work was done only during the daytime on weekdays so as not to disturb the neighbors.

Hiding in plain sight

The Joses wanted their first home to be a reflection of their personalities. Business-minded Jason is an avid mountaineer and an enthusiast of witty gadgets. Nice is caring, systematic, and likes her things in order. Though their preferences are different in many ways, they have the same taste in design

and are both resourceful.

Cabinets were built to enclose the air-conditioning compressors, putting an end to the noise and eyesore. To prevent heat from radiating out of the cabinet (and the units from overheating), it was lined with insulating heat-reflective film. Tubing was hidden under wooden boards in the same color as the walls.

Now the compressors are completely invisible. Guests are oblivious as they gaze out at the Pasig River and Marikina skyline from the window.

Another problem was where to hide infrequently used necessities, such as Christmas decorations and suitcases. They created hidden storage by building a crawl space above the dining room, accessible only by ladder. Jason does most of the climbing and crawling inside the hidden space, and it involves a lot of sweat and a bit of backache. "It is a witty technique, as long as I don't have him frequently going up there," says Nice.

Jason and Nice are pleased with all the extra storage space they achieved in the kitchen. "We're amazed at how much space can be saved by hiding a front-loading washing machine under the kitchen counter," says Jason.

But not all space-saving techniques involve hiding something in plain sight. To double the visible space, they installed a large mirror on the dining room wall.

Affordable multipurpose furniture

Jason says, "My wife and I wanted to design our very first place together in a way that made daily chores efficient, having guests easy, and coming home a welcome treat at the end of a long day!" Interestingly, the couple was able to acquire furniture that highly suits their interior design, but not a heavy drain on their budget.

"We visit the Cainta branch of Mandaue Foam every chance we get. I would say we're





LEFT: The maid's room was taken out to expand the kitchen. Folding clothes rack and table enhance functionality. RIGHT: The bath in the maid's room was transformed into a slick powder room.



regulars,” says Nice. That’s where they got the six-seater dining set, and pair of cabinets which they placed side by side to create the appearance of a single console of more dramatic proportion.

To offset the rigorous palette of blacks, whites and grays, Nice picked a pair of mocha-colored couches for the living area. Gray linen runners and pillows with a graphic print reiterate the general color scheme. The smokey tempered glass coffee table emphasizes the modernity of the setting. Across the couches are an LED TV and entertainment system, excellent when friends come over for game nights or parties.

Jason and Nice are also regulars of True Value, where

they got the Philips light fixture above the dining table and the shelves over the TV, both of which Jason installed himself.

He says, “We wanted a look that was modern but warm. To do this, we spent a lot of time in Ikea Singapore, marveling at the multifunctional furniture and inspirational showrooms.”

Before they were married, Nice was employed in Singapore so Jason made regular trips to the city-state. She was on a plane bound for Manila when Jason suddenly appeared and proposed to her in front of everybody.

In Ikea Singapore, they bought a multipurpose kitchen table, which can be pulled up to make an additional counter when cooking, and pulled down

to make space when doing the laundry. Also from Ikea is a foldable clothes rack, installed in the kitchen, that can hang loads of laundry.

Resourcefulness

Guests are always struck by the large-scale mechanical wall clock in the dining area and a floor lamp in the living area that looks like a small tree with numerous twigs with LED bulbs at each end. Both pieces were acquired in Singapore, the latter at Ikea.

In the kitchen, a trio of abstract art pieces, found in Tiendesitas, add color and visual interest. A tall and a small

plant, which the couple call money makers, are a small yet conspicuous green highlight of the condo.

To finish the design, Jason had two large photos of him and his wife printed on canvas and stretched them over wood frames he built himself. They hang on the wall that was once the doorway to the bathroom and add a very personal touch to the apartment.

Nice, as a dedication to Jason, bought decal mural of an Alpine mountainscape off the Internet, and installed it as a backdrop to the living area.

During their engagement, Nice and Jason Jose agreed that their first home would reflect their character as a couple. Today, they are truly at home. 🏡

folio

ART / DESIGN / PLACES / INSPIRATION

The view from Cortijo del Charro in Calatagan, Batangas (‘Inn of the Horseman,’ page 24)



Inn of the Horseman

A UNIQUE, EXCLUSIVE
GETAWAY IN PICTURESQUE
CALATAGAN, BATANGAS

BY MARTIN ANGELO AGUILAR
PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM ONG



Deck in front of the main sitting area of Cortijo del Charro commands sweeping views of the oceanscape. At the edge of the lawn below is the swimming pool. RIGHT: Artifacts the owner acquired from travels all over the world.

A COUNTRYSIDE GETAWAY in Calatagan, Batangas has been transformed into a unique B and B, reflecting the owner's adventure-filled life and basking in the stunning riches of nature.

Cortijo del Charro, Mexican-Spanish for "country house of the horseman," stands on a promontory in the southernmost tip of Batangas, giving it majestic views of Balayan Bay, Cape Santiago and the nearby island of Mindoro.

The house is on a sprawling garden with a swimming pool in front that seems to merge with the sea below. The interiors are a bold blend of African, Mediterranean and Mexican styles and artifacts that you won't find anywhere else, just like the privacy and exclusivity the B and B affords.

The Horseman himself not just acts as host to guests, he is the property's gourmet chef. The well-traveled Horseman serves cuisine from all over. On request, he will roast a whole lamb on a spit over a bed of bricks on the front lawn, a spectacular feast that makes for a whole day's eating.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: Row of lounge chairs at the foot of the swimming pool faces the magnificent view. Front entrance of El Cortijo faces a garden. One of the bedrooms, each with ensuite bathroom. The largest room in El Cortijo has its own terrace and a bathroom with indoor and outdoor showers.



It was the Horseman's passion for entertaining that led him to open the doors of his hideaway.

"Designing and building the Cortijo has been a true labor of love," he says. "It has been my home away from home for over 15 years. Now, I look forward to sharing it with you and your friends."

For the sports-minded, Calatagan is a haven for golfing, trekking, biking, snorkeling, kayaking, shooting and touring. But the main attraction at Cortijo is the Cortijo itself. When people come, it's unlikely they'll leave till the end of the visit.

Cortijo's location makes it the perfect escape from the urban jungle. "If you want to get away, this is the place," says the Horseman.

Visit www.cortijodelcharro.com, or call +630917-801-1860, or email cortijodelcharro@gmail.com.

Family hospitality

IN PARAÑAQUE, AN ELEGANT 12-ROOM INN OPENS ITS DOORS

BY RAPHA KIEFER
PHOTOGRAPHS BY ALDWIN ASPILLERA

THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM BELOW: Wrought iron balustrade in the staircase tower. Room with wood plank floors. Gabriel and Teng Bustos. Norwegian Salmon Fillet. Pan-seared duck breast. Glassbox, the hotel's top-level events venue.



NEWLY OPENED in the entertainment district of BF Homes in Parañaque is a small family-run boutique hotel, whose existence was inspired by a trip to Europe.

Standing on a 208-sq.m. piece of property, which used to be the family home, Casa Alfonso Bed and Breakfast is a collaboration between much-sought-after home builder Teng Bustos and her son Gabriel, who named the hotel after his grandfather, Alfonso Bustos.

From the outside, it is easy to spot the place, with its European-influenced architecture, highlighted by a tower. In the tower is a spiral staircase leading to the hotel's 12 rooms spread over three floors. Alternately, there is also a scenic elevator. Despite the limited land area, it does not feel congested. This was achieved by creating long hallways with lean white walls that lead to the bedrooms. At the top of the building is the Glassbox, a fully air-conditioned glass-enclosed function room that can host events for up to 100 people and offers a view of the Parañaque skyline.

Black and white tiled floors and intricate wrought iron unify the interior design, which can be described as whimsical and elegant.

ABOVE: Translucent Tiffany chairs with white cushions, black and white floors, black framed art and black and white table linen in Favori, the hotel's restaurant.

Providing counterpoint are colorful and elaborate painted details such as the engraved red and brown baseboard panels of the stairs. The rooms have a more traditional design, with cozy wood floors instead of tiles. The bathrooms are sleek and well-designed.

Favori is the hotel's 30-seat international restaurant on the ground floor. The fine dining café is the brainchild of Gabriel, a young self-taught cook whose refined kitchen techniques are like a seasoned chef's. The Mediterranean/European menu includes such must-haves as the salads, salmon, Mozzarella Stuffed Burger Steak and the Foie Gras. **1**

For inquiries and reservations, call (+632) 519 61 03 and (+632) 519 62 43 or email hello@casaalfonso.ph or visit www.casaalfonso.ph.



Timekeepers

A BYGONE ERA COMES TO LIFE IN A MUSEUM AND THREE OLD HOUSES TURNED B&B IN SAN PABLO, LAGUNA

BY CHRISTIAN REGIS
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO

BELOW, CLOCKWISE FROM UPPER LEFT: Old wooden stairs displaying antiques, including primitive pots and WWII mortar bomb shells; Bedroom vignette with a stand for wash basin and chamber pot and an elaborately carved dresser; Roy Empalmado in front of an old Chinese shop door from Binondo. A *habihan* or loom from Batangas is surrounded by old religious statues.



ABOVE: The Obando House—dismantled in Bulacan, transported by truck, and rebuilt in Laguna. Almost all its elements are original.

COLLECTING PHILIPPINE ANTIQUES was the hobby of Roy Empalmado and his friend Arthur Reyes while they imported and distributed wines and spirits from Barcelona.

After more than 25 years, they have amassed an extensive collection—thousands of pieces—from different eras of Philippine history and art. Roy now focuses his time on turning a small piece of land into a cultural heritage site of San Pablo City in Laguna Province.

In the middle of his family's land is a long, three-story building. Built in 1967, it used to be a school, then a hotel and government office, and later abandoned. Today, it houses Roy's extensive collection, with the whole first floor completely renovated into a museum. "Our collection is categorized into four main groups: Primitive, Art Nouveau, Art Deco, and Neo-classical," says Roy.

Sulyap Gallery

Upon entering the museum, visitors are presented with pieces

from the "primitive," or pre-colonial, era. There are wood basins used for gold panning, metal saws, and a wood cylinder at the end of a long pole. "It makes a loud noise when rotated, like a mechanical scarecrow."

The next room houses several *aparadores* (closets), all original and untouched. "Closets from Laguna look simple while the ones from the Visayas or Mindanao look extravagant," says Roy. There are also bed-



room vignettes, with canopy beds, *lavador* tabletop, a study. To have a room similarly furnished was a status symbol back then.

Another room displays the importance of religion in Philippine history. There are statues of saints, most especially the city's patron, St. Peter. The museum's main hall in the first-floor lobby has rows of old wood tables and chairs and an extravagant stage, where Sulyap Gallery conducts workshops and seminars on painting, poetry, photography and music, among others. The last room houses pieces made from a variety of wood—*narra*, *tindalo*, *balayong*, *molave*, *ipil*, *mangga*—as well as horses and people made from papier-mâché.

The museum is only half of what Roy offers. In front of the building are three old houses that are not of San Pablo but truly belong here in Sulyap. All the houses have gone through an extensive transformation.

Roy explains, "They were discovered, bought, dismantled, categorized piece by piece, transported to San Pablo by truck, and finally, rebuilt."



Homes from Cabay, Obando and Alitagtag

All the two-story houses are named after the place where it came from. The first, from Cabay, Quezon, has a steep wooden staircase and wide windows. It is now Sulyap Café, offering excellent Filipino cuisine.

The second, from Obando, Bulacan, has a concrete stairwell and a large triangular roof. It was transformed into a B&B with five rooms for couples.

The last one, from Alitagtag, Batangas, is big, with patios. It now offers lodging for groups. Fronting the houses is a dirt road with hundreds of cobblestones made from genuine European-made bricks.

These houses are a unique destination in San Pablo, a town that was burnt down in WWII—no house was left standing.

"I spent a lot of time in the café, pencil-sketching my dreams for this place. It feels great finally to see your dreams turn to reality," Roy says. "I want to create a place where visitors can experience reliving our old history, even in just feeling the touch of old wood, tasting good food, and creating art." 🍷

Manila's urban barrio

IN BARRIO KAPITOLYO, NOSTALGIA, CHARM, GREAT FOOD, ORIGINALITY AND FANTASY

BY RAPHA KIEFER
PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOVEL LORENZO

CLOCKWISE FROM BELOW: Interior of mosaic artist Denise Celdran's Edgy Veggie cafe. Edgy Veggie's Teriyaki Tofu with Brown Rice and Mexican Vegetarian Wraps with salsa and guacamole.



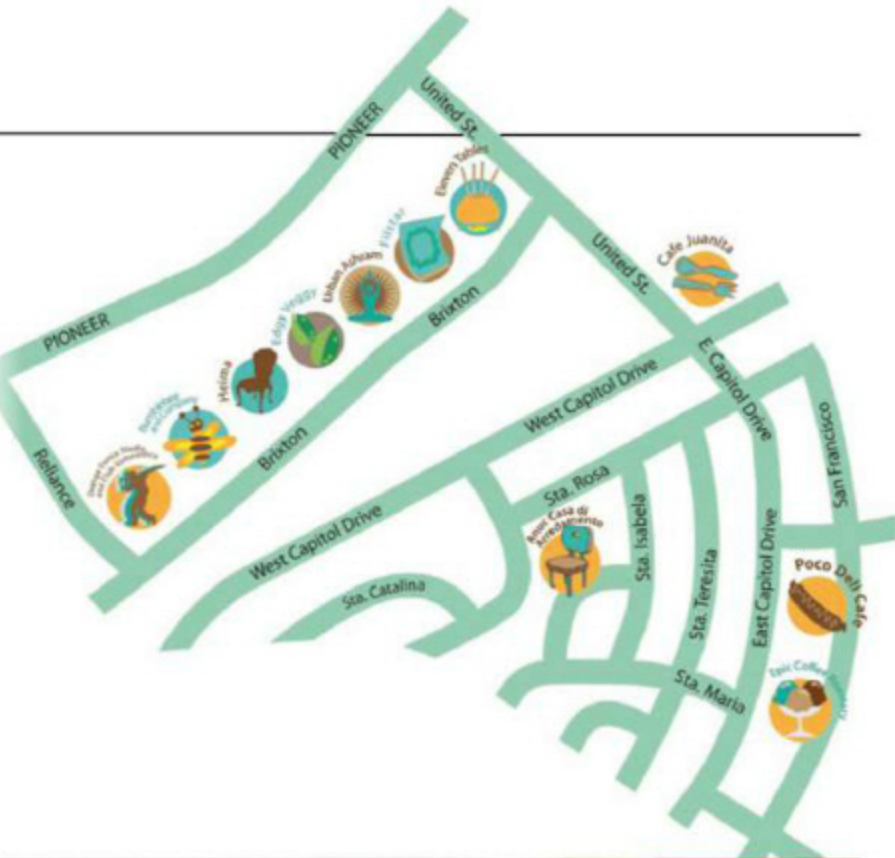
DRIVING THROUGH THE STREETS of this hilly barrio trying to find a parking spot calls to mind that Barrio Kapitolyo was once purely residential before commercial establishments started coming in. Conveniently located in the middle of the metropolis, it is easily accessible through Shaw Blvd., Pioneer St., which connect to busy EDSA and C5.

A few years ago, residents and landowners began converting private spaces into restaurants. The target market was the barrio itself and the neighboring villages. As more and more people from all walks of life arrived in search of a more intimate and authentic experience than they could find in franchise-filled malls, the streets began to have a facelift. The recent growth in interest fuelled by the conversion of industrial warehouses into commercial buildings has Barrio Kapitolyo mushrooming with original ideas and concepts in food, wellness and finds for the home.

HOMEGROWN

If there is one name that has been popularly linked with Kapitolyo, it would have to be **Café Juanita** (19 West Capitol Drive, +632 6320357). Almost two decades of history and good food have made this

ABOVE: Wide selection of wines at Eleven Tables. RIGHT: Smores fondue at Eleven Tables. ABOVE RIGHT: Flamboyant decor at Café Juanita. RIGHTMOST: Pastry display in the Japanese style coffee house, Epic Café.





restaurant a destination on its own. You feel like you're going back in time as the dreamy interiors draw you in. A cornucopia of nostalgic objects from the collection of the owner, Dr. Efren "Boy" Vasquez fills the restaurant and gives it its magical charm. The staff is trained to show Filipino hospitality by treating guests like family members. The menu, which was created and developed by Dr. Vasquez, also focuses on familiar Filipino and Asian dishes. Café Juanita has won a reputation for consistently good food. Among the must-try on the menu: Kare-kare, Crispy Pork Binagoongan, Fried Tanigue Tail, Catfish Mango Salad. There are big tables for special occasions, which is uncommon in the tight spaces of the establishments in Kapitolyo. The best thing about the whole experience is the ambiance, which makes you feel like time has slowed down, like you are out of the city.

Vegetarians have a home in Kapitolyo with the recent opening of **Edgy Veggy** (3 Brixton St., +63 917 847 4831), a small café that proprietor Denise Celdran says was born because she wanted to get out of the house more. In fact, it started out as a vegetarian food delivery service operating out of the kitchen of her home. Denise took her passion for "advocating good food" and turned it into a charming and simple café with five tables. Proving that healthy food can be delicious, Denise sources ingredients, some from small communities that grow organic food. She does not use MSG or food additives that can potentially harm the body. And everything is made from scratch. Try the freshly baked Panizza, the sumptuous Panini, the Tofu Mushroom Bulgogi with Spicy Korean Bibimbab Rice and, to finish your healthy meal, a vegan cupcake or a scoop of vegan ice cream. The Edgy Veggy kitchen also offers the Thrive (Transformative Healthy Regenerative



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Sausage platter, wine selection and Callos at Chef Joy de Leon's Poco Deli.

Inspired Vegan Eating) detox program, a diet designed to recalibrate the body by providing high quality nutrients to reduce cravings for junk food and sweets, and to detoxify the body. Daily, weekly and monthly programs are available; all meals can be delivered to your home. For more info, visit edgyveggy.ph

If vegetarian food is not your thing, head to **Poco Delicatessen** (21 East Capitol Drive, +632 477 4332), where delicious artisanal sausages take the spotlight. It began as a family business of homemade sausages and later became a restaurant. A glass window allows diners to see into the kitchen. The sausages (lamb, bockwurst, kielbasa, cabanossi, etc.) are displayed on a counter next to cheeses. The sausages do not contain any binders, preservatives or extenders, so you taste the blended meat and spices. It is still common for people to just walk in, buy what they need and bring it home. For those who wish to enjoy their meals at the venue, European-style brick and wood interiors, and floor-to-ceiling shelves of wine, set the mood. A good start to your meal is the



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Yoga at Urban Ashram. Young students at Club Gymnastica. Hip street dance moves at Orange Studio. On the balance beam in Club Gymnastica.



sausage and cheese platter with homemade sauerkraut and a nice bottle of wine. Apart from the sausages, the stews are also bestsellers. If you are looking for something lighter, the sandwiches and the pizzas are good options. And for dessert, the Chocolate (Black Out) Cake and the Red Velvet Cupcakes are absolutely delicious.

Wine and cheese go well together, and at **Eleven Tables** (Ace Plaza, United St. corner Brixton St., +63 654 6748, +63 917 562 0086) this combination is the star. Eleven dining tables occupy the small space, which looks like a modern deli. On a blackboard by the entrance is the menu, basically fondue, some pasta, raclette and more fondue. It's not just cheese fondue. There's beef, sausage and seafood fondue. Using a skewer, you cook the meat in a pot of hot oil in the middle of the table. Once the meat is cooked to your liking, plunge it into one of the homemade dips.

If you prefer a certain wine or spirit to go with your dish, then you might want to drop in on a Saturday for "bring your own booze" night, with no corkage fee. On Fridays, a "wine all you can" promo for just P500 per person will make dipping bread into a pot of cheese more enjoyable. For the kids and adults with a sweet tooth: the chocolate fondue and the smores that you prepare yourself is the best way to cap the experience.

If you just want a good cup of coffee, **Epiccafé** (102 East Capitol Drive, +63 631 0057) is a most welcome break from the usual coffee franchises. It was inspired by a Japanese neighborhood coffee shop. Bikes of all sizes, shapes and functions from the collection of owner Sonny de Leon stand throughout the small venue as if left there by some guests while they have coffee. The interiors feature brick walls, message walls, small wooden tables and chairs, old wood counter-tops and shelves and, of course, lots of instruments both old and new meant to brew and enhance the coffee experience. The coffee beans sourced from the Philippines and other coffee-producing countries are turned into some of the finest espressos, cappuccinos, lattes and brews in town. That hot cup of java can be partnered with carefully conceptualized homemade cakes such as the New York Cheesecake or the Belgian Chocolate Cake, or even Epic ice cream, which comes in many variants. Good coffee, great conversation and bikes have found a new home in Kapitolyo.

