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Genting Highlands, Malaysia's premier highland resort destination is seeing rapid development. Find out what projects are coming up high on the hills on Pages 4 and 5.



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Crest Builder buys 2.6ha land in Klang from WCT

Crest Builder Holdings Bhd is buying a 2.646ha freehold land in Klang from WCT Holdings Bhd for RM55 million.

In a filing with Bursa Malaysia on Dec 3, Crest Builder said its wholly-owned subsidiary CB Land Sdn Bhd has entered into a sale and purchase agreement with Gemilang Waras Sdn Bhd, a wholly-owned unit of WCT Land Sdn Bhd.

Crest Builder said the preliminary plans for the land is a mixed development of three blocks of serviced apartments and retail shoplots with the gross development value estimated to be above RM500 million.

"The group intends to capitalise on the development potentials to further strengthen the presence of the group in property development and construction activities in the future," it said.

Rehda working with KPKT on proposed Tenancy Act

The Real Estate and Housing Developers' Association Malaysia (Rehda) is working with the Housing and Local Government Ministry (KPKT) on the proposed Residential Tenancy Act.

"We have been having meetings. We have appointed a consultant on board and they are working on formulating the Act. There's been a lot of discussions," president Datuk Soam Heng Choon told reporters on Wednesday.

The Act is intended to protect both landlords and tenants in the event of any dispute that arises during a tenancy period.

KL office rents see quarterly rise in Q32019

Kuala Lumpur's office rents recorded a 2.1% q-o-q increase in the third quarter of 2019, according to real estate consultancy Knight Frank's Asia-Pacific Prime Office Rental Index.

Nevertheless, Knight Frank Malaysia expects KL office rental to decline in the future as the 2.1% rise was mainly due to the addition of two new office towers in the Tun Razak Exchange (TRX) financial district in the Malaysian capital, namely The Exchange 106 and Menara Prudential which held premium rents. On a yearly basis, the index for KL climbed 1.5% in Q32019.

"Malaysia's tallest tower and the capital city's latest iconic skyscraper, The Exchange 106 @ TRX, was awarded the Certificate of Completion and Compliance for the lower zone of the building in Q32019. The building, which is reported to have achieved circa 20% pre-committed occupancy, offers good quality and high specification space and hence, commands higher rental rates," Knight Frank Malaysia executive director of corporate services Teh Young Khean said.

must make an application to renew the required permit at least three months before the expiry date," he said.

Khalid was speaking at a press conference after visiting Block C of Kampung Kerinchi PPR in Pantai Dalam, Kuala Lumpur on Wednesday accompanied by Kuala Lumpur mayor Datuk Nor Hisham Ahmad Dahlan and Lembah Pantai MP Fahmi Fadzil. The lift at the housing area was involved in a freak accident on Aug 2 where nine people were hurt when the lift plunged after one of its two brakes failed.

No electricity tariff surcharge Jan-June 2020 for domestic consumers

The electricity tariff in Peninsular Malaysia for domestic consumers will be maintained while the surcharge for commercial and industrial users will be reduced effective Jan 1 until June 30 next year.

Minister of Energy, Science, Technology, Environment and Climate Change Yeo Bee Yin said the Cabinet has agreed to set the rates based on the 'Incentive Based Regulations' mechanism.

"A total of RM62.95 million from the Electricity Industry Fund will be used to cover the imbalance cost pass through (ICPT) surcharge so that it will not be imposed on domestic consumers.

"In this regard, the effective electricity tariff rate will be maintained at 39.45 sen per kWh," she said.



Win a pair of tickets worth RM108 each to Joey Yap's Feng Shui & Astrology Live Seminar 2020 in KL on Jan 11 & 12, 2020.

Go to www.EdgeProp.my for more details.

KPKT said it expects a study of the Act and data gathering exercise to be completed by this year, followed by the formulation of the Act next year.

Lifts in KL public housing certified safe

Federal Territories Minister Khalid Abdul Samad said all 528 lifts at public housing projects under the maintenance of Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) have valid permits issued by the Occupational Safety and Health Department (DOSH) to operate.

"All public housing projects

**LAUNCHES + EVENTS**

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If you have any real estate-related events, email us at editor@edgeprop.my. Events listed here will also appear on www.EdgeProp.my.

**Unravel the Magic of Christmas**

Date: Dec 7 (Sat)

Time: 2pm to 6pm

Venue: Life Space @ Ardence Labs, Persiaran Setia Alam, Setia Alam, 40170 Shah Alam, Selangor
Contact: (016) 218 2142

Have fun and get a taste of all things wonderful at this special Christmas event for kids. There will be activities like Christmas tree decorating, playtime with Santa Claus, gift wrapping and exchange sessions. Open for children aged six to 12 years.

Frozen @ Greenwood's Salak Perdana

Date: Dec 8 (Sun)

Time: 10am to 5pm

Venue: Paramount Property Gallery @ Greenwood's Salak

Perdana, No. 32A & 36, Jalan Belian 1, Taman Salak Perdana, Bandar Baru Salak Tinggi, Sepang, Selangor
Contact: (012) 422 9003
Fun and festive activities await at Greenwood's Salak Perdana such as DIY Christmas cookies, DIY clay art, a meet-and-greet session with Elsa of Frozen and more! Visitors can also tour the show units of Keranji 2 and walk away with a special gift worth RM12,000 upon purchase of any Keranji 1 and 2 houses. Terms and conditions apply.

**121 Residences Launch**

Date: Dec 8 (Sun)

Time: 11am to 6pm

Venue: Glo Damansara, Main Concourse, 699, Jalan

Damansara, Taman Tun Dr Ismail, Kuala Lumpur
Contact: (03) 7723 9000
Glomac is launching its 121 Residences serviced apartment in this one-day-only special event. There will be attractive sales packages and a family carnival with free popcorn and bubble tea, among others.

