

Ministry of Design Singapore

Loke Thye Kee Residences

Penang

1. Located among a row of shophouses, Loke Thye Kee Residences tries to revive the atmosphere of Georgetown in the 1900s by preserving the façade of the old building.

Architect
Ministry of Design PTE LTD

Design Principal
Colin Seah

Architect's Team
Kevin Leong, Joyce Low, Ruth Chong, Tiang Yeping, Sarah Conceicao, Don Washinton

Castaneda, Richard Herman, Norberto Olegario, Noel Banta, Loleth Alejandro, Aliza Suarez, Danielle Liu, Ron Sim

Location
Penang, Malaysia

Construction Period
September 2013-May 2015

Site Area
421 sq.m

Floor Area
633 sq.m

Developer
1919 Global Sdn Bhd

Main Contractor
SeriousBiz Sdn Bhd

ID Contractor
SeriousBiz Sdn Bhd

Landscaped Contractor
Camellia Landscape Sdn Bhd

Structure
Perunding Pakatan Cergas

M & E
O&A Consult Sdn Bhd

PRODUCT
Timber Floor
SeriousBiz

Sanitary
Rigel

Paint
Nippon Paint

Pantry
LG Hi-Macs

Outdoor Lighting
Lumiplan

Writer
Sandra Forestyana

Photographer
Courtesy of Ministry of Design PTE LTD



At a crossroad in downtown Georgetown, Penang, Malaysia, stands a legendary restaurant called Loke Thye Kee. What makes this place legendary is inseparable with its name. In Hainanese, Loke Thye Kee means "House of Joy". Since it was first opened in 1919, the restaurant is famous as a place where happiness is realized, whether it is through matchmaking events, weddings, birthday parties, or even meals shared with the family. After being closed for quite some time, Loke Thye Kee is reopened. However, it is now not alone. An accommodation facility called Loke Thye Kee Residences is designed not far from the restaurant with the intention to transform the area into Loke Thye Kee Heritage Village.

The ambition is not unfounded. Georgetown possesses unique architectural diversity as the result of the amalgamation of Chinese culture, British colonial architecture, and houses of worship for various religions. This unique characteristic makes Georgetown inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2008. In consideration of this characteristic, Loke Thye Kee Residences are designed as a row of shophouses, the most common typology of buildings in Georgetown.

The design of all five units of this accommodation facility was entrusted to the Ministry of Design (MOD) an architectural and interior design studio from Singapore. Colin Seah, the principal architect of MOD, admitted that he was inspired by the charm of Penang of the 1900s and was determined to bring it back through the design of Loke Thye Kee Residences. However, the architect did not merely restore the building

to its original condition. Colin Seah and his team added contemporary elements to make the design suitable with today's lifestyle.

The architect attempted to combine the traditional and contemporary aspect of this design through materials and spatial experience. Inside each unit, the brick walls are made livelier with LED lamps at the top and both sides of the walls. Spatial experience inside the bedroom is modernized by arranging modern furniture on traditional wooden floors. On the other hand, the old façade of the shophouses is retained as the façade of the accommodation facility.

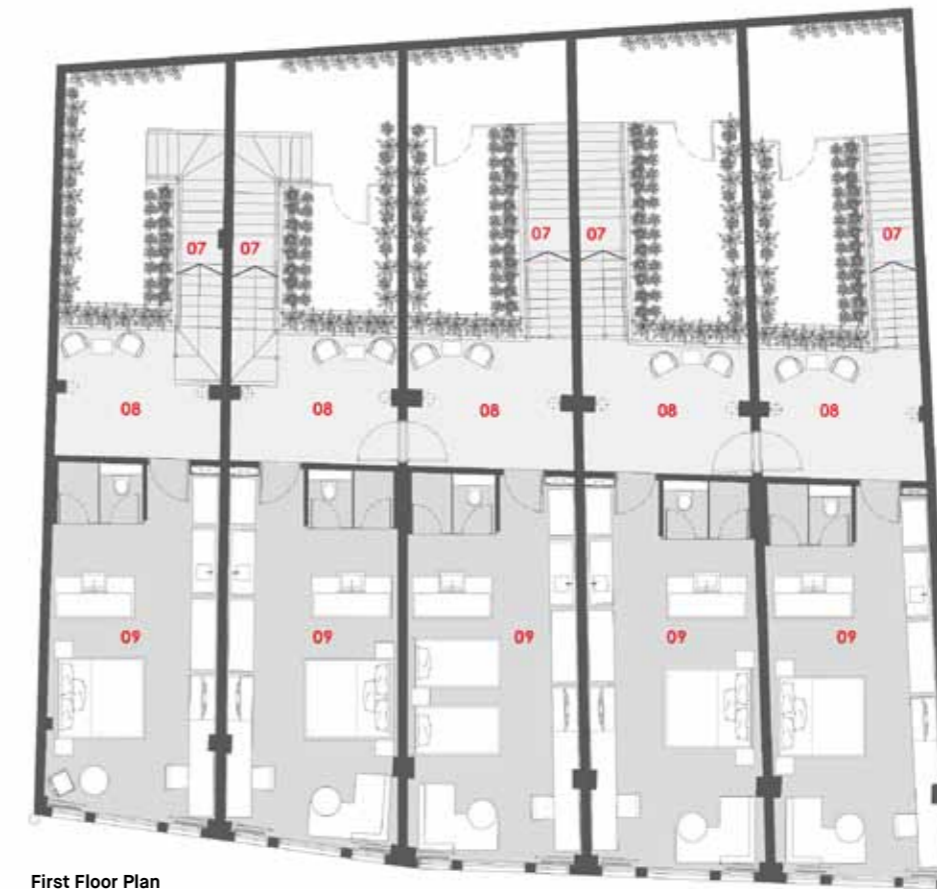
Generally, the architect mostly worked on the interior design of Loke Thye Kee Residences to create novel spatial experiences. The physical appearance of the building is virtually unchanged. From the perspective of preservation of heritage buildings, what the architect did can be categorized as revitalization. Although not stated so, the architect's decision to incorporate modern design in a hundred-years-old shophouse would certainly breathe new life into the long abandoned building. The shophouse function has been transformed into an accommodation facility with contemporary flavor.