WELLNESS

If you're looking for an alternative and holistic way to exercise, then **Urban Ashram** (3 Brixton St., +63 661 9642, +63 917 881 9642) might be the gym for you. Yoga is an ancient philosophy and powerful system for continued health and wellness. What separates it from the conventional physical exercise is that it is a softer art that also focuses on spiritual growth as reaching a state of enlightenment is the ultimate goal of the practice. **Urban Ashram** has the largest yoga facility in the country with many rooms catering to both small and big groups of beginners and advanced students. If you don't know how to start, just pay them a visit. The ashram has a large pool of highly qualified yoga alliance teachers. You can even buy your gear there (most of it produced locally), and even health food. Yoga is, after all, a lifestyle that goes beyond the gym. The ashram accepts children and the elderly alike as yoga can be practiced by anyone in a safe way and at the pace the individual prefers.



An array of furniture, accent cushions, and decor at Heima Brixton. BELOW: The Paper Club in Heima Brixton showcases framed prints, stationary, books and magazines (Photographs by Lambert Pangilinan, courtesy of Heima).



A more extreme form of exercise is available just down the road at **Club Gymnastica** (10 Brixton St., +632 635 2553, +63 922 863 5255) which, as its name suggests, teaches various forms of gymnastics, to both children and adults. It has been operating for 32 years (they opened in 1981) and numerous athletes from the national gymnastics team use and teach in the facility.

In this old warehouse, people are pushed to their maximum potential. The open air gym looks basic, and it can get hot and stuffy, but you do not come here for relaxation. Professional trainers with all the necessary equipment for proper training safely train beginners and advanced practitioners alike. If you do not wish to train like an athlete, Club Gymnastica also offers recreational gymnastics, which also condition the body. Despite its storied history with dozens of trophies from competitions, Club Gymnastica's mission is straight and simple—to accommodate and train anyone who is interested.

Next door, sharing the other half of the warehouse is **Orange Dance Studio** (10 Brixton St., +632 381 1808, +63 927 364 8611). The studio trains dancers in an orange room. Their motto, "Developing dancers, transforming lives," sums up what they have been working for since they began 12 years ago. Homegrown dance instructors, once students themselves, lead the classes, which keeps the studio deeply rooted in tradition and their core values. For those who simply wish to use the facility, the services of an instructor/choreographer can be included in the competitive rates. Dance has long been known to be one of the more fun and dynamic forms of exercise, which requires focused discipline. It is no wonder the Orange Dance Studio has been around this long.

FINDS

The house does not have a sign outside, but if you're looking for some attractive home furniture, then **Anuc casa di arredamento** (46



LEFT: Whimsical children's costumes and furniture at Bumblebee and Co. ABOVE: A smiling strawberry and a Queen of Hearts. BELOW: Anuc Casa di Arredamento's bespoke furniture and finds from around the world.

Sta. Rosa St., +63 917 563 4711, by appointment only) might have what you need. "The business started when our guests would ask if they could buy our furniture," explains owner and designer Diane Cuna. Their quirky and eclectic taste reflects the family's warm and fun personalities. Potential buyers soon realize that this is truly a family business, where even the family cats and dogs help entertain guests. Before making an appointment, we suggest you visit their Facebook page, look at the products, which are well photographed, labeled and priced. Should anything strike your fancy, contact them to set your appointment. The family does not accept walk-ins as the showroom-workshop is their home. Most of the items are one-of-a-kind. Their bestsellers include a tufted stool and repurposed vintage pieces. You can also have your own piece of furniture customized, and their gifted craftsmen will get it done at the factory "on the terrace." For more details, visit their facebook page: *Anuc casa di arredamento*.

Back on Brixton Street, the hipster home ware and furniture label, **Heima** (Unit 103 Three Brixton Building, 3 Brixton St., Barrio Kapitolyo, Pasig, Tel. +63 (2) 358- 5657) recently found its newest home. Manila's popular source for whimsical furniture, it is also the place to score some independent magazine titles such as the Australian *Frankie* and American *Anthology*. This well-loved store has a charming, home-spun feel to it. A mural populated with happy and carefree symbols by Thursday Room greets guests at the entrance.

At **Bumblebee** (2nd Flr., 3 Brixton St., +632 637 5523, +63 908 889 0426), you can transform your children or yourself into any character you want. Their ready-to-wear costumes (sizes newborn to 7 years old) are diverse, from Popeye to Disney princesses to a simple strawberry. Designer and proprietor Mimi Ferrera-Lazano has been creating costumes and women's clothes for a large part of her life, giving her great understanding of an overlooked market. Her expe-



rience allows her to take in orders of any size, whether for just one outfit or 50 for a big children's party. The showroom is a big lounge with a daycare feel that has things "to keep the kids busy" strategically placed around the room. For women looking for something less fanciful, Bumblebee also creates dresses for any occasion, including debuts and weddings. Mimi's warm personality is surely one of the reasons why children and their parents love coming back to the shop. The other reason is that, for as long as there are parties and occasions, costumes will always be in demand. 🍓

Going back to Manila

CUTTING EDGE ARTISTS
RETURN TO THE OLD CITY

BY DODO DAYAO



"IT FOUND US." This is what Birgit Zimmerman and Arvin Flores both say when asked how they found the space in the Ermita landmark called Casa Tesoro. They have turned it into 1335 Mabini, an ambitious art gallery they run, together with Manuel Ocampo, who founded and curates the alternative space B.A.R. (Bureau of Artistic Rehab).

"We have no illusions of gentrifying Manila," Arvin says. "All we want is to rekindle its character." And maybe feed off its energy. Birgit herself loves that the street they're on is teeming with noise and traffic and life. You get a sense that the place, which used to host a variety of commercial establishments, including a massage parlor, has at last settled into what it was built for.

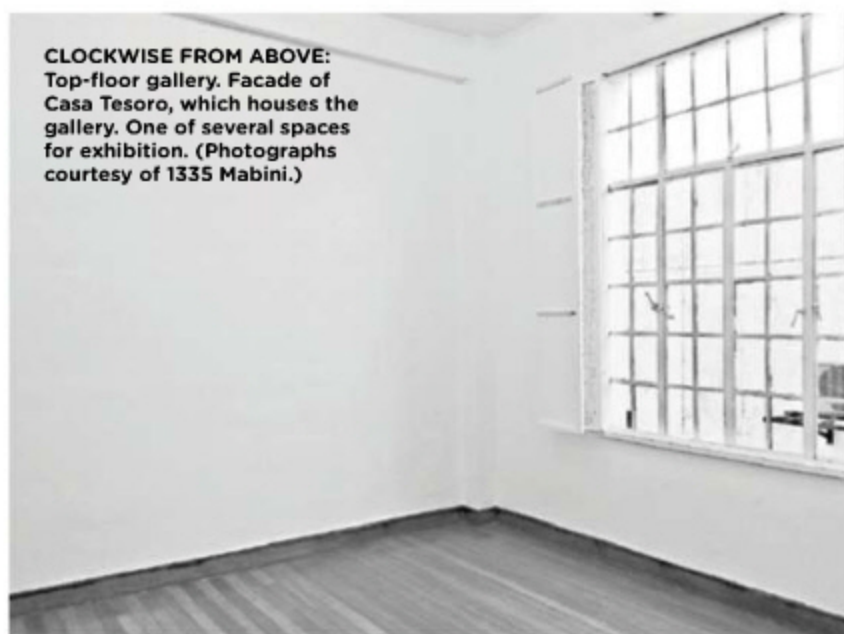
Settle, though, may be a bit of a misnomer, as there's a quality of restlessness to it, a constantly evolving, protean energy, that belies the almost symmetrical coherence it attains from dividing its three floors into different gallery models, including Zn, which focuses on showcasing new media.

Residencies, though, remain their special thrust. There is a practical upside to residency, given how few artists can afford work spaces. The spacious and airy top floor, where the artists in residence stay and work, neutralizes the toxicity. "But more than that, it's really about professionalizing the artist," Arvin, himself an artist and a resident, says.

Birgit is quick to reiterate their role as mediators and how it stops there. "We don't dictate the nature of the object. Our residencies are very open, they aren't tied to a specific show."

Community, it seems, remains central to their philosophy. "The relationship we have with our residents, our artists, is purely symbiotic," Arvin emphasizes. "In the end, it's really all about dialogue."

Visit 1335mabini.com.



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE:
Top-floor gallery. Facade of
Casa Tesoro, which houses the
gallery. One of several spaces
for exhibition. (Photographs
courtesy of 1335 Mabini.)

25 things I learned in my 25 years as a kitchen designer

IT'S ALL ABOUT THE
CLIENT AND THE DETAILS
THAT SPELL HIS LIFESTYLE

BY RAFAEL CALERO

1. Have a heart-to-heart talk with the client about budget, time frame and design concepts before starting the project. Put everything in writing.

2. Design a kitchen that suits the client's needs. When I meet a client, the first question I ask is, how do you use your kitchen? How will you use your space? Will you be entertaining a lot? Who will be cooking most of the time, you or your maids?

3. There is no such thing as 'one size fits all' in kitchen design. Each client is unique.

4. Client satisfaction is a priority. To achieve this, an open channel of communication is key.

5. The kitchen should be a reflection of the client's personality. Go for bright colors if the client is an outgoing person. Go for shades of white and beige if the client wants the kitchen to be a space where she/he can relax.

6. Separate the must-haves from the whims. Is a dishwasher necessary? What about wine chillers? Is one stove / oven enough? Is a ceramic cook top



Kitchen design reflects the client's personality. Bright colors suit a bold character. Photographs by Albert Labrador from '25 Kitchens' by Rafael Calero.

Don't give up an inch. If there is no more space sideways, think vertical.



advisable? Will a pot filler faucet come in handy? Does the client want a TV in the kitchen? Is a computer work area required?

7. Consider the client's health concerns. Is the client health conscious? Suggest a steam oven, wood flooring, lots of natural light and a strong exhaust hood.

8. Consider the client's physical features. Is the client tall or petite? Right handed or left handed? These concerns are mostly overlooked.

9. Don't give up an inch. Use pull-out spice racks. Convert toe kicks underneath cabinets into drawers. Install pull-out wire organizers or pivot-rotating shelving for corner units. If there is no more space to go sideways, think vertical.

10. Prep stations should be strategically designed or positioned. This way, the host can interact with guests and cook simultaneously.

11. The sink area is important but often neglected. Adequate space around the sink is important for prep, washing and draining. It's convenient to have a cutting board near your sink. It's better to have a deep, well-insulated sink to accommodate big pots and pans. I prefer under-mounted sinks over top-mounted. There is a tendency for water to seep in between the counter and the lip of a top-mounted sink.

12. Be wise in choosing your cabinet materials. Marine plywood is best for kitchen cabinet carcass, especially the base board and the sink base cabinet. Particle board and MDF boards soak up too much moisture in tropical countries. Like sponge, they soak up moisture and swell and warp very easily.

13. Try to mix aesthetics and practicality all the time. Seamless synthetic stone countertops are practical. You don't have to worry about mildew and bread



crumbs build-up between the joints. Natural stones and granite countertops lend elegance to a kitchen.

14. Go green if you can. Majority of my kitchen designs are made of bamboo and natural materials. We need to do our part to help the planet.

15. Consider the weather when you want to incorporate the outdoors into your design. I constructed an outdoor kitchen for my own place and later realized that it will not work in the Philippines. Unless it has a roof, an outdoor kitchen does not stand a chance against the elements. That was an expensive lesson for me. Also, the Philippine climate makes for dusty surfaces so remind the client when the design calls for open shelving.

16. Following the tried and tested design elements is convenient, but I find it challenging to come up with different designs: avant-garde, modern, cottage, country.

17. Different designs present different challenges. One thing I learned is that it's harder to make a cabinet look beaten up. It's actually more labor intensive to distress a cabinet. A distressed look, however, gets better over time. Banging, scratches, nicks and the usual wear and tear contribute to the look.

18. Mix and match materials to achieve an exciting look. I have been doing a lot of high gloss cabinets lately. A beige or taupe high gloss cabinet looks fantastic when mixed with natural materials. For example, taupe high gloss cabinets and aluminum shelves with natural stranded bamboo are one of my favorites.



19. Use the latest in design and technology. Use Blum soft closing mechanism hardware. It will make your life much easier.

20. Big and small kitchens present unique challenges. Somehow, big kitchens can be harder to design. It doesn't mean that you have to put lots of cabinets just because you have a lot of room. It's better to create balance by having a few focal points.

21. Go out of the "design" box from time to time. I like using wood or veneer with very distinct grains. Walnut veneer is

the trend now. Try to use walnut crown grain veneer, (book-match) with oil finish instead of varnish. It looks fantastic!

22. The traditional and the modern can blend together perfectly. Kitchens with modern designs automatically incorporate the latest in appliances and gadgets. Kitchens with an old-style look can still have the most modern conveniences with clever placements and disguise.

23. I always like to integrate a new product I haven't used before. Nothing is more satisfying

than when a new idea or product turns out just right.

24. Deal with pest problems from the start. To get rid of ants, find out where they are coming from and cover it with petroleum jelly. Ants will not cross the jelly.

25. I always feel good when I am able to inspire the homeowners to cook in the kitchens I have designed. The challenge is to make a kitchen so "cooking-friendly" that the clients want to take cooking lessons and start cooking in their brand new kitchen. 🍴

Building blocks

AN ARRAY OF OBJECTS AND FINISHES FOR THE KITCHEN, IN WOOD, METAL AND CLAY

BY ANNA M. ROSETE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY IAN CASTAÑARES
STAGED BY KARL CASTRO

Timber

From the humble *katam* to coveted veneers for drawers and cabinet fronts, wood, in various species is a time-tested material for kitchens.



1. Gastro Chef chopping board with stainless handle, P2,095, A11. 2. Glass bowl with cover (set of three), P3,795, A11. 3. Kakawiti root tabletop, P6,000, Ezra. 4. Narra tray, P1,500, A11. 5. 250mm Kaiser patisserie rolling pin, P915, WMF. 6. Kamagong cheese knives, P1,200, A11. 7. Narra hors d'oeuvres tray, P2,500, Ezra. 8. Convertible car in acacia, P5,000, Ezra. 9. Deluxe steak set, price upon request, A11. 10. Narra and kamagong parquet pieces, price upon request, D P Valle Sash Factory. 11. All on top of narra table in distressed green finish, P12,000, A11.

Metal

New and shiny, or with the patina of time, a kitchen constant.



1. Non-stick trivet, P480, Gourdo's. 2. Professional peppermill, P2,150, Gourdo's. 3. Copco red tea kettle, P890, Gourdo's. 4. Nutcracker, P1,480, AC+632. 5. Metallic red votive, P260, Gourdo's. 6. Stiletto soup spoon, P250, Gourdo's. 7. Dornbrach Eliot faucet mixer with expendable spray, price upon request, Focus Global. 8. Lodge Logic melting pot, P1,090, Gourdo's. 9. Zamac knob, P67, Häfele. 10. Zinc alloy, P54.40, Wilcon Depot. 11. Pitch fork with horn handles, P3,200, AC+632. 12. Wall-mounted faucet, P235, Wilcon Depot. 13. Lodge Logic guitar skillet, P870, Gourdo's. 14. Antique bronzed drop handle, P58, Häfele. 15. Plano wire whip, P330, Gourdo's. 16. Utensil set, price upon request, A11. 17. Steel Wool, P32.75, Wilcon Depot. 18. Matte black cocktail shaker, P500, Gourdo's. 19. Basketweave trivet, P325, Gourdo's. 20. Herb Scissors, P980, AC+632. 21. Sheep candle holder, price upon request, Miguel Aguas. 22. Teapot with horn handles, price upon request, AC+632. 23. Black nostalgia votive, P1,074.74, Grassroots. 24. Cheese plate leaf handle, P1,245, Gourdo's.

Clay

Glazed or raw, as tiles or as crockery, clay's versatile properties make it an ubiquitous kitchen material.



1. Ceramic soda can, P390, A11. 2. Broken ceramic bowl, P600, A11. 3. Arabesque serving platter, P1,140, Grassroots. 4. Hacienda ochre tile, P42.62, Wilcon Depot. 5. Blue and white bird cage, price upon request, A11. 6. Porcelain deep plate, P160, Gourdo's. 7. Lionhead porcelain egg cup, P150, Gourdo's. 8. Porcelain Egg Shape Salt and Pepper Shaker, P95, Gourdo's. 9. Sagunto Azul Tile, P185, Wilcon Depot. 10. Blue and White Striped Candle Holder, P980, A11. 11. Blue and white demitasse, P250, A11. 12. Porcelain rectangle chip and dip, P175, Gourdo's. 13. Porcelain four divided dish, P100, Gourdo's. 14. Blue and white canister, price upon request, A11. 15. Hacienda red tile, P42.62, Wilcon Depot. 16. Vigan tile, price upon request, Damilians.

Dream designs

A CATALOGUE OF STYLES, FROM INDUSTRIAL AND MODERN TO ROMANTIC AND WHIMSICAL



Commensurate proportions in appliances, furniture and cabinetry, plus multiple focal points keep this large kitchen from being overwhelming.

The challenge of spaciousness

"Creating a big kitchen has many challenges," says designer Rafael Calero of Kitchen Studio. In this home, the challenge was to avoid cramping too much detail into the large space. The final layout features multiple focal points and expansive proportions to keep the scale from overwhelming. Veneer panels of walnut crown grain were bookmatched to stretch from floor to ceiling. The kitchen cabinets, equipment and countertops are all larger than usual. The big white island countertop is the centerpiece in which the space is enclosed. During the day, natural light flows into the kitchen, which features state-of-the-art equipment. To keep the lighting consistent, the open shelves have built-in lights to give the room all the illumination—whether aesthetic or functional—that it needs. -Rapha Kiefer / Photographs by William Ong.



Ranch style

At Cortijo del Charro, an inn in Calatagan, Batangas, the cooking is done by the owner of the property himself. His professional life revolved around horses, and the name of the B&B (featured as a whole in this issue, in “Inn of the Horseman,” page 40) is Mexican-Spanish for “house of the horseman.

The kitchen evokes a ranch. The stove is set into a counter paved with rough hewn stone tile on an island of bricks. On one side, as an ornament, is the door of an old wood-burning oven. A salvaged wood panel with traces of old carving is another decoration. Carved wood panels were also used to decorate the cabinet doors.

Over the island counter, from a beam suspended on chains from the ceiling, hang pots and pans from hooks.

Across the counter is an old wood table flanked by benches, serving as the main dining table. This open-plan kitchen and dining area is surrounded by large glass windows and doors, which can be closed for air-conditioning. An old cabinet holds condiments, silverware and linen. Just outside, on a covered terrace is another dining area for al fresco meals with a view of the sea. *Photographs by William Ong.*



One of the most convenient ways to store pots and pans is to hang them.



Modern industrial kitchen equipment can be hidden under cabinetry to create a nostalgic look.



French hearth

Aside from creating bestseller recipes for his successful French Baker chain, Chef Johnlu Koa also cooks meals in his own kitchen for his family. Designed by Focus Global, it is a long, narrow, Mediterranean-inspired kitchen, located beside the dining hall.

Richly detailed cornices in the ceiling are echoed in the deep molding of the cabinetry to give a distinctly traditional look to the kitchen, which is in shades of cream, warmly enhanced by sunlight diffused from a shuttered window. The large Sub-Zero refrigerator with multiple compartments is hidden behind the wood cabinetry. Thermadore stoves and ovens reflect a modern, efficient kitchen. Countertops are made from granite.

Chef Johnlu has a special corner for baking. In decorative shelving over the countertop are recipe books and a display of silverware and porcelain. A few steps away is a second sink.

-Christian Regis / Photographs by Paul del Rosario.



Two range hoods ensure cooking smells do not spill over onto the dining area. BELOW RIGHT: Massive Chinese wedding armoire is a Sub-Zero refrigerator.



Hub of the feast

For a home that references the split-level houses of the '50s and '60s, a kitchen that opens to the dining room was designed by SieMatic, with inputs from the homeowners and close friend Migs Rosales. "The owners are fond of entertaining guests. During parties, the island is really used, as guests configure around it," he says.

