FUTURARC

The Voice of Green Architecture in Asia-Pacific

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Hotels and Resorts

Inside: **The Sustainable Kitchen** – *Sustainable sourcing and construction* | **Dr John Keung** – *Former CEO, Building and Construction Authority, Singapore; Dean, BCA Academy, Singapore* | **Oasia Hotel Downtown** – *New frontiers of urban tropicality by WOHA* | **Resorts and Placemaking** – *Two new properties by Alila Hotels and Resorts*

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Letter from the editor

Dear *FuturArc* Readers,

In the 2015 issue on hospitality, we highlighted the contrast between resorts and urban hotels. The former celebrated *place*, a mix of materiality, climate and ecology. The latter sought to mitigate impact through, say, reduced consumption—essentially a less 'bad' version of itself.

This dichotomy persists today but there are some emerging variants.

We find out—in most projects in this issue—that placemaking and resort design are still synergistic. The Alila hotels in Indonesia and China (page 32) are a display of climate-responsive and passive design, integrated landscapes, as well as local materials and craft. The Alila in China is also an overt expression of culture. Craft is on display in the two other Indonesian projects (pages 62 and 68) and an Indian spa (page 52). Here, brick is the material *du jour* that speaks to lower impact and local skills.

In these, Green is inferred. None states categorically what has been the impact of the design approach.

In the category of urban hotels, there is one project here but it is innovative enough to set us thinking. The most striking thing about the Oasia Hotel Downtown (page 24) is its skin. The tower is clad in red mesh, an exoskeleton, which in time will be overrun by plants that the architects hope will cool the building and neighbourhood, and attract biodiversity. The Green Plot Ratio (the total surface of greenery relative to site area) is greater than 10, which is astoundingly high for a tower with little open space on the ground. And while the goals of heat mitigation and ecological hotspot are yet to be audited, the ambition is noteworthy. WOHA has shown us, as they did in PARKROYAL on Pickering before, why they are 'auteurs' of a new spirit in urban tropicality.

What is also interesting about Oasia is its typology. The tower consists of three distinct components: offices, hotel and club rooms—each clearly expressed, each with a naturally ventilated atrium. Each atrium faces a different direction so the tower reads like a series of spiralling punched-out voids. The hotel is in the mid-section of the skyscraper. It should be said that most urban hotels need space on the ground or on podium roofs for recreational and commercial areas. In Oasia, this is all packed within the geometry of a singular tower, suggesting new ways to cope in high-density situations.

In this issue, a third theme has emerged. Miriel Ko's commentary on the sustainable kitchen highlights the push for sustainable construction materials and sourcing (page 80), alluding to a changing culture of consumption. The most interesting example of this is the Kamikatz Public House in Japan (page 74). This shop and F&B outlet cum microbrewery—situated in a village in Japan—is a bold experiment in production and process. The union between goods and services (all sustainably sourced), as well as form and detail (recycled or repurposed materials) is deeply satisfying. It speaks to a deeper conviction, as if the architect and operator were the same person.

A criticism of the hospitality sector—if Greenness were to be judged by the projects in this issue—is that it does not synthesise design and operations, like Kamikatz. Why must mitigation be separate from sourcing? Why must user experience and culture be discussed in some projects and not others? In the next hospitality issue, probably in a couple of years, we will look for examples of integration. At the very least, we will report on progress made in the name of Green.

Until then, happy reading.

Dr Nirmal Kishnani
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The FuturArc Interview

Dr John Keung

Former CEO, Building and Construction Authority, Singapore; Dean, BCA Academy, Singapore

