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There is that certain prestige and stature that usually go with being a boutique developer. Such connotations often stem from the fact that when one says boutique, the other hears uniquely personal, highly customized approach that is made more distinct by the keen attention to every painstaking detail, the passion, and unrelenting pursuit for excellence. This is exactly what Cathay Land president Jeffrey T. Ng has brought in every project the company has embarked on for more than two decades now.

World-class communities

In fact, a cursory tour of the sprawling 500-ha South Forbes Golf City in Cavite alone would display a kind of prowess, focus and discipline that allowed Ng to successfully create an innovative township now comprised of boutique communities with international architectural themes. Residents are offered with utmost exclusivity given the low density in each project; lush greenery and generous open spaces; and more notably, an 18-hole golf course amenity with a free membership—said to be the only offering of its kind in the Philippines.

Currently, South Forbes has the Mansions or premier boutique communities which are the Bali Mansions, Tokyo Mansions, Phuket Mansions and Racha Mansions—all catering to the well-heeled market. At the minimum, owning a house and lot in these exclusive, stunning developments could set you back by at least P20 million.

Horizons, comprised of the Villas, Chateaux de Paris, Miami, and Nirwana Bali, cater largely to the mid-market, whereas Elevations, which include Scandia Suites and Stanford Suites, refer to mid-rise residential condominiums. The Golf View Terraces, of course, are the residential condominium projects on the golf course priced starting at P7.22 million.

The latest addition to the South Forbes Golf City is the 32-ha Westborough Town Center, meant to serve as the community’s preferred place for retail, dining, lifestyle, leisure and business.

Need to innovate

Ng recalled that as a young property developer, Cathay Land had to compete with the more established players in the industry, prompting the need for him to think out of the box.

“We had to innovate. We had to think of how we can differentiate ourselves from the other projects in the area,” said Ng when asked about why he decided to create these themed boutique communities.



Ng recalled that before, he would bring his wife and kids abroad during the holidays, and it would be partly sight-seeing and partly visits to residential subdivisions in the United States, Hong Kong, Thailand and Indonesia, among others.

“It was really my

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Homes made beautiful

By Minerva Generalao, Kathleen De Villa, Ana Roa, Marielle Medina
Inquirer Research

Human dwellings have vastly evolved from the rudimentary caves of ancient men to straw huts and stone houses in settlements, to the present modern homes utilizing the latest technologies. The changes over time have been characteristic of the people's way of life, their socioeconomic conditions, and the advances that take place during a certain period.



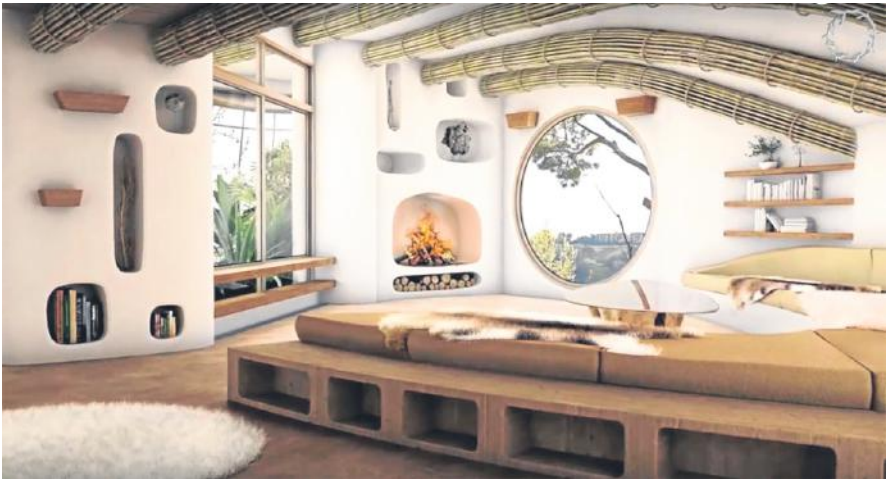
LIFEHAUS HOMES IN LEBANON

In this house in Lebanon, there is treasure in trash. Lebanon-based company Lifehaus uses recycled and locally-sourced materials to build low-cost and sustainable houses to address the waste problem in the Middle Eastern country. The house has roofs for

growing food, solar panels to generate its own electricity, and a rainwater collection system. It is also built to withstand natural calamities, such as earthquake. Lifehaus uses ancestral building techniques—such as using mud and clay, instead of concrete—in building its houses.