Cabinet and drawer fronts in cream, with synthetic surface countertops and Graphicote glass backsplash in latte, offset the showstopper of the room, a refrigerator concealed within the Chinese wedding armoire that is rendered in natural wood.

Demonstrating the owners' fondness for entertaining, this kitchen enjoys a lavish dual hood configuration for an island cook top and a range oven, respectively.

As accents, copper vases, pots and pitchers were used to complement the blue and white ceramic ware. -*Anna M. Rosete / Photographs by William Ong.*



Old bricks and wood combine with steel for a vintage industrial look.

Bold mix

This kitchen brings together the restaurant-grade equipment Chef Giovasco Barlao, who is accustomed to the Vigan kitchens of yore recalled by his mother, Daisy. Formerly a garage, the kitchen is conveniently situated between the formal dining area and other dining and sitting areas by the large buffet seen here.

Walls are made of old bricks, sliced in half to achieve greater texture, from an old house in Vigan. Diffused sunroof introduces natural warm light to the kitchen.

A massive old butcher's block on steel legs makes for a standing cutting surface. The upper cabinets were covered in nostalgic sampaguita glass. -*Christian Regis / Photographs by Paul del Rosario.*



Open kitchen

Food stylists Theo and Samantha Zaragoza designed their kitchen to be the focal point of their business, Resultado Gourmet Designs. Here, they can meet clients, conduct shoots and do cooking shows.

The elevated level of the kitchen makes it look like a stage when seen from the living area.

It was laid out to allow people to work back-to-back or walk past each other without disruption. Guests or clients can easily line up during a buffet.

In style, it has a Mediterranean-Filipino theme. The couple designed all the wooden drawers and cabinetry. Sherwyn Guinto Furniture constructed the designs. The island countertop is a whole slab of natural quartz stone. —*Christian Regis / Photographs by Paul del Rosario.*



A working kitchen in every sense of the word, it was designed for family and business.



ABOVE: Chandelier seems to hang from branches of trees painted on walls and ceiling. BELOW: Real creeping plants on a wall by additional work space just outside.

Romantic flourish

This Tagaytay home designed by the firm Lucina appears to have been transplanted from Old Europe. Vines cover walls of piled stone. There is intricately carved stone art here and there.

The kitchen blends into the home seamlessly. You enter into it through a pair of Greek columns. A reconstructed vintage chandelier seems to flow out of the branches of trees painted to stretch from walls to ceiling. It hovers dramatically over a table that evokes Renaissance design. The cabinets, the center table, the stools and even the cladding of the range hood are made from old recycled *ipil* wood, which radiates a deep red, and articulates a time-worn, European rustic quality.

When designers Paul Baez and Joel Salazar of Lucina say “custom made,” they mean it. —*Rapha Kiefer / Photographs by Aldwin Aspillera.*



Designer ingredients

FOUR PALETTES FOR AN INSPIRED KITCHEN SCHEME

BY ANNA M. ROSETE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY **IAN CASTAÑARES**
STAGED BY **MARK PEREZ**



Spaghetti Western

Natural wood grain combined with the glint of metal

1. Knife block, P2,595, Dimensione. 2. Canvas note pad, P199.75, Dimensione. 3. Salt cellar, P950, Dimensione. 4. Small creamer jug by Alessi, P1,549, Conlins Elements. 5. Large creamer jug by Alessi, P5,643, Conlins Elements. 6. 28 cm. Favorite Brown Pan, P4,495, WMF. 7. Teak veneer #310, Price upon request, Diamond Concept, Inc. 8. Recline bamboo velveteen, P900/yard, Larry's Curtains. 9. Premier beige and brown upholstery fabric, price upon request, Larry's Curtains. 10. Tile: Fanal, Syncro Crema, 59 cm. x 59 cm., Price upon request, La Europa.

Seaside Soirée

References to seaside treasures, beach glass and sand

1. Customized glass mosaic tiles in Gladiolo colors, Price upon request, Bisazza. 2. Shell-shaped placemat, P390, Firma. 3. Window treatment material in Freeride Dune, P900/yard, Larry's Curtains. 4. 8" Pair of napkin rings with mini bells, P595, Gourdo's. 5. Coupe plate with blue band, P550, Gourdo's. 6. Palm beach lunch napkin (set of 20), P360, Firma. 7. Cream delight Graphicote coated glass, Price upon request, Pacific Glass Corp. 8. Parador engineered wood cabinet and drawer panel, Price upon request, Domus. 9. Avocado tumbler and plate (set of 12), P1,645, Gourdo's. 10. Tile: Pamesa, Quartz Arena, 60 cm. x 60 cm., La Europa.





Animal Magic

Animal prints and a dash of fossil-like texture paired with muted neutrals

1. Tan leatherette, P210/yard, Sheil Canvas. 2. Zebrano veneer, Price upon request, Diamond Concepts. 3. Graphicote coated glass, Price upon request, Pacific Glass Corp. 4. Zlin cutlery set in yellow, P748, Conlins Elements. 5. 28 cm. Kaiser pralinen (candy mold), P695, WMF. 6. Kaiser rolling pin, P695, WMF. 7. Lion cupcake liner, P140, Gourd's. 8. Zanibar coasters (set of 8) P660, Firma. 9. Bundt pan, P4,095, WMF. 10. Stove top coffee maker by Alessi, P9,403, Conlins Elements. 11. Josephine banana timer by Alessi, P3,085, Colins Elements. 12. Banana babies place card holders by Alessi, P1,309, Conlins Elements. 13. Paint palette by Virtuoso shades of roasted honey, Price upon request, Boysen. 14. Tile: Fanal, Tecno Sand 60 cm. x 60 cm., Price upon request, La Europa.





The S2 Kitchen is modern and minimalist, warmed with natural walnut finish that is meant to blend with the furniture. It features sleek design elements such as the metal finishes of the cabinet frames and a touch controlled island canopy hood that opens when in use and folds back when not. Matching the minimalist treatment is the sculptural one-piece spout platinum matte faucet fitting from Dornbracht. RIGHT: Handle-free and ergonomic drawers and cabinets give the S2 kitchen a highly-functional yet decluttered look. It features top-of-the-line Miele 60 cm. Microwave Combination Oven and a Subzero undercounter base refrigerator that is camouflaged like the veneered drawers.

KITCHEN INNOVATIONS

SIEMATIC MAKES DREAM KITCHENS—FLAWLESS, FUNCTIONAL, FLEXIBLE—A REALITY

BY DAHL BENNETT

PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO / STYLED BY MARK PEREZ

YEAR AFTER YEAR, SieMatic keeps turning the notch up in kitchen innovation, redefining adjectives that have become synonymous with their impeccable designs—flawless, functional, flexible.

Nothing less than revolutionary is expected of this German luxury brand, which, after all, introduced the first handle-free kitchen to the world in the '60s. It continues to push the design envelope with the aim of not only seamlessly integrating the once-concealed utilitarian space into the rest of the home, but ultimately, making it the core of the home.

For 2013, SieMatic introduces yet again new innovations to existing models, refining aesthetics and functionality while keeping tried and tested features that all add up to pleasurable moments in the kitchen for both the home or condo owners.

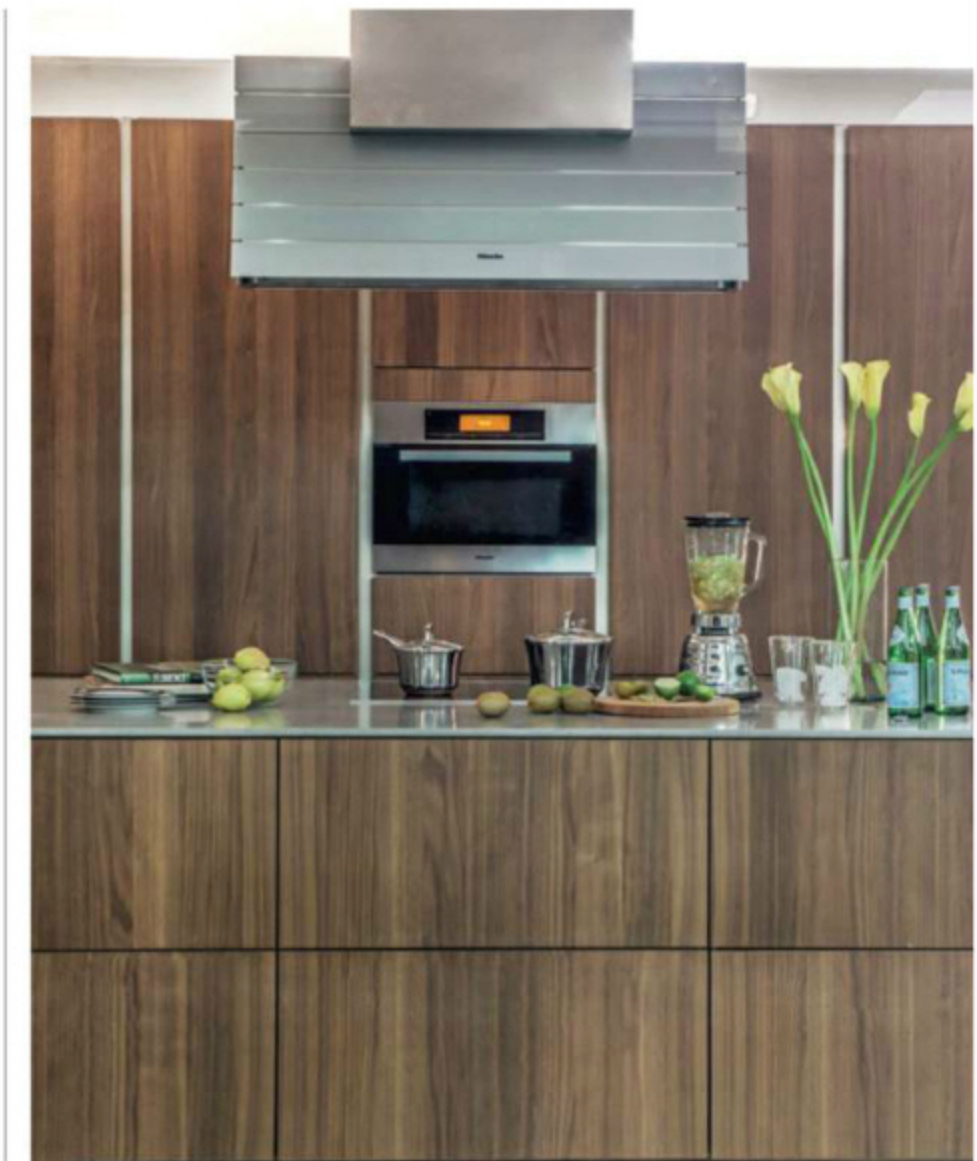
Minimalist escape

Minimalist but superiorly functional, this layout of the **SieMatic S2** is ideal for the bachelor or single dweller. Its segmented layout works well in compact or big spaces, complementing open plans that lead to living areas.

The dominantly warm walnut finish of cabinets and counters is intended to make these ergonomic storages look like—and blend with—pieces of furniture. While the wood veneer finish lends a laid-back and homey atmosphere, the cut is distinctly sharp and modern with the use of linear and cubed shapes. Concealed under these sleek panels is SieMatic's brand of ergonomic touch sensitive drawers with **GripDeck**, a MultiMatic tracking system that maximizes cabinet space up to 30% more, and pull out cabinets with precise channel recesses to enhance aesthetic and function.

The minimalist theme is applied in the installation of appliances as well, virtually eliminating clutter. Side to side with the drawers in the island is the **Sub-Zero** undercounter base refrigerator drawers that not only blends beautifully with the kitchen but also frees a considerably big area.

Installed at the center of the wall cabinet is the **Miele 60cm Microwave Combination Oven**, which functions separately or combined as a microwave and oven for baking and heating. The 4-zone





ceramic hob is also embedded beautifully on the countertop.

The hovering hood this time becomes the conversation piece of the S2 kitchen. The touch controlled 110 cm canopy island hood adds to the sleekness of the kitchen as it only expands when in use at a simple press of a button. It can also replace the chandelier with an optional LED lighting that is bright enough to illuminate the whole island and drawers beneath. When folded, the hood lends a sleek look to the entire area, functioning more as a tasteful art installation rather than an exhaust.

Efficient kitchen planning

The **SieMatic SC10** has a timeless charm with its crisp and clean lines. It comes in greige (a combination of gray and beige) and titan pine with a laminate matte finish that gives the whole area a warm, sophisticated and high-quality look.

It is a working kitchen equipped with top-of-the-line cook tops and appliances. It has a Miele built-in steamer, pyrolytic oven, built-in coffee machine, 2-burner gas hob, 2-zone induction hob, 2-Zone ce-

ramic hob, electric fryer and 120 cm island hood. It also has a Sub-Zero built-in 36-inch over and under refrigerator/freezer.

To manage waste, the sink area is installed with preferred brand **InSinkErator** that grinds food waste to liquid, which then automatically goes down the sewage.

One of the most practical features that can be found in the working kitchen is the Side Slide door that wraps around a washer and dryer, efficiently and beautifully concealing the appliance when not in use.

Aesthetically impressive yet functional and practical, the SC10 guarantees satisfaction as you transition from a busy cook to a party host right in the very same space.

Integrated in the working kitchen are the addictively adjustable **SieMatic FloatingSpaces**. It gives you the freedom to design—and redesign—your kitchen walls for a perfect transition into the living area. Making such flexibility possible are the SieMatic panels with hanging and tracking systems. You may consider as many factors depending on your needs—layout, lifestyle, safety, convenience, aesthetics—and the adjustable panels present just as many solutions.

TOP LEFT: The SC10 kitchen is timeless with a flexible design that can fit compact or wide spaces perfectly. Integrated in the kitchen are SieMatic's panel system, FloatingSpaces (inset photo) that can be designed and redesigned to fit the owner's lifestyle. In the background just above the sink is a cookbook holder, towel holder, herbs and spice rack, and chalk board for reminders, all SieMatic accessories that are just as movable as the FloatingSpaces. Above are steel framed cabinets with MultiMatic tracking system to maximize space. **TOP RIGHT:** Pull out drawers with chrome plated railings allow users to see what is stacked at the back. The SC10 is a working kitchen equipped with Miele 60 cm built-in steamer, 60 cm. Pyrolytic oven, built-in coffee machine, 2-burner gas hob, 2-zone induction hob, 2-Zone ceramic hob, electric fryer and 120 cm. island hood, and a SubZero built-in 36" over and under refrigerator/freezer.

With nearly unlimited design options, the FloatingSpaces makes it ideal for compact areas to maximize space and function, especially when combined with the wide range of SieMatic accessories. You can position bookshelves lower or higher, place towel hooks right above the sink, and utensil railings just at the right distance from the cook tops—the versatility has the fun and appeal of Lego except that this one is ergonomic and useful.

The new BeauxArts

This year, SieMatic takes inspiration from the icon of sophistication, Sophia Loren, for its latest interpretation of **BeauxArts** kitchens. Celebrated Chicago designer Mick de Giulio collaborates once more with SieMatic to come up with a subtly feminine design that is chic, timeless and, like its inspiration, iconic.

Taking the cue from BeauxArts' philosophy of segmentation, repetition and symmetry, de Giulio introduces a quietly modern kitchen by playing with different finishes, contrasting materials and varied shades. The glossy white of the seamless countertop is complemented



The new BeauxArts takes inspiration from Italian icon Sophia Loren, exuding a placid kind of class and sophistication with just the right balance of soft and hard. The tall and wall glass cabinets in nickel gloss finish contrast with the white countertops and walls. TOP RIGHT: The trademark profile drawers of the BeauxArts kitchen are still present, adding texture and rhythm to the whole layout. Framing the entire wall are mosaic tiles that deviates from the design in the past.



with steel framed cabinets. Pristinely matte painted walls frame tall nickel gloss cabinets with wood interiors. Profiled doors complement handle free drawers.

While all these elements contribute to the balance and beauty of the new BeauxArts kitchen, it is the grey Bisazza mosaic tiles that subtly ruffle the polished atmosphere of the area. It invokes the same “oomph” that Loren exudes but without going overboard.

Hidden under this working kitchen’s stylish exterior is intelligent functionality that considers every centimeter and inch of space. The trademark **MultiMatic** system allows adjustments on the height of the shelves, maximizing available space. The oak interiors of drawers can be tailor-made for the easiest organization of utensils possible. Hard-to-reach areas such as deep corners under the sink are installed with a kidney-shaped rack that easily swivels in and out for easy reach. SieMatic aptly calls it the “corner solution,” making sure that no space in the kitchen is left unused.

Apart from the smell of cooking, it is also the conveniences and beauty of the smart design that make homeowners and their loved ones gravitate to the kitchen more and more. Expect SieMatic to come up with newer and more intelligent innovations that will compel you to linger in your dream kitchens a little longer, year after year. **1**

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SieMatic solutions

Order in the kitchen is a constant challenge to many, but there is nothing that a smartly designed kitchen by SieMatic cannot declutter.

Customize spaces. The MultiMatic Tracking System is an interior fitting system that can be adjusted, combined, added to or modified to utilize storage space up to 30% more. Plate sets can be stacked as high or as low, glasses can be displayed in longer or shorter rows, herb racks and towels and magnetic boards may be hung at eye level while utensils may be sorted using as many partitions as needed.



Organize kitchen items. Organize utensils, tablewares, cooking ingredients, and other items according to frequency of use with the SF10 system, a SieMatic exclusive furnishings for drawers and pull outs in light glazed oak, fine porcelain, and high-quality aluminum that is extendable, stable and sturdy. The SF10 received a “Special Mention” from the Design Council

of Germany for its outstanding design and high functional quality at the German Design Awards 2013.

Label and relabel items. You can write and rewrite on the user-friendly porcelain lid containers and light oak wooden boxes to label herbs and spices and other food ingredients. Drawer inserts in oak or plastic may be customized to fit the shape of these containers.



Keep dust and pests at bay.

Another SieMatic trademark, the Dust Seal feature is present in all SieMatic kitchen doors to lessen chances of dust, moisture and pests from penetrating cabinets and drawers. It also ensures that doors can be closed without a sound.

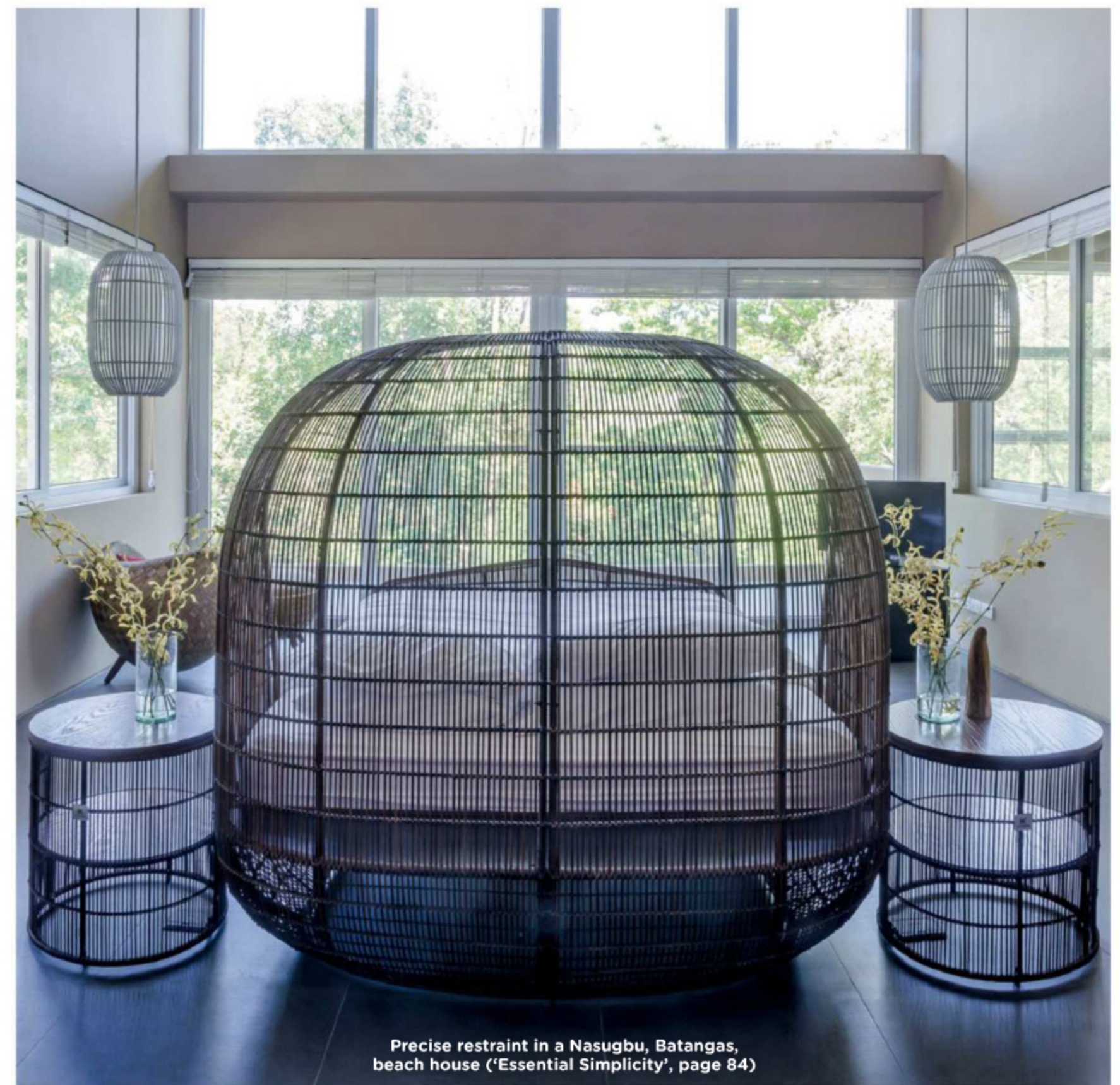
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homes



Precise restraint in a Nasugbu, Batangas, beach house ('Essential Simplicity', page 84)

A RHYTHM OF ITS OWN

OFF THE BEATEN TRACK
WITH DANCE GURU LIGAYA
FERNANDO-AMILBANGSA

BY PATRICIA TUMANG
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO

The exterior of the two-story home is made from various kinds of recycled, antique hardwood, which were assembled together and then painted with an ochre stain to unify them. The *piedra china* of the ground level walls, the owner sourced in Bulacan. A variety of ferns and trees like *makopa* and lemon were planted in the front yard.