**Satay Party @ Southville City**

Date: Dec 7 & 8 (Sat & Sun)

Time: 11am to 5pm

Venue: Southville City @ KL South, Southville City, Taman Teknologi Mint, Bangi, Selangor
Contact: (03) 9212 0199

Mah Sing Group invites all satay lovers for a free satay party at Southville City. Bring your family and friends to join the feast!

A Day of Nyonya Heritage

Date: Dec 8 (Sun)

Time: 11am to 5pm

Venue: Wisma Chin Hin, No. 2, Jalan 1/127, Off Jalan Kuchai Lama, Kuala Lumpur
Contact: (03) 7984 7878
Organised by Chin Hin Property Development, the nyonya-themed event will feature batik drawing and nyonya kuih-making workshops plus an appearance by Malaysian Singapore-based actress Tong Bing Yu.

Christmas Glass Jar Painting Workshop

Date: Dec 8 (Sun)

Time: 2pm to 4pm

Venue: EcoWorld Gallery @ Eco Majestic, 1, Lingkaran Eco Majestic, Eco Majestic, Malaysia, Semenyih, Selangor
Contact: (012) 338 7232

Come to Eco Majestic to be part of the Christmas spirit and learn the art of jar crafting to create your own Christmas gift. All materials are provided. Seats are limited.



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New development vibrancy at GENTING HIGHLANDS

BY CHELSEY POH

Along the winding path up Jalan Gunung Ulu Kali to Genting Highlands, new high-rises are rapidly joining older apartments.

Sitting 1,800m-high atop Mount Ulu Kali, on the border of Pahang and Selangor, Genting Highlands is a popular spot for leisure and recreation amongst Malaysians and foreign visitors, with several hotels, theme parks, shopping malls and a cable car system, thanks to Resorts World Genting (RWG).

According to Genting Group's annual report, RWG welcomed 25.9 million visitors in 2018, a 9.75% increase compared with 23.6 million in 2017. In 2018, visitors comprised 27% hotel guests and 73% day-trippers.

In 2013, Genting Group embarked on a 10-year master plan — Genting Integrated Tourism Plan (GITP) — to reinvigorate and transform RWG. A few notable completions under the GITP master plan, which includes First World Hotel (Tower 3), Awana SkyWay cable car, SkyAvenue mall, Genting Highlands Premium Outlets (GPO) and Skytropolis Indoor Theme Park, have attracted many repeat and first-time visitors. After a few hitches, the company is looking forward to the opening of the new outdoor theme park.

Gohtong Jaya and Genting Permai located along the main access road at mid-hill are also gaining interest among visitors.

Renewed interest in properties

Genting Highlands' popularity has attracted property developers as well.

Nawawi Tie Leung Property Consultants' data shows that at least 3,800 high-rise residential properties have been completed at Genting Highlands over the past five

years. Among the projects that were completed this year were OSK Group's Windmill Upon Hills and geo38 Residence by Pesat Bumi Sdn Bhd. Yet, there is no sign that the pace of development will pause anytime soon as more than 4,200 units in new and upcoming projects are expected to add to the current supply. (See Table 1.)

Why are people and property developers making a beeline to Genting Highlands?

Considering the country's heat and humidity in general, the top draw to this place is its cool hilltop climate, making it a favourable weekend getaway and a coveted holiday home destination.

Rahim & Co's survey reveals that most of the people residing in Genting Highlands work there while the rest are transient visitors who only stay there on weekends and holiday seasons. "These short-term visitors usually come from Kuala Lumpur, Kuantan, Penang as well as Singapore and Indonesia," Rahim & Co International Sdn Bhd Director of Research Sulaiman Saheh tells EdgeProp.my.

Nawawi Tie Leung Property Consultants director and regional head of research and consulting Saleha Yusoff believes that once the new outdoor theme park opens, RWG will garner more visitors and there will be more job opportunities, subsequently creating a spill-over effect on the demand of residential and commercial properties within the vicinity.

She says that the area also has the potential for new catalysts, such as eco-tourism and medical tourism, which would require different types of accommodation, facilities and services.

"Resort-type developments are not only suitable for holiday getaways but also for retirement villages. Compared to the US, medical costs in Malaysia is 65% to 80% lower and this has attracted medical tourists from many countries. Genting's cool atmosphere and proximity to the KL city



SULAIMAN SAHEH

Sulaiman: Investment performance will depend on management quality and tourist arrivals.



SALEHA YUSOFF

Saleha: Diversifying product offerings would make the property market in Genting Highlands even more vibrant.



Foo: Those who have the ability could still buy property here as their holiday homes.

Table 1: Recently completed high-rise residential developments

YEAR OF COMPLETION	DEVELOPMENT	DEVELOPER	NO. OF UNITS
2016	Ion Delemen	Galeri Tropika Sdn Bhd (NCT Group of Companies)	1,148
2018	Midhills	LBS Bina Group	610
2019	Vista Residences	Kerjaya Prospek Group Bhd	378
2019	Windmill Upon Hills	PJ Development Holdings Bhd (subsidiary of OSK Holdings Bhd)	1,108
2019	geo38 Residence	Pesat Bumi Sdn Bhd	579
Total units			3,823

SOURCE: NTL RESEARCH & CONSULTING, 2019

Table 2: New and upcoming residential developments

DEVELOPER	PROJECT NAME	(ESTIMATED) LAUNCH DATE	NO. OF UNITS
NCT Group of Companies	Grand Ion Majestic	March 2018	1,885
Hongkong IBN Group	IBN Highlands City	End-November 2019	488 units in the first two blocks
Tropicana Corp Bhd	Tropicana Grandhill	Q1 2020	1,443 units under first phase
YNH Property Bhd	Celestia Genting Highlands	1H 2020	Under planning
Pesat Bumi Sdn Bhd	Geo Antharas	Pre-launch in December 2019	476
	Geo Elite	Under planning	Under planning
	Geo Royal	Under planning	Under planning
Sering Manis Sdn Bhd	Pavilion Genting Highlands	Under planning	Under planning

