

# News Clipping

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## Green theme



CREEPERS crawl up the facade of the new Naumi boutique hotel in Seah Street.

But architect Sim Boon Yang is quick to dispel notions that his work plants a flag for eco-architecture. It is simply our design philosophy to include some green elements,' he says of the work done in his firm Eco-id. The hotel, which is owned by local business consortium The Hind Group, opened on Wednesday.

### Street theatre

The harmonising of nature with the building design - the essence of eco-architecture - is clear from the minute one sets eyes on the 10-storey hotel which has 40 rooms and whose rates start from \$390 a night.

On its facade, an origami-fold screen that provides support for growing creeper plants sets Naumi apart from its shophouse neighbours.



The hotel stands on the site of the 33-year-old Metropole Hotel which The Hind Group bought for \$18 million last year. It was retrofitted at a cost of \$10 million. The job took eight months.

Inside, a different greenery takes over. In the lobby and rooms, a botanic motif is distinct - from decorative garden-themed wall sculptures to mirrored walls covered in a white, floral-patterned decal.

Mr Surya Jhunjhnuwala, managing director of Naumi, says the aim is to create an urban-jungle getaway for business traveller guests. To pamper them, rooms are furnished with designer fittings like a classic Ardea armchair from Italian furniture house Zanotta and a leather rocking chair from Poltrona Frau, another Italian company.

On the rooftop terrace, guests can admire the Central Business District skyline as they take dips in a 14m-long, purple tiled infinity pool.

Mr Sim says there were many challenges in regenerating an old building.

'There were a lot of columns we couldn't move and the ceiling height in the lobby wasn't as generous as I would like it to be,' he says.



Given the small land area of 498 sq m, he had to go big on creative solutions. For example, the lobby now serves as a dining area by day and a whisky bar at night.

Drawing inspiration from a theatre stage, the space's lighting changes according to the time of day.

'This open concept turns the hotel into a form of street theatre for those passing by. In this way, the hotel becomes part of the streetscape,' says Mr Sim, who has previously worked on the Metropolitan Hotel in Bangkok and the W Hotel in the Maldives