JAPANESE PALACE IN CALIFORNIA

Billionaire Larry Ellison, co-founder of the software firm Oracle, is known as an avid trophy-home buyer. One of the most notable homes he owned was a 23-acre Japanese imperial estate in Woodside, California. Patterned after a 17th-century Japanese palace, the \$70 million property made waves in upscale Zen architecture when it was completed in 2004. According to Paul Discoe, a lead designer of Ellison's Asian-inspired estate, the design incorporated spread-out buildings, giant sloped roofs and traditional gardens to infuse feudal Japanese aesthetics into the construction of Ellison's 10-building compound.



PRE-FABRICATED ACCESSIBLE TECHNOLOGY HOMES IN PARIS AND NEW YORK

French designer Philippe Starck collaborated with Slovenian construction company Riko for the pre-fab line Pre-fabricated Accessible Technology Home (P.A.T.H.), which is seen to address future challenges of individual pre-fabricated housing by combining timeless design, high technology, comfort and respect for the environment. With more than 30 model houses all distinguished by Starck's signature timeless design, P.A.T.H. offers a variety of

facades, interior finishes, fixtures and other possibilities for personalization. It also provides a wide range of complementary eco-technological solutions such as photovoltaic solar panels, wind turbines, rainwater collectors or heat pumps. In 2014, the first P.A.T.H. was unveiled in Montfort l'Amaury in the Paris region and in 2016, Starck with Riko began the construction of the first P.A.T.H. house in the United States, located in a private property Bedford, New York.

LUXURY BAMBOO VILLA IN BALI

Built for David Hornblow and his family, the 4-storey Ananda House located in Green Village in Bali, Indonesia is a striking bamboo villa with curving leaf-shaped roofs that sweep low around the sides. The house has three glass-enclosed bedrooms with airconditioning and en-suite bathrooms. Completed in 2015, the team of IBUKU who built the house said that the challenge was to maintain most of the trees on the property while creating three bedrooms with private balconies, so holes were designed into the roof overhang in key places to accommodate the trees.



ROMAN AND GRECIAN ARCHITECTURAL TEMPLE IN CEBU

The seven-storey temple in the mountains of Barangay Busay, Cebu City has been dubbed as the city's Taj Mahal. Like the popular tourist attraction in India, the Temple of Leah was built to immortalize the love of businessman Teodorico Adarna to his wife, Leah, who died of cancer in 2010. Built along Roman and Grecoian architectural lines, the temple which sits on a 5,000-sqm property has 24 chambers that house Leah Adarna's vast collection of treasure chests, books, Persian carpets, Buddha heads, Chinese vases and jars, and figurines she had amassed



from her travels abroad. The collections came from at least seven houses where she had stayed throughout her life. The temple was opened to the public in 2012, a year after construction started. Visitors to the temple are greeted by huge

columns and two gigantic lions seemingly looking out at the city's panoramic view. At the main structure, two bronze lions and two angels stand guard. A fountain at the center of the front yard features three naked women and horses.

Sources: Inquirer Archives, inhabitat.com, Forbes, Business Insider, Green Village Bali, ibuku.com, starckwithriko.com



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FROM B4-1 passion to see which were the best developments and the best (practices) in terms of urban planning. And we tried to adopt these and have it in the townships we're planning," Ng explained. The company's property in Cavite and Laguna, which were expanded eventually, served as the perfect canvasses for Ng to start from scratch, masterplan a community, and imbibe in his township all the learnings and best practices he got from abroad. At that time, being able to create a township that would make a lasting mark was necessary as Cathay Land was still a new industry player competing with established ones.

It turns out, Ng was headed towards the right direction. Today, South Forbes has aptly fulfilled its promise of providing residents with a life redefined, with its luxurious portfolio of projects catering to the affordable, mid-market and upscale homebuyers. Facilities and topnotch amenities are well suited and attuned to the hurried pace of lifestyle of modern urban dwellers who value exceptional convenience, timeliness and of course, quality. Even in the tiniest details, it was evident that it had a touch of a boutique developer, of someone as passionate as Ng. From the ornaments, decor, fixtures, flora and fauna, to the way the gates, walls, gardens,



The 32-ha Westborough Town Center offers curated selections for the community's retail, dining and leisure needs.

pathways, islands, clubhouses and even the guardhouses were put up and styled—all these were perfectly in sync with the theme of the community. Beyond this, it's also important to take note of how Cathay Land's projects have helped uplift the lives of the people who

are either living or working within these communities. "Perhaps, in my own small way, having these integrated, small cities is my contribution to nation building, leaving some significance on the society. This will be my legacy even after I am gone," Ng concluded.