

Horizon Homes carries Shangri-La's luxe signature
The Philippine Star
April 9, 2016

MANILA, Philippines – In James Hilton's 1933 novel *Lost Horizon*, he describes —Shangri-Lal as a mystical paradise on earth hidden in the valleys and mountains of Tibet. Today, it is much easier to find.

Forty-one to 61 floors up the prime lot of Shangri-La at The Fort are the well-appointed residential Horizon Homes. In its show suite, we get a glimpse of that reality as interpreted by two of the world's best creative forces in interior design.

FM Architettura d'Interni, an Italian-based interior design company led by architect Francesca Muzio and interior designer Maria Silvia Orlandini, who design super yachts as well as exclusive solutions for high residential and complex residential projects all over the world, were commissioned to open up one of the 98 exclusive residential Horizon Homes.

Sky is the limit, and in the 418-sqm. four-bedroom show suite located at the 43rd floor, the designers express a more exclusive, intimate kind of luxury: comfort. It is designed to maximize the already ample space, with an eye for harmony and symmetry, showcasing the best of what Filipino and Italian artisans can offer. True to the duo's philosophy, —I am my home, Muzio says, —We are tailors of architecture, we are not imposing our style, we do not have a style as a brand. It's a person that has a style and a lifestyle.

Even without Muzio and Orlandini's touches, there are more luxuries that come with each Horizon Home aside from a panoramic view of Metro Manila stretching all the way to Laguna Bay or the many hotel perks its owners can enjoy, whether they buy the same four-bedroom unit, a three-bedroom unit (available in 316, 319 and 383 sqm.), or a two-bedroom unit with a floor area of 250 sqm.: each unit comes equipped with Sub-Zero refrigerators and Miele appliances in the white marble and steel show kitchen, Smeg and Whirlpool in the wet kitchen, Toto bathroom fixtures and Poliform cabinets.

But of course, that is only the beginning and Muzio and Orlandini's work is but a tempting proposition of what can be done with the space. Orlandini enthuses, —It is all in the spirit of Shangri-La: everything you wish, you can have.

PHILIPPINE STAR: Given 418 sqm. — and unlimited budget at that — what was the design process behind the Horizon Homes model unit?

FRANCESCA MUZIO: The view of the panorama was the first inspiration. I came here in April 2015, when there was still nothing, and I was brought up to see the panorama. I could see the city, all the way up to the Laguna Bay. Clouds are at my eye level.

And so we cut the unit in a way that all rooms have views of the panorama with either the Laguna Bay or the golf course; from the master's bedroom, you can see both.

I then went to Cebu and met a lot of local artisans and manufacturers. I returned to Italy with a lot of experiences and materials. It's the Italian way — to put together all the ingredients, at first not knowing what you are doing.

MARIA SILVIA ORLANDINI: Muzio and I met each other in a shipyard. We come from the yacht interior design business, and I tell you, she is the best architect in the business to cut and create spaces. (To date, Muzio has designed 112 of the most prestigious super yachts in the world.) The space in a boat is very limited, and you have to find a space for everything in that box. Even with all this space, we still maximized the layout.

In what way were you able to incorporate your experience in decorating super yachts?

MUZIO: Here, we have created unique spaces that can only come from our yacht experience. Between the living and dining area — both designed for Filipino-style entertaining — are pillars, dead spots in a typical home layout. But with shutters installed, we now have an intimate space for breakfast, and the possibility of a saloon. On another corner, we put a desk so you can write

in private. By the entrance of the bedroom, we created a nice window in the library so you can have a view of the panorama as you work. Every single space has a function.

All ceiling treatments enhance the feeling of space. Recessed lighting makes the 2.975 meter floor-to-ceiling height feel even higher, and running lights in the middle of the ceiling elongate the space.

The furniture floats on stainless steel, even if you can't see it right away. The inside of the drawers are also lined with leather. It's like nice lingerie under a nice dress — no one can see these details on the outside, but it influences the overall big impact.

What are the touches we should look out for?

ORLANDINI: Everything is bespoke only for you. You can see it in our choice of materials and the Italian artisanship. My family owns the furniture brand Cantori. We have a very long tradition of Italian design and craftsmanship. Together with our office and the Cantori facilities, we work in a big design compound that covers everything from designing to manufacturing. It is very important to the way we work. It's why our design

is so accurate and detailed. We can put together leather and metal and get a lot of fun in making particular pieces and every project can be different in this way.

For the Horizon Homes show suite, we used a lot of leather, wood, stainless steel, Murano hand-blown glass, Carrara marble, but also Filipino materials like shagreen and fish scales from Cebu. Artwork is all local, handpicked in collaboration with art curator Migs Rosales. The addition of local pieces such as Kenneth Cobonpue tables and chairs is like its inhabitant bringing in something of their own.

We designed the carpets and we can say it is the only one in the world. In the standard units, the floor is wood, but we decided to upgrade it into marble but it doesn't make sense to make it all marble and cover it with a rug and double the cost, so in the central part, the carpet is inlaid.

The chandelier in the dining room, which is the same as the one in the lobby, serves as a reminder that this project is commissioned by Shangri-La.

Having designed spaces all over the world, what is the common element that makes a space feel like home?

ORLANDINI: It is harmony, which is something everyone likes, whether they have different tastes or attitudes. We create it through symmetry. When you have a symmetrical view, it is a perspective that relaxes you. Anywhere in the world, when you create harmony with proportions, when you recognize it, you feel fine. In music, you can find a melody and every language recognizes the harmony because there is a melody. This is what we try to do.

MUZIO: Harmony is made by geometry. So when we design frames and spaces, we make a lot of lines and recalculation to make the right proportion. Like Leonardo da Vinci, it is in our blood.

We also balance the light and dark colors in our monochromatic, neutral palette. We then added a lot of textures to create comfort. Everything is very tactile. During the preview, I observed that many were touching the furniture. This interaction with the space made us very happy, proving this point of view is not exclusive to a culture. It's universal.