By **Dr Nirmal Kishnani & Lakshmi Menon**

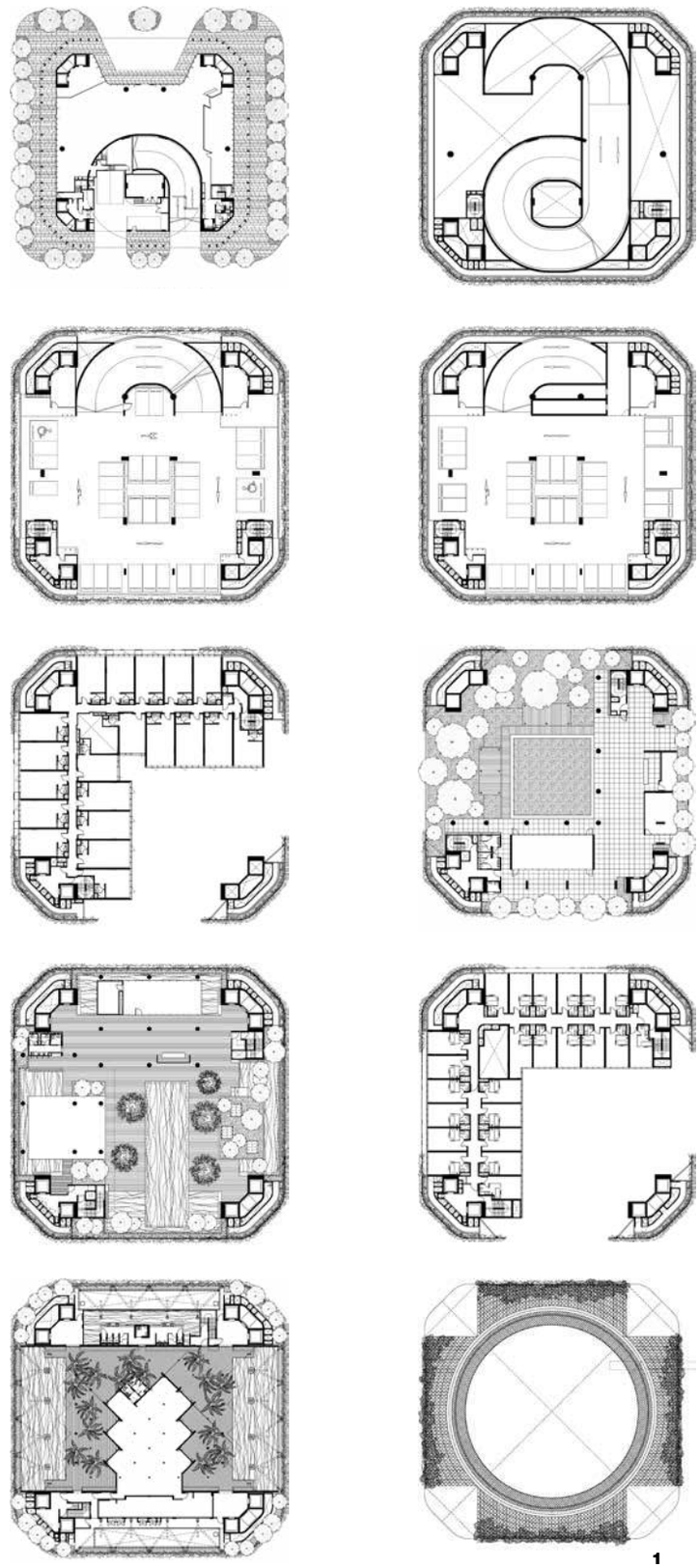
OASIA HOTEL DOWNTOWN

With several landmarks of towering heights, Singapore has no lack of sleek futuristic skyscrapers. The bustling metropolis is packed with residential estates, retail megamalls and offices. Even so, this high-density urban dot has earned itself the number one spot in the list of cities with the most trees in the world—a Green View Index of 29.3 percent[1]. This is in line with Singapore's Master Plan 2003[2], where the importance of greenery for a quality living environment has long been underscored. Oasia Hotel Downtown is a standout example of a new type of tropical skyscraper that seeks to bring flora and fauna into the city. Not only is it an urban retreat for hotel guests, it is also an oasis that brings comfort and nature to city dwellers.

BLOSSOMING FAÇADE

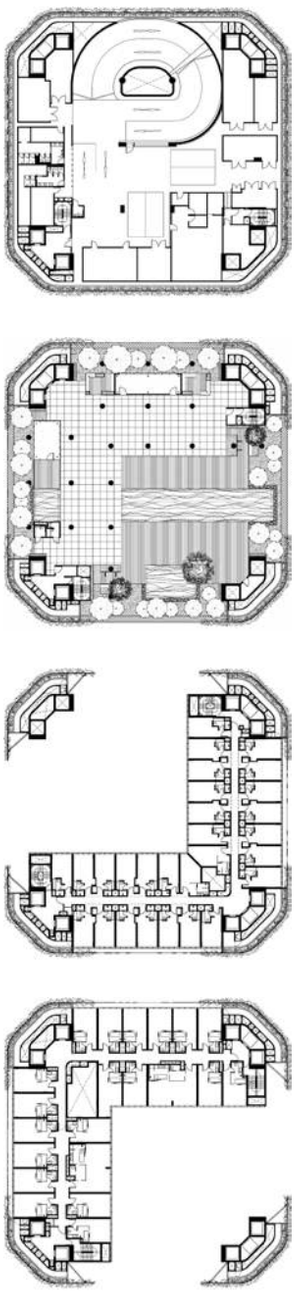
Rising in the midst of concrete and glass, the hotel boasts a distinctive permeable crimson steel façade (25,490 square metres) that encourages biodiversity against an otherwise harsh, concrete backdrop. With butting planters on every storey (a total of 1,793 planter boxes on the façade), the aim is to envelope/wrap Oasia in a layer of green foliage with a variety of bright flowers. There are 21 species of creepers distributed across the trellis, some producing flowers that will attract birds and insects at different times of the year. To maximise their adaptability, the species have been arranged on an elevation that aligns with their preferred growing conditions (amount of sunlight, resilience to wind and growth speed). The façade is extended down to the ground, creating possibilities for small animals (such as squirrels) to scale the building and settle in as a habitat—this brings another dimension to the notion of a 'living' building. Together with 33 different species of trees, there are a total of 54 species of plants within the tower that is able to support an ecosystem. This vegetated outer skin also seeks to transform and soften the surrounding landscape by offering visual relief. With the aim of creating a biophilic environment, Oasia's shell visually and psychologically engages the guests, staff and the occupants of the surrounding buildings.

