



## The Clan Hotel

SINGAPORE

At the crossroads of old and new, the debut property from Far East Hospitality's luxury-tier brand brings the heritage of the locale to a skyscraper setting.

Words: Luo Jingmei  
Photography: Courtesy of The Clan Hotel

Modern-day travellers hankering for more authentic experiences will surely welcome the opening of Singapore's The Clan Hotel, which narrates a contextually unique story in all aspects of its design and experience. The property is the first for Far East Hospitality's new luxury-tier brand and adds to the owner-operator's portfolio, which includes Oasia, Quincy, Adina and TFE Hotels. "We believe that luxury is not about having the biggest, latest or most expensive offerings; in this sense it is a concept that goes beyond just a room stay," says Far East's CEO Arthur Kiong. "The Clan Hotel is about inclusivity rather than exclusivity; experience rather than function."

Historically, clans were organisations delineated by provinces in China, or kinships that immigrants established in foreign lands to help new arrivals with accommodation, employment and protection. In Singapore, they often occupied shophouses in the Chinatown district demarcated by Sir Stamford Raffles' master town plan in 1822. Many still exist today,

albeit with dwindling membership. The Clan Hotel honours these forefathers, who toiled to build the city and its community spirit.

Poised at the juncture of past, present and future and of culture and commerce, the property is surrounded by the contrasting sea of shophouses and commercial towers that make up the Central Business District of today. While positioned as a business hotel, its storytelling approach offers much more. Clad in a bronze-coloured, double-glazed and low-energy curtain wall, the 30-storey tower adds to the skyline while lower down, a chamfered profile mirrors the angled façade of the neighbouring Far East Square mall, comprising 61 restored shophouses-turned-restaurants, cafés and offices. Within the latter are two historic landmarks: Singapore's oldest school – Chui Eng Free School, now a restaurant – and earliest temple-turned-museum, Fuk Tak Chi Temple.

"We designed a sleek and modern façade, so it appeals to international sensibilities and expectations but also mindfully pays homage



Interiors play on the theme of dark versus light, while a sense of nostalgia is evoked through subtle details, patterns and ornaments

to the past through the subtle integration of Chinese motifs on the window subdivision pattern,” says Suneeth Changaroth, Director at DP Architects. The first storey gives way to the drop-off and existing public thoroughfare, while lifts lead to a second storey offering guests a panoramic introduction to the multi-textured urban fabric of sweeping orange rooftops, concrete buildings and gleaming skyscrapers.

Inside, Kanko Kikaku Sekkeisha (KKS) has injected a chinoiserie theme that avoids kitsch by employing a polished feel with a sense of nostalgia, evoked through subtle details, patterns and decorative ornaments. The Japanese firm’s impactful yet intimate lobby plays on the theme of dark versus light, with an installation of metal plates by local artist Grace Tan catching the glow from double-height windows. Tan belongs to The Clan Collective, the hotel’s inventory of native craftspeople, artists and influential personalities, whose contributions range from outfitting the staff to brewing the beer found in guestrooms.

“We have designed the lobby to accommodate both function and comfort through a key feature – an oversized, ceiling-height display shelf that divides the space so that the activities at the reception are separated from the welcome tea ceremony in the lounge area,” says Kunio Iwata, Managing Director at KKS. A resident tea master prepares and offers tea and local snacks amid a backdrop of dark timber shelves, lattices and lantern-like lamps, which give scale to the lofty space and evoke a homely ambience. Hidemi Kanda, Designer at KKS, adds: “The tea fragrance is also part of the hotel’s experience, inviting guests to relax as soon as they arrive.”

The decorative objects on the shelves were selected by design agency Farm, who also worked on the branding and graphic design. “They were curated to bring out The Clan’s core brand promises, which is to bestow upon guests an unyielding sense of kinship, to receive a stranger into one’s home and take care of them as if they were one’s very own,” says Selwyn Low, Director at Farm. Items like





vintage Pasotti umbrellas symbolising shelter and protection can be purchased too.

The hotel's restaurant, Qin – which means kinship in Mandarin – is managed by TungLok Group and serves fusion Chinese cuisine with a view – a point of conversation at every turn. Up walls and across the ceiling, KKS employed the motif of the Chinese medicine box, while on the mezzanine is the bar, which opens at the rear to a breezy terrace. “This green oasis serves as a break in the architecture’s massing and a place of commune for all guests,” Changaroth explains. Other amenities include two meeting rooms christened The Den and The Mahjong Room – a Chinese game involving porcelain tiles – as well as a gym, swimming pool and Jacuzzi with a privileged vantage on the rooftop.

324 guestrooms continue the use of dark timber on joinery, furniture and bespoke lamps. Framed heritage objects such as Chinese paintbrushes can be purchased, while in the grey-tiled bathrooms, tall windows again highlight the spectacular view. Among the three

room categories, the Premier and Grand Premier options belong to the signature Master Series and are more luxurious, larger and feature dual bands of windows courtesy of their corner locations. There are also treats like a welcome amenity teapot set featuring Nanyang Ritual Tea and local cookies, precinct tours, access to The Clan Keeper concierge service and in-room hawker fare served in tiffin cases. For all guests, an Inner Circle Guide divulges the best entertainment and culinary secrets nearby.

The Clan Hotel’s concept is refreshing – even for local guests already familiar with some of these discoveries. “We think that the story of The Clan and its operating philosophy is unique, and there is room for such modern luxury in key gateway cities,” Kiong concludes, hinting of the group’s plans for international roll-out. “London, New York, Tokyo, Hong Kong and Sydney are good examples of locations where we can tell the story of the Chinese diaspora but with a contemporary application.”



#### EXPRESS CHECK-OUT

**Owner:** Far East Organization  
**Operator:** Far East Hospitality  
**Architecture:** DP Architects  
**Interior Design:** Kanko Kikaku Sekkeishai  
**Graphic Design and Branding:** Farm  
**Lighting Design:** Lightbox  
**Art Consultant:** Kwodrent, Farm  
**Landscaping:** Tinderbox  
**Main Contractor:** Hexacon Construction  
**Project Manager:** Far East Management  
[www.theclanhotel.com.sg](http://www.theclanhotel.com.sg)