SOURCE: RESPECTIVE COMPANIES



Table 3: Transacted prices for high-rise residences completed in the past five years

NAME OF DEVELOPMENT	SIZES (SQ FT)	NO. OF TRANSACTIONS		AVERAGE TRANSACTED PRICE (PSF)	
		2018	2019	2018	2019
Ion Delemen	603 – 990	1	1	RM1,169	RM1,037
Midhills	557 – 999	2	—	RM692	—
Vista Residences	1,078	—	1	—	RM749
geo38 Residence	642	—	2	—	RM652

SOURCE: JPPH; NTL RESEARCH & CONSULTING, 2019

centre are plus points for an integrated medical tourism development.

“Diversifying product offerings would make the property market in Genting Highlands even more vibrant,” she notes.

New and upcoming developments

Newly-planned and ongoing developments here include Grand Ion Majestic and Celestia Genting Highlands on the hilltop as well as Tropicana Grandhill, Pavilion Genting Highlands, IBN Highlands City, Geo Antharas, Geo Royal and Geo Elite located close to Genting Permai. (See Table 2.)

“Midhill Genting has attracted major developers which are planning huge mixed developments such as the 112-acre Tropicana Grandhill and the 280-acre Pavilion Genting Highlands,” TSK Realty senior real estate negotiator Ben Foo Tien Choy says.

Tropicana Grandhill will consist of residential, commercial, wellness, education, park and silver-hair components, while Pavilion Genting Highlands will have resort apartments, luxury villas, parks, commercial and retail properties as well as resort hotels.

To draw more visitors to frequent the midhill, developers are actively trying to create commercial activities there. For example, the 20-acre IBN Highlands City in Genting Permai will have a retail mall, says Foo.

As housing demand is largely driven by tourism and rental, new developments in the area commonly offer fully-furnished units to lure buyers. A few projects such as geo38 Residence, Ion Delemen as well as the upcoming Grand Ion Majestic have even partnered short-term rental management companies to help homeowners rent out their units.

Secondary market yet to gain momentum

With RWG gaining popularity and the success of GPO, psf prices of newer high-rise residential developments are catching up with Kuala Lumpur’s prices.

Looking at high-rise projects completed in the past five years, there were very limited secondary transactions in 2018 and 2019 while more transactions are seen among the older developments, although the number is still small.

Nevertheless, Foo believes the secondary market will slowly gain momentum as more new projects come on stream.

Transacted prices of some old apartments have seen a drop between 2017 and 2019, owing to competition from new supply. However prices of those located close to RWG such as Kayangan Apartment

and Ria Apartment are holding up better, while Genting Permai Resort Apartment at the midhill has also seen a 27% increase in average transaction price based on seven transactions across three years. (See Table 3 and 4.)

Competition rolling in

No doubt, one of Genting Highlands’ main attractions is its entertainment and leisure component while its limited accessibility by road as well as its altitude have deterred people from staying there for the long term, apart from those who work there.

“Therefore, the rental market is limited to tourists or visitors who come for short-stay. With all investors eyeing the same target market, rent is very competitive,” Saleha says.

Foo concurs and adds that with more supply coming into the market, yields and occupancy rates could become more challenging.

“However, I believe that those who have the ability could still buy property here as their holiday homes, because Genting Highlands is one of the top tourism destinations in Malaysia,” he says.

In terms of rental yields, Foo says certain apartments offer healthy yields. He cites geo38 Residence which received yields of between 5.1% and 5.76% while data from the National Property Information Centre showed that rental yield of Ion Delemen was 3.7% in 2017 and 2018.

Sulaiman of Rahim & Co points out that the main challenge would be sustaining occupancy and attractiveness to potential tenants and short-stay guests. “In light of this, some new developments are offering sale-and-leaseback as well as guaranteed rental schemes,” he adds.

Notwithstanding the guarantee and the financial backing of the guarantor, many investors are still wary of risk after the guaranteed period ends. As such, they’d rather do it themselves. “Many house owners are trying to rent out directly through online rental platforms, while at the same time being supported by property management professionals or informal unit custodians to take care of their units,” he elaborates.

“Investment performance will depend on the management quality of the premises, on top of tourist arrivals. Fortunately, Genting Highlands is expected to continue drawing visitors both locally and regionally,” he says.

Other concerns among property buyers include the traffic and human congestion that occur during peak seasons as there is only one main access road up and down the hill. Apart from this, landslides that occasionally occur on the hillsides, especially after a major downpour, could also deter property investors.



Genting Permai, located midhill along the main access road is gaining interest among visitors and developers.

Table 4: Transacted prices 2017-2019 for high-rise residences completed more than five years ago

NAME OF DEVELOPMENT	SIZES (SQ FT)	NO. OF TRANSACTIONS			AVERAGE TRANSACTED PRICE (PSF)			GROWTH RATE
		2017	2018	2019	2017	2018	2019	
Amber Court	624 – 818	1	5	12	RM336	RM245	RM266	-20.80%
Genting View Resort	581 – 990	1	12	3	RM586	RM461	RM437	-25.40%
Genting Permai Resort Apartment	1,012 – 1,130	1	4	2	RM316	RM356	RM402	27.20%
Kayangan Apartment	1,658 – 2,000	1	2	2	RM351	RM731	RM590	68.09%
Ria Apartment	1,087 – 1,249	1	2	1	RM641	RM516	RM641	—

SOURCE: JPPH; NTL RESEARCH & CONSULTING, 2019

Attractions at Genting Highlands



Nedved Chai and his family operate New Rainbow Restaurant.

