

Naturally *happy*

> Run down on Pantone's colours for 2016

BY ALYSSA JOON

THE design world was abuzz with excitement at the announcement of Pantone's Colour of the Year for 2016. For the first time in history, a blend of two soft shades was announced as the colours of the year – Rose Quartz and Serenity.

Rose Quartz is described as a “persuasive yet gentle tone that conveys compassion and a sense of composure”, while the airy Serenity is expressed as “the expanse of the blue sky above us, bringing feelings of respite and relaxation even in turbulent times”.

Pantone Colour Institute executive director Leatrice Eiseman cites the shift in perception of gender-assigned colours as the primary factor for 2016's choice of colours.

“This more unilateral approach to colour is coinciding with societal movements towards gender equality and fluidity, the consumers' increased comfort with using colour as a form of expression, which includes a generation that has less concern about being typecast or judged, and an open exchange of digital information that has opened our eyes to different approaches to colour usage.”

Rose Quartz and Serenity are merely two of the many pastel colours that have dominated the interior design scene over the past few years. This should come as no surprise as the colours are easy to incorporate in any home of today.



PHOTO: JLIFE.NL

LAYING THE BASE

To go all the way or not with pastels is not an easy choice for many, especially not in Malaysia where majority prefer neutrals and basic colours like whites and nude tones.

While many on impulse would choose pastels for children's bedrooms, relating the soft yet fun colours more suited to the young ones; stereotypically, adults are pushed to go for more “business-like” colours, such as the minimalist black and white or navy blues.

Since the Colours of the Year are meant to “bring a feeling of calm and relaxation into the home environment”, the 2016 Rose Quartz and Serenity become ideal as the base colour for any room in the house.

For the more reserved and majority of Malaysians, perhaps it is time to step out of one's comfort zone and explore how pastels can work as well or even much better than using plain, old white for the walls of interiors, even exteriors.

ALL-IN PASTEL

Like white walls, pastel-coloured walls reflect light to increase the brightness

of a room while giving a psychological boost to one's mood. The use of pastel colours for walls also induces an airy and spacious feeling.

Pastel saturation, as it is known, calls for all walls to be completely

Painted in one shade of any pastel colour. These pastel hues create fresh, radiant spaces and inject a lovely sense of calm. When paired with neutrals, the relaxation factor is maximised. For houses with low ceilings, pastel colours can also make the ceiling appear higher, especially if the walls and floors are painted in darker shades.

In terms of decoration, homeowners can opt to complement or contrast the chosen wall colour. An important tip to bear in mind is to approach pastel-themed decoration with an element of playfulness.

Complement a Rose Quartz or Serenity coloured walls with furnishings in earthy colours such as brown and gold, grey or white. A bed frame in gold or light brown will match nicely with Rose Quartz, while a white couch will go well with Rose Quartz throw pillows. Dark wooden tables would make a classy addition to a Serenity-coloured room, while white bedside tables bring about a country feel to the bedroom.

However, one's interior design



INSIGHTS

PHOTO: JDTONETHOME.COM.BR



PHOTO: DONTCRAMPYSTYLE.CO.UK

PHOTO: SPACOKASA.COM.BR

capabilities truly shine when there is success in blending the two Pantone Colours of the Year.

Think Rose Quartz bedroom walls with a light-coloured wooden bed frame topped with a Serenity-coloured bed sheet and comforter, with pillows in varying shades of Rose Quartz and Serenity. On the other end of the spectrum, we have Serenity living room walls with a white couch as the statement piece, decorated with throw pillows in dark grey with Rose Quartz accents and a couch throw in the same colour. The look is completed with a dark, glossy wooden coffee table.

TOE IN THE WATERS

Alternatively, home owners can opt for accented pastel walls if they fear a too “sugary” look. Accent pastel walls are a much needed pop in rooms with clean, crisp white walls.

Use pastel-coloured furnishings as statement pieces in a room. Switch out the couch for one in Rose Quartz, paint over the light brown wooden table with a coat of Serenity, or bring mint-coloured bar stools into the kitchen for a retro feel.

By blending soft tones with natural textures and hard materials, a sense of warmth is created in the interior. Brass is often used by

interior decorators to create that perfect contrast between soft colours and hard metals.

