

HOME & DECOR

SINGAPORE'S NO.1 INTERIOR DESIGN MAGAZINE NIELSEN MEDIA INDEX 2013

The Inspiration Issue!

- RECREATE THE CAFE LOOK YOU LOVE
- GROW VEGGIES IN YOUR BEDROOM
- DESIGN YOUR OWN PERFECT KITCHEN

ANNUAL CHINESE ZODIAC FORECAST
PG 110

DIVA DOMAIN
Exclusive look inside
Christina Aguilera's home

PROPERTY
NEW VS RESALE
WHAT SINGLES
SHOULD BE CHOOSING

YES, YOU CAN
HAVE A BATHTUB
IN AN HDB FLAT!



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text MAVIS ANG
photography FRED WISSINK



The villa is surrounded by magnificent views of Dalat's pine forests, opposite the homeowners are avid golfers, and often practise at the bunker in their own backyard.



THE high LIFE

SET AMID THE BEAUTIFUL DALAT HIGHLANDS, THIS VILLA'S CALM, EARTH-TONED INTERIORS COMPLEMENT THE NATURAL PALETTE OF ITS SURROUNDINGS.

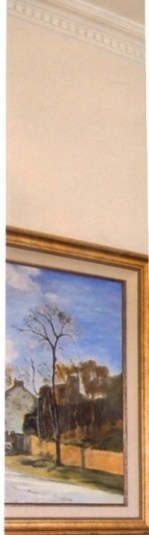



The villa that Le Ngoc Khanh Tam and her husband recently moved into boasts an enviable floor area of 6,500sqf. It houses sprawling common areas, and four bedrooms including a master bedroom suite that occupies the entire top floor. It might already sound like a dream home, but the main highlight, says Le Tam, lies outside the three-storey house.

Set in Dalat, a town in Vietnam's Central Highlands region, Le Tam's French-inspired villa is surrounded by mountains, vast stretches of pastoral terrain, and pine forests. "Dalat gives us a wonderful escape from the heat and chaos of the big cities," says the Dalat native, who shuttles between Ho Chi Minh and her hometown. "And at 1,500m above sea level, Dalat has a temperate climate that hovers around 20 deg C."

To highlight the gorgeous views surrounding her home, Le Tam worked with architecture firm Asiatique Design to create a house that lures people outside. "When you come through the main door, you'll already see the views outside, which will draw you towards the large verandas that overlook the horizon," she says.

Located against a hill and opening up to a lush view, Le Tam's home was built with fengshui principles in mind, as with the other six luxurious villas that form the La Vallee de Dalat estate which she developed with her husband. "We took special care to have open interiors to create a healthy environment, avoiding hidden corners and dead air," she elaborates. "All the doors and windows also follow specific measurements to foster prosperity and health." >



A living room with a fireplace, a white sofa, a coffee table with wine, and a large rug. The room features a large window, a fireplace with a wooden mantel, and a colorful rug. A white sofa with a teal pillow is on the left. A dark wood coffee table holds a bottle of wine and two glasses. A large, patterned rug covers the floor. A fireplace with a wooden mantel is on the right, with a fire burning inside. Above the mantel is a framed painting of a street scene and two blue vases. A large window is in the background. An arched doorway leads to another room. The walls are light-colored with decorative crown molding.

The living room is kept cozy during Dalat's chilly evenings with the help of a fireplace and a soothing colour palette.

THROUGH THEIR TRAVELS, THE
COUPLE HAVE COME TO LOVE
BOTH EASTERN AND WESTERN DESIGN.



The large, open kitchen lets guests interact with one another more comfortably, and its extended island also serves as a casual dining table for the homeowners.



this picture & below. Occupying the entire top floor, the master bedroom includes a veranda as well as his- and-hers bathrooms and dressing rooms.



The accomplished couple chose to keep the interiors of their new home "simple, elegant, and not too extravagant" so as to let the surrounding scenery take precedence. "While most high-end villas in Vietnam use a lot of marble flooring, we selected wide-plank American oak flooring and European limestone for a more French-colonial country feel," explains Le Tam.

To echo the villa's classical-contemporary architecture, the couple curated a selection of classic-style furniture with a French flair,

interjected with pieces that combine French and Asian design features. A majority of the pieces, Le Tam lets on, are designed and produced by Saigon Interiors, the couple's furniture business. The brand's fusion aesthetics are inspired by their travels, and having seen many examples of how Western and Asian elements can come together in furniture elegantly, she and her husband wanted the same for their new home. "It helps that we have some first-hand experience in how to bring the best of the two design languages together," Le Tam quips, referring to her American husband.

Having settled down quite nicely in her new home, Le Tam has recently started opening her house up for gatherings. Blessed with a spacious kitchen and dining room, this home can serve up to 18 people comfortably. But when it's just her and her husband, their regular routine starts with breakfast on the ground floor veranda, continues with a dip in the outdoor Jacuzzi with a glass of port during sundown, and ends with dinner on the master bedroom veranda "to enjoy the quiet and fresh Dalat environment". What an enviable life, indeed! **Q**

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