



Cosmopolitan revamp

The Singapore Marriott, one of Singapore's best-known hotels, gets a S\$40 million interior face-lift

Above: The Singapore Marriott hotel specialises in facilities for the business traveller.

Above, right: The redecorated Crossroads cafe features distinctive black and tawny striped rattan chairs.

Facing page: Ten-metre tall palm trees create a centre court in the lobby. The anagray veneer wall panels have stainless steel inlays.

Singapore's city skyline would not be the same without the prominent green-roofed pagoda of the Singapore Marriott hotel. But while the exterior remains a familiar sight, the hotel interior has undertaken a major transformation.

The Marriott reopened as a five-star business traveller's hotel in April 1995, after a nine month \$40 million renovation.

Specialist hotel design company Hirsch Bedner was contracted for the refurbishment project. Interior designer Robert Ambulo explains the brief: "The original interior had a typical Chinese character, with rosewood

panels and jade features in the lobby. This traditional moulding was very heavy and dark. We aimed to give the hotel a bright and contemporary look to suit its urban setting."

Bringing more light into the three-storey high lobby and reception area was the first priority. Several skylights were installed and light is drawn through large new openings on the first and second levels. The openings also provide impressive views over the lobby from the pre-function areas on the first and second floors.

Robert Ambulo placed ten-metre tall preserved palm trees from Treescapes, USA





Above: Part of the \$40 million refurbishment included designing the formal Wan Hao Chinese restaurant. Interior designer Robert Ambulo of Hirsch Bedner chose a classical black and gold colour scheme to highlight the Chinese calligraphy wood carvings. The black granite floors are matched with black lacquer walls for a high gloss look.

in the centre of the lobby. This gives the area a focal point it had previously lacked.

The new wall panels are anagray, an African timber veneer. Robert Ambulo chose this wood for its light grain. Stainless steel borders give the panels a modern feel.

Cream coloured Botticino polished marble floors replace the existing carpet and contrast with the wood tones.

The lobby furniture is based on a honey, gold and black colour scheme. Tub chairs are upholstered in a black pinstripe fabric by Kravet, New York. These are matched with two-tone leather armchairs and sofas.

"I have avoided overly-decorative pieces and kept the furnishings subdued to create a sophisticated ambience," says Robert Ambulo.

Crossroads, the hotel's sidewalk cafe, has also been renovated. This opens onto the bustling intersection of Orchard and Scotts Rds.

The interior of the cafe is an Asian interpretation of a bistro style. Ambulo chose black and tawny rattan chairs suitable for casual and alfresco dining and ceramic tabletops with handpainted designs.

The use of stone gives a cool feeling to

the cafe. The Botticino and Golden Emperor marble floor echoes floor schemes seen elsewhere in the hotel. The floor has extra appeal with large broken glass terrazzo insets. The counter bar has a carved limestone facade.

"Because the cafe has such a strong connection to the outdoors, I furnished the interior like a gazebo or pavilion and made the ceiling look like a large-scale trellis," says Robert Ambulo.

The Wan Hao formal Chinese restaurant is new. It replaces the former restaurant with a traditional Chinese interior.

The black granite floors of the central

passageways are highlighted with brass strip inlays. The seating areas are carpeted in black.

Specially-created wall niches have white silk panels and black lacquer borders. These house large gold leafed wood panels carved with Chinese calligraphy.

Pinstripe curtains separate the open areas from the private dining booths. The fabric matches the tones of the wood panelled columns.

The gold and black interior is accented with high-backed burgundy dining chairs with black lacquer legs. The cotton upholstery fabric is by Valley Forge, Florida.

Location: Marriott Hotel, Singapore
Interior designer: Robert Ambulo, Hirsch Bedner
Main contractor: Shanghai Chong Kee
Lighting consultant: Jonathan Grundy
Granite and marble: Tan Chiang Bros
Carpet and rugs: Taiping
Trendsfax: For more information on these products and services, fax (64) 9 309 1708

Photography by Peter Mealin