Incorporate this tip into your home using brass handles on a pastel-coloured armoire or chest of drawers, or even as a standing lamp or mirror.

Tone down a stark white wall with watercolour paintings in Rose Quartz and Serenity, or use lightweight linen in the same shades as window dressings. The addition of a pastel-coloured rug plays up the comfort factor in a room. Other smaller ways to introduce pastels into the home include everyday items, such as cutlery, teapots, dining room chairs, kitchen countertops, kitchen cabinets, refrigerators, and side tables.

Pastel colours are a trend that has been on the rise over the last few years and this is expressed in the selection of Rose Quartz and Serenity as Pantone's Colours of the Year for 2016. This new year how about bringing home these lovely shades? The lovely “lights” set the foundation for a happy aura in the home – the place to return to for one's daily dose of delight.



PHOTO: PANTONE.COM



PHOTO: ANNPORTER.WORDPRESS.COM



PHOTO: JLIFE.NL

► Email your feedback and queries to: propertyqs@thesundaily.com

Harmonious living

> Exploring Mah Sing's award-winning property development Ambrosia@Kinrara Residence

RENOWNED property development firm Mah Sing Group, developers of the Ambrosia@Kinrara Residence project, bagged the "Most Harmonious Community Living Concept" award at the recent Malaysia Property Awards 2015. Established as the most luxurious phase within the developer's Kinrara Residence project, *theSun* skims through the blueprint of the development to find out more about the gateless neighbourhood created to promote a harmonious and enriching community living experience.

FLUIDITY

Wouldn't most of us love the idea of living in a gateless community? One that bolsters the feeling of being happy and carefree, culminating in a neighbourhood where neighbours become friends, in a community that is concerned and cares for each other.

Ideally, the name of the development itself, Ambrosia, aptly describes the picture perfect scenario of the "ambrosial lifestyle" that Mah Sing Group plans to achieve through its development project.

From its surrounds, developed adjacent to one of the nation's most treasured forest reserves, the 3,000-acre Ayer Hitam Forest Reserve, to the fact that the development has no gates other than the main gate which welcomes one into an environment that blocks out the hustle and bustle of the world outside - we delve further into other features that make Ambrosia@Kinrara Residence most harmonious where community living is concerned.

GATELESS

Like anything which has its pros and cons, so too does the gateless concept in community living. While many of us would love to live in harmony in a closely knit neighbourhood where we can say that we "know" our neighbours, call them by their first names, and have our neighbours in and out of our houses, if not, our lives; there are also those who care for privacy and want their "own" and "personal" space.

While there is no right or wrong, these living concepts are just a matter of preference.

The thought of gateless brings to mind a happy, carefree, friendly and open environment to which the more reserved individuals and families may not find stimulating. Nevertheless, one can always find a balance as there are means and ways to draw the line to the idea of living a "free-spirited" lifestyle.

Besides, Mah Sing's concept is really steered towards an enriched living experience constituted on care and concern, looking out for each other, getting to know the



Getting to know the neighbours at the recent New Year party.

people we live next or near to, and perhaps inviting the lifestyles of old as in the kampungs, where people take interest to really get to know and want to help each other.

TRUST

While doing away with gates may help a community to bond, there needs to be a certain amount of trust among the people. Trust that the "free to explore" gateless surrounds will be "used" with care and respect; trust that one's family members will be safe in the "free for all" gateless consigns; trust that one's valuables and belongings will be secure; trust that if one should want some amount of privacy, it can be obtained as and when; and so on.

How Mah Sing ensures all the

above is by providing safety assurance within each home in its development, besides a host of modern security and safety features externally.

