

The Philippines' New Architectural Landmark and a First by Foster + Partners

The Philippines will soon welcome a new residential landmark designed by Foster + Partners, the globally renowned architecture and design firm behind projects such as the HSBC Building in Hongkong, Apple Park in California and The Gherkin in London. Set to open its doors to homeowners starting the first half of 2027, The Estate Makati marks the firm's first residential project in the country.

Developed through a joint venture between SM Residences and Federal Land, Inc., The Estate Makati begins with a simple but defining idea: homes should evolve with the people who live in them.

Located along Apartment Ridge, the development sits right at the heart of Makati's commercial core while maintaining a quieter, more exclusive character, reflecting what Foster + Partners' project lead and partner Perry Ip describes as "a dialogue between two worlds."

"It's a rare site," Ip said. "You move from a very urban condition to something quieter within a short distance. That contrast shaped the design from the beginning."

For Ip, that duality became more than a site condition. It became a way of thinking about how people experience home and balancing access to the city with a sense of retreat.

"At Foster + Partners, all the projects we design are a reflection of how people live," Ip said. "It needs to be built around you. It shouldn't be something generic."

That thinking carries through the building's core principle of full adaptability, where homes are designed as spaces that can change over time.

This idea takes shape through its pioneering double-slab system, where there's a one-meter space between floors to conceal plumbing and electrical systems, allowing greater freedom for homeowners to reconfigure their space over time, whether adjusting layouts, expanding rooms, or adapting the home to new routines.

A column-free layout further supports this, enabling each home to function as a blank canvas rather than a fixed plan.

"The essence of the project is how much flexibility it gives residents to shape their space," Ip said. "It's all about possibility."

Rather than treating the facade as a purely visual element, it is designed around how people will use the space.



The entrance is organized as a sequence of spaces, shifting the scale from civic to residential to establish a deliberate sense of quiet.

The experience of the home extends beyond its interiors. In a tropical setting, comfort becomes a central part of the design, shaping how light, air, and views are experienced throughout the day.

Rather than treating the façade as a purely visual element, it is designed around how people will use the space. Deep horizontal fins provide shading, while operable windows allow controlled ventilation.

"We didn't want the view to just be something you look at," Ip said. "We wanted to bring people closer to it."

This thinking is expressed through bay windows that can be used as everyday living spaces, whether for reading, working, or simply pausing above the city.

The building's cruciform layout deepens this connection. Each residence is positioned as a corner unit, maximizing views, natural light,

and airflow. In a dense urban environment, this creates a stronger sense of openness and connection to the surroundings.

"Urban living is vibrant, but people also want a retreat," Ip said.

Movement through the building is approached as a transition from city to home.

A landscaped arrival sequence introduces this shift, creating a quieter, more private environment from the moment residents enter. The ground level is organized as a series of spaces rather than a single lobby, reinforcing a more residential, less institutional feel.

With 188 units, the development is intentionally low in density, supporting privacy and a more considered living experience. Private lift access further enhances this sense of exclusivity.

Environmental performance is integrated into the design in practical ways. The façade reduces heat gain and reliance on mechanical cooling,

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while rainwater collection and electric vehicle infrastructure support more efficient daily living.

These decisions reflect a broader approach where sustainability is embedded into how the building works, rather than treated as a separate feature.

What holds all of these together is a belief in continuity. Materials are selected for durability, and systems are designed to accommodate change.

"We believe these will prevent the building from becoming obsolete," Ip said. "Instead, it will evolve with its residents and remain relevant for generations." The Estate Makati takes a timeless approach, allowing homes to adapt alongside the lives unfolding within them.



Deep horizontal fins on the façade provide essential shading and reduce solar gain, tailored for the tropical climate.



A private, landscaped approach creates a physical buffer from the surrounding streets, separating the development from the urban environment from the moment of arrival.



The double slab system allows rooms to expand or change function entirely, ensuring that reconfiguring a unit is a question of intent rather than structural intervention.



Designed by Foster + Partners, The Estate Makati will start turnover in 2027.