

## **A-LIST DESIGNERS REVEALED AS TEAM BEHIND NEW SUPER-PRIME SRI LANKAN RESIDENTIAL TOWER**

Luxury Indian hotelier ITC Hotels operating in Sri Lanka through its 100% subsidiary WelcomHotels Lanka (Private) Limited has released eagerly awaited details about its first ever project in the branded residential market.

Sapphire Residences takes centre stage on the prestigious Galle Face, the ceremonial heart of Sri Lanka's capital, Colombo. Comprising 132 private residences averaging a remarkable 5,000 square feet living area (penthouses are 9,325 square feet), all apartments benefit from 180° panoramic views of the city, lake and ocean, floor-to-ceiling windows and high ceilings.

Destined to become a globally recognised landmark for the city, the iconic design was the brainchild of a world-class international team lead by U.S. architectural firm Gensler, which created the two distinctive parallel towers connected by a sky bridge, with the residential interiors by London-based YOO working with Philippe Starck in Paris and landscaping by Burega Farnell in Singapore.

Set to redefine uber-luxury vertical residential living in the Indian Ocean region, the extensive mixed-use development also includes a private Residents' Club offering over 25,000 sq. ft. of leisure amenities for the exclusive use of homeowners and their guests. Conceptualised by YOO Inspired by Starck, these include several swimming pools, cinema, residents' lounge and library, outdoor amphitheatre, full-service spa (with steam, sauna and treatment rooms), gymnasium and fitness centre, yoga room, squash court, indoor multi-purpose sports court, function rooms, 'hobby' studio, Teens' and Kids' lounges and a lawn play area.

Arun Pathak, Managing Director of WelcomHotels Lanka (Private) Limited, comments: *"Our objective was to develop a new icon for the country on this ultra-prime Colombo coastline that would be recognisable across the globe. This inspired us to bring together and collaborate with an exceptional team of international designers to deliver this truly striking development, comprising the finest collection of apartments and penthouses in the region."*

The new development, currently under construction with completion expected in 2021, comprises a 224 metre tall residential tower, set alongside a 140 metre tall hotel. Connecting the buildings at the 19th and 21st floors is a 54-metre long sky bridge, which incorporates a stunning bar and lounge on the lower level with spectacular lake, city and ocean views, above which sits an exterior pool and sunbathing deck. Elegant offices available for lease or rent and high-end retail complete the mixed-use facilities on offer.

With extensive landscaping throughout the complex, the drop-off areas, lobbies and retail components are elevated to the second level, whilst at the fourth level above this are a pool deck and an event deck (for the hotel's conference centre). The hotel is crowned by a helipad (the only one being built in the vicinity) that cannot only be used by VIPs, guests and

residents, but also to meet medical and other emergencies and evacuation needs in the area. The helipad facility in the prime business district serves to upgrade Colombo's urban infrastructure on the lines of what is available in premier cities across the world.

The development is symbolic of a modern Sri Lanka which remains true to its roots. Accordingly the ITC One hotel and Sapphire Residences are modern skyscrapers with a futuristic illuminated exterior wrapping around each tower while the interiors draw inspiration from the rich architectural history of Sri Lanka and incorporate elements of local architecture and vernacular practices.

Situated between Beira Lake and the Galle Face Ocean front, Gensler has thoughtfully designed each tower using an innovative triangular plan to maximise the uninterrupted views from each apartment across the Indian Ocean and the city. Engineered with no external supporting walls, uninterrupted light flows into every residence, accentuated by almost 4 metre floor to ceiling heights (c.5 metres in the penthouses). Well-engineered blackout blinds ensure a good night's sleep.

The spectacular apartment interiors are by YOO inspired by Starck. Responsible for numerous interior design projects around the world, visionary creator Philippe Starck has drawn inspiration from the island culture and the serendipitous nature of Sri Lanka for his work at Sapphire Residences. There are four interior design styles available, giving residents the opportunity to choose a distinctive theme to suit their individual lifestyles:

- *Nature*: Airy rooms with white oak floors and light fabrics. Sun-filled spaces shaped by organic materials, as well as soft and textured finishes designed to instil a sense of freedom, health and freshness in your living experience.
- *Culture*: Spaces designed to socialise and engage with family and friends. Culture has a richer and darker material palette, eclectic mixture of furniture representing the different cultures of the world designed to instil a sense of cool vibrancy and happening in your living experience.
- *Minimal*: Pure and simple layouts to enhance space and light, creating a quiet and calm ambience designed to instil a light, calm and tranquillity in your living experience.
- *Classical*: Interiors that are refined, sleek, with strong colour ways and dark wood finishes. It reflects the natural elements and textures from nature designed to instil a sense of finesse and sophistication in your living experience.