SAFETY

Apart from the guardhouse and sentry at the main entrance, complete with the latest in security features and a central control room, there are internal and external security features carefully configured into the blueprint of Ambrosia@Kinrara Residence. The developer has indeed invested in an extensive multi-tiered security system as explained below:

INTERNAL

- ▶ Smart home security alarm system with LCD Control Panel

- ▶ Fibre optic broadband ready (service governed by third party provider)

EXTERNAL

- ▶ Barrier gates with fixed CCTV and facial image recording function
- ▶ Perimeter fencing is simple with see through 8ft-high steel wired fencing giving better visual surveillance
- ▶ Infrared CCTV system with fibre optic motion sensors
- ▶ Electronic clocking system throughout perimeter fencing for round-the-clock guard patrolling
- ▶ Main entrance guard house with central command centre with 24-hour state-of-the-art security systems
- ▶ Dual entry and exit points via access card system
- ▶ Back-up power generator for guard house, central command centre, perimeter fencing and CCTV systems

MOTHER NATURE

In the name of "harmonious living", nature's needs must also be taken into concern and at Ambrosia@Kinrara Residence Mah Sing Group is proud to address environmental issues. In fact, the development firm's CEO Ng Chai Yong said: "We invested RM10million for landscaping in Ambrosia alone. Kinrara Residence provides contemporary urban living amidst lush greenery. We want to provide residents with everything that makes up today's quintessential home - practicality, security, eco-friendliness and warmth."

The developer has also preserved the surrounding greenery, constructing Ambrosia's 79 exclusive bungalows and 66 semi-detached homes on undulating terrain. Arranged in linear fashion, the houses are all placed on terraced platforms, "stepping up in sympathy with the elevated site".

"Green" features include a hybrid hot water system, rain water harvesting, centralized water filtration system, a booster pump to enhance water pressure, high ceiling in home designs to promote natural lighting and ventilation among other additional environmental-friendly enhancements.

RESIDENTIAL OFFERINGS

Ambrosia@Kinrara Residence offers the home owner or investor a range of layouts across its bungalow and semi-d units, all three-storey and generous in space. From built-up areas of between 4,468 sf and 5,908 sf, it is pretty much like "ambrosia" or "heaven on earth" where space is concerned.

Whether indoors or outdoors, there is a fluid feel of freedom, an unrestrained easiness and independence that incites a sense of content, completeness and wholesome satisfaction.

From six to seven bedrooms, all ensuite, selected houses are designed with private swimming pools while others come with double volume ceilings in the living area. There is also a residents' clubhouse that offers a host of facilities. These include swimming pool, gymnasium, multi-purpose hall and lounge area. There is also the Ambrosia Linear Park facilitated with a children's playground, jogging track, cycling and reflexology path, a basketball court, gazebos, viewing decks and more.

GOOD LOCATION

With the Ayer Hitam Forest Reserve nearby, trekkers and hikers will rejoice while nature buffs revel on the extensive green landscape and backdrop that makes for a stunning view, daily.

The neighbourhood is also easily accessible via Bandar Kinrara's Jalan Kinrara 6 and Persiaran Puncak Jalil, as well as via an integrated network of highways and expressways including Damansara-Puchong Highway (LDP), New Pantai Expressway (NPE), North Klang Valley Expressway (NKVE), Shah Alam Expressway (Kesas), Puchong-Sungai Besi Highway, Old Klang Road and Middle Ring Road 2 (MRR2).

Located just a short drive away are a host of conveniences and comforts like Columbia Asia Hospital and Sunway Medical Centre, Tesco, Giant and AEON, IOI Mall, Sunway Pyramid, Empire Shopping Gallery, Subang Parade, Summit Subang and Endah Parade, while the Kinrara Golf Club and Bukit Jalil Golf & Country Resort are nearby too.



▶ Email your feedback and queries to: propertyqs@thesundaily.com

Property market overview for 2016

PART 1

> Global professionals' view on the market in some of the 'power houses' around the world

WITH real estate officially recognised as an asset class, it is no wonder that property markets around the world have continued to receive more interest and attracted a global following. In Malaysia, there are many with a watchful eye on the property market across all corners of the world. And why not? Especially with the steady returns it has earned many that have taken the trouble to learn the ins and outs of property investment along with the risks involved.

As the world recently closed its books on 2015 and opened a new chapter for 2016, we check what the authorities in global economy and property have to say on the property market industry in various regions around the world.

LAND OF OPPORTUNITY

Moody's chief economist Mark Zandi sums up the US property market for the new year. His prediction - that homeowners, landlords and taxpayers should have a good year, apart from renters. "Gauging trends in housing is often an intrepid affair,



but these trends seem firmly in place for this year."

