

STAY

Meet the designers behind some of the world's most beautiful hotels

Francesca Street, CNN • Published 3rd December 2018









1/8 Bar Trigona, Four Seasons Hotel Kuala Lumpur, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: AB Concept is an interior design and architectural consultancy which has worked on

super luxury hotel brands including Shangri-La Hotels, Mandarin Oriental and the Four Seasons (pictured here).

Courtesy Owen Raggett

(CNN) — The dazzling mosaic-bar of Bar Trigona at the Four Seasons Hotel in Kuala Lumpur, the Italian-chic, cinema-themed Paper Moon Giardino restaurant in Milan, the beach resort chic of the Rosewood Sanya in China.

Ngan, who founded their business AB Concept 20 years ago and have forged a career creating some of the swankiest hotel spaces around the globe

They're all the work of a Hong Kong duo, interior designer Ed Ng and architect Terence

To celebrate two decades of work, the pair's greatest hits have been compiled into a new book, "AB Concept: A cultural journey through light, form and space," published by Assouline.

Common aesthetics



Paper Moon Giardino, Milan, Italy is a Milanese restaurant has been serving classic Italian food for 40 years. AB Concept redecorated the space for the 40th anniversary.

Courtesy Matteo Imbriani

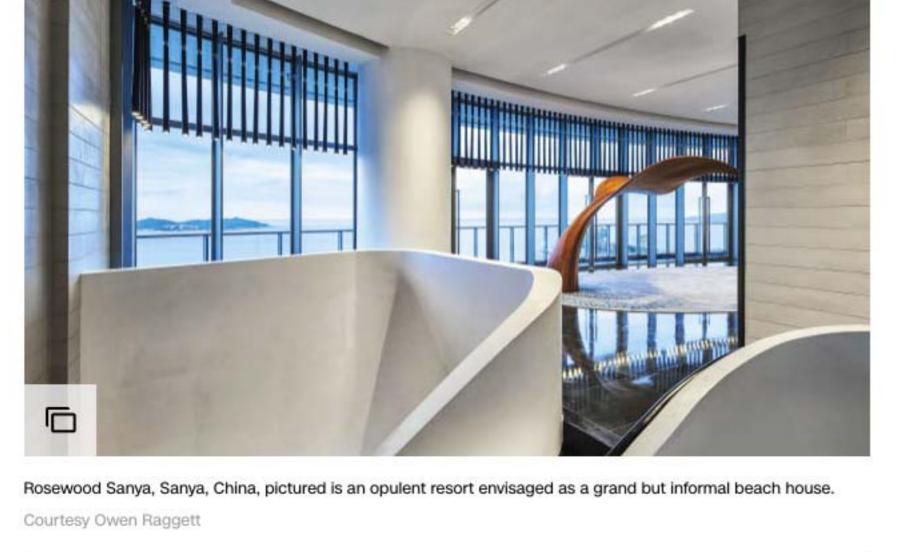
when they were introduced through a mutual friend. "We realized we see a lot of things in common," Ng says. "We have common aesthetics."

Ng tells CNN Travel his work with Ngan began two decades ago, as students in Hong Kong,

They were both keen to have their own businesses and decided to partner up.

Since then, their inimitable style has transformed bars and restaurants at Four Seasons,

Rosewood, Mandarin Oriental and Shangri-La hotels worldwide.



They've worked on private residences too, but Ng says that creating hotels is a particularly dynamic experience.

"It's something very culturally specific [...] It will also bring you the opportunity to go to