This hotel bucks the trend of a sealed skyscraper—the architecture allows guests to acclimatise and experience Singapore's tropical surroundings with internal breezeways and atria, multiple sheltered terraces, sky gardens and vertical greening. It addresses the loss of green spaces in the urban fabric by achieving an overall greenery replacement of more than 10 times the site area. Embracing living systems of lush greenery and open volumes, the building is eco-friendly, humane and liveable.



1

1 Floor plans **2** The tower is a high-rise prototype for the tropical climate with a distinctive, permeable crimson steel façade



From top left to right, floor plans for: First floor, second floor, third floor, fourth floor, fifth floor, sixth floor, seventh to eleventh floor, twelfth floor, thirteenth to twentieth floor, twenty-first floor, twenty-second to twenty-third floor, twenty-fourth floor, twenty-seventh floor, roof

2

Photo by K. Kopter

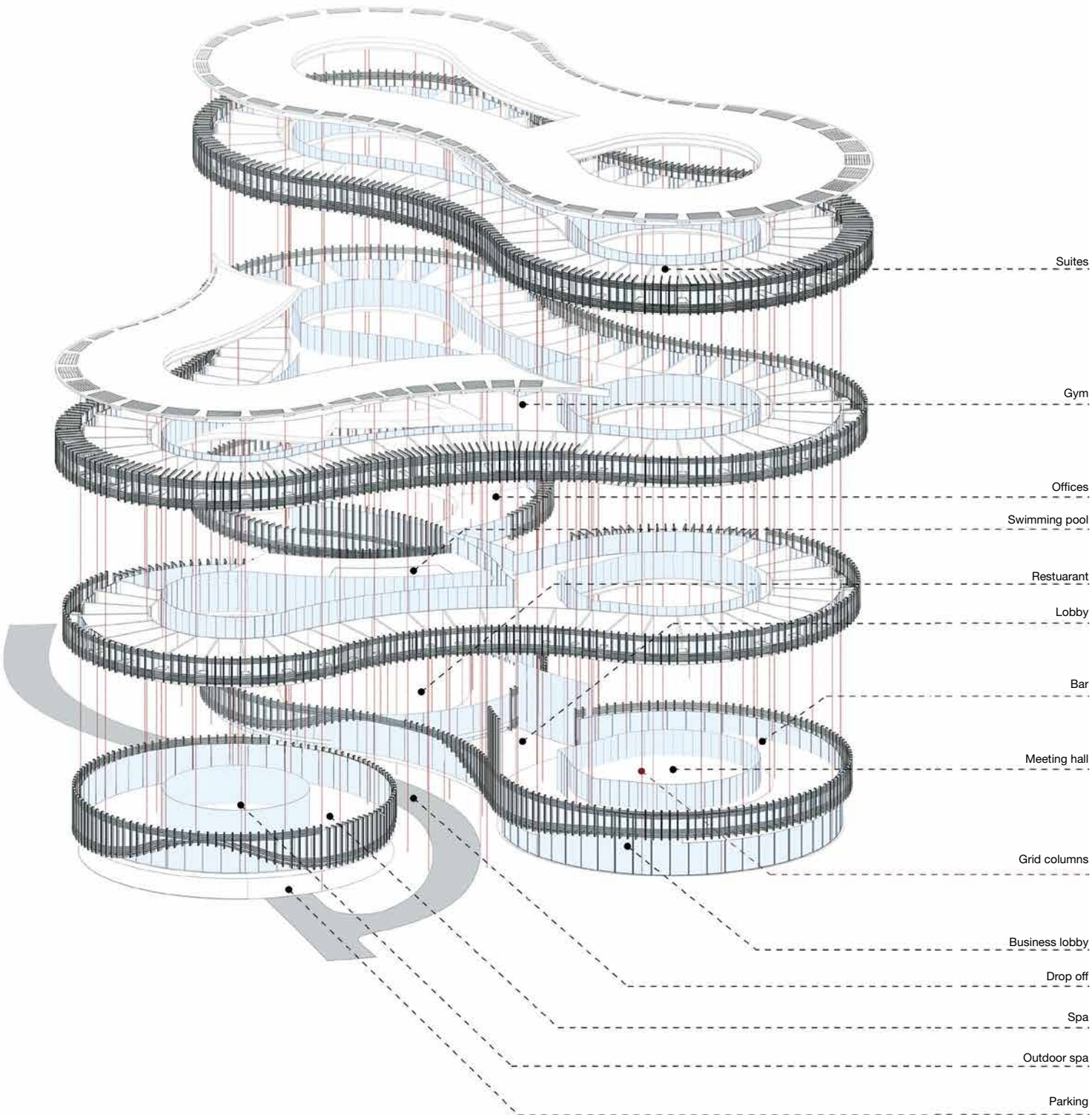
Photo by Aaron Pocock

RESORTS AND PLACEMAKING

A getaway to a resort is an ideal vacation for travellers seeking to destress from their urban hectic lifestyle, especially one that is set in a serene landscape. Not only do these resorts offer a respite for weary tourists, they attempt to fit into their localities and implement environmentally friendly initiatives that seek to conserve, respect and respond to the fragile sites. They communicate the idea of eco-tourism by offering recreational activities that are in line with the site's parameters, and offer community involvement in the construction and maintenance. In this story, we feature two resorts that are built unobtrusively into ecologically sensitive premises, and look at how they aim to be restorative developments in their respective ways.

1 Close-up view of the bespoke vertical timber screen at Alila Seminyak
2 Sweeping dark-tiled roofs that reference traditional Chinese villages at Alila Anji

Photo courtesy of Alila Hotels and Resorts


Suites
Gym
Offices
Swimming pool
Restuarant
Lobby
Bar
Meeting hall
Grid columns
Business lobby
Drop off
Spa
Outdoor spa
Parking

1

MYRTLE GARDEN HOTEL

Shaped like an infinity loop overlapping another curvilinear structure, the Myrtle Garden Hotel is a striking piece of architecture that attempts to blend into the surrounding landscape. It sits within the largest myrtle flower garden in Asia, and is partially 'inserted' into the slope of a small hill, giving it a continuity with the topography.