LIGAYA FERNANDO-AMILBANGSA perches wistfully on a spacious window ledge framed by native capiz shutters. Her home is a modest 80-sq.m. structure overlooking a flourishing garden of durian and mangosteen trees. Her slender frame and shoulder-length gray hair catch glints of sunlight as she reads Plato and writes in her notepad, listening to the chirping birds in the garden while relaxing in her favorite nook.

In this lush, hillside property in Antipolo, a cool breeze flows in and out of windows and open doors, and the sun's rays cast playful shadows on terracotta floors and rough hewn stone walls. Ligaya actually prefers the shade, having grown accustomed to the dark when she and her late husband, Datu Punjungan Amilbangsa, moved from Manila to his native Sulu in 1969.

At night, with no electricity and guided only by candlelight and memory, Ligaya would practice the *pangalay* dance that she had seen at weddings and ceremonies in Tawi-Tawi and Sulu, studying and documenting her silhouette's intricate symphony of gestures and movements until she became an expert in the form.

Today, the 70-year-old dance scholar, choreographer, and author of seminal books on the dance and arts of the Sulu archipelago, is content with the nostalgic comforts she created in her charming, two-story abode and adjoining dance studio, which are constructed from recycled materials sourced from different locales in Manila and its environs.



Living area. The clay tiles are from Antipolo. Ligaya and her students used this as a dance space before the dance studio was built on the property in 2000. She inherited the 1950s German Euterpe piano from her mother. The early 20th-century *aparador* came from the family's ancestral home in Marikina. The statues that grace the piano are gifts from friends and relatives visited on travels to Indonesia, Thailand, India, and Ifugao Province. One statue depicts an Indian goddess of dance, which was given to her by her son's driver when her son lived in Pune, India. TOP LEFT: Main door into the home and stairs leading to second-story bedrooms. Ligaya recycled the native capiz window shutters from old homes.



Some of the artworks that hang in the living room are by Ligaya herself. The oil painting of the woman performing the *pangalay* dance is a self-portrait. The colorful wooden piece above the paintings is from Tawi-Tawi. OPPOSITE PAGE: A portrait of Ligaya taken by photographer Isa Lorenzo exhibited in Paris in 2007 for a show celebrating Philippine Independence, hangs beside entryway to an enclosed veranda.

The rhythm of home

Built in 1984, the main house was intended as a rest house since Ligaya and her family had relocated from Sulu to live in her ancestral home in Marikina. It had been neglected for many years until Ligaya decided to move out of Marikina sometime in 2000 and into this smaller, more intimate space after her husband's passing.

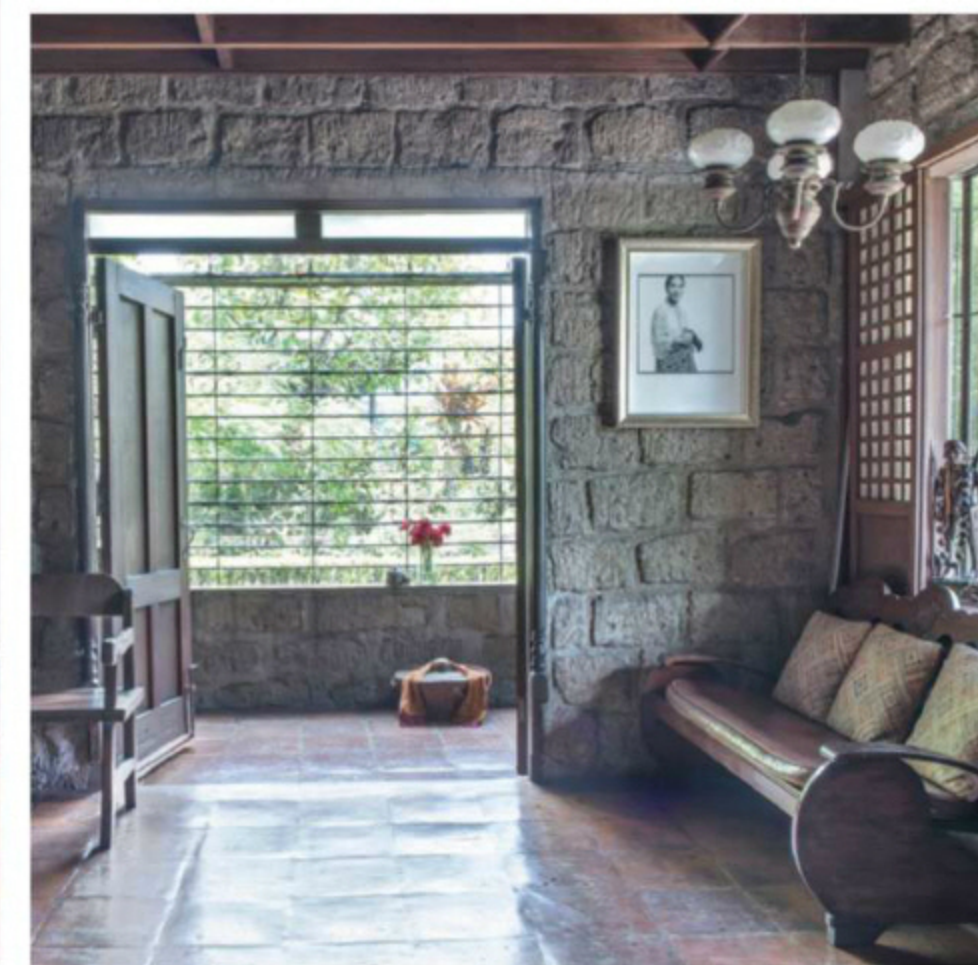
Cement and solid stone bricks from Bulacan adorn the façade of the home; clay tiles from Antipolo line the entrance. Informed by her experience in the family construction business, she designed and constructed every aspect of the house, with the help of architect-classmate Maning De Guzman, who drew up the initial blueprint for the foundation.

Her home contains a treasure trove of Southeast Asian artifacts, trinkets, art, and folk costumes, which she had amassed over the years, as well as baskets and a variety of bric-a-brac from Sulu, where she spent decades doing extensive research on the *pangalay* and its rich vocabulary of slow, choreographed movements that originate from the Tausug, Samal, Badjao, and Jama Mapun cultures in the Southern Philippines. Her research resulted in two award-winning books, *Pangalay: Traditional Dances and Related Folk Artistic Expressions* (1983), and *Ukkil: Visual Arts of the Sulu Archipelago* (2005).

The gestures of *pangalay*, so refined but full of motion, are deeply rooted in the rhythm of Ligaya's home and dance studio, where the AlunAlun Dance Circle (of which Ligaya is the artistic director) teaches and performs the *pangalay*. The movement continues in the freestanding open-air structure that connects the two, which incorporates both cement and brick elements and serves as an al fresco eating area.

Each room in the main house has a specific function and activity. The two upstairs bedrooms are for sleep and meditation while the rooms on the first floor see the most energy and movement.

"I'm always moving," Ligaya says, gliding through the different spaces in her home and gesturing animatedly while pointing to the





ABOVE: In the kitchen, Ligaya's collection of various glassware, ceramics, and teapots are stored in a wooden cabinet above still life artwork that Ligaya made in the 1960s using crayons and pastel on paper. She made the artwork to demonstrate examples of different media and techniques to her students at Mindanao State University in Tawi-Tawi. Because there was no electricity, she couldn't use a projector. **LEFT:** Ligaya created a little nook on the side of her kitchen to serve as a study area. The oil painting is by Ligaya. It depicts a marriage ceremony in Sulu and is part of a triptych.

Cambodian banana fiber weave above her bed featuring Apsara dancers in classical dance postures resembling the *pangalay*. The weave, together with several artwork displayed along the staircase, and some folk statues atop her 1950s German Euterpe piano in the living room, were given to her by friends and colleagues on her travels around the region to teach or lecture on Sulu folk dances. More artwork, including parts of an oil triptych painted by Ligaya and depicting a Sulu marriage ceremony, can be found in the kitchen and its adjoining dining area, which leads to Ligaya's study.

Preference for recycled materials

A few steps away from the main house and through the garden, grass meets adobe brick tiles that lead to Ligaya's light-filled dance studio, erected in 2000, and also made of natural materials that she

sourced independently. Supported by tall posts from an old cooking oil plant in Quezon City, they are decorated with handmade wrought iron leaf motifs. The flooring is from the old *entablado* or stage in a movie theater in Cavite. "I always recycle," says Ligaya. Clearly, her dance studio is an extension of her preference for recycled materials.

Inside the studio, smooth hardwood floors give way to walls lined with a vibrant mosaic of colorful hand-painted tiles, some depicting birds in flight. A brass *gangsa* or gong, and *kulintang* ensemble with a hand-carved, boat-shaped stand from Tawi Tawi are set on the side, ready to be played. Pastel artworks depicting everyday scenes in Sulu—many of them done by Ligaya—hang proudly on the walls.

"In *pangalay*, you dance against the music because the music is very fast, and the dancing is very slow and meditative," Ligaya says. "*Iba ang syntax ng* body movement (The syntax of body movement is different). *Iba ang syntax ng* language (The syntax of language is different). *Iba ang language ng* body (The body language is different). In dancing, you follow the music within, and you can dance to any music."

Womb-like space for dance

Inside the studio, sounds echo and collide, following a natural rhythm as Ligaya's students meet here every Sunday for *pangalay* dance lessons.

"This is such a small place, but it's like a womb," Ligaya says, finding comfort in the natural wood that surrounds her and the antique art deco furniture given to her by her brother, Bayani Fernando, the former mayor of Marikina, along with pieces brought in from her an-



At the top of the staircase, a display of antique ceramics and a gallery of family photos, artwork, and awards on recycled hardwood walls. RIGHT: A corner in her bedroom, which is decorated with personal mementos and antiques. The deeply pitched ceiling following the incline of the roof is made of wood from the floor of a bowling alley in Cavite.



The dance studio. The floor and ceiling is made of wood salvaged from a variety of old structures including an entablado, or stage, from an old theater in Cavite. She inherited the art nouveau sala set from a cousin. The ivory-inlaid *kamagong* *aparador* dates to the 1930s. On the floor are a *kulintang* or brass gong set and a native xylophone on a hand-carved, boat-shaped stand from Tawi-Tawi.



cestral home. Ligaya stores costumes and papier-mâché masks for *pangalay* performances in the early 20th-century, Puyat-style *aparadors* in the main house and in her dance studio.

"I'm fascinated by the grain," Ligaya explains as she recalls her ancestral home in Marikina, which is made entirely of hardwood. This passion for wood and natural materials never left her, and when designing the structure that would eventually serve as her own home, she set out to find a variety of different hardwood—*mulawi*, *narra*, *yakal*, *kamagong*, and *ipil*—to create a space reminiscent of her childhood.

The home's pitched wood ceiling, walls, and floors are patched together like a canopy of trees with distinct grains and color. One part of the ceiling is wood flooring sourced from a bowling alley in Cavite. Some of the wood came from old houses, and the paint had to be stripped to reveal its natural veneer. The hardwood staircase and some windows came from the house of a relative. Ligaya also prefers using natural hardwood because it keeps the house cooler without the need for air-conditioning.

"That is the beauty of wood. You have a different temperature under the tree because it has its own world, its own environment. It is the same here—I have my own environment," she says, referring to her unique home, a place "that has music and its own rhythm within." ❶

Ligaya spends a lot of time reading books or writing on her notepad at this window ledge in her home, where she can peek at the fruit trees and plants outside and also observe her students dance in the living room if they aren't practicing in the dance studio.






THE QUERIDA MIA

A PARAGON
OF SIMPLICITY—
AND LUXURY

BY CHRISTIAN REGIS
PHOTOGRAPHS BY
PAUL DEL ROSARIO



The Lagoon 450
Catamaran Cruiser is a
latter-day interpretation
of the ancient catamaran,
a multi-hulled boat. In
this modern version,
the two hulls house
bedrooms, or cabins, and
bathrooms. OPPOSITE
PAGE: A special sail used
for sailing downwind,
a gennaker pulls the
boat back to harbor.



OPPOSITE: The rear of the boat descends on both sides for easy access into and from the water. Normally between the two descents is a small power boat which was used to take this photograph. **ABOVE:** The upper deck from which the vessel is steered.

IT FLOATS STEADILY AMONG BOATS of countless variety in the marina of Subic Yacht Club. The Querida Mia, a Lagoon 450 catamaran, is double the width of most. The owner, who's also the boat's captain, stands proudly at the stern.

"That's how my wife calls Mother Mary," he says of the boat's name, "and it's related to the name of one of our products."

A sleek machine

The Querida Mia took nine months to build to the owner's specifications in France. Then it was transported by freighter to Hong Kong, where it was assembled. From there it sailed 24 hours to Subic, where it was handed over to its owner in January 2011.

It's 45 feet long, 26 feet wide, with a mast 76 feet high. At the front of the boat—or "bow"—is a cockpit lounge, a place to experience cruising with the sea breeze and warmth of the sun directly on you. It's like a sofa over the sea. For an even more exciting thrill, there are two large nets splashing over the water, where you can work on a tan with the water splashing directly underneath.



At the back of the boat—or “stern”—there is a table and built-in seating for al fresco dining and lounging. The seating stores gear for snorkeling, scuba diving, or fishing. A lowered deck with a ladder makes it easy to get back on the boat from the water. On this lowered deck, there is also a small powerboat (or sea taxi), which can be used to go ashore, or visit other boats while at anchor.

Slip resistant walkways on portside (left side) and starboard (right) and handrails make it easy to go from one part of the boat to the other. There is a canopied upper deck where the vessel is steered, commanding a 360-degree view.

With provisions and planning, this boat can sail all over the world, day or night, windless or in a squall.

Three bedrooms, called “cabins”, each with its own bathroom, are in the two hulls of the catamaran. The master suite occupies one whole hull, and it includes a bedroom, a work area with a sofa and a bathroom.

Between the hulls is the saloon—dining area, a complete galley with oven, and an interior cockpit. Cabinets and countertops are laminated wood, the ceiling is faux leather, the lights are LED. Concealed under floor and behind walls is commodious storage. “There’s beer in the floor cabinet,” the captain offers.

The furniture is teakwood as are the floors of bathrooms and cockpits. The entire interior space is air conditioned.

“But I didn’t buy a boat for luxury. I bought it to sail,” says the captain.

Wind power

Harnessing wind power is what he loves about the yacht.

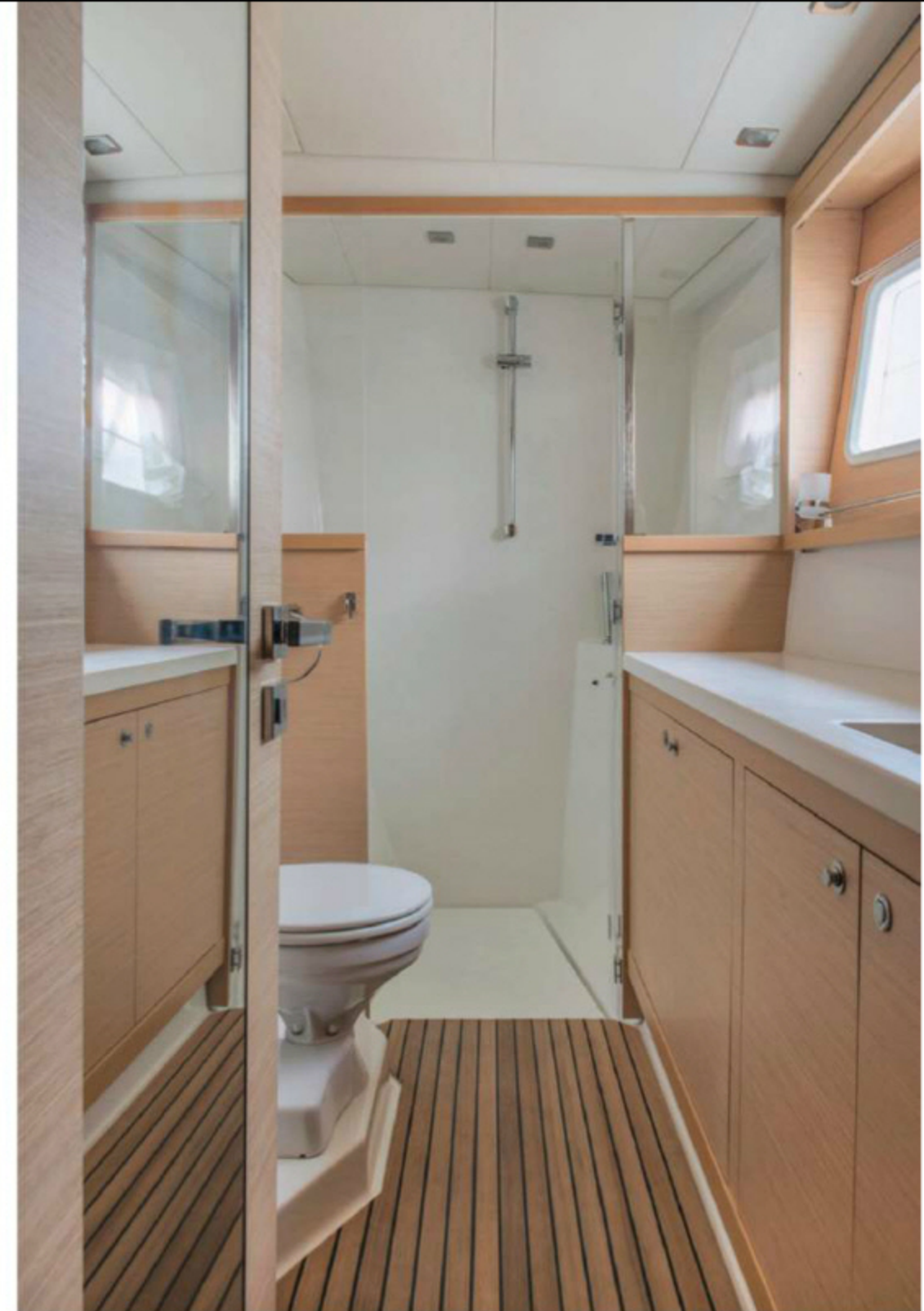
“I learned sailing on a small boat. As soon as I learned how to sail this boat, we went out almost every weekend. Subic is the best because it is well protected. However, when using the head (the toilet), don’t press the wrong button. It will suck in black, oily, stinky water from the sea.”

His single crew member prepares for departure: ropes are untied, the tap into the electricity of the marina is unplugged, and engines started.

