

# Site-seeing at open houses



The Hanging Garden at 158 Cecil Street (top), Treelodge@Punggol (above), HDB's first eco-precinct, and the eco-house off Balestier Road (right).  
PHOTOS: ARCHIFEST, ST FILE

This year's ArchiTours will visit well-designed buildings and will include a public forum for the first time

tay suan chiang

**Y**ou can take a peep into some of Singapore's most well-designed houses in this year's ArchiTours.

The tours, which will be held over three Saturdays, starting on Saturday, will take visitors on a tour of private homes and commercial buildings that are normally restricted to the public.

The sites include an eco-house off Balestier Road, which won an award for its green features, such as its solar panel roof, and a house in Jalan Rukam at Upper Thomson, where the centre portion of the house is a hollow space for an in-house garden.

Apart from private homes, ArchiTours will also visit Treelodge@Punggol housing estate, which is HDB's first eco-friendly precinct and the newly opened National University of Singapore University Town which has research buildings and residential colleges sited around heritage trees.

The tours will also include office buildings such as 158 Cecil Street, which has been nicknamed the Hanging Garden in the CBD, because of the vertical greenery running down the building.

The tours cost \$35 to \$45 a person.

ArchiTours are one of the most popular events in Archifest, an annual architecture festival organised by the Singapore Institute of Architects (SIA). It began on Monday and will run till Oct 28.

Now in its fifth year, the festival aims to promote and showcase quality archi-



tecture to the public, while fostering a sense of community among the local and international architectural fraternity.

This year's festival theme is Common Spaces, which explores the idea of how the nature of shared spaces and experiences is shaped by the environment.

Mr Seah Chee Huang, 36, the festival's chairman, says: "The festival showcases creative ways of how common spaces are designed or used in an uncommon and refreshing manner."

Apart from ArchiTours, this year's festival features 60 events, including an ArchiFest Forum, which will appeal more to professional architects. Nine Singapore and foreign architects and academics will share their views on what common spaces mean to them.

For non-architects, there is the inaugural ArchiFest Public Forum. At this free event which will take place on Sunday at the National Library Building, academics, conservationists and archi-

itects will share their views on the future of the former Malaysian railway land.

This is a hot topic, as several groups have thrown up various ideas on what to do with the land, which was returned to Singapore three months ago after being used as a railway for about 80 years.

Other festival highlights include an exhibition featuring winning entries from the SIA Architectural Design Awards and the SIA-NParks Skyrise Greenery Awards.

Architecture buff Melvin Lee, 28, is keen to go on the ArchiTours. "It'll be a good opportunity to learn more about some of the buildings that I pass by daily," he says.

Bank analyst Daniel Ong, 34, who owns the eco-house off Balestier Road, is keen to show his home, as "there are quite a few green features and it would be great to share ideas with green enthusiasts".

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## TOUR SPOTS

### ARCHITOURS

**What:** Tour buildings in Singapore, from offices to homes, which are normally restricted to the public.

Architects for the various projects will explain their design concepts.

**Where:** Includes NUS University Town, Mapletree Business City and an eco-house off Balestier Road

**When:** Saturday, Oct 15, 22, 9am to 1pm, 2 to 6pm

**Admission:** \$35 to \$45, go to [www.archifest.sg](http://www.archifest.sg) to sign up

### DETOUR

**What:** The Norwegian Public Roads Administration has developed 18 scenic routes into National Tourist Routes. This exhibition features the lookout points, picnic areas, service and rest areas with unusual architecture in natural settings.

**Where:** National Library Building

**When:** Till Oct 28, 10am to 9pm

**Admission:** Free

### UNCOMMON SPACES: PUBLIC PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

**What:** An exhibition of entries from the Archifest'11 photography competition, on the theme

Uncommon Spaces. The photographs show how people have made use of common spaces. Winning entries stand to win \$2,000 worth of prizes. Entries close on Friday and can be submitted to [www.archifest.sg](http://www.archifest.sg)

**Where:** National Library Building

**When:** Till Oct 28, 10am to 9pm

**Admission:** Free

### NUS OPEN STUDIO EXHIBITION

**What:** Thinking of becoming an architect? Then check out the open house of the Architecture Society at the National University of Singapore.

**Where:** School of Design and Environment, National University of Singapore, 4 Architecture Drive

**When:** Oct 21 and 28, 2 to 4pm

**Admission:** Free. To sign up, go to <http://ofthesociety.wordpress.com>