



Garden in the city

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Tasked with designing the landscape for 8 Conlay in Kuala Lumpur, Pok Kobkongsanti's first instinct was to look around him. Taking inspiration from the city's topography - a huge valley surrounded by rivers and tropical rainforests - the founder of Trop Studio set about creating a natural landscape with lush greenery around and within the three towers.

"Good landscape must belong to the context, to the topography of the site and to the culture of the local people," said the award-winning landscape architect. "My role is to bring physical architecture to life, creating a viable space to live, work and play, where residents can enjoy harmonious and liveable spaces with exceptional experiences."

Kobkongsanti's design is also influenced by his deep-rooted love of nature since childhood and the insights gained during his studies at Harvard University.

"We tried to create a microclimate in our landscape, seamlessly integrating residents' experience at 8 Conlay," he said.

One area residents are sure to be drawn to is the dewdrop-shaped water lounge on the 26th floor. Drawing inspiration from the abundance of dewdrops in rainforests, Trop Studio merged the organic shapes with robust natural materials, creating an oasis comprising of ripple pools, cabanas and a jacuzzi. The use of porous materials and natural gravel helps to slow down the water running off the surface and prevents excessive stormwater discharge. A 25-meter lap pool is a paradise for swimmers while the cozy pod-like cabanas act as a perfect hideaway.

On the 44th floor, a leafy sanctuary awaits. Conceived by Trop Studio as a multitiered park in the sky, the Green Refuge is packed with tropical flora. It boasts a library, games room, lounge, yoga deck and barbecue area, as well as resting nooks and an elevated jogging path.

A considerable number of fern trees have been planted in the Green Refuge, in line with Kobkongsanti's concept of offering residents a comforting haven away from the city's hustle and bustle. Native to Malaysia, the durable shade plants are easy to grow, self-sustaining and reduce airborne pollutants.

The integrated development, set on a site of around 1.6 hectares, is scheduled to open by the end of this year. It will feature the first and only five-star Kempinski Hotel in Malaysia and the world's tallest twisted twin residential towers, housing the Yoo8 serviced apartments by Kempinski.

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