

8 Sustainably Designed and Architecturally Significant Buildings in Singapore

March 15, 2019
By Sholeen Damarwala

It has been only 54 years since Singapore declared independence, but the island nation has grown to be one of the most powerful yet environmentally responsible economies in the world. Walking through Singapore’s vibrant downtown, that meteoric rise in sustainable architecture—much of it constructed over the past decade—is reflected in a cool mix of glass, steel, and lush green edifices that create a rich panorama of structural design.

While architectural marvels in their own right, what sets Singapore’s urban buildings apart is the commitment to green initiatives. “Singapore is the only country that makes it mandatory by legislation for any building of about 5,000 square meters [53,820 square feet] to achieve minimum standards as per the code for environmental sustainability,” says Mayank Kaushal (<http://www.fcl.ethz.ch/people/Researchers/MayankKaushal.html>), an architect, senior sustainability consultant, and researcher with Future Cities Laboratory, a program supported by ETH Zurich (<https://www.ethz.ch/en.html>) and Singapore’s National Research Foundation (<https://www.nrf.gov.sg/>) to help promote sustainable future cities through research, science, and design.

While builders are incentivized every step of the way to adhere to sustainable design practices, the most remarkable incentive is the Skyrise Greenery Incentives 2.0 (<https://www.nparks.gov.sg/skyrisegreenery/incentive-scheme>) scheme established in 2009 by the country’s National Parks Board, which funds up to 50 percent of installation costs of rooftops and vertical greenery—more than 110 projects to date. The result has been stunning builds ranging in scale, scope, and purpose yet with a common theme of using natural elements cleverly to reduce the impact of urban living.

Oasia Hotel Downtown by WOHA



Oasia Hotel Downtown by WOHA. Photography courtesy of Patrick Bingham-Hall.

Not only is the entire 27-floor external facade wrapped in a natural vine covered sunscreen, but the Oasia Hotel Downtown (<https://www.oasiahotels.com/en/singapore/hotels/oasia-hotel-downtown>) also has four lush sky terraces, 1,793 large planter boxes, and four large structural cores that allow for good cross ventilation reducing the overall energy cost.





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Designed by WOHA (<http://www.woha.net/>) and completed in 2016, the hotel is home to over 33 species of plants and 21 species of creepers. In addition, the 314-room property is notable for its striking interior design by Patricia Urquiola (<http://www.patriciaurquiola.com/>).