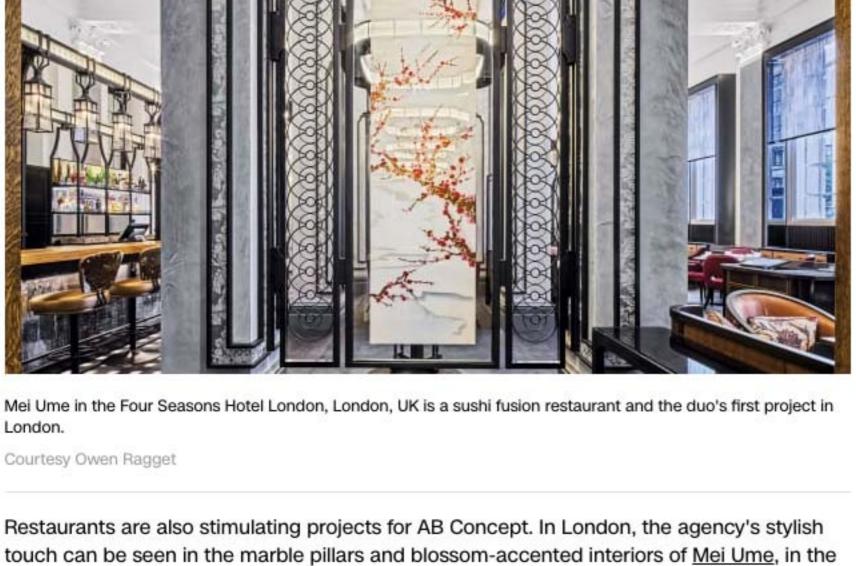
Ng says he often finds himself designing a hotel in a location he's never visited before.

many different countries to work on very unique projects, destinations and to interact with

"In the end you actually have a hotel, you have a presence there that will last for maybe another few decades. I think that is something quite unique, but also quite a challenge."

Creative collaboration

the local team," he says.

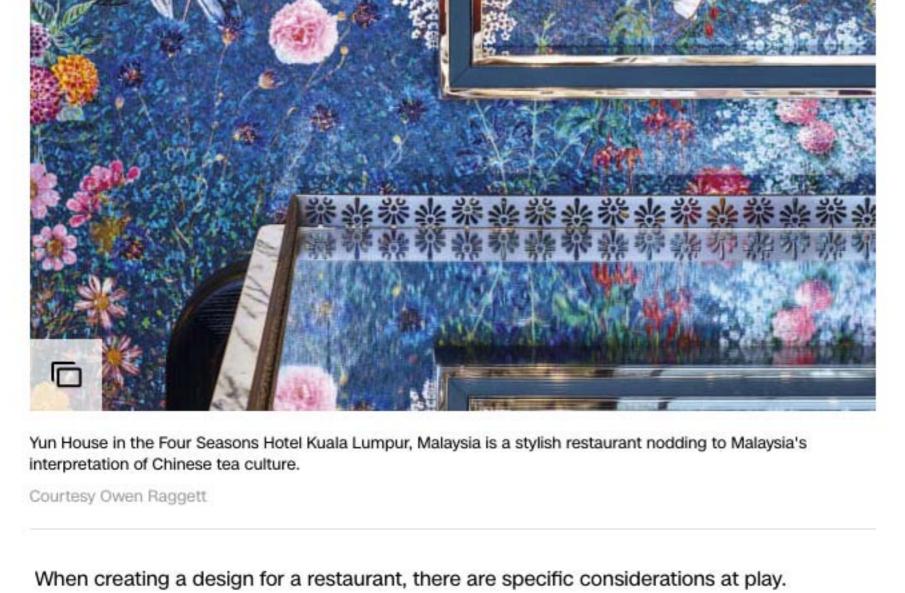


Four Seasons Hotel at Ten Trinity Square in London.

Restaurants are collaborative projects, which is why they're particularly appealing to the

design duo. "In most of the cases, I mean almost in all cases, a great chef is a very creative, another creative mind. So you always find some very interesting chemistry with them," says Ng.

This sushi fushion spot was AB Concept's first project in the British capital.



Those references, however, are always filtered through AB Concept's particular point of view.

"The culture, the building itself, all the food concepts," Ng adds.

"People are looking for us to design a space, to take leaps as the spatial designer," says

Ng. "I always explain that we are here not to tell my story, but I am telling the story of that

restaurant, telling the story of that hotel, just through my aesthetics."

Future plans

Next up, AB Concept is heading to Portugal to work on the upcoming W Hotel in the Algarve -- but first, the book will come out in time for the 20th anniversary and Ng has been recalling all the spaces the duo have designed.

"We quite enjoyed this journey," he says. "I know the book is called 'A cultural journey,' but even creating the book itself is kind of an interesting journey for a designer -- to consolidate 20 years of your work."