

# 70 EU TONG SEN STREET



**Client:**  
Yue Hwa Chinese Products Pte Ltd

**Architect:**  
OD Architects

**Engineer:**  
T Y Lin South East Asia Pte Ltd

**Contractor:**  
Hexacon Construction Pte Ltd

## 1997 AWARD

This is a part six- and part three-storey Art Deco building located in Chinatown. The main building is conserved and the rear service blocks, which were evaluated to be of no architectural value, were allowed to be redeveloped.



*Aerial view of 70 Eu Tong Sen Street*

Originally built around 1936 as a hotel with shops and entertainment outlets, the building has been adapted into a modern-day department store. Most of the original features of the main building such as the balconies, brackets, cast-iron arches and other

architectural features were retained and carefully restored.

The new extension at the rear is designed to harmonise with the existing main building and yet bear its own distinctive contemporary stamp.

Externally, it is not visible from the main street. Internally, the 4-storey high atrium gives a sense of orientation as well as provides contrast between the new and old in the interior of the building.

The project, involving old and new buildings with adaptive reuse, is indeed a challenging one.



Side elevation showing the part six and part three Art Deco building



Original architectural elements restored



Brackets retained



Sixth storey roof terrace



Light diffusing through stained glass skylight in the new rear extension



Cast-iron arches retained and carefully restored



The colonaded Five-footway retained and restored



## The Past and Pre-condition....

The Nam Tin was built around 1936 as boutique hotel with shops and entertainment outlets to serve the richer Chinese immigrants with its status to the Chinese community was equivalent to then Raffles Hotel to the westerner and the English educated locals communities. The Hotel with its Southern Cabaret was reputed to have glory past till 1950s and early 1960s. It was then the tallest building (six storeys) and among the first in town to be built in r.c. structure with lift machinery. Unlikely then popular conventional two to three storeys shophouses, this building 'complex' was among the first of its kind in Singapore to be built as integral structure of r.c. slab and beam with infill brickwall. The L-shape plan with its ground floor had brickwall partitions to form 8 units of shops. The 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> storeys with its doubly loaded corridor as defined by two rows of closely spaced r.c. columns were partitioned into 38 hotel rooms. Each room was equipped with own attached shower and toilet. It was roomy with high ceiling (4m) and high cast iron casement windows and terrace. The 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> storeys did not have any internal brick infill wall and formed into large colonnaded space for night club with its private back kitchen and common toilets. The 6<sup>th</sup> storey was r.c flat roof with partially covered by T-shape timber truss pitched interlocking clay tile roof supported on r.c columns. The elevation along Eu Tong Sen Street is punctuated with recessed wall giving rise to balconies for the hotel rooms and terrace, lined with Anglo-India inspired cast iron decorative arches on the 5<sup>th</sup> storey. On the whole, the entire building was surprisingly in good shape though tilted back by 300mm or so. The other features with exception of the cast iron railing were in good order.



Then...(from old photo-undated)