New Rainbow Restaurant

New Rainbow Restaurant is one of the first shops opened at Gohtong Jaya. The 20-year-old shop is famous for its delicious fresh wild river fish sourced from the rivers in Pahang, as well as various other seafood dishes. Loved by both locals and foreigners, the eatery recently opened a branch at Genting Highlands Premium Outlets.

The Chai family who operates the shop rented the three-storey shopoffice at Gohtong Jaya for RM6,000 per month when it first started business in 1997, but the rental has increased to RM12,000 per month now.

According to data from JPPH and NTL Research & Consulting, there is only one shopoffice transaction recorded at Gohtong Jaya in the past two years. The 4,164 sq ft shop office was sold with a price tag of RM2.90 million or RM697 psf.

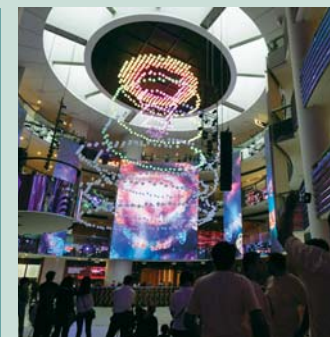


Happy Bee Farm

Happy Bee Farm, Insect World & Butterfly Wonderland allows visitors to experience how a bee farm is operated and check out a collection of bug specimens with peculiar forms and colours. Visitors can also walk through the Butterfly Wonderland, a specially built garden filled with beautiful butterflies.

Genting Strawberry Leisure Farm

Genting Strawberry Leisure Farm is a family-friendly attraction that lets visitors pick strawberries from the orchards. It is also famous for its astounding Lavender Garden that provides colourful photo opportunities.



SkyAvenue Mall

There are more than 100 brands, shops and restaurants at RWG’s SkyAvenue Mall, along with entertainment outlets such as SkyCasino and Picture House Cinema. Must-try restaurants include Beauty In the Pot, Burger & Lobster and The Laughing Fish by Harry Ramsden.

Awana SkyWay cable car

A ride in Awana SkyWay cable car would be a memorable experience. There are spectacular views

and a fresh breeze enters the gondola while you drift past the 130-million-year-old rainforest and the many attractions and hotels in Genting Highlands.



Genting Highlands Premium Outlets

Genting Highlands Premium Outlets is a great open-air shopping destination. It offers a collection of over 150 designer brands and stores, a food court and a wide range of restaurants and cafes. The mall opens daily from 10am to 10pm.



Malaysian developer takes on Thai holiday homes market

BY TAN AI LENG

KUALA LUMPUR: Location, lifestyle offerings and pricing are the typical key elements that property buyers look for, but Malaysia-based developer Sanctuary Lakes Global Group (SLGG) sold their first million-ringggit bungalow in Thailand because of a bird!

"It was a beautiful afternoon, when we welcomed a retired Switzerland couple to our first show villa in Hua Hin, Thailand.

"They were standing in front of the glass doors at the balcony, enjoying the lakeview, when suddenly a crane flew past in front of their eyes. It amazed them, and that was the moment they decided to place their booking for the villa," recalled SLGG director Leo Tan.

The couple, he told EdgeProp.my, had been visiting various locations to hunt for an ideal vacation home for five years.

The four-bedroom villa, which was built on 8,472 sq ft of land, was sold for RM1.8 million. The lakeside villa has a built-up size of around 3,261 sq ft and comes with a pool, landscaped garden, fully-fitted kitchen and a large patio area.

The villa is one of the 86 holiday villas in the boutique developer's first development in Thailand. SLGG also has projects in the US, Europe, China and Australia.

Launched in 2018, Sanctuary Lakes Hua Hin is a joint venture between SLGG and the landowner of the 32-acre site.

The luxury resort homes development also features a 6.5-acre natural lake with a cascading wa-



Sanctuary Lakes Hua Hin boasts views that appeal to vacation homebuyers.

terfall and a 1.4km walking path. The villas come in three designs called Kingfisher, Sandpiper and Hummingbird. They are priced from US\$330,000 (RM1.37 million).

Land area sizes range from 3,390 sq ft to 18,309 sq ft, while built-ups can vary based on a customer's design preference. Tan expects Sanctuary Lakes Hua Hin to generate a GDV of US\$42 million.

Protection for foreign buyers

"Buying property in Thailand is different from Malaysia. Foreigners are not allowed to own land in Thailand but they could lease the land from landowners for a perpetual lease of 30 years with renewable

options to build their own houses on the land," Tan explained.

There are no lease renewal fees but there is a risk that the lease may not be renewed, he added.

Hence, to protect both buyers and landowner, SLGG and its JV partner have formed a company to take control of the land to ensure that buyers could get a 90-year lease.

"The buyers can choose to build their own houses and live there. SLGG will provide them the building and home design service," he said.

Located about four hours' drive from Bangkok, Hua Hin is a popular tourist destination among Thais, including the late King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand.



Tan: Vacation home purchasers tend to take their time to shop around before making a decision one or two years later.

However, Tan noted that Hua Hin is less commercialised and more family-friendly than many other similar Thai resort destinations, making it an ideal place for vacation homes.

"Vacation home development is a niche product, unlike houses for homeownership. Holiday home purchasers are not in a rush to buy one.

"They take their time to shop around. There were buyers in our previous projects who only purchased the property a year after they had first visited our show unit," said Tan.

Creating value and products that are not easily replicable are key elements in attracting buyers in such a niche market.

Mulling resort homes in Serendah

Back in Malaysia, SLGG launched Santuari Park Pantai located close to the Bukit Gasing Forest Park in Petaling Jaya, Selangor in September.

