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BEST OF THE BEST



Showcasing the winners of the region's prestigious property awards

Market Intelligence from the UK capital
Vertical Living in Singapore
Neighbourhood Watch: Johor, Malaysia
New Singapore cooling measures challenge market

Property Magazine of the Year
voted by readers of Marketing, Singapore

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CONDOMINIUMS • VILLAS • APARTMENTS • HOT DEALS • INTERIORS • DESIGN

And the winner is...

They may not be the Oscars, but Property Awards are an important recognition for the region's best developers and their projects.



From right: Luke Townsend, Kalara Developments' sales director; Zulal Ut, brand & marketing manager; Linda Hargitai, rental manager; Carl Robert Lamb, managing director, Claire Brown and friends.

As 2011 drew to a close (where on earth did the year go?) we found ourselves in the nervously suspended animation that is the property awards season. And though our industry might not be quite as glamorous as the celeb filled world of showbiz (believe me, at a real estate gala dinner at the Grand Hyatt, which was wall to wall with developers with a side order of lawyers, there was sadly not a spanx clad designer bottom or a freshly botoxed face in sight – needless to say I was able to leave the hotel without being “papped” and throughout the entire course of the evening nobody asked me “who” I was wearing which is a pity as I was in a fabulous little Isabel Marant LBD which alas was lost on my peers)... but even though our winners won't make the cover of Heat magazine, these coveted awards are nonetheless important barometers of who is doing what and the winners represent the crème de la crème of the region's property professionals.

I was therefore very happy that three of the developers I work closely with each won very prestigious titles. At the South East Asia Property Awards ceremony in Singapore, Brocon Group walked away with Best Villa

Development for their extremely ambitious and innovative Song Saa project – a six star private island development (in fact made up of two pristine islands linked by a footbridge – the only resort of its kind in the world) featuring 27 gorgeous villas and a formidable array of luxe resort facilities including a champagne bar, wine cellar and cigar lounge. Song Saa opened on 24 December and I was lucky enough to be invited to visit the project recently and test out the villas, the chef etc. I can summarise my Song Saa experience very deftly in one word – awesome.

Next up were my favourite development firm, Kalara Co. Kalara has been developing successfully on Koh Samui for 10 years already, so it was great for them to finally get some recognition. I was most honoured to collect an award on their behalf and despite the several litres of sauvignon blanc that had been quaffed over the course of the evening, I can recall that my acceptance speech went something like this... “Kalara start their projects on time, and unlike a lot of developers they also finish them on time, and the value of the real estate delivered is always significantly higher than the price

originally paid. They absolutely deserve this award” (Kalara actually won two, Best Boutique Developer Thailand and also Best Residential Development for their achingly cool “Code Samui” project, which I am totally in love with. My company has sold more than 50 properties for Kalara in the last 12 months alone (I know this as I did a quick tally up the other day and was really quite shocked with this number!) And, boy, do they make life easy for me as an agent. Monthly detailed progress reports with accompanying photos, an excellent team on the ground to take care of visiting clients, a meticulously organised in-house rental management operation and a seriously impressive track record of completed projects provide maximum investor confidence. Working with these guys is a breeze.

Last but not least, Iguana Matrix scooped Best Thailand Developer at the OPP awards in London. Iguana have been quietly and confidently developing in Pattaya for the last six years and have numerous completed projects under their belt – from modest resort style condo developments to their high rise masterpiece The View to their latest showcaser, “The Vision” – set to be the highest building in Pattaya. I like Iguana because they simply get on with the job in hand... which is building high quality real estate that is driven by market demand. There is no rocket science here – Just build what people want and do it well and everybody is happy. By the way, a quick note to all vertigo sufferers reading this – if you visit Pattaya and want to take a look at some of Iguana's projects, and you are offered a ride in the service elevator up to the 8th floor of The View to take a peek at the mock up unit, as you step from the cage-like contraption over the pretty sizeable gap and onto the building's edge, please, whatever you do, *don't look down*.



Claire Brown

formed Claire Brown Realty in 2004 having worked for various developers across South East Asia. Her roles included sales and marketing, project management, construction planning and consultancy. As well as running the business, Claire is also developing

her own project in Bali, a luxury villa and spa retreat in the beautiful and somewhat undiscovered province of Tabanan. She enjoys travel, food and wine, interior design and shopping – in no particular order.
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