The façade varies in depth, depending on the orientation of the rooms, and provides natural lighting for the interior. This variation creates small balconies on the narrower zones, and extends to large terraces at the deeper parts, facilitating public spaces for movement throughout the exterior of the hotel. The balconies present a dynamic façade, where wooden panels sweep across the exterior of the four levels, enhancing the circular volumes of the hotel. Even within the boundaries of the upper part of the hotel where the guest rooms are located, the balconies will function as transitional spaces to blur the distinction between the interior and exterior, taking guests a step closer to the natural environment. The spa area will also be connected to the park to offer a private atmosphere for guests. Smaller trees will be grown on and within the façade layer in planter boxes.

1 Axonometric diagram revealing different features and uses on each level **2** Detail of a model of the wooden panels on the façade

2

ANAHA SPA AT SHREYAS RETREAT

The serene setting of the site required the design of the spa to come across as natural and 'neutral', to align well with the function and intention of a quiet retreat. Thus the architects undertook an approach that respected the physical context and natural surroundings.

The built form was designed to be less imposing and more harmonious with the landscape. For example, sinking in half the ground floor of the structure brought the building scale down, and 'pushing' the ground away from the building created a sunken court that is accessible from the salon area. 'Sliding' back the toilet block on the first floor of the gym area introduced a planter bed that acts as a screen, while managing slopes and connecting the upper floors to the ground with inclined walls that merged with the overall setting of the built form.

The spa block is climatologically designed to link the interiors with the exteriors through sunken courts and a centrally placed open-to-sky water body, which helps to maintain a cool microclimate. Several existing trees that have been retained also become a part of the open spaces and the green courts, embracing nature as a key element of the built space.

