

# Inside Shangri-La's new orchid pod



The interior of The Orchid (above), at Shangri-La Hotel. ST PHOTO: LIM YAOHUI

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## Shangri-La Hotel's new pavilion is home to about 300 potted orchids as well as other plants such as bird's nest ferns



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A 7m-tall greenhouse, filled with orchids and shaped like a flower bud, has sprouted on the grounds of Shangri-La Hotel.

Located off the pool area, The Orchid is an open-air wooden pavilion where hotel guests and those attending events or dining at the hotel can sit and admire about 300 potted orchids.

They hang from 51 larch wood "ribs" that form the greenhouse's facade and are interspersed with filler plants such as bird's nest and staghorn ferns, and tillandsia. Larch wood was chosen partly because it will develop a silvery-grey patina over the next six to 12 months.

The Orchid, which will be officially launched on Tuesday, was designed by multi-disciplinary firm Tierra Design, whose work includes landscape architecture, while timberwork specialist Venturer built the structure.

The hotel declined to reveal the cost of the structure. The greenhouse was built to celebrate the hotel's 45th anniversary.



The interior (above) of The Orchid, at Shangri-La Hotel.  
ST PHOTO: LIM YAOHUI

It is not the first time the hotel has celebrated an anniversary with plants. It got its own orchid hybrid, *Dendrobium* by Shangri-La Singapore, for its 35th birthday.

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**“We've been touched by the kindness of others.**

The Orchid is the latest addition to the Orange Grove Road hotel, which is a green haven.

There are 200 plant species and more than 1,000 flowering trees, fruit trees, aquatic plants, tropical flowers and Asian herbs grown on the hotel's sprawling 6ha estate, about the size of 15 football fields.

They are maintained and cared for by an on-site team of 14 grounds and landscaping professionals.

Highlights include heliconia and ginger garden plots and an old Abiu tree planted by the late American singer John Denver. More than 200 Japanese koi fish swim in a pond at the Garden Wing of the hotel.

Blooms within The Orchid will be updated regularly - seasonal orchids will be put on display, while those that are sick or dying are replaced every few days.

Some now on show include Phalaenopsis cornu-cervi, a species found in South-east Asia; Vanda Saint Valentine, which has magenta petals; and Dendrobium bracteosum, which is native to New Guinea.

The hotel has planned a host of activities around The Orchid, such as painting classes for stay-in guests, with the greenhouse as the subject. It costs \$20 a session.

The Orchid can also be booked as a dinner venue for up to four guests, with food prepared by a hotel chef. It starts at \$480 for two people.

Orchid fans can take a self-guided Orchid Walk using a new booklet that details the 25 species of orchids planted throughout the hotel's gardens.

The booklet is available at the reception or concierge desk.

Mr Reto Klauser, vice-president and general manager of the hotel, says: "It's a different hotel experience for our guests. With all this greenery and flowers, it's like a second botanic garden in town."

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