

HOME & COMFORT GOODNESS

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All in the Family

The JSLA Architects on their design
philosophy and the "Siao Ling Way"



Message from the Vice President

We have seen disruptions in the last two years brought about by the unprecedented Covid-19 pandemic that was felt in our professional lives, our relationships, our families and even in our homes. This magazine was even put on hold temporarily. Good thing, things are picking up again and moving forward. From everyone in Home & Comfort Goodness, I welcome all our readers back!

This issue will look at how things changed and stayed the same despite the pandemic.

Our cover story features the design philosophy of one of the pillars of Philippine Architecture, Ar. Jose Siao Ling and his firm, JSLA. We also take a brief urban escape to Clark, Pampanga where Swissotel takes hospitality to the next level. We talk to Ar. Armando De Guzman about inclusive design and list down the best houseplants for your indoor spaces. Finally, we drive all the way to Binangonan, Rizal to check out Coffee Rush, a new and popular coffee spot.

Be prepared for a full and satisfying read in this issue of Home & Comfort Goodness. We hope that this volume hits the spot and gives you ideas on how to further desk out your sanctuary and living space!



David Chang
Vice President, Hocheng Philippines Corporation

The HCG TEAM

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All in the Family.

The JSLA Architects on their design philosophy and the “Siao Ling Way”

You may not know **Architect Jose Siao Ling** by name, but you know his work. If you walked through a mall, used their restrooms, or rode their elevators, you have already experienced the **Siao Ling Way**.

The Jose Siao Ling and Associates (JSLA) Architects make it their mission to provide innovative, efficient, and sustainable design solutions that optimize the potential of a building’s space, materials, and technology. They approach every project as a blank slate, and customize their design solutions based on their client’s personal and business goals.

They are also known as one of the Philippines’ proponents of integrating Feng Shui in their designs. “If it’s Siao Ling, no need for Feng Shui,” says architect Jose Siao Ling, his confidence absolute.



A Pillar of Philippine Architecture.

Jose Siao Ling, or Joe, has been a professional architect since 1982. A graduate of the University of Santo Tomas, Joe honed his craft in both the Philippines and Hong Kong before starting his own firm in 1983. His wife, Ana Magalino Ling, joined the firm, and their practice grew into a family corporate practice, fortified by their children who joined as the company's next generation of architects.

Today, JSLA has over 50 design capabilities. Their multi-awarded firm has designed the most number of malls in the country. JSLA's projects span from commercial buildings, schools, government offices, hotels, residences, master plan developments, and assembly venues all over the country.





“

We established the business before we established our family,” says Ana.

“Our children have been helping us since they were kids.” Before technological advancements like colored photocopiers and printers, the Ling kids helped by coloring plans, smudging, or erasing mistakes as part of the production line.

“The first office was our grandparent’s house,” reminisces Jesi Alec Ling. “My parents started their business in our old house, and the office was just beside it. As kids, our playmates were other architects, our parents’ office staff.”

“Nae-excite kami pag summer because it’s a chance to observe people and how they work,” says Joan Adda Ling. “Sa house, ‘yun din ang pag-uusapan during meals. We had the same language as a family. We were learning from each other.”

This early exposure to a professional architecture firm shaped the Ling kids’ vision for their future and strengthen the family’s bond. Today, all of the Ling children work at JSLA in various capacities, and all of them strictly follow the “Siao Ling Way.”



The Siao Ling Way.

"The Siao Ling Way started as just the rules of mom and dad," says Jeny Alys Ling. "It revolves around the 5Fs: Firm, Focused, Flexible, Friendly, and Fast. It means doing what's right-- not just for myself, but for others. You have to be firm about it, and you should never let others wait for you."

"It's a core value for us," says Joan. "It's basic knowledge, the do's and don't's. It's also about sharing this knowledge with others. Hindi lang siya 'Architect, gawin mo ito.' You also have a say. You're not just a draftsman who follows the owner's instructions. It's a collaboration."

