



THE WIZARD OF OM

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DESIGN



For the multi-disciplined, Singaporean designer Soo Chan, a Master of Architecture degree from Yale is but a veritable side note to a seemingly quixotic, yet wholly successful body of work amassed throughout an illustrious career.

As founding principal and design director of SCDA Architects Pte Ltd, Chan is the driving force behind aesthetically stunning, astonishingly engineered projects across Asia, Africa, Europe, Oceania and America. In his current initiative, Manhattan's Soori High Line, the artist and businessman sits squarely in the coveted catbird seat. As principal design and co-developer of this much anticipated, decidedly urban and undeniably *om*-inspiring oasis Chan is essentially a committee of one, a role that provides nearly unlimited creative freedom for the project.

Located in the hip, halcyonian enclave of Manhattan known as West Chelsea, the Soori High Line has been met with animated anticipation from the very beginning - acclaim made even more impressive by the fact that the building will not be available for occupancy until sometime in 2016. So what is it about this project that has piqued such interest? The answer, it would appear, is as simple as water.

An elegantly modern structure; the Soori High Line is comprised of twenty-seven residences - most boasting soaring, eighteen-foot ceilings and all featuring meticulous finishes. Certainly, building amenities including a wine tasting area, concierge services, health club, housekeeping and an on-site bistro are sure to entice a bevy of discerning, potential buyers to the property. But what elevates this building far above its physical eleven stories is one singular distinction; an



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inimitable feature unique to sixteen of the homes - that is, private, outdoor pools.

Inspired by his work around the globe, particularly in tropical regions where the design of indoor/outdoor space is driven equally by lifestyle and form, Chan set out to blur the line between architecture and landscape when creating the Soori High Line. The wildly successful results are individual pools that serve as extensions to the living spaces they grace. Designed with infinity edges, all the better to create the serene drama that artfully wraps the building, the pools are as much a commanding focal point as they are a functional indulgence.

“The effect of water and other organic elements in design is very soothing.” Chan explains, “By designing the architecture, the outdoor spaces and the interiors as one project, we have been able to capture those organic elements to entice beauty and emotion... the design gave us aesthetics born from simple spaces within a clean structure.”

While one might dispute the notion of referring to Soori High Line as ‘simple’ in any capacity or regard, the sleekly organic, minimalist elements of the design are indeed a study in calming beauty.

Among the elemental features Chan included are fireplaces, radiantly heated limestone floors, exposed beams and wood paneled walls. The juxtaposition between fire and water, stone and steel creating a powerful design, a heady aesthetic and cohesiveness Chan describes as “dramatic and provoking”.

With the Soori High Line, it would appear that New York has a new wizard of *om...* ✈