The 38-acre freehold development has an estimated GDV of RM102 million, offering seven non-strata garden villas and 13 strata-titled courtyard villas, which will be completed in phases by mid-2021. The land sizes of each villa range between 7,200 sq ft and 8,700 sq ft. Each unit comes with a private lift, swimming pool and garden.

There are also vacant plots of 8,000 sq ft to 18,000 sq ft available for those looking to build their own bungalows.

Moving forward, SLGG also plans to develop resort lifestyle homes in Serendah, Selangor, targeting retirees and upgraders who are looking for a small country home located not too far from the city of Kuala Lumpur.

"We are now in talks with a landowner for a joint-venture development. The land is around 500 acres, which is ideal for a small township project. The tract is surrounded by hills and has a beautiful lake in the middle which is good for fishing," he revealed.

Tan said the company hopes to seal the deal and introduce the first phase of the development by mid-2020.

"We will first need to conduct a market study to see whether the concept is acceptable to local buyers," he noted.

KL ranked second best city in the world for expats

BY CHELSEY POH

PETALING JAYA: Asian cities top the Expat City Ranking 2019 which saw Malaysian capital Kuala Lumpur coming in second behind Taipei.

The ranking for the easiest city to get settled in as an expat was carried out by InterNations, the world's largest expat community with over 3.5 million members.

In the global list, Taipei, Kuala Lumpur, Ho Chi Minh City and Singapore were in first to fourth places respectively, with Taipei defending its position in 2018. Meanwhile, Bangkok (20th), Tokyo (26th), Jakarta (33rd), Shanghai (43rd), and Hong Kong (52nd) ranked midfield. Beijing (60th) and Seoul (63rd) came in towards the end of the list, and Yangon (73rd) was among the bottom 10.

"Expats seem to find it easy to get

settled in most Asian cities, with the exception of Tokyo, Beijing, Seoul, and Shanghai," InterNations said in a press release on Tuesday.

Montréal, Lisbon, Barcelona, Zug, The Hague and Basel made up the top 10 cities to move to in 2020 while Kuwait City (82nd), Rome, Milan, Lagos (Nigeria), Paris, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Lima, New York City, and Yangon (73rd) were the worst.

A total of 82 cities around the globe were analysed in the survey covering five areas of expat life — Quality of Urban Living, Getting Settled, Urban Work Life, Finance & Housing and Local Cost of Living. With its second place, Kuala Lumpur finally makes it into the global top three after consistently ranking among the top 10 cities in the past few years.

In the city, 75% of the expats felt at home (versus 64% globally),



Taipei topped the Expat City Ranking list.

while 69% were happy with their social life (versus 55% globally). Language does not seem to be a problem, as 92% find it easy to live in the city without speaking the local language (versus 47% globally).

Expats have little to complain about when it comes to Local Cost of Living (2nd) and Finance & Housing Indices (2nd). Close to four in five (78%) are satisfied

with the local costs of living (versus 43% globally), and 75% find housing affordable (versus 36% globally).

However, expats' satisfaction with their work life was mixed, ranking Kuala Lumpur 26th worldwide in the respective index.

This story first appeared on www.EdgeProp.my

12 Asian Cities in Expat City Ranking 2019

Global ranking

1st	Taipei
2nd	Kuala Lumpur
3rd	Ho Chi Minh City
4th	Singapore
20th	Bangkok
26th	Tokyo
33rd	Jakarta
43rd	Shanghai
52nd	Hong Kong
60th	Beijing
63rd	Seoul
73rd	Yangon





BY SHAWN NG

Creating a safe and comfortable home is often a challenge for many parents, especially those with kids that require special care. Many may find it overwhelming and not know where to begin.

For architect and mother of two Mumtazah Mustajab, making her house a safe place to live for her children, especially for 13-year-old son Najib who was born with autism, took lots of time and planning.

Mumtazah is a director of architecture firm Archisphere Sdn Bhd and one of the council members of the Malaysian Institute of Architects (PAM) for the 2019-2020 term where she is chairing the community and social responsibility committee.

She and her family live in a double-storey linked house in Taman Melawati, Kuala Lumpur, a neighbourhood with plenty of green outdoor spaces for children to enjoy. They moved here after Najib was diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) at the age of three.

In terms of safety for Najib, a number of things were considered. A feature that one may not find in most other houses is the kitchen counter which was lowered by some 150mm from the normal height of about 90cm to enable the children to use and to learn to clean the dishes, Mumtazah tells EdgeProp.my.

"We also took a long time to look for the right furniture and fittings. We had to test them out to ensure everyone in the house will benefit from them, especially Najib. We are very satisfied with the outcome today because we are able to help Najib develop life skills while living happily and safely in this house," she says.

For those who are looking to make their homes friendly to children with autism, Mumtazah offers some tips.



Step-by-step pictorial references stuck around the house to aid the child's everyday activities

1 Understand the child's condition and needs

The first thing to do is to understand the biological conditions of the child, as no two persons with ASD are the same. Every individual on the autism spectrum has his or her own problems to some degree with social interaction, communication, behavioural and sensory sensitivities which require specific care, says Mumtazah.

"Some autistic children are extremely sensitive to sound, light, texture, taste and odour which may cause them to become agitated," she explains.

For example, some autistic children cannot stand the way certain textures or clothing feels on their bodies, finding it uncomfortable. So, it is best to use furniture, furnishing and flooring in smooth materials, or those that do not contain those specific textures.

In other words, there is no one-size-fits-all solution and every aspect must be handled individually, she says.

"When designing their home interiors, many parents want to decide on things like colours and furniture, but often forget about what best suits their children, especially those with special needs.

"We should fit out the home with the child's condition in mind and cater to his or her needs," she reiterates.