"It's doing something extra, more than expected," says eldest son John Aldo Ling. "When we finish projects, we submit an As-Built plan. 'Yung dating practice, blueprint lang. But today, we submit the complete set of plans from architectural, structural, electrical, plumbing, fire, mechanical, and ventilation systems. Kumpleto, naka-book bind."

"You have to consider all the effects of everything you do," says youngest son Jaye Anjo Ling. "Kapag gumagawa ka ng plan, consider all of the users. Not just you, pati yung mga bisita, yung mga katulong. Pati yung mga ipis! Taking that into consideration-- that's the Siao Ling Way." "It's about integrity, honesty, and the value of hard work," says Jesi. "We're very lucky to have parents who taught us never to accept illicit money from suppliers and contractors."



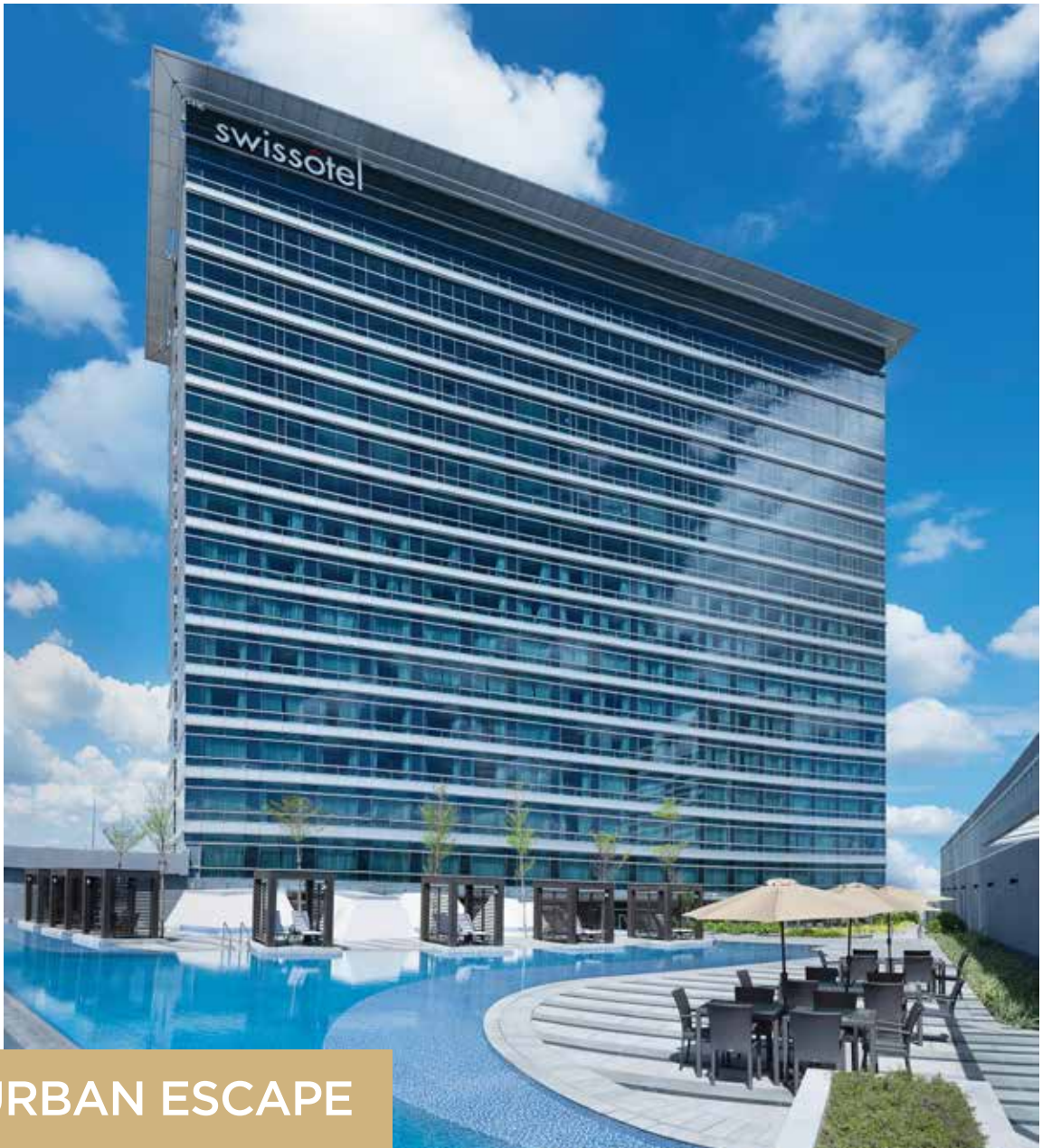
Form, Function, & Firm Foundations.