Zandi adds that market conditions look good for those aiming to sell their homes with the low number of new and existing homes in the market, not to mention the higher prices. Nevertheless, with the US economy said to be on the road to recovery, thus improving wage growth, the market is reported as getting healthier by the day.

Last year, the government housing administration cut its fees which helped first-time home buyers. It is expected to do the same again, as finances improve.

Big mortgage lenders are also said to be working to loosen the high credit plug.

However, with the increase of those finding jobs and living on their own, households that have lost their homes in foreclosure, and more and more empty-nesters down-sizing or simplifying - all these have been fuelling demand resulting in a flourishing market that has outstripped the supply. So for renters, 2016 looks like it's going to be a tough year, especially as vacancy units are at its low and rents continue to rise. Moreover, developers are said to be slow in increasing the construction of new single-family or smaller houses.

GREAT BRITAIN

The BBC.com expects "choppy times ahead" for the UK property market. According to its research, "the UK property market will have more on its plate than just the perennial issue of whether house prices will rise or fall".

It also reported that throughout England and Wales, stamp duty rates will increase by April, for anyone buying a home that is not their main residence. The same will occur in Scotland. "These are



expected to make it more expensive for second-home buyers and buy-to-let landlords, and deter some potential buyers altogether," BBC.com reported.

In all, the property market in the UK is set to receive some "jolts". "An extraordinary about-turn for landlords," said property commentator Henry Pryor as

"rents are unlikely to rise to compensate for the increase in stamp duty, and capital values are likely to fall - the government's intention."

A leading brokers John Charcol, Ray Boulger, predicts some turbulence in the earlier part of the year. He reckons that there will be a rush to purchase buy-to-let properties before the higher stamp duty rates are increased.

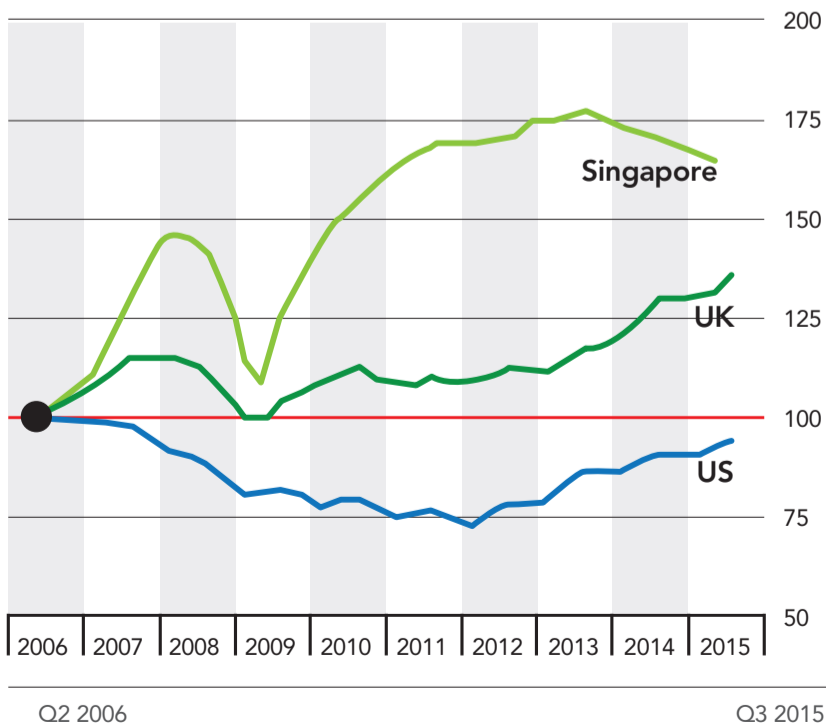
"Till then, I think we will see some quite strong growth prices, then I expect to see prices falling for the next few months as that element of demand is taken out of the market."

Follow our column next week and learn about the property market in Australia and Southeast Asia, followed by Malaysia.



The Economist house-price index

Q2 2006 = 100



Sources: OECD; ONS; Standard & Poor's; Thomson Reuters; Urban Land Authority

► Email your feedback and queries to: propertyqs@thesundaily.com

In a nutshell, last week's article on the US and the UK property market suggested that demand has exceeded supply in the US and developers will be increasing the construction of single-family and smaller housing units into the year; while house prices are expected to fall into the year, after the increase of stamp duty rates in the UK. This week, we take a look at what is expected of the market Down Under.