Discussing his work as Yoo Inspired by Starck for Sapphire Residences, his first project in Sri Lanka, Philippe Starck said: *"Yoo projects, and Sapphire Residences in particular, are about You. I wanted to create a place that draws people together, that makes them laugh, make them more in love, more sparkling, more intelligent. I wanted to create fertile surprises to awake people, to create conversations, to create interactions. A place where Us humans are at its heart."*

Each apartment will be pre-wired to enable the fitting of Home Automation Systems, bringing a state of the art 'internet of things' (IOT) experience to a sublime environment and placing control at its occupants' fingertips. Serviced from a dedicated central control panel in each residence, the system can also be controlled and managed from a tablet or mobile phone and is designed to standards that allow it to evolve in line with technological advances in future. Voice recognition equipment can be integrated with the room controls and AV systems, allowing a superlative digitally controlled home automation experience.

One of India's leading luxury hotel brands, ITC Hotels has developed and operates more than 100 hotels in over 70 destinations across the country. The ITC One hotel and adjacent Sapphire Residences is the company's first development in the burgeoning Sri Lankan market through its 100% subsidiary WelcomHotels Lanka (Private) Limited. The company's commitment to planet positive luxury experiences guarantees an outstanding luxury residential development with 5-star hospitality services created around its unwavering principles of '*Responsible Luxury*' and '*Enduring Value*'. In line with this ethos, Sapphire Residences has already achieved the prestigious and globally respected pre-certification rating for LEED® BD+C (Core and Shell Development) at the highest Platinum level.

Priced from around US\$1.4 million, the residences are scheduled to launch onto the market in Q4 2018 with Sotheby's International Realty.

The Sapphire Residences Experience Centre at 21, Galle Face Centre Road, Colombo 1 opens this month.

For further information visit [www.sapphireresidences.lk](http://www.sapphireresidences.lk).

**-Ends-**

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## Notes to Editors

### About ITC Hotels

With the enduring Namaste as the symbol of its brand experience, ITC Hotels is one of India's largest luxury hotel chains offering comprehensive hospitality solutions through more than 100 hotels in over 70 destinations in the country. ITC's hotel group operates under four distinct brands; **'ITC Hotel'** at the Luxury end, **'WelcomHotel'** in the 5 star segment, **'Fortune'** in the mid-market to upscale segment and **'WelcomHeritage'** in the heritage leisure segment. Integrating India's fine tradition of hospitality with globally benchmarked services, each ITC Hotel in the collection of hotels is an archetype of the culture and ethos of each destination. With **'Responsible Luxury'** as its guiding premise, ITC's luxury hotels combine grandeur with intimacy to operate according to the highest principles of environmental stewardship. Each ITC luxury hotel is certified with a \*LEED® Platinum rating for its endeavours towards green building, using processes that are environmentally responsible and resource-efficient. The brand features opulent accommodations, state-of-the-art business facilities, renowned signature cuisine and award-winning wellness experiences.

*\*LEED® - Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design*

### About ITC Limited

ITC is one of India's foremost private sector companies and a diversified conglomerate with interests in Fast Moving Consumer Goods, Hotels, Paperboards and Packaging, Agri Business and Information Technology. With a market capitalisation of more than US\$ 50 billion and Gross Sales Value of over US\$ 10 billion, ITC has been ranked amongst the top 10 'sustainable value creators' in the consumer goods segment globally by the Boston Consulting Group (BCG). An exemplar in Sustainability, ITC is the only company in the world to be carbon positive, water positive and solid waste recycling positive, for more than a decade now, with its businesses and value chains supporting around 6 million sustainable livelihoods. ITC Chairman Mr Y C Deveshwar was ranked the 7th Best Performing CEO in the world by the Harvard Business Review. In 2014, ITC was ranked as India's most admired company by Fortune India magazine in association with Hay Group.

### **Gensler**

Gensler is widely recognized as the world's leading collaborative design firm, not just the largest. The company ranks high among the world's leading architectural firms as an industry pioneer and visionary that has designed and delivered hundreds of major developments across the globe. Their extensive experience and expertise has ensured that Sapphire Residences and the neighbouring hotel are set to become a landmark design icon on the world stage; aesthetically superior, technologically advanced and visually striking.

### **Yoo Inspired by Starck**

YOO is a pioneering vision for living and the result of a partnership between property entrepreneur John Hitchcox and the ubiquitous designer, Philippe Starck. Since 1999, YOO has worked with international developers, designing landmark residential and hotel projects throughout Asia, Australia, Europe, Africa, North and South America and the Middle East.

### **Sotheby's International Realty**

With its heritage and experience in dealing with the finer things of life, for centuries Sotheby's has been internationally recognised as the epitome of connoisseurship, authenticity and discretion. The Sotheby's International Realty brand unites connoisseurs of life with their aspirations, through a

deeply connected global network of truly knowledgeable individuals. Although steeped in history and traditional values, the company has always been lauded as an innovator.

With their global marketing network, extensive experience and impeccable reputation, Sotheby's International Realty is ideally placed to promote and sell the Sapphire Residences. The sales team at Sri Lanka Sotheby's International Realty are all skilled professionals with insightful local knowledge and profound expertise in international luxury real estate.