"When you design, it should not just be aesthetic or iconic, it should be functional. It should be efficient," says the man himself, Jose Siao Ling.

Joe emphasizes how architects should put themselves in the shoes of their client, and to design space that accommodates everyone's needs. Above all, Joe underscores the importance of ethics in his craft. He refers to his career as "40 years of frustration" because of his commitment to never cutting corners, never taking bribes, speaking frankly, and doing things with integrity. "But it looks like we're finally reaping the rewards of our honesty," he says, ever humble.

Today, JSLA reputation as straight-talking and honest architects with integrity is their strongest proof-of-concept alongside their solid roster of past projects. They have gained the confidence and satisfaction of some of the country's biggest brands. This is why JSLA continues to bag larger, and more challenging projects like the SMX Mall of Asia Arena, the National University, and the SM Ferry Terminal.

"We do things that may not be popular, but we do the right thing. It's about principles and doing what's honest. You can ask any of my clients. That's the Siao Ling Way."



URBAN ESCAPE

The Swissotel at Clark.

You don't need to go far to escape Manila's frantic pace and pressure. Just an hour's drive away from the capital is the perfect urban getaway.

The Swissotel in Clark, Pampanga is a Swiss-inspired 5-star luxury hotel located at the Hann Integrated Resort and is perfect for your next leisure or business trip.

Swissotel is an award-winning premium brand and luxury hotel under Accor, the largest hospitality company in Europe. With more than 1,000 hotels worldwide, Swissotel prides itself in being located exactly where travelers want to be.



The Swissotel Clark is the first entry of Swissotel in the Philippines. At 22 stories, Swissotel Clark has 372 rooms designed for comfort and inspired by the Swiss Alps, showcasing Swiss-style hospitality at its finest.

"People spend more time the bathroom than in the bedroom," observes Alie Sison, Director of Sales and Marketing at Swissotel Clark. "We have great bathroom fixtures and amenities including an automated bathroom system. We want our bathrooms to be an experience in itself." The Swissotel Clark's design and amenities take inspiration from the Swiss Alps as well as the famed Swiss hospitality. Suites and rooms are decked out with artworks and designs that make you feel like you're looking at the Matterhorn, Switzerland's most iconic peak in the Alps.



The hotel also features fitness and wellness facilities including a gym with state-of-the-art equipment, and an outdoor swimming pool and lounge area with sweeping mountain views that combines with the only alpine spa in the Philippines, that is sure to grant guests maximum relaxation. It's the perfect spot to enjoy cocktails and watch the sunset.

For business groups, Swissotel offers 5 meeting rooms for executive functions. For families, the dipping pool for kids is a great place for children to splash around. Guests who want to experience the best in leisure can also enjoy the nearby Han Casino or outdoor activities like world-class golf, zip-lining, and mountain biking.

Foodies can also eat their heart out in any of Swissotel Clark's 10 specialty restaurants, cafes, and bars. Spice brings you all the flavor and fun of Asia's vibrant street food scene, while Nasi boasts of authentic Filipino flavors and recipes. MARKET's all-day dining market-style restaurant offers fresh European flavors

while Oma's cafe provides homemade comfort food and treats. For cocktails and happy hour, The Atrium is a bar and lounge for group gatherings while 20 offers signature cocktails at its casino-style bar served with flair and showmanship.