Mumtazah (left) with her 13-year-old autistic son (on keyboard), her daughter and husband

PICTURES BY LOW YEN YEING | EdgeProp.my

Making a house a home for a special child

2 Clear definition of spaces

Spaces in a home should be clearly defined to avoid confusing children with autism. The more things there are in one place, the more distractions there are for the child, which may worsen their condition. For example, do not put toys in a bedroom or eat in a bedroom, says Mumtazah.

"You can use a small table or carpet to define each space. At the same time, you need to teach the child what activity should be carried out in certain spaces," she adds.

She also notes that a specific space must be set aside as the child's personal space. "This is a must-have for a child with autism as it helps them to calm down when needed. Plush toys, bouncing balls, carpeted or timber floors in calming colours can be placed in their personal space.

"In Najib's case, when he needs to calm down, he will go to his space



A specific place that allows an autistic child to calm down is recommended

tucked in a corner on the ground floor and calm himself down by hugging the beanbags. Music also helps to calm him down so we put a TV and a radio there as well," she says.

3 Use simple and calming colours

At her house, Mumtazah uses shades of white, cream and brown to set a calm and serene tone, making the spaces conducive for Najib to focus on doing a task without getting distracted easily.

"We try to keep it very simple and natural when it comes to colour. If there are too many colours, it may be uncomfortable for those who have visual sensory problems," she says, adding that muted pastel colours are also good choices as a base.

"Use colours wisely. For example, red will make you feel hungry, so you can use it in the dining area or kitchen, where you can have some reddish tones. Green can be used in the bedroom as it gives you a feeling of tranquility," she points out.

4 Be mindful of furniture and fittings

As some children with autism have an acute sensitivity to noise, touch or other sense modalities, it is important to keep those sensitivities in mind when it comes to furniture and fittings.

Mumtazah's advice is to select furniture that is easy to clean and maintain.

"I would recommend polyurethane, leather and bamboo furniture as they are safe and easy to clean compared with fabric ones.

Parents are advised to cover sharp edges of things in the house to protect the kid from self injury.

Choose ceiling fans and other electrical appliances that do not make too much noise, especially when there are children with hypersensitive hearing around.

"If your home uses fluorescent lights, cover them with a diffuser as autistic children find the flickering from these lights uncomfortable," she says.

Meanwhile, lever-type water taps and door handles are much easier for the child to use compared with, for example, ball knobs.



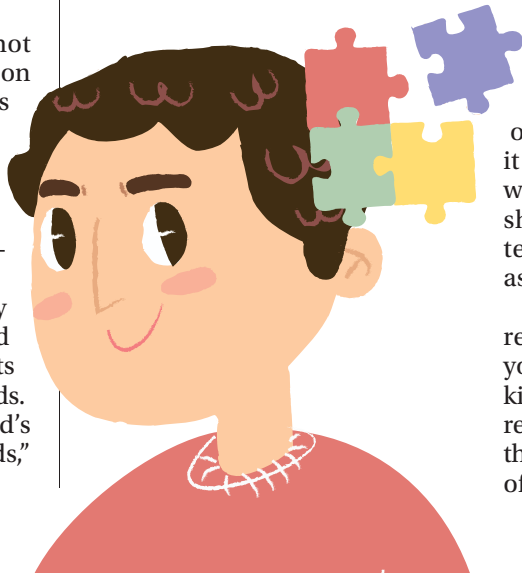
Door handles come equipped with labels

5 Budget – one step at a time

If budget is tight, start by purchasing items of priority and save for future purchases.

"Be selective, patient and always check your budget," notes Mumtazah. "Your home may need to change as your child grows. Some furniture may not be suitable anymore after some time. So you may sell them and use the money to buy better ones."

"When it comes to fittings, sometimes the best ones are not necessarily the most expensive ones. They just have to be safe for the child and easy to maintain," she says.



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Properties for sale and rent

**RM3,200,000****Taman Ampang Utama, Ampang, Selangor****Type:** Bungalow **Tenure:** Leasehold
Built-up: 6,000 sq ft **Land size:** 6,500 sq ft
Bedroom: 8 **Bathroom:** 7**Ahmad Fikri** (REN 19341)HUNT PROPERTIES (BANGI) SDN BHD (E (I) 1498/3)
+6012 578 7390**RM16,000/mth****Bukit Jalil City, Bukit Jalil, Kuala Lumpur****Type:** Shoplot **Tenure:** Freehold
Built-up: 2,800 sq ft **Bathroom:** 2**Ann Soh** (REN 03232)METRO REC SDN BHD (VE (I) 0376/1)
+6018 369 8650**RM700,000****Wangsa Permai, Kepong, Selangor****Type:** Terraced house **Tenure:** Leasehold
Built-up: 1,800 sq ft
Bedroom: 4 **Bathroom:** 3**Carmen Teoh** (REN 27223)IQI REALTY SDN BHD (E (I) 1584)
+6012 303 3133**RM2,000/mth****Mutiara Oriental, Taman Bukit Mayang Emas, Petaling Jaya, Selangor****Type:** Condominium **Built-up:** 1,400 sq ft
Bedroom: 3 **Bathroom:** 3**Catherine** (REN 09255)CBD PROPERTIES SDN BHD (E (I) 1197)
+6012 383 9275**RM950,000****Dua Menjalara, Bandar Menjalara, Kuala Lumpur****Type:** Condominium **Tenure:** Leasehold
Built-up: 1,739 sq ft
Bedroom: 4 **Bathroom:** 2**Cerrine Yew** (REN 28403)REAPFIELD PROPERTIES (HQ) SDN BHD (E (I) 0452)
+6012 201 3088**RENTED FOR****RM1,300 per month**

(RM1.41 psf)

Serviced residence, D'sara Sentral, Sungai Buloh, Selangor**Concluded by:** Eugene Pang (REN 30525) of MIP Properties Sdn Bhd (+6016 272 4228) **When:** September 2019**DONE DEAL****Noteworthy**

- Freehold
- Unit size: 809 sq ft
- 2 bedrooms and 1 bathroom
- Semi furnished with wardrobe, curtains and kitchen cabinet

D'sara Sentral is an integrated development comprising serviced residences, SoVo, retail and office components.