DOWN UNDER

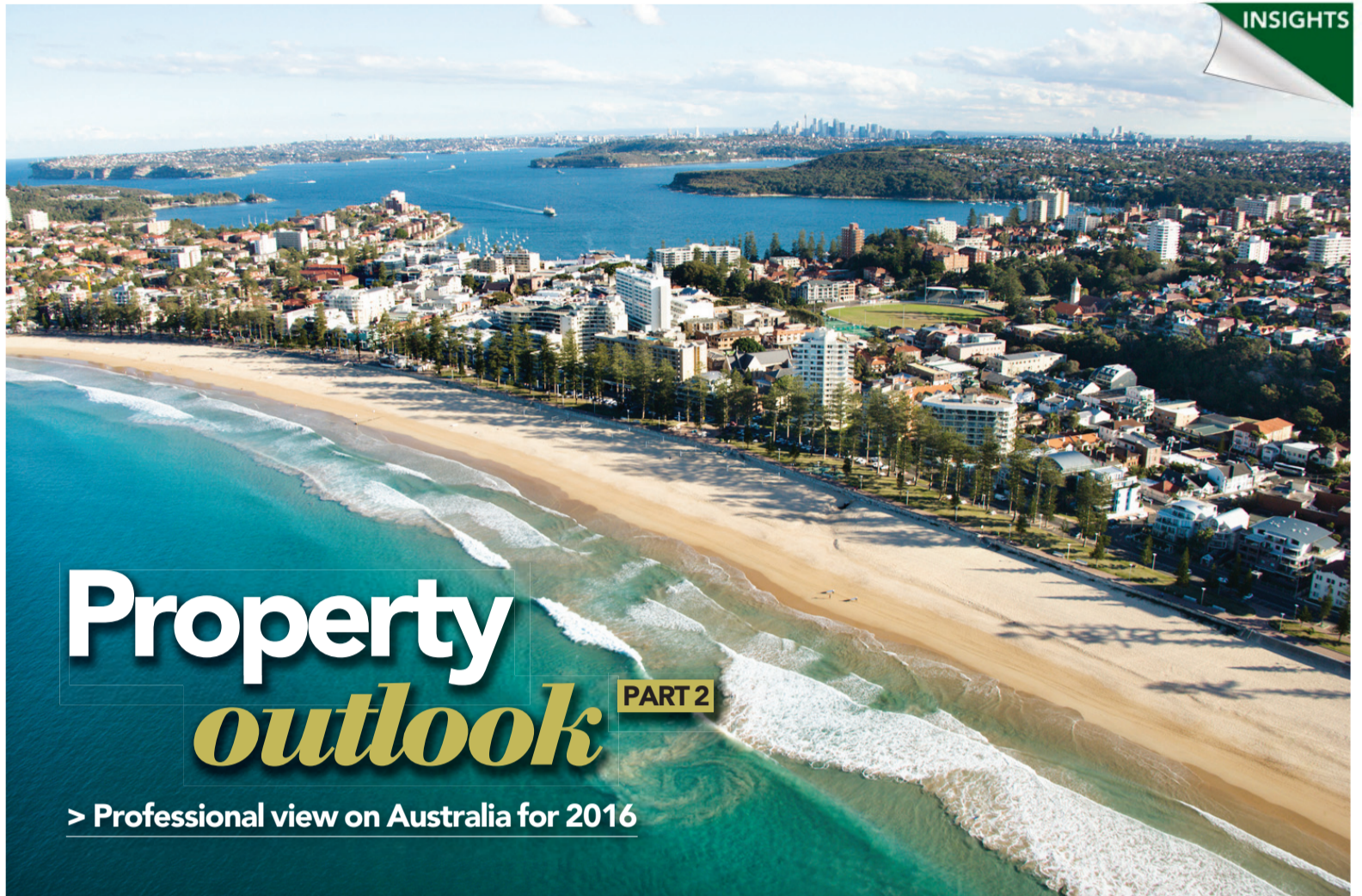
According to Australia's *realestate.com*, which quoted LJ Hookers head of real estate, Christopher Mourd, prices are set to become more consistent in 2016. "The market is definitely slowing, with growth slowing, people can (now) make better decisions. A more consistent market means both buyers and sellers can see what is really going on."