1 The use of local materials and craftsmanship offers an organic feel that is accentuated by natural daylight

Photos courtesy of Mansyur Hasan Photography

1

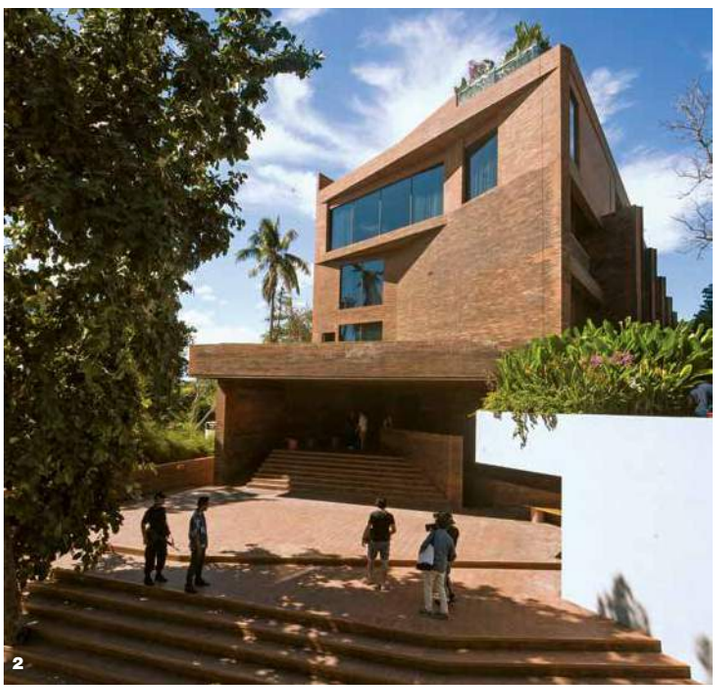
ARJUNA HOTEL BATU

Against a scenic backdrop of mountainous topography, Arjuna Hotel Batu sits quaintly along a main road. What immediately draws the eye are the seven slender building blocks perforated with irregular-sized windows; positioned seemingly randomly on the façade, the hotel exudes an almost whimsical vibe. The site planning was conceptualised as a *kampung*, an indigenous settlement that promotes social interactions. The colour scheme and materials reference nature—wood, exposed stones and Portland cement—blending the building into the surroundings.

The crimson brick walls are featured prominently on most of the façades, utilising customised handmade bricks without any sophisticated technology. Employing traditional methods of brickmaking, the architects were able to keep the material palette simple by using locally sourced and manually produced resources, thus reducing transportation costs. The project encouraged community involvement during the construction phase—collaborating with the locals, the most appropriate soil for construction was selected as the raw material to produce the bricks. The colour-mixing, moulding and drying processes were all completed on-site. The selected soil was first mixed with water and natural colouring, which included crushed tiles and plant dyes. The soil dough was then fitted into a mould. In the drying process that lasted for three days or more, the bricks were placed in an area on-site that has natural wind and shade from direct sunlight.

During the design stage, the architects were focused on respecting the site's parameters. The hotel was pushed back 16 metres from the main street, which created a public gathering space for the community with wide walkways, sitting and outdoor dining areas. With a side parking area and greenery that frames the