Developed by Mah Sing Group Bhd, it was completed in 2017. Facilities at the serviced residence include swimming pool, gym, garden and a direct link bridge from the retail podium to Kampung Selamat MRT (mass rapid transit) Station. There is a hospital, schools, wet market and shopping mall nearby.

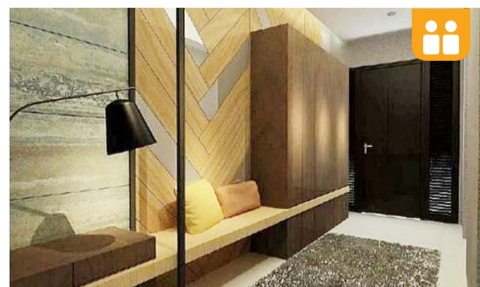
According to MIP Properties Sdn Bhd property negotiator Eugene Pang, who concluded the rental deal, the new tenant of this serviced residence unit is a foreigner who liked the availability of a connecting bridge to an MRT station. He was also

attracted to the semi-furnished unit with built-up kitchen cabinets and wardrobe, curtains, ceiling fans, light features and air-cons.

"Furthermore, it was a brand new unit which had never been occupied and asking for a reasonable monthly rental," Pang told EdgeProp.my. He added that the tenant placed the deposit for the unit the same day he viewed the property.

As at Nov 29, there were 59 serviced residence units at D'sara Sentral listed for rent on EdgeProp.my. Their asking monthly rents ranged from RM1.55 psf to RM3.37 psf.

There were three units for sale at an average asking price of RM832.24 psf.

**RM2,500,000****Sea Park, Petaling Jaya, Selangor****Type:** Bungalow **Tenure:** Freehold
Bedroom: 5 **Bathroom:** 4**Charles Chua** (REN 02154)REAPFIELD PROPERTIES (HQ) SDN BHD (E (I) 0452)
+6012 282 0823**RM1,620,000****BU 9, Persiaran Bukit Utama, Bandar Utama, Selangor****Type:** Condominium **Tenure:** Freehold
Built-up: 2,522 sq ft
Bedroom: 5 **Bathroom:** 4**Chris Tang** (REN 32877)REAPFIELD PROPERTIES (HQ) SDN BHD (E (I) 0452)
+6018 278 9330**RM600,000****Desa Villa Condominium, Taman Desa, Kuala Lumpur****Type:** Semi-D house **Tenure:** Freehold
Built-up: 1,151 sq ft
Bedroom: 3 **Bathroom:** 2**Elvie Ho** (REN 22102)REAPFIELD PROPERTIES (KL) SDN BHD (E (I) 0451/1)
+6012 303 3788**RM700,000****Casa Tropicana, Tropicana, Selangor****Type:** Terraced house **Tenure:** Freehold
Built-up: 1,227 sq ft
Bedroom: 3 **Bathroom:** 2**Fauzi Bin Omar** (REN 24258)AZMI & CO (ESTATE AGENCY) SDN BHD (E (I) 0553)
+6013 693 3699**RM3,500,000****Tropicana Grande, Tropicana, Selangor****Type:** Condominium **Tenure:** Leasehold
Built-up: 3,666 sq ft
Bedroom: 7 **Bathroom:** 6**Ian Tang** (REN 22803)REAPFIELD PROPERTIES (HQ) SDN BHD (E (I) 0452)
+6018 278 3154**RM25,068,000****Puchong land, Selangor****Type:** Land **Tenure:** Freehold
Land size: 126,590 sq ft**James Lee** (REN 11088)LEADERS REAL ESTATE (E (3) 1204)
+6010 773 0073**RM888,000****3 Two Square, Petaling Jaya, Selangor****Type:** Office **Tenure:** Freehold
Built-up: 1,800 sq ft **Bathroom:** 2**Jen Leong** (REN 28384)REAPFIELD PROPERTIES (HQ) SDN BHD (E (I) 0452)
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Properties for sale and rentPro Agents, get your listings featured here! Email support@edgeprop.my or call 03-7733 9000**RM10,000,000****Tropical Resort Home, Taman Duta, Kuala Lumpur****Type:** Bungalow **Tenure:** Freehold
Built-up: 4,300 sq ft **Land size:** 22,550 sq ft
Bedroom: 5 **Bathroom:** 4**Jennifer Yap** (REN 01757)

REAPFIELD PROPERTIES (HQ) SDN BHD (E (I) 0452)

☎ +6012 324 0238

**RM850,000****Jalan Seri Sungai Long, Kajang, Selangor****Type:** Terraced house **Tenure:** Freehold
Built-up: 2,552 sq ft **Land size:** 1,540 sq ft
Bedroom: 4 **Bathroom:** 4**Jimmy Ng** (REN 02015)

REAPFIELD PROPERTIES (KL) SDN BHD (E (I) 0452/1)

☎ +6016 257 0886

**RM1,200,000****Taman Segar Perdana, Cheras Hartamas, Cheras, Selangor****Type:** Terraced house **Tenure:** Leasehold
Built-up: 2,100 sq ft
Bedroom: 4 **Bathroom:** 3**Joanne Soh** (REN 13124)

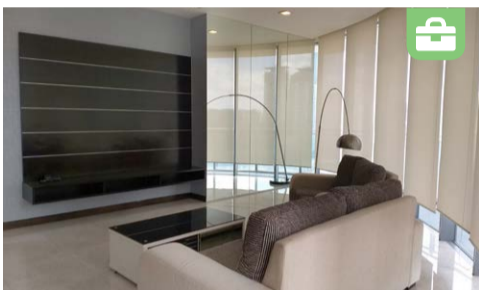
CBD PROPERTIES SDN BHD (E (I) 1197)