“Our last was a two-week cruise from Subic to Punta Fuego, Min-



Blonde wood finishes in the saloon. To the side of the sofa is the sliding door leading to the master suite in one hull. Beside the door, within the cabinetry is one of several refrigerators. There are storage compartments hidden in the floor. LEFT: The galley with stove, oven, microwave, refrigerator and sink. Across it is an interior cockpit for steering the boat in inclement weather. Between the two areas is the doorway leading to two bedrooms and bathrooms.



ABOVE AND OPPOSITE: Opposing views of the master suite, which includes a bedroom, sitting area, study and bathroom. Watertight transparent windows on the ceiling have sliding mesh shades to diffuse sunlight. **ABOVE RIGHT:** The bathroom floor is made of ash teakwood striped with rubber to prevent slips. Three buttons beside the toilet, or "head" in nautical language, can extract stored fresh water, seawater, or dump water out to sea.

doro, Boracay, and Coron, in a fleet of five catamarans, cruising in formation!" recalls the owner. "We never checked into hotels. From a boat, we saw the Philippines through a different perspective. You can see it up close; you can talk to people."

He turns off the engines and releases the sail. His crew member runs across the deck, ties slacking ropes on automatic cranks. The sail balloons to a crescent shape, and the boat's speed increases.

"The wind pulls the boat and it's faster when harnessing upwind. Tacking is zigzagging through the wind at an angle," explains the captain. "Using wind is more exciting so we only use the engine for electricity when anchored."

The boat begins tacking. The sail flutters violently as the starboard rope slacks, and the portside rope is pulled. The boat turns portside.

"We strictly follow the menu because of limited supplies. We only use the fridge for veggies and meat. Also, we don't use utensils to save water. To heat or thaw food, we leave it under the sun. As for the trash, we throw biodegradables into the water, and non-biodegradables in the can."



The aft cockpit at the rear of the boat has a table and seats for al fresco dining. The seats also serve as compartments to store gear for snorkeling or diving. RIGHT: Lounge chair across the dining area beside freezers. On the rail is a grill. LOWER RIGHT: Sunken lounge area in front of the boat. Stretched between the hulls are nets you can sit or lie on with the water directly beneath.



The boat arrives in Triboa Bay, a cove of clear blue-green water, almost surrounded by ridges of thick jungle and mangroves. The forest is alive with the sound of birds and monkeys.

Sailing

"It's like having a rest house that you can bring anywhere," says the owner. It's a luxury that comes at a price. "The boat's more expensive than a house, plus there's around P150,000 per month on maintenance, parking, salaries, and insurance. We spend P300,000 yearly to lift the boat, remove barnacles and repaint the hull."

On the way back to the marina, the crew member pulls down the main sail. The captain presses a button and a winch pulls up a blue, white and green gennaker, a sail used when sailing downwind at a slow pace. It billows beautifully in the wind.

"My dream is to go to Palau," he says. "It would be a three-month adventure."

The exhilaration is addictive. Says the owner: "When we're on land, we would just find any reason to go out and sail." 11

ESSENTIAL SIMPLICITY

DESIGNED TO CELEBRATE NATURE AND FAMILY, A BEACHSIDE GETAWAY IS AN OBJECT LESSON IN CLARITY OF LINE AND PURPOSE

BY JHEFFRY RYAN HSU
PHOTOGRAPHS BY
WILLIAM ONG

Slanting roof over a multi-level beach house for a young family in Nasugbu, Batangas. The porches have glass balustrades to maximize views.





LEFT: *Bakawan* armchairs paired with *Lolah* couch and coffee table by Kenneth Cobonpue in the living area. The vintage furniture is painted white, giving it a modern edginess. The Z floor lamp is from the Kai collection by Kenneth Cobonpue for Hive. BELOW: Pre-war *bakawan* armchair and sidetable in a sitting area in the guest room.



“A HOUSE, REGARDLESS OF ITS SIZE, becomes a home when it is a joy to return to,” says the lady of this getaway house in Nasugbu, Batangas. Despite its expansive scale, multiple levels and sleek surfaces, this beach house shares in essence the basis of any well-designed home, a blueprint for family togetherness.

Because of their fondness of the beach lifestyle and outdoor activities such as cycling, open water swimming, and sailing, the family decided to build a countryside house. They chose this gated community for its beauty, low density, the developers’ hands-on management and, most importantly, the privacy it offers.

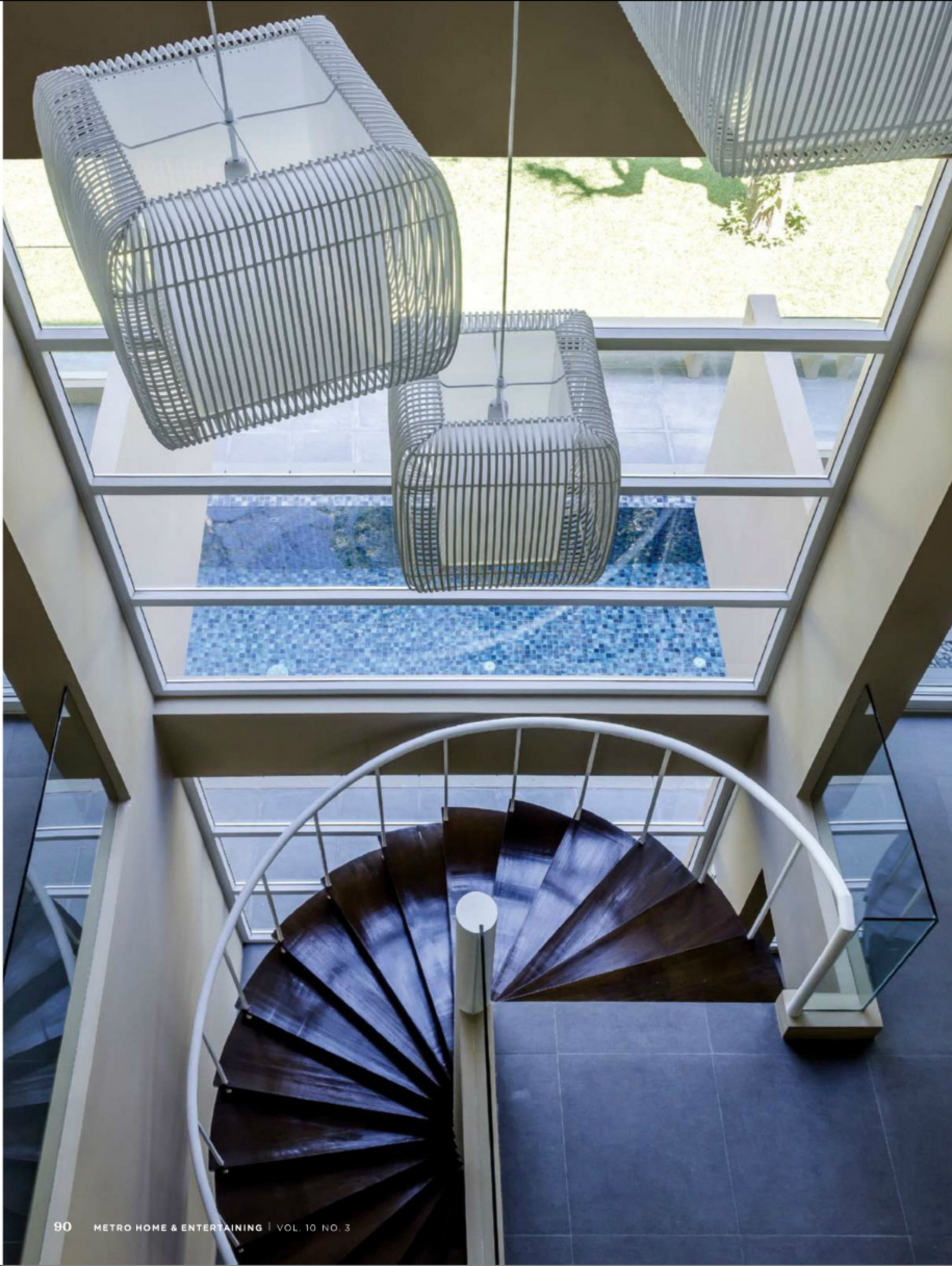
It all started when the family saw an open-plan house by the much-sought-after architect Gil Coscolluela. They always wanted a home with a relaxing vibe, with views of the trees and sea, so when they saw this property they didn’t think twice and bought it immediately. Then they let Gil take control of the design, and contracted Intergiro for the construction, which took only 14 months to finish.

Less is more

The foyer splits into a gangway that leads to the bedrooms and a stairway that leads to the common areas. The bedrooms are furnished with exquisite simplicity, with nothing more than beds, lamps and side tables. “The house is meant to be a place where the family can spend

RIGHT: Heirloom carved wood table in the dining area belonged to the husband's grandparents. It is matched with modern white chairs. **BELOW:** Kitchen is open to dining and living areas, all forming one continuous space.





OPPOSITE PAGE: From the foyer, a view of the staircase that leads to the recreational area and pool at the lowest level. Suspended from the ceiling is a trio of Geisha Square lights by Kenneth Cobonpue for Hive. **ABOVE:** Monolithic staircase descending from entryway. **ABOVE RIGHT:** Gangway leading from the entryway to the bedrooms on the top level of the house.

time with each other. Family members are therefore encouraged to be together in the common areas,” the lady of the house explains.

Simple as the furniture looks, each piece was selected with precision. The beds in the children’s room were imported from Guangzhou, China. The bed in the master bedroom is Kenneth Cobonpue’s iconic Voyager. All bedrooms open up to a balcony overlooking the trees and the beach, from where comes the soothing sound of the surf.

To take advantage of the natural light, the house is surrounded with clear glass windows while the rooms are adorned with paintings by artist, production designer and director Leo Abaya.

Descent to paradise

One of the highlights of the house is the monolithic staircase that greets visitors as they enter the house. The architect envisioned it even before the ground was broken.

From the front door, the staircase gives a glimpse of the stunning view that lies ahead and, as you descend, the view opens up to reveal more of the garden, the forest and the sea.

On the first lower level, you will find the beautifully proportioned living and dining areas in an open plan with the kitchen. On the lowest level of the house is the recreational area, where the family and their guests can enjoy the scenery while playing table tennis or taking a dip in the pool with towering trees surrounding them.

The open space of the lowest level gives some indication of the fam-



ily's love of being active and outdoors. Occasionally, family members who are avid cyclists bike through the scenic country roads on the return from Nasugbu to Alabang.

Memory lane

"I was more involved in the interior design of the house," says the lady of the house. The intention was to have a house with clean strong lines, and symmetry. It was never meant to be over-furnished.

The owners are actively involved in Kenneth Cobonpue's soon-to-open Manila store, and many of the pieces in the house are by the Cebu-based designer, including those from his lights company, Hive.

There are pre-World War II *bakawan* armchairs, sofas, tables, daybed, and even a bar scattered across the lanai, living room, and guest bedroom.

"These came with a house in New Manila purchased by my husband's parents from expatriates returning home in the early '70s," says the lady. "The house was built and furnished before WWII. Until his widowed mother moved to a smaller home, these pieces, which were originally dark brown, had been continually in use and needed minor refurbishing."

The dining table and buffet are from his maternal grandparents, and comprised the setting for Sunday lunch reunions for decades. Many happy memories are associated with these pieces, which had been in storage for many years. The table was stripped of its original black finish, and paired with modern chairs.

It's not just the innate beauty of the design of the house and its furniture, but the sense of familial continuity that makes it a simply great escape. 📍

Dramatic simplicity in the master bedroom with Kenneth Cobonpue's Voyager bed 'floating' in the middle. OPPOSITE PAGE: Kids' bedroom shows the view of the cove.



Living and dining area in the home of Victor and Maggie Consunji opens onto a deck and swimming pool.

DESIGN EVOLUTION

LIFE AND ENGINEERING
SHAPE A SPACE FOR LIVING

BY EDA BATENGA-ACUNA
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO



SCION OF CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY GIANT DMCI, Victor Consunji made a home for himself among the townhouses of Mahogany Place III, one of several components of Acacia Estates, the vast development of the company in Taguig. The townhouse is now shared with his wife Maggie Wilson-Consunji and their year-and-a-half-old son.

"This house has evolved with me since I had it two-and-a-half years ago, before I got married," Victor says, sounding almost nostalgic. "It has changed from being a bachelor's pad, to a house for newlyweds, to a house for expectant parents, and now to a house for a young family with an exuberant little boy."

Even as it has been "baby-proofed," as Victor puts it, there's no way of escaping the sexiness of the house's original vision, the design for pure fun—a bachelor kind of fun.

A swimming pool wraps around its front half. You can see into the swimming pool, like into an aquarium, through glass windows in the basement garage cum bar cum gym cum private movie theater.

There's a bit of James Bond meets Tony Stark going on around here.

A wall of mirrored glass panels enclosing the garage opens electronically to reveal a circular steel floor, a much talked about feature of the garage. It allows cars driven into the subterranean level to be turned around in this tight space so they can be driven out face front.

In the manner of Tony Stark, Victor designed and built the revolving floor himself.

On the ground floor are living and dining areas and kitchen plus a den. The space is walled in glass, including the den, so you have clear lines of sight from any point and an unobstructed view of the wood deck and that sexy wraparound pool.

Given DMCI's long history, its construction of some of the biggest projects in the country (and in neighboring Brunei, the sultan's palace, Istana Nurul Iman) and its current surge of construction throughout the metropolis, Victor had his choice to live anywhere. His decision to live in Mahogany Place III was based on the pride he takes in his own product.

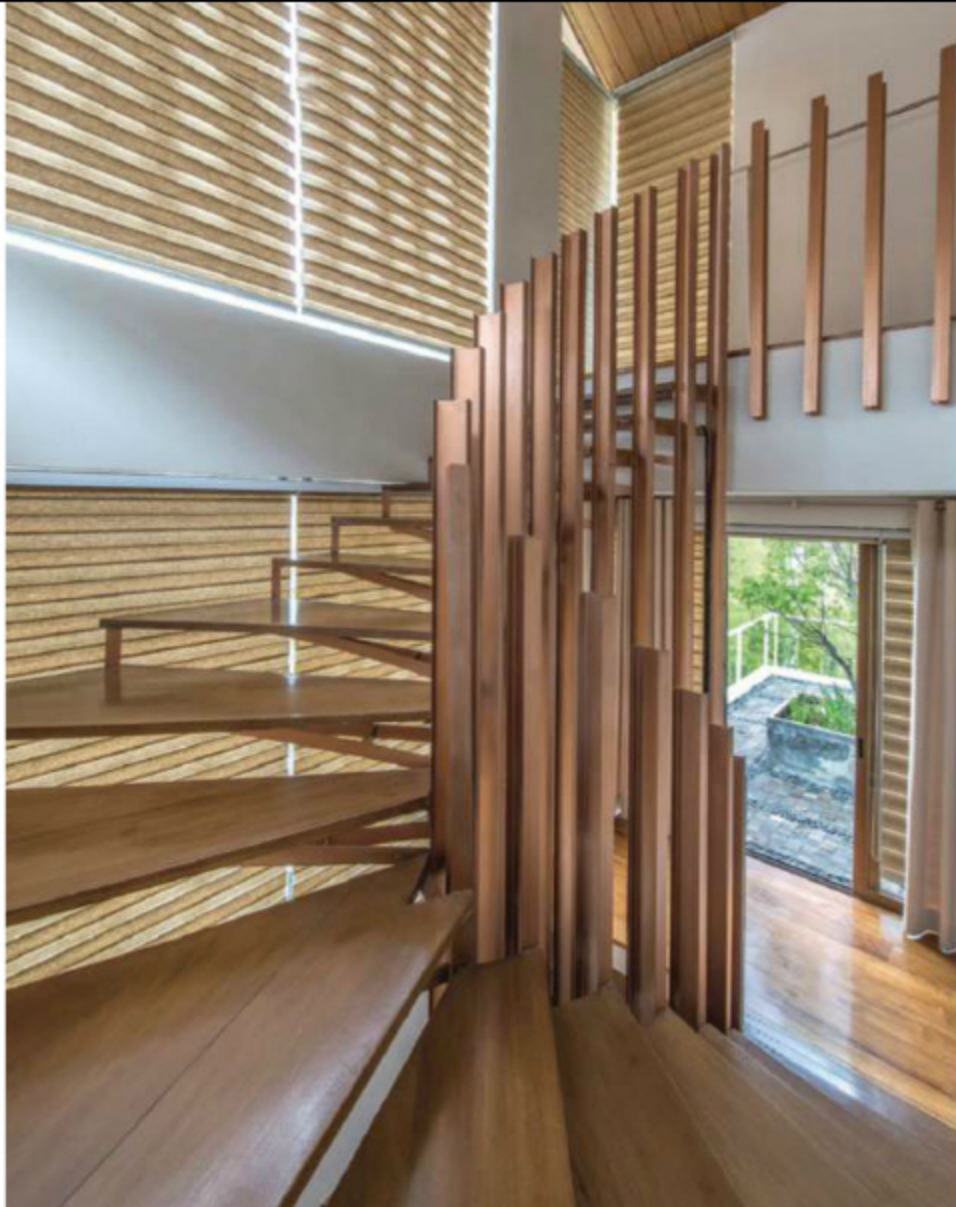
Victor co-developed Mahogany III with DMCI as CEO of VConsunji Inc., which, he stresses, is not a subsidiary of the giant

ABOVE: Persian carpets, Arabian cushions, metal lanterns and other accessories lend a distinctly Moorish feel to the den on the ground floor. **RIGHT:** A Persian carpet backdrops the large dining table, which can be completely enclosed by chairs. The dining set was designed by Robin Da Rosa based on inputs of Victor. Wicker screens flanking a console hide a pair of air conditioners.





Husband and wife both enjoy cooking. The kitchen is designed to accommodate them both, simultaneously. A unique glass range hood hangs over the stove top on the island. Exhaust fans are concealed in the ceiling beams. It is abutted by a wine rack fashioned out of steel rings welded together by Victor.



corporation, but an independent company. The two companies collaborated on higher-end lines than the more popularly targeted range DMCI has become so successful at.

Victor's neighbors are very successful young people, including a few of his high-profile friends.

He has just completed the show unit of a brand new highly limited edition luxury townhouse line for Mahogany III called Kasa (see "Urban Luxury Kasa," page 31).

Victor's own home is a unit among his earliest collaborations with DMCI.

"This is basically the Ariana," he says, referring to the product line, "but my wife and I chose to personalize it by making a reference to Balinese style and architecture." It does call to mind a resort in Bali. With that pool just steps away from the living and dining areas, the house feels like a vacation paradise.

For the interior design of the house, the couple enlisted the help of good friend Robin Da Rosa, the former model, film actor and TV host, whom it may surprise some to learn graduated from the Philippine School of Interior Design.

Around the house are many sandstone statues of gods and goddesses. Ganesh stands beatifically in the middle of a vertical garden at the end of the pool. "Ganesh is my favorite god," Victor says. "I like him because they say he is the remover of obstacles."

Backdropping the dining area is a Persian rug, smaller versions cover the floor in the den like in a desert tent. "Of course, our house is not purely Balinese," Victor says. We have also chosen to fill our home with things that we collected from our travels. Maggie spent her childhood in Saudi Arabia, so we have a lot of things from there, too."

