

Matters of the Estate

Dato' Tracey Lai shares the number one question that buyers ask themselves when buying a property

By Elizabeth Soong. Photography by Khairul Imran

"People are not looking into just putting their money into brick and mortar. They're buying into a lifestyle," proclaims the sales and marketing director of 1Pavilion Property Consultancy, the marketing arm of the Pavilion Group. Indeed, this has been the main draw of Pavilion Damansara Heights, a mixed-development of offices, residences and a shopping mall that sits in the posh neighbourhood of which it is named after. Most of the buyers for the first two blocks of residence suites are from the local vicinity, ranging from singles to young couples, families and retirees.

Dato' Tracey Lai further explains, "Today the needs of buyers are different. The first thing they ask is, 'What am I looking for?' I was talking to this lady and she was saying her helper ran away and her house is like 7,000 sqft. She's so used to having such a big space that she wants to look at one of our penthouses. Actually her place is not really very far but she has to drive out, which is inconvenient. So what really convinced her are the conveniences that Pavilion Damansara Heights has to offer. What's more, we also provide the Pavilion concierge services, which you can call on when you need some assistance with day-to-day necessities like helping with the groceries or finding part-time help. All Pavilion branded developments come with this service, including the Pavilion Suites and Pavilion Banyan Tree Residences, which I think is very important for today's lifestyle needs."

Pavilion Damansara Heights is not only attractive to local buyers but also foreign investors as well. Having launched the third block of suites in Hong Kong last June, it attracted around 250 Hong Kong buyers over a period of three months. This is hardly surprising as Lai said Malaysia is considered more affordable compared to our neighbours Thailand and Singapore. "In Hong Kong, a 1,000 sqft house is considered super luxe and expensive. With Pavilion Damansara Heights, not only are they getting bigger units, they're also buying into status (old money enclave), affluent location, international schools, and connectivity (you know they like to travel

everywhere by MRT). So once they had an understanding of everything, they went ahead and purchased."

At the end of the day, a property is more than just four walls. It is about the life you wish to live, and this is what Lai constantly contemplates about. "I think people today are more self-centric," she remarks. "It doesn't mean that we are selfish or self-centred. But think, we work so hard our entire lives, for our children, for ourselves, and now we'd like to reflect on what we want to do with our life. People are literally dropping dead because we're so stressed, so it's time to say, I want to travel, I want to do things, I don't want to be a slave to my house."

These are some of the reasons why Pavilion Damansara Heights holds such an appeal to her personally. Retirement is imminent in her near future with plans to sell her landed home since her two grown children have flown the nest. She's eyeing to live in a condominium for better security and convenience. As she pictures her life-to-be, a happy, contented look comes upon her face: "It would be so easy to close up my unit, go away for a couple of months without worrying about it. When I come home, I can get a part-time helper to help clean up. If I want any food, I just go downstairs to the mall. As I get older, I don't want to go so far to see a doctor. If I'm stressed, I can go for a massage or mani-pedi, or spend time with my good friends. When I travel, I can take the MRT to the airport—people don't believe me when I say this but I will, if only just to escape the traffic jam to the airport! Everything I could ever want or need is right here at my doorstep. So that's the added convenience that will help me have a better life."

Before we wrap the interview, I ask what's next for Pavilion Group. Lai shares about their upcoming project in Genting Highlands which has a landbank area of 280 acres, of which there are plans to build a shopping mall with a cultural precinct, an eco-adventure park for outdoor activities such as boulder climbing, hiking and glamping, a petting zoo plus five-star luxury hotels and villas. Watch this space for more updates! ┘

Hair & Make-up: Joey Yap

