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Construction begins Feb 13 on the massive Lisboa Palace Hotel complex in Macau

East meets West all over again in a cross-cultural fantasia drawn from 18th-century styles

Global resort destination design firm WATG is delighted to announce groundbreaking on its latest project, the Lisboa Palace Hotel complex at Cotai on the island of Macau, China, for Macau's SJM Holdings. The complex will comprise three hotels: the five-star Lisboa Palace with 1425 keys, and two boutique hotels, the Versace with 226 keys, and a second boutique hotel with 216 keys. The built area of the complex, covering nearly 6 square km., will include 37,800 square meters of gaming facilities, 30,346 square meters of retail shops, and 35,000 square meters of restaurants and entertainment.

But the impressive scale of the Lisboa Palace complex is by no means its most intriguing feature. Dr. Ambrose So, CEO of SJM Holdings, had a powerful vision for the Cotai project: a fusion of history and fantasy based on the two-way cultural exchange between Europe and China that started in the later 1500s. From the European side, décor will reflect the eighteenth-century passion for "Chinoiserie"—scenes of an idealized China in painting, prints, and porcelain (itself an imported Chinese technique) as well as Chinese motifs in furniture and detailing. From the Chinese side, the architecture and surrounding landscaping will evoke the famous Beijing Summer Palace (Yuanmingyuan), and in particular its historic "Western Buildings," which together with their beautiful surrounding gardens were designed in imitation of European neoclassical styles.

This was a monumental undertaking and would not have been possible without the depth of experience and knowledge of WATG's leadership team—Perry Brown, Tom Fo, Ron Van Pelt, and Sharmila Tankha. Under their guidance, architects, landscape designers, and interior designers from WATG and its Wimberly Studio worked together to create the project as a seamless and integrated whole. "The WATG designers indeed lived up to their reputation. After much in-depth research, critical and professional analyses, and debates and discussions with their employers, WATG's team came up with a masterpiece of design. It is a true representation of a fusion between the cultural quintessences of the Chinese and European architectural and artistic styles of a distinguished historical period, as well as decorative symbolism at its best." says SJM CEO Dr. So.

Lead architect Sharmila Tankha agrees. "The design of the Lisboa Palace is a great example of WATG's creativity and imagination coming alive in response to the SJM's aspirations and the project's rich cultural and historical context in Macau."