1 Roof ventilation **2** Detail image



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KATAMAMA HOTEL

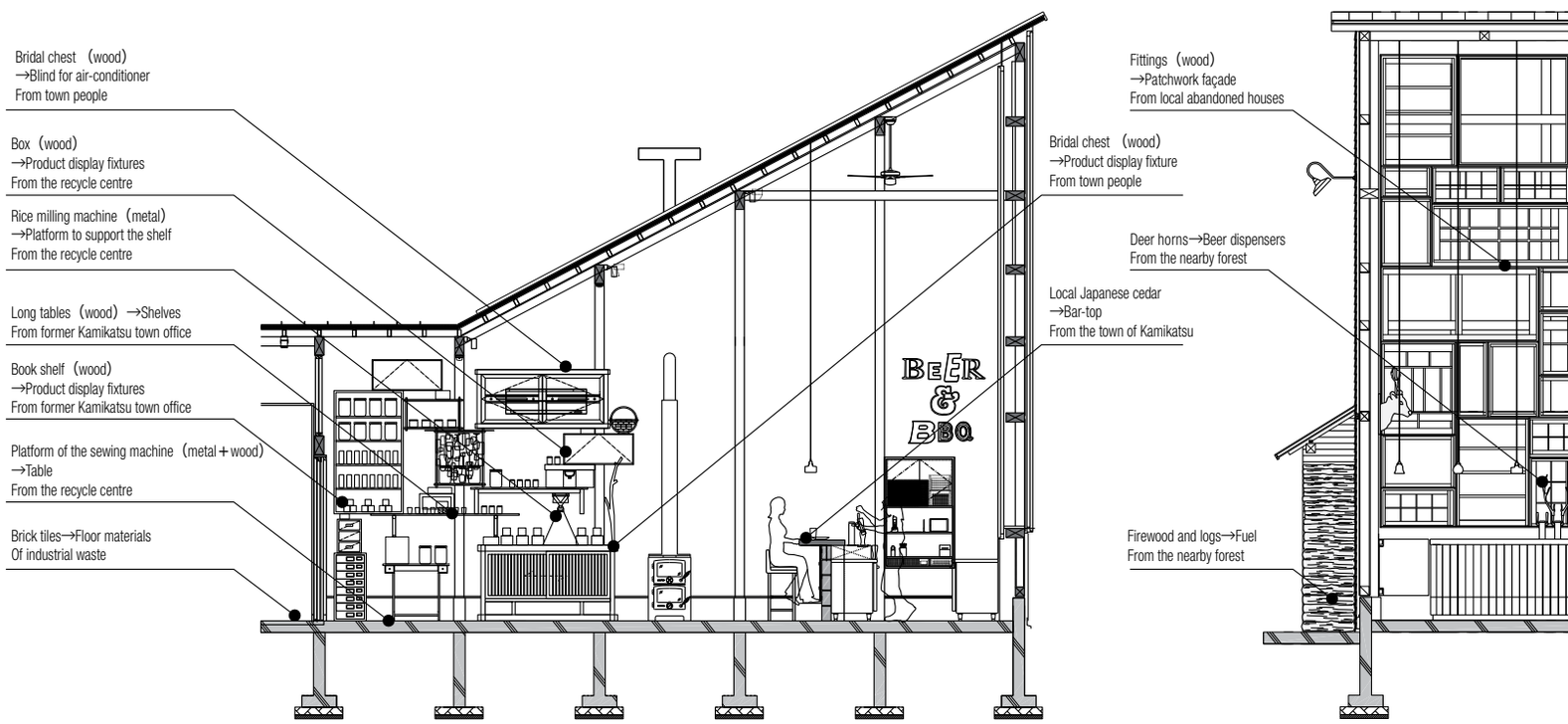
Dominated by red bricks that were intentionally left exposed, Katamama Hotel is a 58-suite boutique hotel that places an emphasis on modern designs with the use of traditional materials that are customised with local craftsmanship. The architect sought to express and embed the vernacular form of Balinese architecture in a new way, celebrating the essence of a classic Balinese building through an exploration of local materials and methods with multicoloured bricks, handmade tiles and bespoke terrazzo.

Because the hotel sits behind the famous Potato Head Beach Club—with its well-known window-shutter façade—the architect wanted to draw a marked differentiation in appearance and form. The hotel's main structure is built using red bricks, which were selected to pay homage to traditional Balinese homes and temples made up of bricks. The architect was inspired during a visit to Desa Tenganan, East Bali, where the locals use their natural resource—exposed brick—as the façade. Buildings in Bali used to be dominated by natural bricks, but have since become a rarity since they are labour intensive to make. An excellent building material for the local climate, it does not deteriorate from

1 Perforated brick screens offer shading from direct sunlight
2 Entrance of the hotel

Photo by Koji Fujii (Nacasa & Partners Inc.)

1



2

KAMIKATZ PUBLIC HOUSE

by **Y-Jean Mun-Delsalle**

Kamikatsu in the Tokushima prefecture of Japan aims to become a zero-waste, sustainable recycling town as a rejection of today's society of mass production and consumption. The mountain village town sitting along a main road has already achieved an 80 percent recycling rate by sorting its waste into 34 different categories, and used items are displayed in its recycling centre like a store. To help the town achieve its objective, a Japanese company in the private sector specialising in food hygiene, quality inspection and research, SPEC BioLaboratory, Inc., launched the Kamikatz Public House project, combining a shop selling household sundries, food and beer by weight with a microbrewery and a pub, which rethinks production and retail processes. The name Public House was chosen to signify that the wooden building designed by Japanese architectural firm Hiroshi Nakamura & NAP would become a meeting place and a source of pride for the community, representing the inhabitants' best practices towards waste. The project's lead architect, Hiroshi Nakamura, says, "As the word 'pub' comes from 'public house', we decided to bring the principles of the community, the wisdom and ways of the people towards waste, to life through architecture. Our goal was to create a public house so that the community could feel proud of their actions."

