following eight years of design and construction, safdie architects is nearing completion on ‘raffles city chongqing’, embedded within the chinese city’s densely developed yuzhong district, the mixed-use complex combines office, residential, hotel, retail, and recreational facilities across a 22.7 acre site. situated at the confluence of the yangtze and jialing rivers, the historically significant site was once home to the city’s most important gateway and the official imperial entrance to the city: chaotian gate. today, chongqing is one of the world’s fastest-growing and densest cities with a greater metropolitan population of over 30 million.
A phased opening of the development commenced in September 2019 with the unveiling of a five-storey retail galleria and continues into early 2020, culminating with the opening of ‘the crystal’ — a 300 meter-long (984 ft) horizontal skyscraper elevated 250 meters (820 ft) above the ground. Containing gardens, numerous dining options, a bar and event space, a residential clubhouse, an infinity pool, and a hotel lobby, the structure stretches across four of the development’s eight towers. The project is Safdie Architects’ fourth collaboration with Capitaland, one of Asia’s largest real estate developers.
with a total built area of over 1 million square meters (approx. 11 million square feet), the project is one of safdie architects' largest and most complex projects to date. five of the eight vertical structures are residential, with another serving as a dedicated office tower. the remaining two structures include a mixed-use tower with office space and serviced apartments, and another with offices and a hotel.
‘chongqing is such an extraordinary city — in scale, population, and personality,’ says christopher mulvey, safdie architects’ managing principal, who relocated to china in 2011 to establish a branch office for the firm. ‘the topography of the city creates opportunities for intimate pockets of public space at different elevations, stacked and stepped to overlook one another and the city beyond. it’s the defining characteristic of chongqing and one that we sought to build upon with raffles city.’ see designboom’s previous coverage of the project here.
project info:
client: capiteland + capitamalls asia
design architect: safdie architects
executive architect: P&T group international ltd
design institute: CQADI (chongqing architectural design institute)
structural engineer: arup
MEP engineer: parsons brinckerhoff
landscape architect: williams, asselin, ackaoui & associates
façade engineer: ALT
signage+wayfinding: pentagram + entro
lighting consultant: BPI (brandston partnership inc.)
interior design: CL3 architects ltd. (hotel & convention)
interior design: the buchan group (retail)
LEED consultant: arup
quantity surveyor: rider levett bucknall