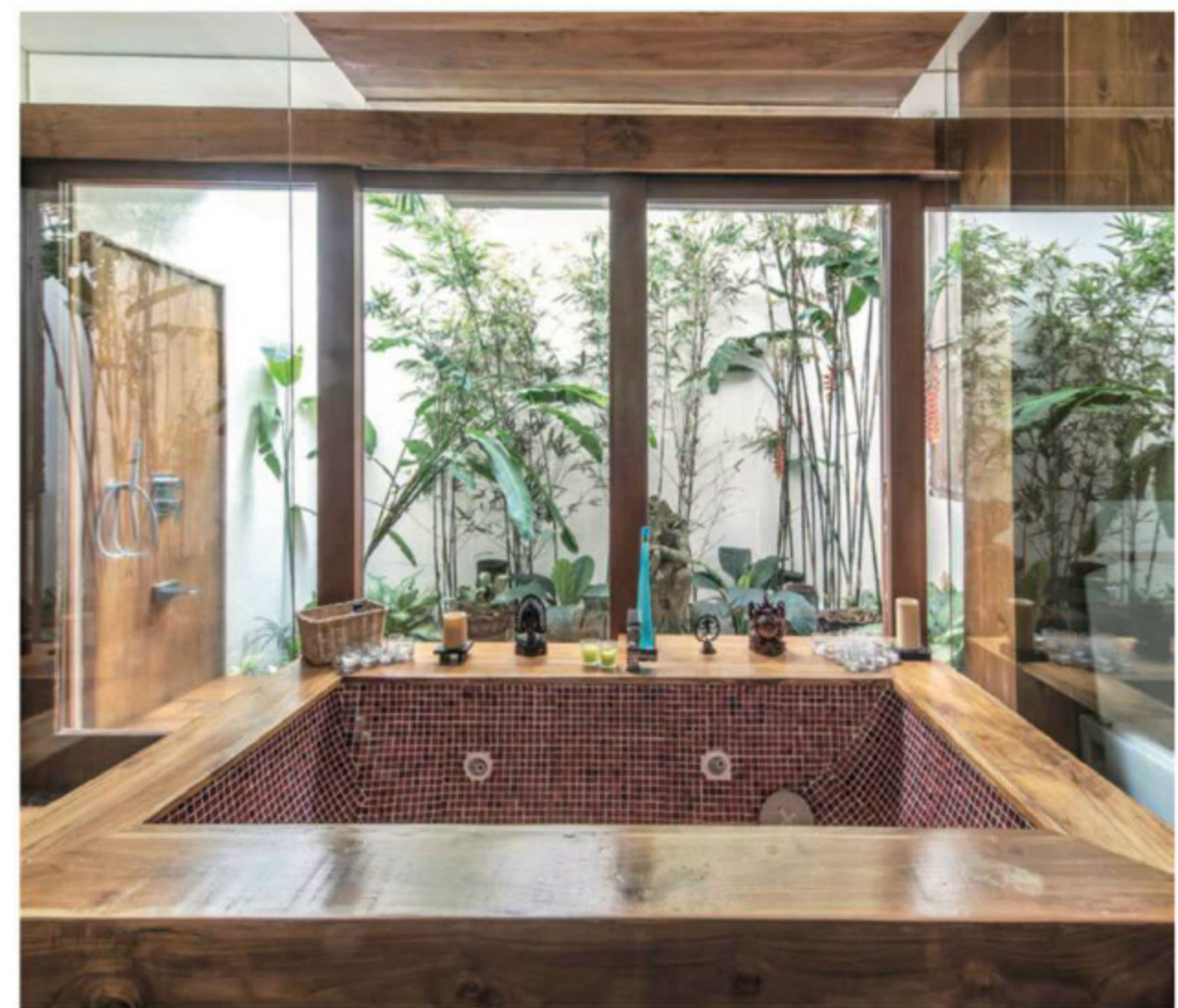
Swords of all sorts are displayed all over. "I collect swords, and I like putting them on exhibit. There's one from Mindanao, beautifully



In the master suite, the bed and a tufted cushion at its foot appears to float on a wood slab that climbs up the wall into a canopy with built-in lights. From the headboard flow out arms that function as side tables. Controls for the room lights are built into the headboard. The bed was designed by Robin with inputs from Victor. The blow-up is a photo from the homeowners' wedding. OPPOSITE PAGE: I-beams stretching down three levels form the balustrade of the spiral staircase.



CLOCKWISE FROM THIS PHOTO: Vertical garden forms the backdrop of the ground-level deck by the swimming pool, which wraps around the front of the house. Custom-made mosaic-lined tub and glass enclosed shower in the master bathroom. Outdoor shower beside indoor shower in the pocket garden by the master bathroom.





RIGHT: The ultimate man-cave. Victor's underground garage does multiple duty as a gym, workshop, bar and private movie theater. Over the row of sofas along the wall are windows that look into the swimming pool. Past the bar, a sauna is almost complete. **ABOVE:** The man of the house on the revolving floor of his garage.

done, which I especially like," Victor says, referring to a *kris*.

Scattered among this exotica now are bikes, a playhouse, toy cars.

As Victor noted, a child has redirected the work in progress that is this home. "I'm thinking of transforming the second-floor balcony to a playroom," says Victor. "Sooner rather than later, my son must have a space where he can actively play in."

Among other projects around the home, Victor is having lights installed on the steps of the dramatic staircase designed by Robin. The existing lighting is too dim, Victor says. "By now, the house has understood that change is the only constant thing, and that's what I like about it. It's something that can be worked and reworked, according to how I like it."

A graduate of Civil Engineering at the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Victor knows he has the human capacity to help shape the world about him rather than simply always make do with what he is presented with. "Once, I made jewelry for Maggie, but before I could do that I had to make a small smelting furnace from stainless steel pipes," Victor fondly recalls. This explains the gas cans in his basement.

He explains, "In construction, you don't really need complicated equipment. You can make do with basic tools as long as you have a good eye. In fact, the well enhanced crane has its roots from the humble hoist."

Nodding towards the massive rotating floor, he says, "Believe it or not, I made that thing with my bare hands, out of necessity. Since we have a relatively narrow lot, there isn't enough space to maneuver the car from the ramp going down to the basement. So I had to devise something that would allow me to do that."

"My next project is to transform our existing pool to a stationary lap pool," he says. "I had to make a part of my already small pool shallow to accommodate my son, so we are now left with a smaller pool. I want something where I can swim against the current to make it worthwhile swimming. I just can't find the right supplier for a pump strong enough to do that. Now I'm tinkering with the idea that maybe a propeller is a better tool for the job." ❶

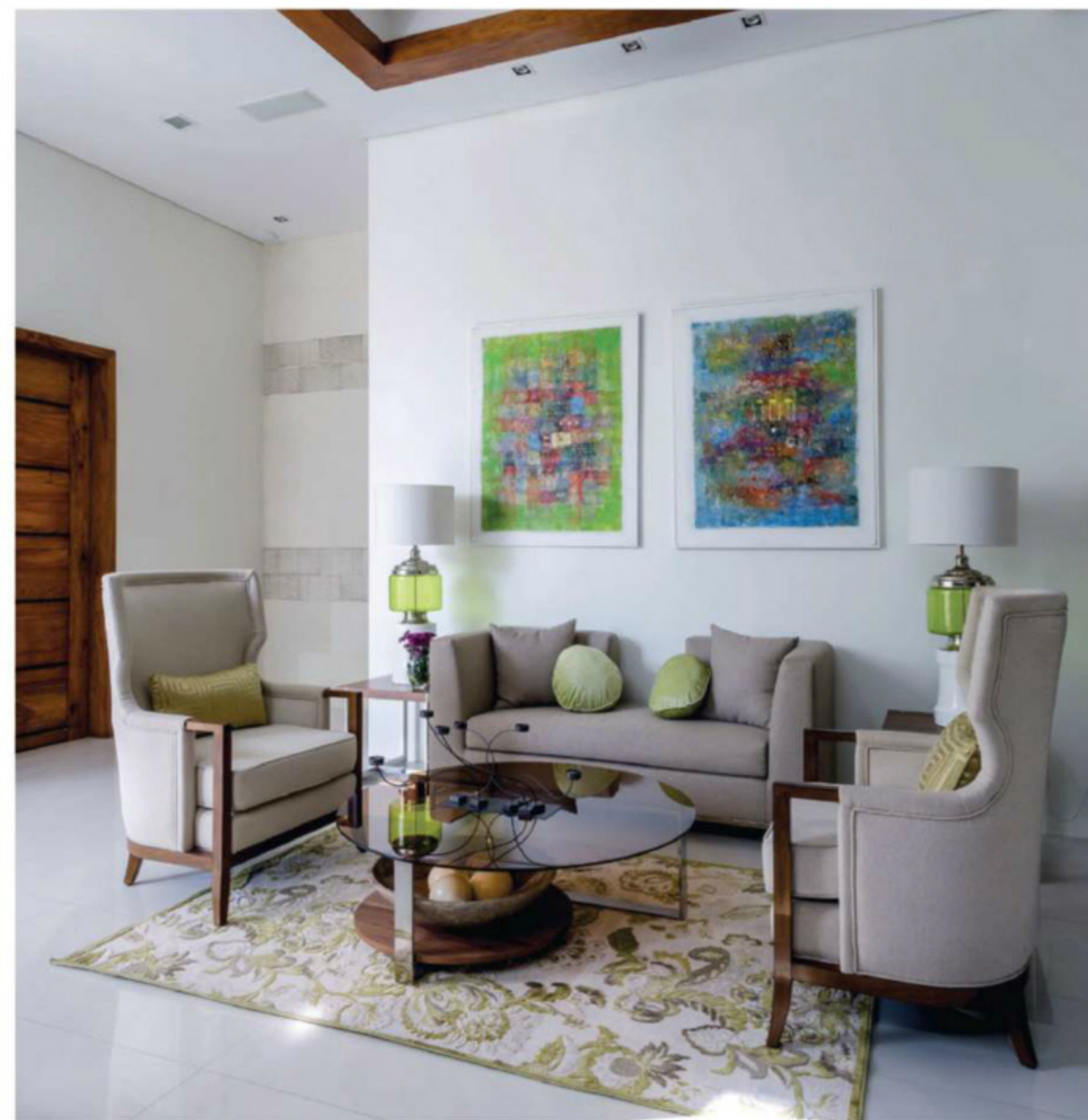




SERENE GRANDEUR

A CLOSE-KNIT FAMILY FINDS WARMTH AND COMFORT IN A CAPACIOUS SANCTUARY

BY BARRY VILORIA / PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM ONG



OPPOSITE PAGE: The main living room, framed by the key architectural features of the house: the commanding ceiling, Balinese limestone walls, and a glass wall that lets in a view of the garden. A large teak cabinet was custom-made to suit the proportions of the room. RIGHT: A secondary sitting area, styled less formally for casual tête-à-tête.



FROM THE OUTSIDE, the residence on a corner in this idyllic community appears forbidding with its mighty size. But, with the clever play between the luxury of space and light and the thoughtfully selected details of its interiors, this sprawling structure has been successfully made into a warm home.

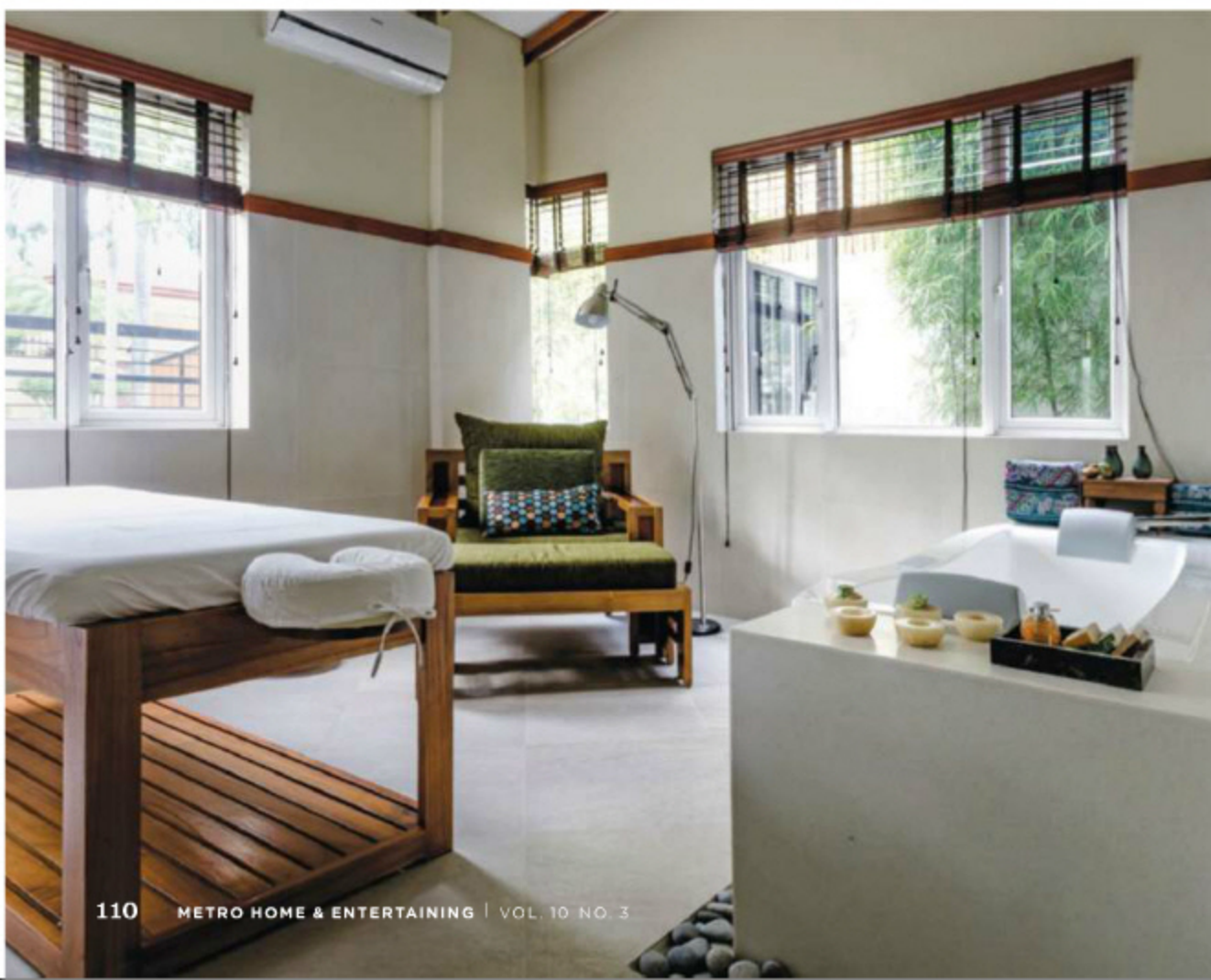
Asian aesthetic and contemporary modern

Inside, it's bright, welcoming and peaceful, this home of a widowed businesswoman and her three daughters, its varied elements testaments to the family's close relationship.

It took some time and thought for this 800-sq.m., five-floor dream home to become a reality. The family used to rent a home before finally deciding to build, commissioning Don de Guzman for the architecture and Design HQ for the interior design.

ABOVE: Sleek open kitchen crowned with a range hood that underscores the height of the space. **OPPOSITE PAGE:** The drop lamp, which was made by a rattan exporter from Cebu, adds a dramatic touch to the otherwise restrained dining area.





ABOVE: Third level sitting area, onto which the rooms of the three daughters converge. Modular sofa upholstered in an array of vividly colored graphic prints makes a bold statement.

LEFT: In the master suite, a luxuriously appointed home spa.

OPPOSITE PAGE: The lady of the house requested her bedroom be her "oasis, a sanctuary after a long day's work." The lines of the four-poster bed are reiterated by the beams on the ceiling, converging on the pair of fans that crown the room, all emphasizing the luxurious height of the space.



OPPOSITE PAGE: With its pitched ceiling and teak four-poster bed, the room of the youngest daughter echoes the master's. **ABOVE:** Cerulean velvet bed for the eldest daughter. The mural was painted by an in-house artist of Design HQ. **LEFT:** In the bathroom of the youngest daughter, an intricately carved antique panel, flanked by a pair of drawers, was used as an apron for the sink counter.

The interior design team, headed by Frenjick Quesada, with the assistance of Jobele Tee, aligned their plans with the architectural theme to create an eclectic, modern Asian look. The walls are in elegant limestone, the floor in polished ceramic, the doors and stairs in native narra. The furniture was bought here in Manila, and in Pampanga and Bali. The homeowner and her sister joined Quesada to shop in Bali.

"The client wanted us to mix the relaxed Asian aesthetic with the contemporary modern," Quesada says.

The luxury of scale is used to dramatic effect. The ground floor living room shoots all the way up to the top ceiling, a glass window on the side following suit, allowing plenty of natural light to shine through. A second sitting area is several steps farther. Next to it is an open kitchen that also emphasizes the size of space, with a range hood plummeting from on high.

The relaxation factor

The master bedroom is majestic. A four-poster bed points upward to two wooden fans descending from a deeply pitched ceiling with hefty wooden beams. Ensuite is a home spa—complete with Jacuzzi and massage beds—for the lady of the house, her sister, and friends. Directly outside the room is a patio facing a landscaped garden, accented with a fountain wall.

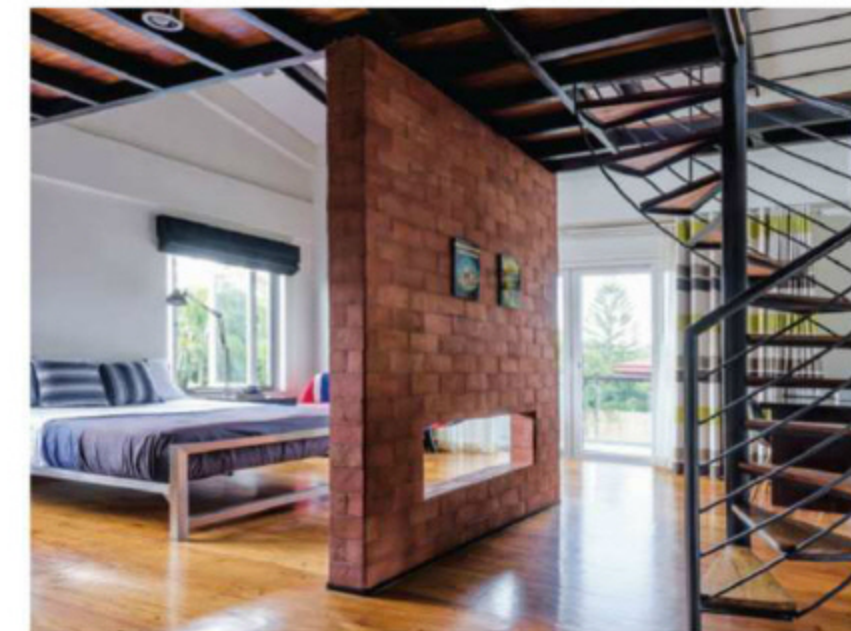
Before design work began, the three daughters also gave their own notes as to how their own rooms should look. All situated on the second floor and adjacent to each other, the three rooms lead to an



The middle daughter's room includes a loft. It bears an industrial, streamlined, less feminine look.



ABOVE: On the top level is a family room that faces a balcony.
BELOW: Brick wall in the middle child's room separates bed from the spiral staircase that leads to a study in the loft.



entertainment area and a terrace.

The eldest daughter's room radiates feminine grace, with vibrant colors like pink and turquoise, and murals of birds on twigs on the wall. The middle daughter's room is classic but bold, in shades of blue, brown and gray. The youngest daughter went with a tropical vibe, with a large tribal mask, dragonfly figures and colorful lanterns.

The lavish scale of the rooms is also underscored with striking accents. In the main living room, a huge resin wheel instantly draws attention. Another one appears at the entrance of the master bedroom. Hanging over the dining table is a stunningly large abaca light fixture.

One of two guest rooms is situated near the master bedroom. It is reserved for other members of the extended family (especially the owner's elderly mom). There is another guest room on the second floor. At the top floor is a common room that faces a terrace. There is no television or stereo or anything other than couches, air bags, and throw pillows, making it a comfy and spacious private sanctuary, where the close-knit family can bond and savor the silence.

Clearly, it is the organization of this grand space for the enjoyment of family and the pleasure of hospitality that make it a beautiful home. 11



OPEN SANCTUARY

PRECISE PLANNING AND LOVE
FOR ENTERTAINING RENDER 'WALL-LESS'
VISTAS IN A MODERN TROPICAL VILLA

BY ANNA M. ROSETE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM ONG

Living and dining areas are enveloped in glass partitions that can completely slide into walls so that they "disappear." Furniture is by Primafil. Objects are heirlooms from the wife's grandmother.



ONCE THE NARRA DOORS OPEN into the interiors of this home, a quiet sea of immaculate, creamy travertine tiles usher guests into a spacious open lanai.

"Would you like some iced tea? We have wonderful iced tea here," the mother of the man of the house asks. Here, in this modern villa, she lives, with her son, his wife and their three children. Soon, the iced tea is served, along with tall glasses of iced water, cocooned in crocheted cozies, which she designed herself.

On a hot Manila summer afternoon, the iced tea is a welcome balm to the senses and so, too, is the experience of being in this resort-like home.

Meticulous detailing

Open to the outdoors and airy, the home is a collaboration between the owner, an engineer, his wife, and his brother, Architect Ramon Maria "Monchu" Gonzalez.

"The planning and building of this house came after several years of building for clients. I know exactly what kind of house we wanted. With the help of Monchu, our vision became a reality," says the engineer.

A list of requirements informed the design direction during the process of collaboration for the residence's design. Topping the list was a consideration for cross-ventilation. "It started with an exchange of ideas in 2009 and a few drafts, which eventually led to an open and contemporary tropical home. Very resort-like," says the lady of the house.