Want to venture outside for a change of pace? Swissotel Clark is just a 20-minute drive away from dining and entertainment hotspot Angeles City, Pampanga. The hotel is also just a 10-minute drive away from the Clark International Airport. Guests can enjoy their guilt-free luxury staycation through Swissotel Clark's commitment to sustainability. The Swissotel brand threads its corporate responsibility with sustainable development that ensures that customers, local communities, and stakeholders all benefit equally.

There are more things to look forward to from Swissotel. Swissotel Clark is only the first of several openings in the Philippines from parent company Accor.

HOME & COMFORT GOODNESS

A NOSTALGIC
& PEACEFUL
TRIP AT

Coffee Rush



For many of us, a great day starts with the perfect cup of coffee. From that perfect cup, the day can only be made better if we build on the experience. Imagine your first cup of coffee while surrounded by nature, the calm breeze making the leaves of the nearby trees flutter. Then imagine pairing your coffee with great food. Perhaps a plate of beef tapa, comforting and nostalgic, like the way your lola makes it. Now, your perfect cup of coffee can only be made sweeter if you had a breathtaking view.

At Coffee Rush Eastridge in Binangonan, Rizal, you wouldn't even need your imagination to enjoy this perfect moment.



This specialty coffee shop serves great food, ambiance, and a stunning view of the Metro Manila skyline and Laguna Bay. Coffee Rush Eastridge is the brainchild of Architect Adrian Caponfuerza who hails from Pampanga and graduated Architecture from the University of Baguio. Architect Adrian spent most of his career in Hong Kong as a Design Contractor for multinational companies until he retired at the age of 40. It was also in Hong Kong that he and his wife opened their first coffee shop which enjoyed some success until the pandemic forced them to close the business.

The couple moved back to Angono, Rizal during the pandemic to regroup. Here, Architect Adrian spent many sleepless nights coping with general pandemic anxiety and worrying about the future. It was on one of those nights that he came up with the inspiration to put up a coffee shop right there in Rizal-- something unique and overlooking the city, just like the Victoria Peak in Hong Kong which he and his wife frequented. The spot where Coffee Rush now stands on was a forested area that Architect Adrian chose for its stunning views. With its 360-degree skyline, it has a majestic view of Metro Manila and the best sunset view. You could see how Laguna Bay flows into Manila Bay from here. On clearer days, you could even see the Pililla windmills and a splendid view of Philippines' longest mountain range Sierra Madre at a distance. Best of all, the place could elevate the coffee-drinking experience with its open fresh air and closeness to nature.

Architect Adrian's lifetime's worth of experience in design and construction made the conceptualization and execution of Coffee Rush a breeze. He wanted a coffee shop with a touch of Spanish influence, combining both vintage and modern industrial.

Visiting Coffee Rush Eastridge feels like coming back to your home province to chill in your grandparent's relaxing ancestral but modernly updated house. That's exactly the vibe Architect Adrian was going for. The place is decked out with old sewing machines upcycled into coffee tables and sliding capiz shell windows, artfully styled in earth tones. Even the wooden furniture are all tailor-made to create that nostalgic feeling. Everything in Coffee Rush faces the lake and is unbelievably Instagrammable.

"At Coffee Rush, we provide inspiration," says Architect Adrian. "We want to bring back memories. You can see it in our fixtures and furniture. Even the way we named our areas, like the Azotea, the Torre con Vista, and the Vista al Jardin. Everything here will remind you of something." Before you think the place is all style and no substance, their menu will make you think again. Some of their bestsellers include their signature Spanish Latte and Yogurt Frappe. The food menu boasts of home-style Beef Tapa and Longanisa. You can even order their Tempura Sushi Rolls, Sushi Karaage, and well-loved pastries like the Sansrival and Black Forest.

