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'Creativity, humor and love' find room in Singapore hotel

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Singapore's Robertson Quay area used to be famous for its laid-back, expat scene. But there's now another reason to head toward this riverside community.

M Social, a 293-room life-style design hotel designed by the acclaimed French creator, designer and architect Philippe Starck, has shaken up established concepts of accommodation to create a fun, cool place to stay for global citizens with a millennial mindset.

"M Social is where all the elements of the world — including creativity, humor and love — come together in an explosion of energy to create the joy of today's and tomorrow's world. To me, it is a stage dedicated to creative people," said Starck.

M Social is a brand that thrives on an interplay of friendship, community and new experiences. They consider comfort and customization as priorities, but in a setting that is casual and convivial, without stuffy hotel clichés and formalities. M Social Singapore represents the first hotel from the new brand, which belongs to Millennium Hotels and Resorts' signature Leng's Collection.

"M Social is not about interior design," explained Starck. "It is more about creativity, love and humor. It's just the best stage dedicated to creative people. A design without love and humor isn't human. The word 'beautiful' doesn't mean anything. A place or an object is above something where all the parameters of intelligence converge... A lack of love and humor is the definition of vulgarity."

For M Social, Starck and the team spent four years studying all details of the rooms, to make them intelligent and



comfortable.

The design-led rooms are available in four categories across 10 floors: Alcove Cosy, Alcove Terrace, Loft Gallery and Loft Terrace. The rooms have ceiling up to five meters, and come in varying sizes and configurations. Each variety is rich in design but functional at the same time.

The inverted V-shaped ceilings in the Alcove Cosy and Alcove Terrace rooms are charming and the leafy terraces contrast starkly with the concrete walls and floor tiles.

Starck said the rooms are the best he has ever designed, saying they are "the prototype for the future" thanks to their attention to detail and small footprint.

While the rooms provide a modern sanctuary where guests can relax, the communal spaces are designed to appeal to globe-trotters who want to gather in a digitally-led, experience-rich environment.

Patterned floor tiles from Spain lead guests to the reception area, where self-check-in kiosks are placed to ensure a quick do-it-yourself process. The area is dominated by a 10-meter long high table with a veined alabaster floor lit from the inside and recalling the effect of marble. It also functions as a mini business center.

A second public area is the restaurant and bar, Beast & Butterflies. The space is like a university of creativity with unexpected design details popping in every possible corner. All the furniture are designed or hand picked by Starck.

On the fifth floor is the 31-meter-long lap pool tiled with glittering blue mosaic stretching out toward the Singapore River.

Each guestroom is also equipped with a complimentary smartphone that comes with unlimited data and can make calls both locally and internationally.

"I don't know if this is the best hotel I've ever designed, but I'm proud that it tends toward democratic design and also democratic architecture — a concept I have been developing for 40 years now and which tries to give the best... to the greatest number of people," Starck said.

When asked about his favored design details in M Social, Starck said: "You cannot ask a parent which of his or her kids they prefer. But I can point some of the strongest elements, such as: the sculptural entrance, the technologic magic of the bar, the terrace and the river, the rooms like small temples with coziness and human scale and overall the creative and timeless modernity."