The owner left no detail to chance. Meticulous detailing honored the request for openness and air, resulting in clever design decisions whose execution was put in the expertise of Conmech Construction and Development Corporation. In the public areas, the partitions between each of the rooms, which serve a public function, clue one into the engineer and architect's thoughtful implementation of the design concept. Impressive sliding glass doors encased in hard wood, span-



ABOVE: Creamy travertine tiles make up the floor of the lanai which can be protected from the elements by a shade mechanism. **BELOW:** Framed in wood, glass partitions slide along a track that is concealed in the ceiling design. **RIGHT:** 12-seater square dining table in the main pavilion with a deeply pitched ceiling of stained wood.





LEFT: Kitchen designed by SieMatic echoes openness of the house plan. By the long kitchen island a more casual dining area. **ABOVE:** In the den across the main pavilion, the outdoors are reflected by a bar with mirrored cabinet fronts. The rattan set is from E. Murio.

ning 8 meters in width and 2.7 meters in height move along a hidden track concealed into ceiling details, which soar to exuberant heights in a pitched tent formation. These sliding doors can be pulled all the way back into the walls, allowing for the complete absence of barriers from room to room. This results in open views of the house through and through. And when these doors are closed for air conditioning, you still have unimpeded view of the garden.

The open concept extends to the powder room, behind massive narra doors. The vanity area looks over a pond that spans the powder room's length, creating a rather sexy, free and uninhibited feel to the space. Its gray tones, in wall covering, floor tiles and a collection of charcoal prints by Anita Magsaysay-Ho, offer a contemplative complement to the greens outside.

The procession of flowing spaces includes the den, the only room in the house that enjoys a dash of color. Inspired by a safari theme, the lady of the house discreetly incorporated animal patterns to liven up the space, which is used by the family for their entertainment.

Thorough planning

The precision in planning of the house lent itself down to the last detail of interior and garden design.

"The house's construction started in March of 2010. By April of 2011, we moved in," the lady of the house says. Her contentment with the process owed to careful planning and strategy.

"We had the furniture custom-made for the home. As the house was being constructed, we made all of our orders from Primafil," she says.

In similar fashion, the garden's lush greenery is courtesy of disciplined preparation. "Ed Santiago of Velvets and Blooms took us on a field trip to Bulacan to choose the plants," she says. "Gardening is my mother-in-law's expertise. She propagated [the plants] in the lot next door during construction. By the time we moved in, the plants were ready," she says.

Hence, merely two years after the home's completion, tired and weary eyes are able to rest on the canvas of picturesque verdant greens in the tropical garden vista.

Family mementoes

For this family, time spent entertaining loved ones are prized moments. Their home's open spaces allow them to gather family

The home merges indoor and outdoor living. Outdoor sitting area next to the indoor formal living and dining area. The large scale rattan sofa set contrasts with an antique Chinese cabinet.





and friends for celebrations.

"Last Christmas, I hosted the party for my side of the family. They were all here," the wife says.

This fondness for their closest, most cherished relationships is also reflected in the home's décor. "Much of the decorative accessories were from my *lola*," the lady says. "She moved in with my parents, and gave me some of her pieces," she continues.

A glance up at the house from the garden shows massive antique carabao jars on a ledge on the upper level. "The jars are from my mother-in-law. She collected enough of them so that she could pass them on to each of her children," says the lady.

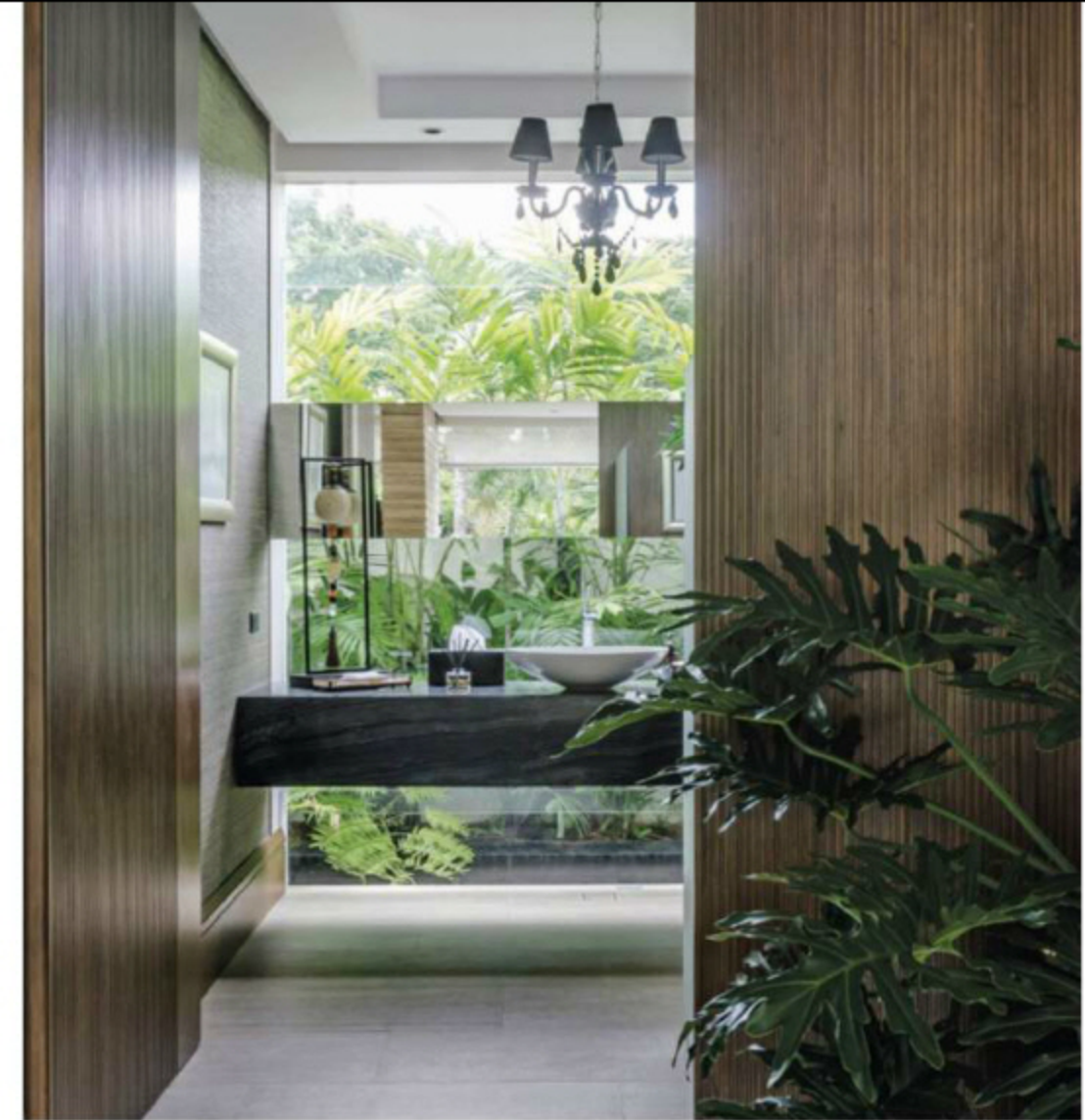
The kitchen by SieMatic is a further testimony to the family's love

of entertaining. In the middle is a large island where the food is spread out in preparation for the meals, which are served in the dining room that boasts of a 12-seater dining table. In the pantry, heirloom crockery and serveware are lined up in an orderly fashion.

The house's over-all scheme lets the outdoors in. The lady of the house's manner of decorating shows that she literally picks the best of nature's offerings from her garden to bring color into the neutral interiors. On the coffee table in the lanai, a water-filled crystal bowl floats flowers from a flame tree, neatly arranged into a yin-yang pattern. Also in this area, a table is festooned with the fruits from a betel nut tree.

All these gifts from nature have made their way into the house, in harmony with its grand design. 🌿

LEFT: In the mother-in-law's bedroom, a view of garden flora is echoed by framed botanical prints on the headboard wall. RIGHT: The powder room is concealed by dramatically scaled and heavy narra doors. The counter looks out to a fern fringed pond. BELOW: A splash of red in the den along with a peppering of animal prints that underscore a safari motif.



the Luxury of Travel



gardens

Beautiful blue bloomer

The blue iris is emerging as a new garden favorite. This once locally rare *Neomarica* is now available in garden shops around Metro Manila. The large blue flower is more impressive-looking than the smaller blooms of the more common yellow iris or *Neomarica longifolia*. The large fan-shaped growth appears more structured than the slender leaves of the yellow variety. Blue iris is perfect as potted specimens or landscape massing plants for a tropical garden. Large clumps can be purchased in Greenhouse 2 and 3 shops at the Manila Seedling Bank compound.



Playful clay sculptures

These homemade clay sculptures depicting playful children and farm animals would make whimsical additions to any garden. They're fun, and the fine details make them eye-catching focal points for a garden. The group of red pigs would be delightful conversation pieces near a sitting area or on a garden tabletop. The terra cotta pigs and several other playful clay sculptures are sold by Brenda's Garden at the Centris weekend market.



Naturally synthetic

AMC Trading, based in Cebu, introduces its version of plastic imitations of native tropical construction materials like thatch, a variety of weaves and even bamboo. The PVC and polyethylene are all imported but woven locally. These alternatives present a more durable and maintenance-free option for gazebos, fences and other hardscape elements. For a complete selection of their products, visit www.amc-trading.com or contact Ana Maria Climaco at 0920-9075988 or email ac@amc-trading.com.



Philippine Horticultural Society president Dorie Bernabe's garden in Pansol, Laguna, is filled up to the brim with ornamental plants. Structures are almost obscured from view by walls of green. OPPOSITE PAGE: Dorie's first love, cactus and succulents, sheltered from high humidity and the rain by a polycarbonate greenhouse.



THE GARDENER'S HAVEN

A LIFETIME PASSION
FOR PLANTS IN
SPECTACULAR DISPLAY

BY PATRICK GOZON
PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM ONG



LEFT: In one corner of the property, several bonsai trees were arranged to receive the maximum amount of sunlight they need. Dorie has an impressive bonsai collection distributed in various spots around the garden. BELOW: A mother and child stone sculpture, flanked by colorful bromeliads and flowering plants, livens up a shady spot underneath a large variegated *pandan*. OPPOSITE PAGE: The matriarch's favorite sitting area is nestled beneath the shade of a large Indian mango tree. Light filters through the large branches and Dorie's extensive collection of *Tillandsia* bromeliads.



PANSOL IN CALAMBA, LAGUNA, is an ideal place to grow tropical ornamental plants. The area was popular in the '70s and '80s as a resort and recreation destination close to Metro Manila. Known for cool weather and the crisp mountain breeze from looming Mt. Makiling, it is blessed with excellent climate for plant cultivation.

Today, Pansol is rivaled by adjacent towns as a resort destination. The once-favored swimming establishments may be gone, but the district remains a haven for plant hobbyists and collectors. Being near the agriculture and horticulture institutes in the University of the Philippines campus in Los Baños (UPLB), it is where you can find the farms of reputable plant nurseries as well as landscaping experts. And this is where you will find the one-of-a-kind garden of Adoracion Bernabe, incumbent president of the Philippine Horticultural Society (PHS).

True plant lover

Dorie, as most PHS members fondly call her, has nurtured her ornamental plant passion for over 60 years. She has built a remarkable collection envied by other plant collectors. Hers is the garden for other hobbyists to emulate, filled to the brim with prized horticultural specimens, which she has acquired and cared for over many decades.

Her romance with plants started when she was a teenager, when she bought her very first pot of cactus. She immediately got hooked collecting the numerous varieties of the spiny ornamental. In the years that followed, she expanded her interest to ornamental plants. Her serious dedication is very much evident in the plants displayed

around two separate gardens in her Pansol property.

Most would consider garden space as an after-thought—a backyard filled with plants. Some homeowners may put a premium on garden aesthetics and create the desired ambiance. But for a serious plant lover like Dorie, her garden spaces were shaped primarily to showcase and enjoy the ornamental plants she has found such a passion in collecting.

Both gardens are located at the foot of mystical Mt. Makiling. The plant collection is divided among two properties, a few lots apart from each other. When the family acquired the land 30 years ago, it was intended for a weekend home. They made simple improvements on the existing residential structure and swimming pool. Over the years, small structures like a separate kitchen and a guest house were added. Dorie concentrated on developing the surrounding gardens for her numerous plants and other gardening paraphernalia. Several gazebos were also erected to serve as sitting and lounging areas to complement the outdoor spaces.

Thematic pocket gardens

The residence is located in a smaller lot with a flat topography. The expanse was planted with several trees serving as shelter for some of the smaller plants. The trees' arbor hides vines and epiphytes underneath the network of leaves and branches. Native and exotic *Hoya* species climb the tree trunks, virtually covering barks with varying leaf shapes.



The larger of the two gardens hides the more impressive specimens. Larger bonsai, oriental sculptures and antiques are set against a backdrop of tall clumping bamboo, large palms and majestic fruiting trees.





OPPOSITE PAGE: Garlands of hanging *buhok-ni-Ester* or Spanish Moss over the volcanic rock driveway leading to the main house. At noon, sunlight creates interesting patterns on the red rock surface. **BELOW:** Dorie Bernabe. **RIGHT:** The pathway leading to the house is lined with the more precious bonsai specimens and the more delicate plants.



Flowing strands of Spanish Moss, locally called *buhok ni Ester*, hang everywhere. It is hard to imagine that the delicate strands are actually diminutive silvery *Tillandsia* bromeliads. The moss filters the strong sunlight and creates an intriguing interplay of light and shadow on the volcanic rock surface covering the driveway.

Since the house lot is more accessible to the main road, it is where Dorie chose to keep her cherished and more challenging plant species, for easier maintenance. Her small but prize-winning cactus and *Euphorbia* specimens are grown potted, sharing a sheltered growth on a roofed lanai, along with the more delicate species of *Aloe*, *Agave*, *Sansevieria*, *Haworthia*, and others.

The property's remaining open space is still large, and several sections were created as thematic gardens. In a lush tropical-inspired landscape thrive showy foliage plants as well as hardy large bromeliads like *Neoregelia*, *Alcantarea* and many more. A Japanese-inspired corner displays the precious and painstakingly shaped bonsai trees, along with Dorie's Suiseki pieces and several stone sculptures. Two ponds play host to an array of aquatic and moisture-loving plants, and to large colorful carps.

The larger among the two gardens is located a few hundred meters from the main house, where the slope of Mt. Makiling starts to become steep. The terrain is rolling, requiring the pathways to have many steps and changes in elevation. The challenging slope allows for a more interesting setup to grow and display the majority of Dorie's collection.

The much wider space accommodates more spots for the cultivation of tall impressive trees and palms. Fruit trees like *rambutan*, *lanzones*, *siniguelas*, mangoes thrive on higher ground. The seasonal produce is a delight, always a hit among Dorie's friends who visit the garden.

Beloved patron

Under the shady trees, an array of large aroids, ferns, gingers and tropical herbs benefit from the cool temperature and humidity. Healthy specimens of cacti and other succulents are out-planted into soil, with the more delicate species grown in a greenhouse. The near-perfect conditions make it easier to cultivate the large show stealers that Dorie displays in annual garden shows and ornamental plant exhibits.

Though Dorie spends most of her time in Manila, she makes sure to visit the Pansol garden regularly to check up on her plant collection.

Because of her dedication, Dorie is regarded by her peers and plant aficionados as gardening's beloved patron. She is a member of almost all the horticulture organizations and societies, and is very active in their events.

Agriculture journalist Zac Sarian has nicknamed Dorie the "plant nut," which she lightheartedly accepts. "It is probably true," she chuckles. "I really can't help liking the plants when I see them."

Her much-loved plants appreciate the care back as they reward her with a vibrant glow. Dorie is a picture of contentment in her garden. She is radiantly immersed in her element. **11**

World on a plate

THE CHILD WITHIN US will always be fascinated with miniatures. Be it a small die-cast car, a model kit or a diorama, the intricacy and diminutive details never fail to arouse interest.

Miniature gardens have an honorable pedigree. They are used in landscape architecture. A garden, after all, is a recreation of a natural landscape in

smaller scale and in a confined space. Miniatures are also found in Asian traditions. The Chinese *pen-jing* and Japanese bonsai replicate natural scenery in much smaller sizes.

Here are some design ideas for creating miniature vignettes as tabletop gardens. Combinations can be as varied as the landscapes you find around the world.



LANDSCAPES FOR A TABLETOP

BY **PATRICK GOZON**
PHOTOGRAPHS BY **IAN CASTAÑARES**

1

‘C’est la vie’

One of the most popular landmarks reproduced in miniature is the Eiffel Tower. It has become synonymous with what the city of Paris stands for—love, romance, culture, art, etc. The Parisian life is recreated for a tabletop garden using artful and romantic elements revolving around a brass replica of the Eiffel Tower. A selection of miniature shabby-chic accessories evokes a cozy, covetable view of *la tour Eiffel*. The look is completed using a variety of Mediterranean-inspired succulents like *Aloe*, *Haworthia* and *Euphorbia*, planted in miniature terra cotta pots. Brass Eiffel Tower from Dapitan Flea Market. Furniture miniatures, pots and boxes from the home section of Landmark Department Store. Wood easel, National Bookstore. Kokuyo sketch pad, Fully Booked. Plants from various shops in Manila Seedling Bank.

2

Concrete and steel jungle

A strong contrast of materials makes a solid statement. The metallic sheen of miniature buildings is set against the silver hue of *Tillandsia* species, presenting a contrast between industrial technology and nature. The buildings mimic the skyline of cosmopolitan New York, with elements recalling the iconic Empire State Building and a few other Art Deco skyscrapers. The structured geometries are complemented with an array of epiphytic *Tillandsia* bromeliads native to the tropical Americas. Different *Tillandsia* varieties like *T. ionantha*, *T. stricta* ‘Cotton Candy’, *T. fasciculata* and *T. var. ‘Victoria’* are becoming popular to plant collectors and even to florists as cut flowers or ornamental plants for interiorscaping. Metallic ceramic buildings, decorative ball and copper-colored tray, Our Home. The different *Tillandsia* plants are from various shops at the Centris weekend market.



3

Japanese sandbox

The Japanese have perfected the art of recreating miniatures. They have achieved perfection in wood craft, and in the implements of daily life, including children's toys. Simple beauty is achieved using smooth lines, form and texture. Wood miniatures of old Tokyo are set on a contemplative Zen garden. The look is basic yet very Japanese. The elements suggest old but evoke contemporary. The wood Edo Playset is from Muji. Tall wooden pagoda was found in a Japanese surplus stall in Centris Market. The sandbox is a candle holder, available at SM Home Furnishing section.



4

Across the pond

Another Big Apple vignette, this time in white. The tabletop garden draws inspiration from a famous lake in Central Park. Ceramic candleholders evoking iconic New York buildings, including the Chrysler Building, are paired with a wide ceramic bowl serving as the mini pond focal point. In the pond are water plants and floating candles. Deep red earth star bromeliads (*Cryptanthus varians*) provide the unusual greens. Ceramic candleholder buildings from *Our Home*. Ceramic bowl from Dapitan flea market. *Cryptanthus* plants from the Centris weekend market.



5

Shanghai old and new

Two simple *penjing* dish gardens use striated stone, black volcanic sand and dish garden staples *Fittonia verschaffeltii* (snail plant) as the stage to juxtapose the old and the new in China. The setup mimics the eternal Yangtze River and surrounding mountains. Traditional fishing culture is represented using dish garden ornaments like a miniature pergola, Chinese junk boats and fishermen. The very contemporary Shanghai tower and metal wire balls reflect the new, and complete the look. Bonsai pots, rocks, sand and plants from shops around Manila Seedling Bank. Shanghai tower ceramic miniature and metal wire balls from *Our Home*. Bonsai ornaments, stylist's own collection.



6

African safari

The playful vignette of African animals brings back strong memories of the child visiting the zoo. The fascination for the animals would have led to us owning wildlife figurines at one point in our childhood. Elephants, giraffes, lions and zebras march through the African savannah. A picture frame depicting the baobab tree is used as a backdrop while metal candle holders and potted *Sansevieria bacularis* reinforce the vertical element, contrasting the horizontality. *Schleich* wildlife figures, *Hobbes* and *Landes*. Framed baobab tree from Landmark home furnishing section. Pots and candelabra from Dapitan flea market. *Sansevieria* plants from Centris weekend market.