Reduce, reuse, recycle and respect are the four Rs adopted by Kamikatz Public House, which turns them into a tangible form. The building displays its commitment to sustainability in architecture through valuing nature and man-made objects, eschewing the throwaway culture prevalent worldwide in our modern age, and embracing local production and consumption. The scheme's functions are intentionally positioned linearly in chronological order to clearly show visitors the cycle of production and consumption—from the raw material storage rooms, boiler chamber and brewery to the store and the pub where beer and food are served—rather than hiding the process and treating resources with little regard. This is done because ignorance about the amount of effort and materials involved in the manufacture of the final product is one of the reasons for increasing amounts of waste.

Composed of a patchwork of wooden windows salvaged from derelict houses that once illuminated the town, Kamikatz Public House's northwest face—set 8 metres tall, allowing natural light to stream in—shines like a beacon of light and becomes a choice destination for its inhabitants and those from further afield. The elevated ceiling and exhaust fans near the rooftop ventilate warm air that stagnates above during summer. In winter, the double layer of window fittings traps air and increases insulation, reducing heat loss, while ceiling fans circulate the rising warm air produced by the carbon-neutral radiant heater, which burns tree branches collected from the nearby forest.

1 **A public house that the community can feel proud of, with principles of sustainability in its architecture** **2** **Interior elevation depicting sources of the materials**

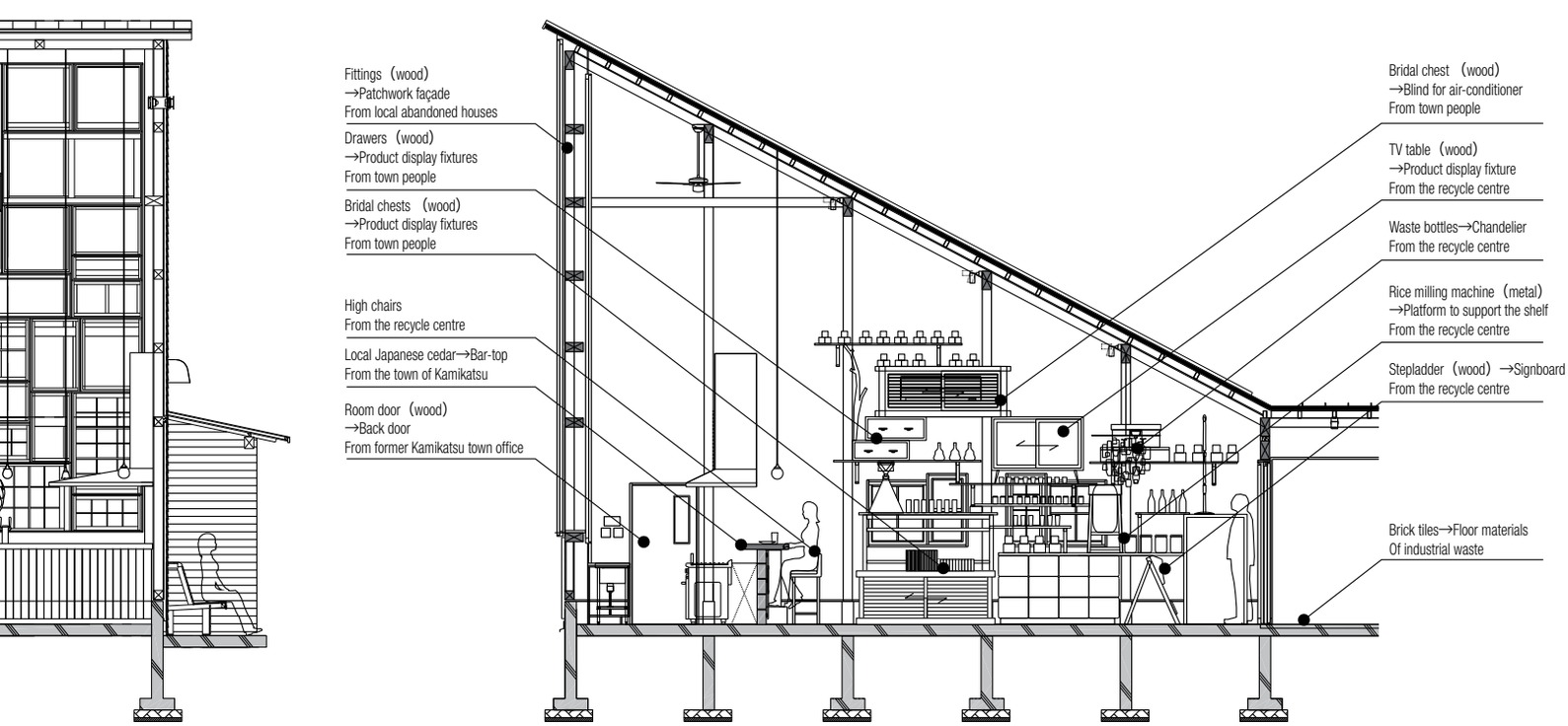


Photo by Lukasz Kos (Four O Nine Warsaw)