Coffee Rush isn't just for the early birds-- they have something for the night owls as well. Come sunset, this coffee shop doubles as a bar and live music place. You could order alcoholic beverages while enjoying live performances from popular Filipino acts like Paolo Santos and MYMP while overlooking the Metro Manila view all lit up at night.

Currently, Architect Adrian has no plans of franchising out his brand. He prefers instead to help other people who are interested in entering the coffee business. He is one of the distributors of Starbucks coffee machines in the Philippines and gives out free seminars on business management in catering and the coffee business. In the future, he wants to bring Coffee Rush to Dubai and open a branch there.

Asked what makes the perfect cup of coffee for him, Architect Adrian points out the different strains of coffee-- from arabica, liberica, robusta, and so on. There's a universe of different coffees from different parts of the world. "The perfect cup is dependent on the taste of the beholder," he says.

But Architect Adrian knows exactly what goes well with coffee.

“ It's gratefulness. The contentment of sipping coffee in an open area, with nature. Where every sip lingers in your mouth. You appreciate what you have. It's that kind of happiness that money can't buy.”



WITH AGE COMES
WISDOM

Architect Armando De Guzman

on designing
for seniors



“

Complying is just giving the minimum. Designing is paying attention to the details and considering the needs of everyone who will use the space. We should be designing and innovating.”

Filipino culture respects our elders. We say *po* and *opo*, listen to their wisdom, and *mano* when greeting seniors. This respect, however, falls short when it comes to our space and architecture. For a culture that values our elders, our public and indoor spaces unfortunately overlook the needs of the elderly.

This is a point of advocacy for United Architects of the Philippines (UAP) Former President Armando “Dondon” De Guzman.

Years ago, he designed a restaurant in the US and received an antagonistic letter from a Society for the Physically Challenged. The group complained that Architect Dondon’s design made switches and counters too high for them to access. “Do you mean that people

in wheelchairs aren’t welcome in the kitchen?” the letter asked. Since then, Architect Dondon has been keenly aware of the need to design more inclusive spaces.

“Being a young architect, you are very proud and excited,” observes Architect Dondon.

“You get caught up in aesthetics. You forget that you need to consider all people, across all boundaries, ages and race. That’s a learning curve for architects.”

Architect Dondon himself spent a month in a wheelchair at one point in time, the experience humbled him and made him aware of the little things that able-bodied people take for granted but are limiting to people with different needs, including seniors.

"It's all about the little things, like grab bars and handles, That helps a lot," says Architect Dondon. "With age comes physical limitations. Self-closing doors can be too heavy due to its hardware. It's going to be an effort to push that. Why not use a sliding one with good hardware, or better yet automatic sliding doors?"

"Sometimes, we can be culturally and professionally insensitive," Architect Dondon points out. Many designers, architects, and property owners integrate a ramp in their spaces simply out of compliance. "The most common mistake in designing a ramp is that it's too steep. Sasabihin, "may magtutulak naman ng wheelchair niya,"but you're still not designing for their needs."

"There's a big difference between complying in designing," explains Architect Dondon.

Architect Dondon points out that the way a space is designed can influence the behavior and mood of its users. For elderly people, having their needs unmet can make them feel grumpy and frustrated. "If only architects would address the needs of the elderly, we become professionally friendly to them."

Aesthetic form and function don't have to be mutually exclusive. It is an architect's job to marry both beauty and utility. The Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) is a shining example of this. Designed by legendary architect and national artist Leandro Locsin, the CCP's design is undeniably iconic. It is also unmistakably accessible and inclusive. The ramp that goes out from the front of the building looks like the arms of a giant crab that satisfies the function for accessibility. The building declares that art and culture is inclusive, as the building seems to offer hugs to everyone.

"Regardless of whether your design is modern, postmodern, or space-age modern, there's still the human ability that you have to consider," says Architect Dondon.