Does it work? One thing for certain, Loke Thye Kee Residences will enrich the features of Georgetown and contribute to maintain one of the Outstanding Universal Values bestowed by UNESCO, i.e. "a unique architectural and cultural townscape without parallel anywhere in East and Southeast Asia". Additionally, by sharing its name with a legendary restaurant, Loke Thye Kee Residences hopefully would be able to provide happiness to its guests through the unique experience.



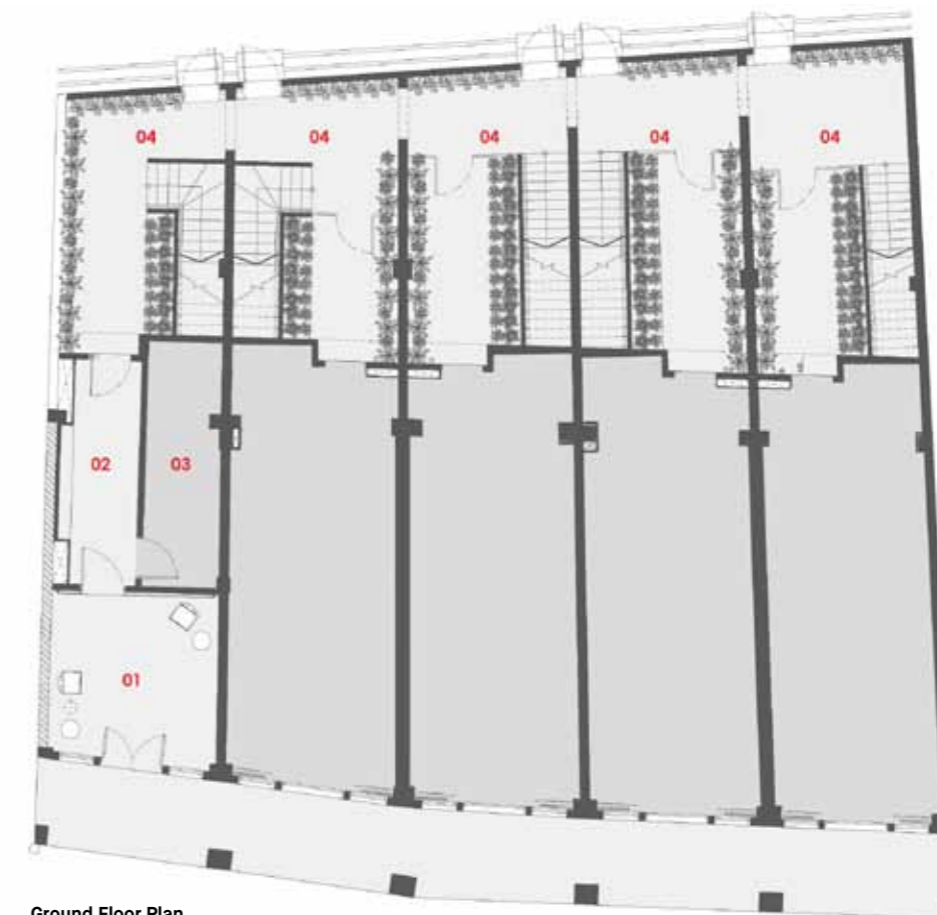
Typical Floor Plan

- 01. Entrance
- 02. Pantry
- 03. Vanity
- 04. Toilet
- 05. Shower
- 06. Wardrobe
- 07. T.V. Ledge
- 08. Desk
- 09. Bed
- 10. Lounge



First Floor Plan

- 07. Staircase
- 08. Private Balcony
- 09. Guestroom



Ground Floor Plan

- 01. Foyer
- 02. Passageway
- 03. Store
- 04. Private Garden

1. Each unit of Loke Thye Kee Residences occupies a single shophouse.
2. A Private garden is provided at the rear area of each unit.
3. The design attempts to combine the traditional and the contemporary through materials and spatial experience. One of the examples of this is the use of LED lamps.



1.



2.

3.



ARCHITECT'S PROFILE

Ministry of Design PTE LTD was created by Colin Seah to question convention and redefine the spaces, forms, and experiences. Headquartered in Singapore and with offices in Beijing and Kuala Lumpur, MOD was declared a "Rising Star of Architecture" by Monocle Singapore Survey 2010 and "Designer of the Year" by the International Design Awards, USA 2010. Each MOD projects endeavors to be surprising yet relevant, distinctly local but still globally appealing.