Apparently, the market has witnessed a rise in the price of property throughout 2015. HIA senior economist Shane Garrett commented: "Activity is at such a high level ... it can't be kept at such a high level." He also said that as economies in other parts of the world improve, there is a drop in the number of foreigners going over.

CoreLogic's RP Data senior research analyst Cameron Kusher said - "Only time will tell if a slower market will see prices fall". He added that while Sydney and Melbourne had seen the strongest rates in home value growth over the past year, the recent months had seen these values slide. He reckons that whether these values are just low for a bit or decline further will determine the housing market conditions for this year.

His take on Adelaide and Hobart: "Markets will likely see fairly moderate levels of value growth". On Perth and Darwin, he says: "We anticipate further value fall".

While a "slower market" is good news for buyers, especially first homebuyers, sellers are likely to be clinking glasses to good deals as the rate of economic growth gets back on track. Generally, the report described the 2016 market as "taking a breather", which should give buyers "increased confidence in the property process". Moreover, with the growth of prices slowing down, sellers will be in the position to trade out of their current homes into new ones.



AUSTRALIAN RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY PRICE INDEXES

(Info retrieved from the Australian Bureau of Statistics)

RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY PRICES	June Qtr 15 to Sept Qtr 15 % change	Sept Qtr 14 to Sept Qtr 15 % change
Weighted average of eight capital cities	2.0	10.7
Sydney	3.1	19.9
Melbourne	2.9	9.9
Brisbane	1.3	3.8
Adelaide	1.2	3.5
Perth	-2.4	-3.3
Hobart	0.5	1.7
Darwin	-0.4	-2.0
Canberra	1.3	4.0
Total value of the dwelling stock		Sept Qtr 15
Value of dwelling stock (a) (A\$million)		5 859 824.6
Mean price of residential dwellings (\$'000)		612.2
Number of residential dwellings ('000)		9 572.4

CHANGES TO RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY PRICE INDEX

- The price index for residential properties for the weighted average of the eight capital cities rose 2% in the September quarter 2015. The index rose 10.7% through the year to the September quarter 2015.
- The capital city residential property price indexes rose in Sydney (+3.1%), Melbourne (+2.9%), Brisbane (+1.3%), Adelaide (+1.2%), Canberra (+1.3%) and Hobart (+0.5) and fell in Perth (-2.4%) and Darwin (-0.4%).
- Annually, residential property prices rose in Sydney (+19.9%), Melbourne (+9.9%), Canberra (+4.0%), Brisbane (+3.8%), Adelaide (+3.5%) and Hobart (+1.7%) and fell in Perth (-3.3%) and Darwin (-2.0%).



TOTAL VALUE OF THE DWELLING STOCK

- The total value of residential dwellings in Australia was A\$5,859,824.6 million at the end of September quarter 2015, rising A\$137,125 million over the quarter.
- The mean price of residential dwellings rose by A\$11,900 to A\$612,200 and the number of residential dwellings rose by 38,600 to 9,572,400 in the September quarter 2015.

For foreign buyers, the buying power remains pretty significant claims Mourd. A slow down is expected where domestic buyers are concerned. This is due to the internal changes in lending criteria. It is also said that this slow down will have a knock-on effect. "The type of property domestic buyers purchase are usually entry level stock. This slow down in domestic investing will allow first home buyers to return to the market," Mourd explained.

With the buying power of foreigners better than that of the

locals, investment properties like holiday homes, retirement homes, casual holiday rentals and short term leasing will most likely increase. Mourd's suggestion - "For those planning retirement, it could be the right time to buy a future retirement and holiday home, and let it out (for now)."

Follow our column next week to learn of what is expected in the property market across Asia.

► Email your feedback and queries to: propertyqs@thesundaily.com



Our series on the global property outlook over the past weeks, we published the views of industry professionals on markets in the US, UK and Australia. This week, we take a brief look at neighbouring markets.

