



Marks of good design

Over 30 projects get the stamp of approval for enhancing lives.

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by

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A WELL-DESIGNED product is greatly appreciated, regardless of whether you are a practising designer, or just a consumer making use of it.

Each year, the Design Business Chamber Singapore (DBCS) hands out awards to products and solutions that are evident of good design. Since its inception in 2013, there were some 176 products and solutions deemed worthy of the Singapore Good Design Mark (SG Mark).

Modelled after Japan's prestigious Good Design Mark (G Mark), the SG Mark not only champions holistic design practices but is also a benchmark of design that enhances lives.

The awards aim to spur businesses towards adopting design for innovation and competitiveness, raise professional design standards and increase awareness and appreciation of the value of good design among businesses, designers and the public.

There are 36 award winners this year from all fields of design. They will be admitted to the final round of Japan's G Mark for consideration to be selected for its highest level of awards.

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"SG Mark promotes the adoption of design by enterprises and the public sector in their product and services," says Tai Lee Siang, president of DBCS. "In the face of today's challenging economic climate, we must continue to invest in design."

Oasia Hotel Downtown

SG Mark Platinum winner

Designed by award-winning architecture firm Woha, the Oasia Hotel Downtown stands out among the sea of concrete and glass buildings in Tanjong Pagar with its distinctive red silhouette clad in lush vertical greenery.

This Far East Organization project is an integrated hotel-office development, comprising a 27-storey, 314-room business hotel and new-age office space.

The main facade is lined with greenery, comprising creepers and flowering plants, entwined around vertical grid panels, which rise to form a captivating green skin.

The facade consists of a pattern of expanded aluminium mesh in five warm tones of red, orange and pink, offset against the building. The end-product achieved is an overall greenery replacement of over 10 times the site area.

The facade panels open up on different floors to elevated gardens cut three-dimensionally into the building like huge windows. They create a breezy resort-like natural ventilation to the structure, which is capped by an open-air rooftop garden and hotel swimming pools that offer a panoramic view of the surrounding cityscape.

At the sky garden public areas, the intent is to create functional, comfortable tropical spaces with greenery, natural light and fresh air that hotel guests can enjoy, instead of being in an enclosed, air-conditioned space. The greenery and waterscapes within the sky gardens are lifted up onto different floors of the building. They serve as multiple ground levels, creating large public areas for recreation and for people to mingle.

With its lush greenery and open volumes, the building is much more sustainable, humane and liveable.

AIRMOTION Mask

SG Mark Gold winner

Air pollution is a global health issue, and not just a problem that Singaporeans grapple with every year.

Most air pollution masks in the market are often poor in fit, comfort, reliability and durability, and not suitable for outdoor activities.

Technology startup firm AIRMOTION LABS has created a highly protective PM2.5 filter mask that allows users to do outdoor activities even in poor air conditions.

The AIRMOTION mask integrates an innovative AIR-IQ Multi-Function Smart Module that takes in clean air to make breathing easier and its replaceable PM2.5 filters allow for affordable continuous usage.

Its soft form provides comfort when worn. The "Y" strap is designed for a secure fit to the face and frees the upper part of the ear for eyewear. The intuitive magnetic locking system provides a quick and easy way to wear the mask.

Designer Leonard Tan Bahroocha took into consideration how wearing a mask usually conjures up ideas of sickness. Hence the sporty look, which makes it easier to go outdoors without any stigma.

The AIRMOTION mask also uses durable materials, so it lasts longer than conventional masks, therefore more sustainable.

Onewealth Mobile App

SG Mark Gold winner

Busy folks now do their banking on the go through their smartphones, so it's important for mobile banking apps to be easy to use.

Designed by the OCBC Experience Design Team, OCBC's One Wealth mobile app helps clients achieve and manage their investment goals in a simple and personalised way - while on the move.

The OCBC OneWealth app is designed based on customer insights and builds on three core principles: accessibility, simplicity and personalisation.

Information about wealth and investments are easily accessible. Besides having anytime-anywhere mobile access to their portfolios, customers are served useful and easy-to-understand content, in addition to customised alerts and targeted information, to make investing simpler.

They can choose the specific content they want to receive on the app, such as information on unit trusts, equities, bonds and foreign exchange currencies, and the outlook and top investment ideas for each of the chosen asset classes and markets.

The Peach Garden

SG Mark Gold winner

Drawing inspiration from the ancient Chinese Tale of the Peach Blossom Spring, this Shanghai residence, by Kris Lin International Design for The Zendai Group, combines unique natural landscape with the oriental elements of peach blossoms, pebbles and grid elements.

The building consists of three floors: one underground and two above ground. The basement is mainly used as the public space, which is an integration of dynamic and static activities.

The first floor serves as the living space, with a sitting room, a dining room, a guest room and a granny room. The second floor is a private space with a master bedroom and a children's room. Making space permeability a priority, the architectural design of the building effectively uses natural light and air to merge nature with the residents' senses.

The Tale of the Peach Blossom Spring comes alive with the peach blossoms, pebbles and grid elements used throughout the residence, inviting its occupants to the fairy-like Peach Blossom Land with an experience of the ancient aesthetics of nature.

St Luke's Eldercare (Nee Soon Central)

SG Mark winner

With its bright colours and airy interiors, St Luke's Eldercare centre at Yishun looks more like a designer home than a facility catering to the needs of seniors, dementia daycare patients, family members, caregivers and the community.

The ElderCare Centre, the Day Rehabilitation Gym, and the Wellness Kampung were converted from a HDB void deck.

Design firm D'Perception Ritz integrated the numerous pillars seamlessly into each of these facilities, anchoring the activity hub in the ElderCare Centre with a multi-height island workstation buffeted by pillars.

In the Day Rehabilitation Gym, the pillars provide natural privacy barriers in an upgraded club-like environment, complete with simulated skylight.

The snazzy Wellness Kampung is conceived as a multi-generational space that draws in the community with its hip cafe-like vibe and blackboard menus on pillar walls. The Wellness Kampung houses a mini library managed by the National Library Board in a casual sitting-room format.

Pebble Water Closet**SG Mark winner**

The government recently announced that water tariffs will be going up this year. Short of not flushing after using the toilet or not showering, homeowners can make smart choices by choosing more water-efficient products.

The clean design and curved lines of the Rigel Pebble Series one-piece water closet fits in any type of bathroom, without looking bulky or obtrusive.

It is enhanced by an anti-bacterial coating on its surface and its dual flush mechanism is 25 per cent more water efficient as it uses a maximum 3.5 to 4.5 litres for a full flush, and uses 30 per cent less water for a half flush.

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