THE SUSTAINABLE KITCHEN

by **Miriel Ko**

Eating healthy and sustainably is starting to shape the hospitality industry worldwide. Aside from catering to our changing diets, new food establishments are also looking at ways they can be designed to reduce waste and their carbon footprint. After all, sustainability is not just about where food is sourced but also about how the restaurant is designed and operates. Ovens burn heat, dishwashers and lights consume energy and both the production and disposal of food require an abundance of energy and resources. Add in the materials required to build these establishments and you have even more design considerations to take into account when catering to both our appetites and the planet. So what is a sustainable kitchen and what does it mean to design for health and sustainability?

FEEDING EXPECTATIONS

Designing for a sustainable food industry that is well suited to both the clientele and the chef's culinary tastes is nothing short of a challenge. As patrons look for restaurants that are more sustainable, providing transparency in the food supply chain is often key. While not an entirely new notion, many kitchens are being designed with an open concept, allowing patrons to sit and view their food being made. This not only offers insights and whets people's curiosity but also provides less opportunity to hide ingredients. Online resources or labels indicating which products are sustainable or fair trade also help increase transparency (i.e. Ocean Wise and the Rainforest Alliance), and many patrons would rather pay more knowing that their food is sourced sustainably or organically. This has led to a market of restaurants tailoring to more farm-to-table dining and menus catered to more specific food diets. With it also comes a shift in kitchen design.

For example, kitchens with selective gluten-free or vegan food options will most often require separate counter space to limit cross contamination. In-house production using raw materials and the preservation of food (i.e. curing, fermentation and pickling) often requires additional equipment, appliances or storage[i]. Some other new design considerations include the incorporation of rooftop gardens, green walls and even small farms. As we get further away from our agricultural roots, connecting our food with elements of nature helps to affirm the concept of farm-to-table dining and bring the message home. However, while these concepts may seem rather modest, there are also many design specifications and trade-offs to consider. For one, designers may be required to choose between incorporating energy-efficient lighting or artificial lighting that is more energy-intensive but supports plant growth. Rooftops may need to be assessed by an engineer for their load-bearing capacity before a garden can be built, while on-site conversion of food scraps into fertilisers may require some knowledge of permaculture principles. Plants, while having the potential to enhance the air quality in a room, may also emit certain aromas or be toxic to humans and animals, so careful consideration of these elements into food establishments may necessitate more integrated and holistic approaches to design.

At the newly renovated Botanist restaurant inside the Fairmont Pacific Rim Hotel in Vancouver, these were just a few of the design considerations evaluated by Ste. Marie Art + Design. Sourcing most of the menu options locally and seasonally, the restaurant serves different earthy mushrooms and sustainably caught seafood, which are paired with cocktails made from blue algae and seaweed-infused gin. However, the downtown restaurant, which also faces the city's major convention centre and harbour, lacks greenery. To intrigue guests in exploring the local flavours and flora of the region, they designed the restaurant into a conservatory-like space by integrating over 800 plants, many of which are botanically interesting. Aside from having to accommodate these additional plants, the designers also added additional shelving for in-house production of artisanal breads and seasonal produce that are being pickled and preserved for future use. Even the cocktails are served on a bed of moss in

1 Café 27, flagship in Beijing, China was redeveloped from a greenhouse

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Water

There is rising awareness of the importance of a healthy ecosystem on an urban scale, and amongst them, blue-green infrastructures are vital in the regulation of the microclimate and biodiversity. In the upcoming issue, we look at how Green design principles of water-related projects can help to increase the liveability of our environment and also explore micro- and macro-perspectives of the water issue.

If you have projects to nominate, please send an email with a brief profile and photos to c.lim@futurarc.com by end July 2017.

We will notify you if your project is shortlisted for publication. Please note that the selection of projects is subject to editorial discretion.

Jiading Central Park by Sasaki Associates
Photo courtesy of Sasaki Associates

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