La Vita Italiana

THE TRAVEL ISSUE



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entertaining

Pasilyo

Artist Plet Bolipata-Borlongan assembled a collection of plates, crockery and jams in Pasilyo, a country store nestled in the mango orchards of Casa San Miguel, San Antonio, Zambales. Her inventory of finds is from an assortment of places, and their common denominator is that they all caught Plet's fancy. From charming bistro plates to ones fashioned from bamboo fabric, Plet has a small sampling in this quaint country store. *Achieve the charming mixed and matched look with plates and crockery from Pasilyo, Casa San Miguel, San Antonio, Zambales. Open Saturdays and Sundays, 1-6 p.m. -AMR*



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One-pot feasts

ALWAYS A SPECTACLE,
INTERACTIVE,
AND PERFECT IN
WET WEATHER

BY CYRENE DE LA ROSA

“TAGINE,” WHICH MEANS “STEW,” is the most famous dish of Morocco. The name comes from the special earthenware vessel with a distinctive pointed cover in which it is cooked.

Thanks to the dynamic husband-and-wife team of Martin and Madonna English, Filipinos can now enjoy the exotic flavors and spices of Morocco in their souk-inspired, Moroccan restaurant aptly named Kasbah at the Fort Strip or in its older, more laidback sibling in Boracay.

According to Madonna, who also designs Kasbah’s menu, you don’t even really need to use a tagine clay pot to whip up this fragrant, North African dish, an easy to assemble one-pot dish that is great eaten with couscous.

Kasbah Restaurant and Bar: The Fort Strip, 7th Ave., cor. Katipunan Circle, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig. Tel. 553-4499.

RIGHT: Madonna English in Kasbah at the Fort. BELOW: Orchestra of ingredients that goes into the famed Moroccan stew.



RIGHT: Preserved lemons, an essential ingredient. Photographs by Paul del Rosario. LEFT: Moroccan tagine by Lanelle Abueva-Fernando

Moroccan Chicken Tagine (Serves 2-3)

- 3 Tbsp olive oil
- 3 red onions, thinly sliced lengthwise
- 3 garlic cloves
- 2 tsp ground ginger
- 2 tsp ground cumin
- 1/2 tsp saffron, in a little warm water
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- Juice of 1 lemon
- 2 small preserved lemons
- 2 Tbsp chopped parsley
- Small bunch of fresh coriander, chopped
- 6 chicken thighs
- 3 Tbsp green olives
- Salt

1. Heat a tagine or heavy-bottomed, shallow, lidded pan over low heat and add the oil, followed by a layer of onion. Mash the garlic with 1/2 tsp salt, and add to the pan.
2. Sprinkle over the ginger, saffron water and cinnamon, followed by the lemon juice, and coarsely chopped pulp of one preserved lemon and the rind of both, cut into slivers. Add the parsley and 2 Tbsp chopped coriander, and toss it all together well.
3. Arrange the chicken on top, and scatter over the olives. Pour 300ml water into the pan, cover tightly and simmer very gently for about 45 minutes or until the chicken is cooked through.
4. Season with salt to taste, and top with the remaining coriander.



Chiri-nabe / Seafood and Vegetable Hot Pot

Serves 2-3

- 90 g salmon fillets
- 90 g lapu-lapu fillets
- 3 pcs or 290 g prawns
- 1 block (80 g) soft tofu
- 8 pcs (20 g) shiitake mushrooms
- 20 g enoki mushroom
- 30 g oyster mushroom
- 100 g spinach
- 160 g Chinese cabbage
- 30 g bamboo shoot
- 120 g sotanghon
- 2 stalks Naganeji or long onions (substitute leek if unavailable)
- Ponzu soy sauce for dipping (available in Japanese grocery stores)

FOR KOMBU DASHI:

- 4 cups kombu (dry kelp) 10 in x 5 in
- 4-5 cups water

TO MAKE KOMBU DASHI (VEGETARIAN STOCK):

- Put water and kombu in a pot, warm over medium heat.
- Just before water begins to boil, kombu will expand and tiny bubbles will form. Remove pot from heat and allow stock to sit 10 minutes.
- Remove kombu from stock (now Kombu Dashi). Use immediately or store in a sterile container for 3-4 days.

TO COOK CHIRI-NABE OR SEAFOOD AND VEGETABLE HOT POT:

- Slice salmon and lapu-lapu into bite-sized pieces.
- Cut tofu into 8 pieces. Remove stems from mushrooms and score a crisscross pattern on each cap.
- Cut the cabbage into 2-inch lengths.
- Cut leeks or onions diagonally into 1-inch lengths. Decoratively arrange above ingredients on a large platter.
- Place a portable gas or electric stove on the dining table. Bring Kombu Dashi to a boil in a shallow skillet. Add seafood first, then tofu and vegetables a few at a time. Skim off foam periodically. The most delicate foods (such as tofu) should be cooked just before you eat them. Watch them carefully and pull them out quickly. Otherwise, they'll overcook and fall apart.
- Eat ingredients as they finish cooking, dipping them into Ponzu soy sauce.



ABOVE: Yurakuen Chef de Partie Louie Rocela. Photographs by Ian Castañares.



THE FRIENDSHIP DISH

In Japan, *Nabemono* or Japanese hot pot dishes are cooked in a pot of simmering broth at the table. Fresh and raw ingredients are arranged on platters so that each person can cook what he or she likes. Then everyone helps themselves from the communal stew pot, sharing the meal in the most convivial manner.

Nabemono dishes are most popular in the late fall and winter months. But a few varieties like the ubiquitous Beef Sukiyaki, known in Japan as the “friendship dish” because of its wide appeal to foreigners, can be found all year round.

In this issue of **Metro Home**, the chefs of Yurakuen, Diamond Hotel’s award-winning Japanese restaurant, graciously share simplified versions of two of its most popular (available all year round) hot pot dishes, for you to cook and enjoy at home.

Yurakuen Japanese Restaurant: Diamond Hotel, Roxas Blvd., cor. Dr. J. Quintos St., Malate, Manila. Tel. 528-3000 loc. 1127.

Sukiyaki

(Adapted from a Yurakuen recipe)

Serves 2-3

- 200 g beef sirloin, thinly sliced
- 60-70 g beef suet, sliced into 2-inch strips
- 200 g Chinese cabbage, sliced into 2-inch strips
- 100 g *Shungiku* (chrysanthemum leaves; or substitute spinach or mustard greens, sliced into 2-inch strips)
- 150 g seared firm tofu, sliced
- 1 stalk *Negi* (Japanese scallion), sliced thinly
- 1 pack *Ito konnyaku* or *shirataki* noodles (jelly-like noodles), cooked according to package instructions
- Assorted mushrooms such as *shiitake*, *enoki* and *shimeji*, stalks trimmed
- 3 stalks leeks,
- 1 1/2 c Kombu dashi (ingredients and procedure in previous recipe)
- 2-3 organic eggs, lightly beaten, in one bowl per diner (for dipping)

- Bring ingredients to a simmer, then set aside.
- Arrange cut-up vegetables and noodles on a serving platter. Lay out the beef strips on a separate dish.
- On a portable burner placed at the center of the dining table, heat a heavy-bottomed skillet (alternatively, use an electric skillet). Sweat suet in the skillet, spreading the oil around. Add a few beef strips and a few tablespoons of sukiyaki sauce. Push the beef to one side. Pour in just enough dashi to cover the bottom of the skillet, and add remaining sukiyaki sauce. Put in vegetables, noodles and then the meat, eating as each cooks.
- You can dip each cooked ingredient in beaten egg just before eating. The egg that attaches to the ingredient will cook lightly in its heat.

SUKIYAKI SAUCE

- 200 ml sake
- 100 ml mirin
- 100 ml light soy sauce
- 4 Tbsp sugar

CLOCKWISE FROM RIGHT: Chef Marc Aubry in his Champêtre restaurant. The classic of French cuisine. Simple ingredients in elegant combination. Photographs by Ian Castañares.



‘FRENCH BULALO’

Pot-au-Feu, a one-pot dish symbolic of French cuisine, and considered a meal in itself, refers to a French dish of meat and vegetables slowly cooked in water. Any combination of meat and vegetables can be used, and the mix usually varies according to the region. The allure of this French dish is the flavorful soup that is greatly enhanced by the use of a good variety of beef cuts and bones with lots of marrow.

Champêtre chef and owner Marc Aubry, who hails from the Champagne region of France, generously shares his rustic take on this comforting French classic that he fondly calls the “French Bulalo.” It’s a dish that he recently added to his restaurant’s ala carte menu, and he highly recommends that we try it on a cold, rainy night. 🍲

Champêtre: G/F, Net One Center Bldg., 26th St., cor. 3rd Ave., Fort Bonifacio, Taguig. Tel. 815-8801 to 02.

Champêtre’s Pot-au-Feu (Serves 4)
Prep time: approximately 3 1/2 hours, including cooking time

- 4 thick pcs or 1 kilo beef shank with bones**
2 big carrots
2 big turnips
4 leeks
2 big onions
1 large head cabbage
4 big potatoes
4 sprigs thyme
8 bay leaves
50 g parsley
100 g butter
Salt to taste
Black peppercorn to taste
Water as needed
1. Put the beef in a pot and cover with cold water. Bring to a boil for 3 minutes, remove meat and rinse in cold water.

2. Cut the beef into big cubes, and keep the bone and marrow aside.

3. Trim, clean, peel and wash all vegetables. Cut the vegetables into big chunks and place them in a big pot, except the potatoes.

4. Add the blanched meat, 100 g butter, the thyme, bay leaves and salt and pepper. Top again with cold water and bring to a gentle simmer. Let simmer for around 30 minutes then remove all vegetables from the broth.

5. Add the cut potatoes and the bone marrow to the broth and simmer for about 20 minutes. Remove the potatoes and bone marrow, and put back the meat and the broth on the stove to simmer another 2 hours.

6. Now that everything is cooked, put back in what you removed from the broth, and cool down. Keep it refrigerated overnight as this dish is better when reheated.

7. To serve: Bring the Pot-au-Feu to a simmer for 10 minutes, then just as you are about to serve it, add another 100 g butter and chopped parsley. Stir well and serve piping hot. Serve with dark bread, fresh butter and Dijon mustard. Now all that is left is to enjoy it. *Bon appetit!*



Back in time

THE CHARM OF YORE

BY CHRISTIAN REGIS
PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM ONG



Page 62 Distinctly traditional Filipino style in the architecture and interiors of the Antipolo home of dance guru Ligaya Fernando-Amilbanga



Old GE electric fan, P12,800. Old bench from Samar, P6,800. Pre-colonial terra cotta bowl from Batangas, P6,800, all PNKY.

Skeleton figure, P5,800, Ching Dynasty exportware bowl, P14,800, both PNKY. Wood and wrought iron table, P18,500, Sifra. China Plate, P14,800, PNKY.



Capiz window screen, P18,500, Sifra

Glamorous modern

SIMPLICITY AND SOPHISTICATION



Page 106 Neutral palette, restraint of line and pattern in a home by Design HQ.



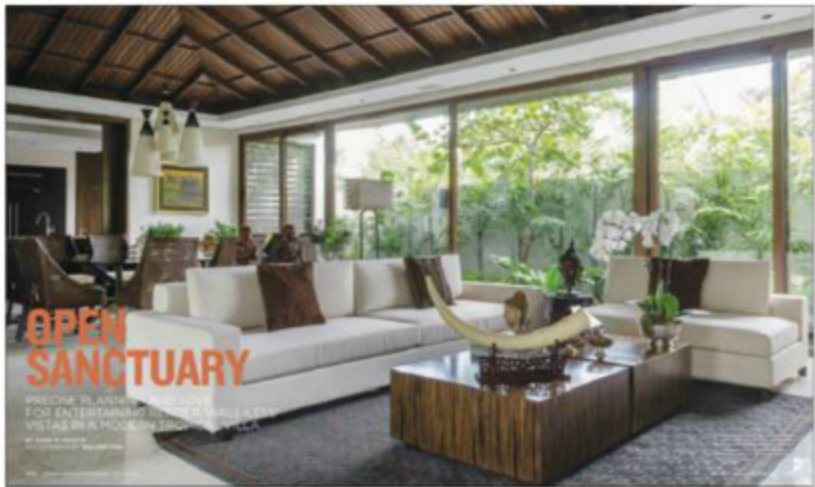
Wishbone coffee table, P17,500, Masterpiece. Round ottoman, P8,500, Biara. Bird cage, P2,400, Sifra. Striped pillow, P500, Diretso.

Blanco lounge chair, P20,000, Outdoor Solutions. Teak chest, P15,000, Diretso.

Blue vase, P7,495, tabletop Eiffel Tower, P5,495, both Sifra. Glass top table, P14,300, Biara.

Tropical retreat

ORGANIC TEXTURES,
DISCIPLINED LINES



Page 116 Openness and air in interiors that look out to lush outdoor vistas



Scorpion G Side Table, P8,500, Komodo. Marianne Lounge Chair, Price upon request, Luzon Rattan Industries.



Veronica Stool, P14,800, Haute Design. Candle Daylight Wood, P1,200, Sifra. Sol Tripod Floor Lamp, P19,395, Triboa Bay.

Woven Abaca Magazine Rack, P2,695, Sifra. Heron Statue, P5,800, PNKY.



Leads

Space encounters, Unit B Mezzanine Level, Padilla Building, F. Ortigas Jr. Rd., Ortigas Center, Pasig City. Tel. 910-8031. **L'Indochine**, 3/F, SM Aura, Taguig. Tel. 808-5620. **Pylones**, Unit R2 202 AB, Power Plant Mall, Rockwell Center, Makati. GF Space #119, Glorietta 5, Ayala Center, Makati. Tel. +63 (917) 538-1903. **La Pomme**, www.lapomme-ph.jugemcart.com. Tel. 0919-9934795; email: lapommehome@gmail.com. **Hermès Manila**, Greenbelt 3, Ayala Center, Makati. Tel. 757-8910. **Phoenix Home @ Crossings**, Shangri-la Plaza, Bautista, San Nicolas, Ilocos Norte. **Häfele**, Levi Mariano Ave., Bgy. Ususan, Taguig City. Tel. 842-3353.

Kitchen Special

ac+632, 2/F, Greenbelt 5, Legaspi St., Ayala Center, Makati City.

Tel. 758-2564, fax: 758-2597, email: ac632@pltdsl.net. **DP Valle Sash Factory** 695 Borja St., Formerly San Miguel Ave., Muzon, Taytay, Rizal; Tel. (632) 4511912, (918)8902826. **Diamond Concept, Inc.** 747 C, Raymundo, Maybunga, Pasig. Tel. 642.9951, 642.2254, 642.8732, 385.4309. **Domus** G/F Greenbelt 5, Tel. 621-5189, 621-5212. www.domus.com.ph. **Firma** Greenbelt 3, Makati City. Tel. 757-4009. **Alessi**, Lower G/F, Greenbelt 5, Legaspi St., Ayala Center, Makati. Tel. 729-9698. **La Europa** 112-G Skyrise Compound, Old Samson Rd., Balintawak, QC. Tel. (922) 878-1187 **A11**, 2680 F. B. Harrison St., Pasay City. Tel. 832-9972. **Dimensione**, Lower G/F, Greenbelt 5, Makati City. Tel. (632) 5013740. **Ezra Lifestyle**, 3/F, Greenbelt 5, Legaspi St., Ayala Center, Makati. Tel. 757-4009. **Gourdo's**, 3/F, Greenbelt 5, Legaspi St., Ayala Center, Makati.

Tel. 728-9911. **Grassroots**, 3/F, Greenbelt 5, Legaspi St., Ayala Center, Makati. Tel. 501-3980. **Miguel Aguas**, 3/F, Greenbelt 5, Legaspi St., Ayala Center, Makati. Tel. 728-0273. **Pacific Corp. Glass Corporation** Sheridan St., Mandaluyong, MM. Tel. 631-8221-23. www.pacificglass.com.ph. **Shell Canvas** 1999 Sen. Gil Puyat Ave. (Buendia Ave.), Pasay. Tel. 831-3103, www.shellcanvas.net. **Larry's Curtain and Upholstery Supply** 225 Wilson St., San Juan, Tel. (632) 396-5471 to 72 **WMP**, 3/F, Greenbelt 5, Legaspi St., Ayala Center, Makati. Tel. 621-5288; email: wmfg5@mlahomekitchen.com.

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Sifra Interiors & Objects 3/Level Greenbelt 5, 3/F, Home Zone Glorietta 4, 2/F LRI Design Plaza N. Garcia (Reposo) Bel Air 2, Makati City. Tel. 501-3220; 752-7174 email Sifra.Interiors@yahoo.com.

conradadamos@yahoo.com; **Triboa Bay** G/F LRI Design Plaza. Tel. 403-6281. **Haute Design** G/F LRI Design Plaza. Tel. 403-6281. Tel. 890-1957. **Biara**, G/F, LRI Design Plaza, N. Garcia (Reposo) Bel-Air 2, Makati City. Tel. 890-5443; email: biara_lri@yahoo.com. **Diretso Design Furniture**, 2/F, LRI Design Plaza, N. Garcia (Reposo) Bel-Air 2, Makati City. Tel. 895-1772; email: diretso@diretso.com. **Komodo Teak Furniture**, G/F, LRI Design Plaza, N. Garcia (Reposo) Bel-Air 2, Makati City. Tel. 403-0677. **Luzon Rattan**, G/F, LRI Design Plaza, N. Garcia (Reposo) Bel-Air 2, Makati City. Tel. 890-1188; email: inquiry@luzonrattan.com. **Masterpiece**, G/F, LRI Design Plaza, N. Garcia (Reposo) Bel-Air 2, Makati City. Tel. 895-0962; email: inquiry@simbulan.com.ph. **PNKY**, 2/F, LRI Design Plaza, N. Garcia (Reposo) Bel-Air 2, Makati City. Tel. 403-0392.

Gil Coscolluela

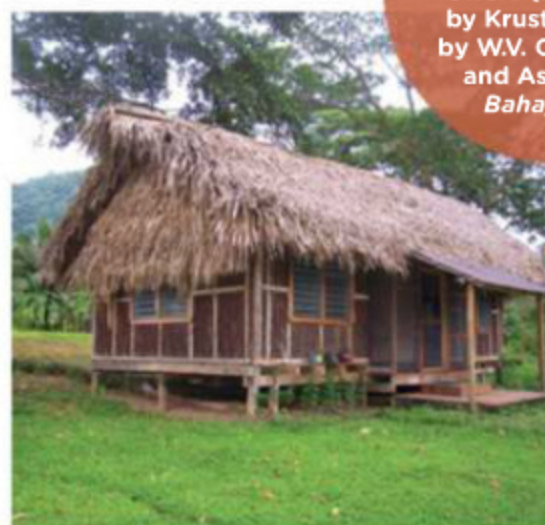
THE SECOND-GENERATION ARCHITECT IS INSPIRED BY HIS DAD, JAPANESE DESIGN AND THE 'BAHAY KUBO'



The popular architect in a home of his design. Photograph by Aldwin Aspillera



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: Geo table by Vito Selma. The Twin Towers (Photograph by Krusty Galsim), by W.V. Coscolluela and Associates. Bahay kubo.



WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT INSPIRATION? Japanese design and architecture.

WHO OR WHAT WAS THE DESIGN INFLUENCE OF YOUR CHILDHOOD? My father (William V. Coscolluela). He has been in the architectural practice for more than 50 years. Exposure to his brand of architecture and design was a natural part of my formative years.

WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE MOST COMMONLY REPEATED DESIGN MISTAKE? Designing something without properly analyzing its fabrication or construction feasibility.

IF YOU COULD CHANGE ANY PART OF THE INFRASTRUCTURE OF METRO MANILA, WHAT WOULD IT BE? Many areas of our infrastructure need improvement. I would give much priority to our roadways and bridges aside from our public transportation system.

WHAT IS YOUR DESIGN INDULGENCE? Good, comfortable and functional furniture. Whether they be an iconic or modern piece.

WHAT WOULD FOR YOU REPRESENT AN IDEALLY DESIGNED SPACE? A space that you seem naturally drawn to and where you would want to often go back.

WHAT IS OFTEN OVERLOOKED BUT IS ACTUALLY A FINE DESIGN? The *bahay kubo*.

APART FROM HIRING AN INTERIOR DESIGNER, WHAT BIT OF ADVICE COULD YOU GIVE HOMEOWNERS DISSATISFIED WITH THEIR CURRENT SPACE? HOW CAN THEY REIMAGINE IT? I usually take a step back and view the space from various angles. Not to mention, experiencing the space itself to get a better understanding of how it can work for you and complement its general surroundings. 🏠