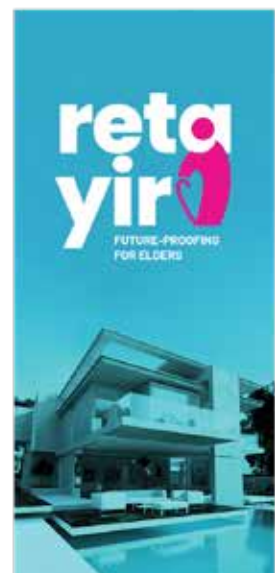
This is the challenge laid out for the future of the architecture profession. In 2019, the World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that over a billion people world wide are past the age of 60. By 2050, there could be more than 2 billion seniors on the planet. In the Philippines, more than 12 million of us are past 60 years old.

Designing for the elderly is also a priority of ArchiNext 2023. With the theme "Retayir: Future-proofing for the Elderly," the competition calls for aspiring architects and designers to imagine a more inclusive environment that is reflective of Filipinos' value of respecting our elders. Given the changing health needs and physical limitations of older people, ArchiNext 2023 hopes to see age-friendly designs that can give dignity to our seniors.

Architect Dondon also looks forward to more young architects considering the needs of older people in the way they design residential, commercial, and public spaces. "The house you design is not just a house that your clients will use for now," he says. "It is a house they will continue using in the future. Your designs need to be inclusive because everybody grows old."

“

At the end of the day, you go back to the basics: the equal march of people, the pace factor. Average human ability remains the same.”



TURNING OVER A NEW LEAF

The best houseplants for your home.

Indoor plants can be more than just a decoration or a pastime, they offer a couple of benefits for you and your sacred space. Studies have revealed that indoor gardening lowers stress response and boosts productivity. Owning certain plants also improves indoor air quality.

But how can you be sure which indoor plant best fits you and your home? Here are five indoor plants you can take into consideration.



ZZ Plant

Difficulty level: Beginner Plantita/Plantito

Light: Low to indirect

Water: Once a week

Safety: Risky to touch and consume

Best for: Apartments that don't get enough light, low-light corners

The *Zamioculcas zamiifolia*, or ZZ plant, is generally famous for being a sturdy houseplant. Originating from drought-prone Africa, Dutch nurseries discovered its propagating potential, and has been distributed worldwide since then.

What makes the plant risky to touch and consume is due to the calcium oxalate crystals it contains. Touching the leaves alone can cause skin irritation. It's essential to keep them out of reach and wash your hands after touching them.

The ZZ plant has wide, dark green leaves fit for office and home interior designs. Its waxy and smooth texture reflects sunlight and helps brighten the room for a refreshing vibe that lightens your mood.





Peace Lily

Difficulty level: Beginner Plantita/Plantito

Light: Low to bright, indirect sunlight

Water: Once a week

Safety: Safe to touch but risky if consumed

Best for: Apartments that don't get enough light, low- light corners, and warm rooms that are prone to molds

The Peace Lily's beautiful white flowers are commonly associated with peace and serenity. It originated from the Amazon in South America, was introduced to Europe in 1870, and eventually to the rest of the world.

The Peace Lily helps in purifying the air by absorbing mold spores and lessening its growth. Having an air-purifying houseplant boosts a healthier environment inside your home.

Ladyfinger Cactus

Difficulty level: Beginner

Plantita/Plantito Light: Bright light

Water: When the soil is dry

Safety: Safe around kids and pets.

The spines are harmless but should not be consumed

Best for: Best for condos with balconies and apartments with outdoor areas that can enjoy direct sunlight

The Ladyfinger cactus bears its name because of its finger-like stems that are long and narrow. It blooms with white to pale yellow flowers from the upper half of the stems.

These types of indoor plants are famous for how easy they are to grow and how little care they need. Its subtle color and flowers are a nice touch that are perfect decorations for balconies or any outdoor area of your apartment.



