



The facade of the Prestige Hotel in Penang represents a modern-day interpretation of colonial Victorian design. — Photos: Ministry of Design



In the reception area, expect several tongue-in-cheek references to magical illusion.

DESIGNED in respect of its surrounding heritage is the newly launched Prestige Hotel in Penang.

Located within the core zone of the Unesco World Heritage Site in George Town, the 8,570sq m hotel is designed by Singapore-based firm Ministry of Design.

Although a new kid on the block, the hotel blends in with the 19th century colonial buildings found in the area, representing a modern-day interpretation of colonial Victorian design.

Besides projecting elegance and sophistication, the name The Prestige also takes a cue from the movie *The Prestige* starring Christian Bale, which was set in the Victorian era about the illusory art of magic.

Subtly magical oasis

The new Prestige Hotel in Penang is a luxe modern interpretation of transposed heritage.

The 162-room property, part of the prestigious Design Hotels group, features an all-day dining restaurant, a rooftop infinity pool, events pavilion and terrace, and a Victorian dining and retail arcade.

Due to its long, narrow layout, the designers incorporated elements of visual surprise, notions of magic and illusions to break the monotony from passing its

long guestroom corridors and retail arcade.

These aspects are subtly introduced throughout the hotel, including in furniture design such as the custom reception desk that seems to magically balance on balls, and hidden doors in guestrooms that open to reveal toilets and pantries.

At the ground floor drop-off area, a feature that unifies the

reception with the Glasshouse restaurant and retail spaces is the black-and-white floor pattern, which seems to magically “appear and disappear” before your eyes.

The Glasshouse is inspired by the English Victorian conservatory; think lattice patterns and metal framed walls and glass. In the reception area, expect several tongue-in-cheek references to

magical illusion, where guests navigate a custom-designed, white marble-clad maze with brass trimmings on the floor, to get to the reception.

To add a local touch, the lift is custom-designed with a floor-to-ceiling tinted metal wall, graphically presenting more than 20 unique features of Penang. The graphic pattern comprises etched outlines of heritage buildings, famous landmarks and the local plants of Penang.

There are four types of rooms at the hotel: the standard room named the Deluxe, the Premier Deluxe Suite, the Loft Suite and the Deluxe Trio room which features a smaller bedroom for a child travelling with parents. — **Wong Li Za**

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