

VOGUE **LIVING**

AUSTRALIA

WORLD VIEW

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THE FUTURISTIC LOBBY OF BOUTIQUE HOTEL KLAPSONS. ARCHITECTURE AND INTERIORS BY WILLIAM SAWAYA. PAOLO MORONI'S 'HAPPY' SOFA (LEFT), AND ZAHA HADID'S UNDULATING 'MORaine' SOFA ARE PAIRED WITH 'MAXIMA' ARMCHAIRS; ALL FROM SAWAYA & MORONI. DETAILS, LAST PAGES.

SINGAPORE SWINGS

Milanese design has touched down in sultry Singapore - and it's not just a stopover. What's more, it's a boutique hotel, rather than a fashion brand, which has the luxury-loving locals and the jet set in a lather.



THE ITALIAN CONNECTION. ABOVE: KLAPSONS MAKES EFFECTIVE USE OF MANY "MODERN-CLASSIC" DESIGNS FROM SAWAYA & MORONI COLLECTIONS, INCLUDING THE UPHOLSTERED 'BLUE VELVET' OTTOMAN AND, ABOVE RIGHT, THE 'RIBBON CHAIR' WITH ITS CURVY WOOD VENEER SHELL AND UPHOLSTERED SEAT. BELOW LEFT: THE CEILING OF THE HOTEL FOYER SLOWLY CHANGES COLOUR DURING THE COURSE OF THE DAY. BELOW RIGHT: IN A DISCREET AREA TUCKED BEHIND THE RECEPTION POD, A STRIP OF ELEGANT 'ELOUISE' CHAIRS ARE PAIRED WITH 'KLAPSON' SIDE TABLES. DETAILS, LAST PAGES.

SINGAPORE COMES WITH its own "must-do" list for any out-of-towners. Sampling steaming plates of chilli crab and local noodles and drinking Singapore Slings at Raffles Hotel (the history-soaked, British Colonial-era architectural gem) traditionally figure on many time-strapped itineraries.

But in a dynamic city which has no shortage of large luxury chains, Klapsons has emerged – a new player in the local hospitality arena offering a contemporary design experience unlike any others currently available.

Milan-based architect William Sawaya, who with his partner Paolo Moroni heads up the 25-year-old product and interior design firm Sawaya & Moroni, was engaged by Klapsons owners, Singapore's Lee family, to design a new building in the CBD (Sawaya and Moroni's own apartment was featured in *Vogue Living's* July/Aug 2009 issue). Currently on four levels, but destined to grow in height with the later addition of a second-stage tower, it's been described as the city's first luxury boutique business hotel. Situated in the CBD, a short ride away from the frenetic street markets of Chinatown, Klapsons is very carefully conceived, making the most of a tricky narrow site (it was effectively built as an annex to an existing office block). The paucity of width has resulted in a deceptively spacious entry lobby that's an object lesson in neck-craning, jaw-dropping vertical volumes. Within it, a stainless steel sphere functions as a futuristic check-in point. Sawaya & Moroni's own iconic contributions to modern Italian design – such as Zaha Hadid's organic 'Moraine' sofa – are placed strategically across the space.

Yet it's the inordinately spacious hotel rooms and suites upstairs (several with private courtyards and heated jacuzzis) which will ensure that Klapsons becomes destination accommodation for design-savvy tourists as well as luxury-seeking business travellers. Adding to the unexpectedly spa-like touches, bathrooms are brought into the heart of the interior schemes. In keeping with the notion of contemporary, bespoke luxury, no two room's schemes are identical. RICHARD WALLER
Klapsons The Boutique Hotel, 15 Hoe Chiang Road, Singapore. Reservations, (+65) 6521 9030; www.klapsons.com; www.designhotels.com. In Australia, Hub Furniture stocks Sawaya & Moroni furniture; www.hubfurniture.com.au.