Monstera Deliciosa

Difficulty level: Plantita/Plantito with extensive experience

Light: Bright, direct sunlight

Water: Every 1-2 weeks, especially when the soil is dry or the leaves are curling, brown, and crispy

Safety: Safe to touch but risky if consumed Best for: Apartments with large and bright spaces

The Monstera plant, also known as *Monstera deliciosa*, is referred to as a celebrity plant because of its expensive price tag. "Monstera" means strange in Latin. It bears the name because of its exotic leaves that start as heart-shaped but eventually grow with holes and notches.

But all parts of the plant are dangerous because they have calcium oxalate crystals. Always make sure to place it away from children or pets. Remember to wear gloves while handling it or wash your hands after.

The Monstera best fits people with large spaces who want to amplify their interiors. Its unusual leaves have been showcased in interior magazines and posters.

THE FUTURE OF COMFORT

3 Smart Products for your Bathrooms

As technology progresses, more innovative home products are being created that ensure people's comfort and hygiene. This includes voice- controlled virtual assistants such as Google Assistant and Alexa in modern living spaces to accommodate technical needs like turning off lights or locking doors. Robot vacuums are in trend for maintaining clean floors without numbing your arms. Our living spaces continuously evolve, and bathroom products are no exception.



1 Automatic flush will be the norm, not the exception.

Wherever you are in the future, you wouldn't have to worry about the hassle and hygienic concerns of reaching for the flush handle. Whether at home, visiting a friend, or making a quick run to public toilets, an automatic flush will now be a standard for every bathroom. With an automatic flush, toilets would have an infrared sensor that can recognize if a person has moved away from the urinal and will automatically activate the flush system. You can just simply do your business, clean yourself, and exit the toilet with ease.

In the future, this comfort will be accessible to anyone, anywhere. Weekly toilet cleaning would also be a thing of the past. Toilets in the future can clean themselves after every use. HCG's AF3031 Urinal Sensor Flush already shows us a peek at this innovation. It features similar functions for a fast and easy bathroom experience.



SmartT

AFC2060

Level up your expectations with a
modern & sleek approach to
technology.



Find out more about this product at www.hcg.com.ph



2 Toilet seats with electronic bidet

Manufacturers today are already coming up with electronic toilet seats. We can anticipate a completely different bathroom experience with features like a heated seat and seats with bidets installed. A heated seat is unusual from the typical ceramic and plastic seats. In the future, going to the bathroom early in the morning would feel extra comfortable if you are greeted with a warm seat. An installed bidet also saves us the hassle of reaching for the bidet, or dipper which can splash water everywhere.

Besides comfort, hygiene is still a top priority for our toilets of the future. While bidets carry the risk of possible contamination whenever we do our business, HCG has solved this concern with their iWash AF2600 Electronic Bidet Seat and Cover. It has an anti-bacterial nozzle function that automatically hides when it is not in use.

It also has warm water adjustable to your desired temperature and is paired with a dryer that soothes your skin. The future truly amplifies our desire for a clean and comfortable bathroom experience.



3 Fully-automatic Electronic toilets

Imagine a future toilet where you can literally just sit back and relax. An electronic toilet would do all the cleaning work as you do your business. Having this type of toilet elevates your bathroom experience, especially when you have children and elderly people in your home. When living with a lot of family members, the bathroom requires constant and consistent attention, and maintenance to keep it clean and hygienic.

HCG has developed the Featoilet AFC2306 AW that is perfect for this kind of living situation. It has a heated seat and two anti-bacterial nozzles that clean you and your toilet with warm water. It also features a remote-control system to better adjust to your needs. The Featoilet is a promising product that meets your family's comfort and hygiene needs. It can help lighten the hassle of cleaning since it already does the work for you.

We all strive for a future of ease and comfort. Though it might seem far from our reach, the consistent rise of technology has shown us what is possible in our home innovations. Tomorrow's comforts already exist in smart products that promise a simple, hassle-free lifestyle for us to focus our time and energy on the things that matter most. With HCG's Smart Bathroom Products, you don't have to keep dwelling on the what-ifs because the future is already here.

