

SINGAPORE

Flatter Homes



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In Good Company

Modern furnishings and thoughtful design come together to form a stylish tableau in this Singapore apartment

By Chelsia Tan. Photography by Jasper Yu



Left to right: An abstract painting adds artistic flourish to the entryway; the Minotti Hamilton sofa by Rodolfo Dordoni anchors the living room; a mix of leather and other plush textures contributes to the cosy atmosphere in this lounge area

Previous spread: The colours of this commissioned painting in the dining area connect to the armchairs in rust orange, and the teal and brown cushions on the sofa in the living room

Ed Ong, founder of Dwell Interior Design, firmly believes that aesthetics aside, one's abode must be welcoming. "Ultimately, we are designing a home, so apart from looking great, it must be great to live in," he says.

This approach informed his take on a project that involved transforming a four-bedroom residence in central Singapore into a sleek space for entertaining. The home of a power couple with a preference for a luxurious and contemporary interior, the requirements were simple; the owners wanted a modern but elegant aesthetic that would complement the Minotti furniture in their 2,885sqft apartment.

FIT LIKE A GLOVE

As the couple frequently entertain, they wanted a large living space with adequate seating for large gatherings. The homeowners also favoured silver travertine, which they wanted to feature in the living room.

While the interior designer was initially hesitant about the excessive use of natural stone in the living area,

he gave the homeowners' preferences serious thought. The solution was to incorporate slabs of black marble at the base of the wall—an elegant addition that adds a luxurious touch to the home.

To keep the look subtle while conveying a sense of luxury, Ong also used vented wooden panels to add visual interest to the silver travertine wall, which is located behind the modular Minotti sofa. As the panels are stacked slightly away from the wall, this also gives depth to the otherwise flat surface.

Finally, he added discreet rose gold trimmings as well as a light grey wall to enhance the overall look. "I wanted the vertical panels to communicate the illusion of height. When the eye registers a line, it will naturally follow its flow and this helps to trick the mind," says Ong.

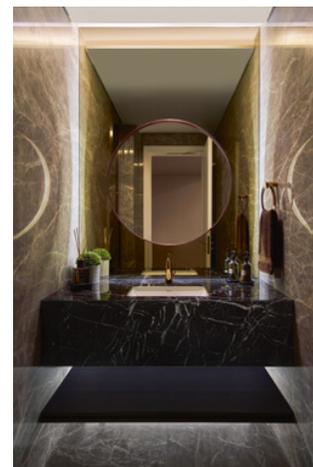
Another important consideration in the living room was the ceiling design, and Ong used cove lights bordered with a light trench to define the otherwise cavernous space. "When you have a large and open space, one of the ways to segregate it is through ceiling





This page:
The owner's spirits and whisky collection takes pride of place on the upper shelf of the bar; the powder room features a solid block of black marble for the basin and mirrored walls that visually expand its dimensions

Opposite page:
This cosy nook has a comfortable armchair, making it a great place to read or enjoy a drink



design,” explains Ong. “If I were to remove the furniture, you would still be able to identify the space from the details on the ceiling alone.”

SOCIAL NETWORK

In the living room, a Minotti Hamilton sofa holds court; it was configured to seat up to 10 guests comfortably when the owners entertain. It is accompanied by tanned leather armchairs in rust orange. According to Ong, the armchairs are the designated seats of the owners, as they can be placed in an area that allows them to host conversations easily in a large room.

“The armchairs are important as they are where the hosts and homeowners should sit. This allows them to fully focus their attention on all their guests, who are gathered on the main sofa,” he adds.

In any social scenario, a well-stocked bar serves as an indispensable ice breaker. Ong designed a whisky bar in black marble, located between the living and dining areas. This well-curated niche allows guests to enjoy their drinks before making their way to the adjoining dining zone, which is furnished with an eight-seater Minotti dining set.

To create a focal point in the dining area, a marble-topped console was installed underneath a large abstract painting with white, green, orange and coral accents. Lamps from Giopato & Coombes hang overhead; Ong discovered these in Milan last year. The glass spheres were inspired by soap bubbles, an apt reference to the couple's sociable personalities.



This page: The walk-in wardrobe features cabinetry with gold trimming and built-in lighting to showcase the wife's favourite bags and shoes; the master bathroom is a tranquil space opulently clad in marble

Opposite page: The master bedroom extends the visual language via an identical palette and a mirror similar to that in the dressing area; the use of upholstered panels in shades of grey and chrome accents is luxurious yet understated; a velvet chaise longue provides a cosy spot for tea and reading

One may not usually expect a powder room to be a highlight in any home, but this is no ordinary space in this apartment. “We fabricated a round mirror rimmed with brass and mounted it on top of a mirrored wall, which gives a subtle ‘infinity’ effect,” says Ong.

BALANCING ACT

The master suite was expanded by combining two rooms. Ong highlights the wall feature in the master bedroom, which he says was no simple task to design. “The wall feature and the Minotti bed had to come together, so we took colour cues—bronze, grey and champagne gold—from the Armani Hotel in Milan. It had to look good and feel right for a very intimate space,” he says.

Ong also created bedside tables with a shallower top shelf and a deeper bottom shelf. He explains this is so one doesn't have to contort the arm to reach their mobile phone, which is typically placed on the bottom shelf. “This is designed for your arm to simply reach down and pick something up.”

Finally, he placed a blue chaise longue close to the foot of the bed. With natural light streaming in from the windows, it's perfect for an afternoon read or a relaxing spot to unwind in the evening.

The original layout of the apartment was a dream for Ong as it had ample space for the sofa configuration



and a large dining table. To him, the main challenge was ensuring a fine balance between opulent elements and understated detailing to avoid an ostentatious look.

“I really enjoyed working with the clients on the colour and fabric selection. The colour scheme received a lot of compliments and the powder room has become a buzzy conversation starter among guests,” he says. “It's so important to hear that the owners enjoy using all the spaces in their new home; from a designer's point of view, this is always the goal.”

