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## Living in harmony: New co-living spaces in Singapore

Clever design and the smart use of space are what drive two upcoming co-living spaces.

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by

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**KĒSA HOUSE**

Back in the day when Keong Saik Road was still a residential zone, it was home to working ladies, and mistresses of rich merchants.

In the early 1990s, it underwent a transformation when the Urban Redevelopment Authority put up several old shophouses for sale, so that they could be conserved and modified for commercial use.

The public can once again live on Keong Saik Road, thanks to Ashish Manchharam, founder and managing director of 8M Real Estate. His firm's hospitality management and operations arm, 8M Collective, owns and manages KēSa House, a 60-room flexible-living concept which also includes a row of six F&B outlets. Its name is a contraction of the words 'Keong' and 'Saik'.

Guests at KēSa House have the option to stay a night, for a week, or a month if they so wish. There are no contracts to be tied down to. "The longer guests stay, the more affordable it will be," says Charmaine Wee, director of accommodation at 8M Collective. "If they want to stay forever, they could do so too."

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The interiors by iThink Consulting Group, have been designed to suit all guests, regardless of their length of stay. There are five room categories to choose from, and they all offer plush beds and powerful rain showers. Some of the rooms have their own private terrace that look out onto Duxton Plain Park. Each room is big enough for two people, but for those with small families, or are staying longer, they have the option of the studios, which come with a living room, and a kitchenette.

Regardless of the size of the room, clever features have been put in to fully maximise the space. For example, there is storage space under the beds, vanity tables that can be folded down to become a desk, and open

wardrobes. Skylights were added to the windowless rooms on the top floor, so that they would be brighter, and more inviting especially for long-stayers.

And unlike hotels and serviced residences, KēSa House offers some unique features. There is the KēSaKitchen, which comes with two fully equipped cooking stations, complimentary coffee and a Nordaq Fresh water station. There is also KēSaLounge, a space for guests to chill out which can double as a co-working space, and KēSaTerrace offers another social area to enjoy an alfresco sundowner. There is also a complimentary in-house launderette that is open 24/7 and a flexible 'select service' allows for bespoke and cost-effective housekeeping requirements. In addition, guests get a discount when they dine at any of the six restaurants, that include the Pasta Bar, and at Spanish joint Olivia Restaurant and Lounge.

“There is a big market to create a space that is a home away from home, and yet allow guests to build a sense of community and belonging,” says Mr Manchharam. “This is why the communal spaces are intentional.”

He reckons the space will be popular with young professionals and business travellers, who want something different from the usual hotels, as well as foreigners who are settling into Singapore. He also hops to target the Singaporean crowd, such as those who are in the midst of moving homes. “It is about educating the public to let them know there is this flexi-living option,” he says.

***[8mcollective.com/kesahouse](https://www.8mcollective.com/kesahouse). Opening mid-April***

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**LYF FUNAN**