☎ +6012 297 6506

**RM1,488,888****Shah Alam, Selangor****Type:** Semidee house **Tenure:** Freehold
Built-up: 4,000 sq ft **Land size:** 3,600 sq ft
Bedroom: 4 **Bathroom:** 6**John Oh** (REN 07002)

IQI REALTY SDN BHD (E (I) 1584)

☎ +6012 298 6266

**RM8,500/mth****K Residence @ Avenue K, KLCC, Kuala Lumpur****Type:** Condominium **Tenure:** Freehold
Built-up: 2,800 sq ft
Bedroom: 4 **Bathroom:** 3**Josephine Tan** (REN 05324)

CBD PROPERTIES (BUKIT JALIL) SDN BHD (E (I) 1197/12)

☎ +6012 390 9498

RENTED FOR**RM1,200 per month**

(about RM1.33 psf)

Cyberia SmartHomes, Jalan Persiaran Multimedia, Cyberjaya, Selangor**Concluded by:** Yeo Hock Beng (REN 14090) of Griffin Properties (+6016 332 2701) **When:** September 2019**DONE DEAL****Noteworthy**

- Freehold
- Built-up: 900 sq ft
- Mid-floor unit with 3 bedrooms and 2 bathrooms
- Partially-furnished with air-cons, water heaters, washing machine, refrigerator, TV and TV cabinet, among others
- Two-year lease with an option for one-year extension
- Nearby amenities include Multimedia University (MMU), Cyberjaya Campus, eateries, mosque and mini markets

Developed by MK Land Holdings Bhd, the Cyberia residential development sits on a 60-acre freehold site next to MMU in Cyberjaya.

Launched in 1999, the 30-acre Cyberia SmartHomes in Zone 1 of Cyberia comprises 1,188 condominium units and 372 town villas.

Zone 2, on the other hand, is dubbed Cyberia Crescent. Comprising 397 units of condominiums and 402 units of town villas, it was launched in February 2004, according to the developer's annual report.

According to Griffin Properties' Yeo Hock Beng, who concluded the rental deal, the semi-furnished condo unit secured a two-year lease from a security firm as staff accommodation.

What caught the tenant's attention was the amenities in the vicinity such as mini markets and eateries, as these will offer convenience for its

staff who will be living there, Yeo told EdgeProp.my.

"The landlord is an investor from Sarawak. He purchased this condo for his son who used it while he was a student at MMU. It was rented out after the son graduated," he said.

He added that the monthly rent of RM1,200 for the unit is considered reasonable as rental rates of similar units in the area ranged from RM1,000 for a bare unit to RM1,500 for a fully furnished unit.

The average asking price for a unit at Cyberia SmartHomes Condominium was about RM300,807 or RM322 psf, according to 28 sale listings as at Oct 22 on EdgeProp.my.

Based on the 16 units listed for rent on the portal, the average asking monthly rent was RM1,322 or RM1.20 psf, which translates to an indicative rental yield of 5.16%.

**RM3,472,800****Laman Granview - Sherwood, Puchong South, Selangor****Type:** Bungalow **Tenure:** Leasehold
Built-up: 5,602 sq ft **Land size:** 4,004 sq ft
Bedroom: 5 **Bathroom:** 6**Justin Lee** (REN 32527)

FULL HOMES REALTY SDN BHD (E (I) 1501/8)

☎ +6016 618 9568

**RM240,000****Intan Apartment Puchong (Kinrara Puteri), Puchong, Selangor****Type:** Condominium **Tenure:** Leasehold
Built-up: 1,089 sq ft
Bedroom: 3 **Bathroom:** 2**Kelvin Tan Khai Yik** (REN 31324)

ASPIRE PROPERTIES (E (3) 1632)

☎ +6016 403 2222

**RM750,000****Casa Tropicana Condo, Tropicana, Selangor****Type:** Condominium **Tenure:** Leasehold
Built-up: 1,420 sq ft
Bedroom: 4 **Bathroom:** 3**Laura Teh** (REN 02734)

REAPFIELD PROPERTIES SDN BHD (E (I) 0452)

☎ +6019 221 9830

**RM900,000****Seri Riana, Wangsa Maju, Kuala Lumpur****Type:** Condominium **Tenure:** Leasehold
Built-up: 1,385 sq ft
Bedroom: 3 **Bathroom:** 2**Leane Wong** (REN 23378)

TECH REAL ESTATE SDN BHD (E (I) 1537)

☎ +6017 280 9663

**RM1,880,000****Taman Tun Dr Ismail, Kuala Lumpur****Type:** Terraced house **Tenure:** Freehold
Built-up: 2,600 sq ft **Land size:** 1,900 sq ft
Bedroom: 5 **Bathroom:** 4**Leena Tan** (REN 28908)

REAPFIELD PROPERTIES (HQ) SDN BHD (E (I) 0452)

☎ +6012 322 7901

**RM1,200,000****2-Storey Shoplot, Seksyen 7, Bandar Baru, Bangi, Selangor****Type:** shoplot **Tenure:** Leasehold
Built-up: 3,530 sq ft**Mohd Faiz** (REN 04003)

TRUE VEST PROPERTY CONSULTANTS SDN BHD

(VE (I) 0249)

☎ +6013 308 3063

**RM600,000****Seksyen 7, Bangi, Selangor****Type:** Terraced house **Tenure:** Leasehold
Built-up: 1,765 sq ft
Bedroom: 4 **Bathroom:** 3**Mohd Syam** (REN 15084)

JUSTE LAND (E (3) 0205)

☎ +6013 639 6454