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WILD TIMES IN CAMBODIA
CRUISING THE FJORDS OF TIERRA DEL FUEGO
JAPANESE ARTISANS

SINGAPORE BY DESIGN

Orchard Road's newest mall showcases more than 61 homegrown brands, while giving shoppers and passersby a generously sized rooftop park. BY DANA TER



Porthole windows and mirrors add a whimsical touch to Design Orchard's Cairnhill Road facade.

Given its low-slung appearance and the lush foliage that almost hides it from view, **Design Orchard** (designorchard.sg) makes an unusual addition to the Lion City's premier shopping belt. Local architecture firm WOHA was tasked with creating a retail and incubation space to nurture and showcase Singaporean design talent, and true to form, the studio has put its own stamp on the project. Look beyond the three-story mall's

glass frontage and you'll spot raw concrete walls softened by greenery and playful sequences of circular windows. By the entrance, a wide staircase leads to a verdant, umbrella-festooned amphitheater on the rooftop, blissfully removed from the din of traffic on Orchard Road. But it's the hand-picked selection of 61 Singaporean brands downstairs that remains the biggest draw: products run the gamut from small-batch

stationery and fragrances to foodstuffs and apparel. Here are a few names to seek out.

ARTISAN OF SENSE

After working in the hospitality industry for 15 years, Vivian Chung took the entrepreneurial leap in 2017 and began making eco-friendly soy candles as a way to reflect on all the good in her life. Her initial range of seven candles and room sprays has since expanded to over a dozen varieties, with scents ranging from citrus fruits such as grapefruit, orange, and tangerine to earthier aromas like the new lavender-sage-eucalyptus candles. Chung's fragrance diffusers and hand-poured candles are entirely plant-based, and come in stylish pink and gold packaging (artisanofsense.com).

PERA SKINCARE

Launched only last year by Raphael Jiang, Pera Skincare takes inspiration from the old cross-cultural beauty traditions of Peranakans, the descendants of Chinese merchants who sailed to Maritime Southeast Asia and local Malay women. The line includes a two-step mask version of *bedak sejuk*, a white cooling powder typically made from pandan leaves and rice to treat oily skin and acne. Meanwhile, the Tropical Hydrator Series consists of a cleanser, toner, and moisturiser, all made with natural botanicals and plant oils (peraskincare.com).

DOTTED LINE

High-collar, form-fitting lace frocks and elegant monochrome jumpsuits characterize Dotted Line, which reinterprets the cheongsam with modern silhouettes and details. Founder Dorothy Loh fell in love with the garment from watching period films such as *In the Mood for Love* and looking at vintage photos of women, such as her own mother, in cheongsams. "The attitude of the women wearing it made a difference," says Loh, who hopes to revive pride in the traditional, body-hugging dress that first became popular in 1930s Shanghai. "There is always an air of elegance and restraint associated with the garment." Loh's pick from Dotted Line is the

Clockwise from top left: A jasmine-scented diffuser by Artisan of Sense; Design Orchard's rooftop amphitheater; local labels take center stage inside the open-plan mall; bean bags from home decor brand SoftRock Living.

Grace Cheongsam, a classic slim-cut dress patterned in blue and white with contrasting fuchsia stripes running down the side (dottedlinestore.com).

ONLEWO

The whimsical name of this home decor brand derives from the Chinese characters *an le wo*, which mean a “safe and happy nest.” Its printed stationery, kitchenware, T-shirts, pillowcases, and lampshades take their design motifs from different Singapore neighborhoods. Owner Mike Tay says the idea behind Onlewo came from living in Tiong Bahru, a public housing estate built in the 1920s. “Tiong Bahru has lots of old charming window grilles; there was also a shop around the corner from my house that made fresh *kueh* [bite-size desserts] daily.” These scenes are referenced in Onlewo's grille- and kueh-patterned upholsteries, but perhaps its most charming products are the colorful new Peranakan-inspired notebooks, cushions, and plates (onlewo.com).

ALEXANDRA ALBERTA

Certified gemologist and young designer Alexandra Alberta Yeo founded her eponymous jewelry brand in 2010. Since then, she has gained a reputation for setting vivid gemstones—think rubies and sapphires—in edgy, unconventional pieces. “Color is one of my greatest passions in life,” says Yeo of her cheerful, tropical designs. “They inject a sense of playfulness and interest to an outfit instantly.” Though she's based in London, hints of Southeast Asia can be found in her work, such as the tongue-in-cheek Exotica range, which includes earrings shaped as durians (alexandraalberta.com).

LITTLE RED BOX

When self-taught artist Ryan Hiew started his brand three years ago, he envisioned “a thinking box full of creative ideas.” His adorable sketches of Singaporean landmarks are printed on magnets, postcards, flasks,



and notebooks, depicting everything from the art deco-style Potato Head building on Keong Saik Road to modern icons such as Gardens by the Bay. Other collectibles range from miniature vintage sewing machines and gramophones to a bright red coin box inspired by the Singaporean penchant for thriftiness (littleredbox.sg).

Q MENSWEAR

This chic menswear label has greatly evolved since launching as a bespoke suit- and shirt-

maker in 2011. Founder Chong Han San sees Q Menswear as being a top-to-toe fashion service and the brand's Telok Ayer heritage shophouse now stocks ready-to-wear pieces and accessories including ties, shoes, lapel pins, and pocket squares. Q's distinctive style makes use of dizzying patterns and colors, but Chong's favorite item is his striped-front long-sleeved shirt, which features thin black stripes on white Egyptian cotton—an elegant look for the office and at dinner parties (q-menswear.com). ●