ASIAN REGION

According to *jll.realreviews.com*, the idea of an economic bloc in this part of the world is finally coming to fruition after 30 years of discussion. And when it does, “this will lead to a single market of over 600 million people, making the region more attractive than any single nation would be on its own. This will also boost the regions long-term prospects”.

On the whole, the world has its eyes on Asia, deemed very much the “land of opportunity” in this part of the world. With its growing wealth and rapidly evolving cities creating dynamic real estate markets packed with potential, 2016 is expected to be another record breaking year in terms of transaction volume says Stuart Crow who heads the Asia capital markets. “But investment strategies are changing and as Asian wealth grows, a lot of it is staying in the region instead of finding a new home overseas,” he adds.

Managing director for Beijing and North China, Julien Zhang shares that with the huge transformation China has undergone in the last few years, one can expect even more change in 2016 with government reform plans and policies in the pipeline to materialize this year. However, the residential sector in Asia is expected to be quieter this year after all the rampant market activity which may cause Asian investors to look at other cities for investment opportunities.

Nevertheless, as JLL stated that Asian wealth will remain in Asia, the overall outlook for property in Asia will remain positive, notwithstanding the challenges in

Property outlook

PART 3

> View on what is expected in the market across Asia



Singapore

the global macroeconomic picture.

Colliers.com Asia Pacific CEO David Hand shares his sentiments – “On real estate capital flow, we predict that the majority of Asia-based real estate investors will continue to look for opportunities to invest within their home region. The cost of funding will head south in markets such as China and India, while real estate yields will likely increase. US interest rates will edge up gradually in 2016 and bring the region into centre stage for investment. We believe the volume of real estate sales transactions in Asia will increase, with an increasing number of motivated sellers coming to market and offering stock for sale. Lured by attractive yields, more long-term investment funds will invest back

in Asia this year.”

Interestingly, the Property Report Congress held in Singapore end of last year acknowledged renewed interest in property in Vietnam especially in 2016. This is said to be due to the easing of foreign ownership rules. Participants at the conference also voted Vietnam as the market to perform well this year, ahead of Thailand, Indonesia and Philippines. Comment on Singapore was that the industry there will feel the effects of the heavy-handed cooling measures while Indonesia and Malaysia will not perform as well as before due to currency depreciation.

Follow our column next week as we zoom in on the property scene in Malaysia.



Property in Malaysia.

PHOTO: HOLIDAYHOMETIMES.COM



Apartments in Suzhou, China.

As urbanisation drives transformation, which in turn influences the real estate and property markets (see the overall economic view below) said to spur the property market in Asia.

ASIA CAPITAL MARKETS

Asia continues to be a choice destination for offshore real-estate capital, driven by its ongoing urbanization and rapidly expanding middle class.

ASIA LOGISTICS MARKET

Logistics sector in Asia looks very exciting in terms of expansion into new locations for development and the adoption of innovative business models by various players in the market.

ASIA OFFICE MARKET

Technology companies will drive growth across Asia in 2016, especially e-commerce operators. These companies will continue to display a strong appetite for high-quality space in core locations, while also expanding to new locations to attract quality talent.

ASIA RETAIL MARKET

Despite some gloomy predictions from mainstream commentators about a slowing of growth in markets across the region, a clear-sighted analysis of the basics of the underlying demographic shifts and consumer behavior at work in Asia show it to be the most energetic and exciting market in the world.

[Information retrieved from Colliers.com]

Country/city	Long-term investment rating	Gross rental yield (% per annum)	
Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur	★ ★ ★ ★	4.57%	Poor
Thailand, Bangkok	★ ★ ★ ★	5.13%	Moderate
Indonesia, Jakarta	★ ★ ★	7.05%	Good
The Philippines, Metro Manila	★ ★ ★	7.51%	Good
Cambodia, Phnom Phen	★ ★	5.33%	Moderate
Hong Kong	★ ★	2.82%	Very Poor
India, Mumbai	★ ★	2.22%	Very Poor
Japan, Tokyo	★ ★	5.02%	Moderate
Singapore	★ ★	2.83%	Very Poor
China, Shanghai	★	2.66%	Very Poor
Taiwan, Taipei	★	1.57%	Very Poor

[Retrieved from *globalpropertyguide.com*]

► Email your feedback and queries to: propertyqs@thesundaily.com