



SAFDIE ARCHITECTS' MONUMENTAL 'RAFFLES CITY CHONGQING' BEGINS PHASED OPENING ON HISTORIC CHAOTIANMEN SQUARE

Continuing through 2020, the opening will culminate with the completion of The Crystal, a 300m-long 'horizontal skyscraper' built at a height of 250m

"While centuries old, Chongqing is now experiencing rapid growth and regeneration that demands thoughtful solutions to increased density and mega-scale projects. Guided by the sheer scale and complexity of the site, our design brings people in and through the site at different levels, whether by foot, car, train or ferry, to reconnect the city to its most historic site – The Emperor's Landing."

— Moshe Safdie

November 14, 2019 (BOSTON) — Following eight years of design, development, and construction, Safdie Architects is nearing completion on its latest project in China: Raffles City Chongqing, a vibrant complex which combines office, residential, hotel, retail, and recreational facilities across a 22.7 acre site, embedded within the densely developed Yuzhong district. Situated at the confluence of the Yangtze and Jialing rivers, the historically significant site was once home to the city's most important gateway and the imperial entrance to the city: Chaotian Gate. The area was also Chongqing's foremost riverfront trading post which has traditionally driven development in this inland city, catalyzing its evolution to become one of the world's fastest-growing and densest cities with a greater metropolitan population of over 30 million people.

A phased opening of Raffles City Chongqing commenced in September 2019 with the unveiling of a 220,000 sq.m., five-story retail Galleria and continues into early 2020, culminating with the opening of The Crystal, a 300m-long horizontal skyscraper perched at 250m and stretching across four of the development's eight towers. Inherently site-specific, Safdie Architects' design for Raffles City Chongqing responds to the city's character as well as its mountainous landscape and extreme climate. The project embodies a considered approach to issues of population density, community connectivity, and urban renewal within a highly developed city center. It is the firm's 4th collaboration with CapitaLand, one of Asia's largest real estate developers.

With a total built area of over 1 million square meters (approx. 11 million square feet), Raffles City Chongqing is one of Safdie Architects' largest and most complex projects to date. It continues the firm's exploration of vertical neighborhoods, livable urban communities, and thoughtfully connected public spaces. As with other Safdie projects, priority is given to maximizing access to daylight, air, greenspace, and views. In order to achieve this in Chongqing, the development's diverse program elements are distributed across eight slender towers which soar above a retail podium which features an expansive rooftop public park and civic plaza that connects directly to the city's higher elevation streets. To account for the hilly terrain, the retail podium provides multiple entry points into the development at different elevations. Additionally, the development provides the city with a new multi-modal transit hub, including metro, bus, and ferry terminals.

The development's design evokes the city's rich maritime history with the north elevation of the towers curved to recall the silhouette of an armada's sails and the crossbeam of the horizontal conservatory echoing the arch of the historic gate, creating a new symbolic gateway to the city.

"Chongqing is such an extraordinary city—in scale, population, and personality. The topography of the city creates opportunities for intimate pockets of public space at different elevations, stacked and stepped to overlook one another and the city beyond. It's the defining characteristic of Chongqing and one that we sought to build upon with Raffles City" said Christopher Mulvey, Safdie Architects' Managing Principal, who relocated to China in 2011 to establish a branch office for the firm.



PROJECT FEATURES

The Crystal

Spanning across four accessible towers, at a length of 300 meters, the Crystal also connects to two of the development's taller towers via linking bridges. Considered a 'horizontal skyscraper,' the Crystal houses 15,000 sq.m. of facilities including gardens, numerous dining options, bar and event space, a residential clubhouse, infinity pool, and hotel lobby. A public observatory offers visitors unobstructed views of the confluence of the Yangtze and Jialing Rivers through a glass-bottom, open-air viewing deck. An evolution on Safdie Architects' 'SkyPark' developed for Marina Bay Sands in Singapore, The Crystal continues the firm's exploration into the potential of connecting buildings as a means of expanding the available public space offered in dense, urban developments—often at sky level.

Enclosed by a glass and steel structure termed a concertina—a serrated profile with an elliptical cross section—The Crystal offers visitors access to natural light, extensive views, and garden settings throughout the year. Metal panels on the west-facing concertina surfaces and glass on the east-facing surfaces afford the guests and visitors with natural light in the morning and shade from the sun in the afternoon. Situated in an earthquake zone, The Crystal 'floats' on large scale bearings on the towers to accommodate for any necessary movement.



Retail Galleria and Roof Park

The retail galleria is organized in five stories, topped by an expansive public park that overlooks historic Chaotianmen Square. The three main retail gallerias align with, and are a conceptual continuation of, the principal north-south streets of the city. Set between the towers, the gallerias create clear interior 'streets' that run through the retail podium towards the square. Each of these interior streets are generously endowed with natural light from skylights set in the podium above. Two additional gallerias run across the podium, in the east-west direction, and provide the visitors with views towards the Jialing and Yangtze Rivers. The system of gallerias, punctuated by the nodes at their intersection, provide a means for the visitors to orient themselves within the 220,000 sq.m. podium.

The public park sits adjacent to each of the residential tower's private gardens, creating a network of green and open space across the development that overlooks the Jialing and Yangtze Rivers. Public artworks in the park include major sculptures by notable Chinese artists Zheng Lu and Jiao Xing Tao.

Towers

The Raffles City Chongqing development is composed of eight towers in total, with six southern towers rising to 250m, and two northern towers extending upwards to 350m.

The positioning of towers follows the internal logic of the retail gallerias to align with the surrounding street grid and provide a sense of orientation with the city. Urban windows created by the towers provide views from the city through the development to the two rivers. The north side of the towers features a “sail” screen that

provides uniformity to the façade and filters daylight for the residents and office workers.

Five are dedicated residential towers, including one of the northern towers making it the tallest residential tower in China. The second 350m tower is office space until the level of the conservatory, where it then transitions to a hotel. The remaining towers include a dedicated office tower and one mixed-use, with office space and serviced apartments.





About Safdie Architects

Safdie Architects is an architecture and urban design studio imbued with a spirit of idealism and innovation; drawing upon a depth of experience to solve contemporary building challenges in imaginative and unexpected ways. Safdie Architects is active in a wide variety of project types, scales, and sectors, designing museums, cultural centers, libraries, housing, mixed-use developments, transportation centers, and master plans in geographically and culturally diverse places. The studio's projects around the world have become beloved resources and symbols of their communities as well as regional and national landmarks. The practice has its design headquarters in Boston with offices in Jerusalem, Toronto, Shanghai, and Singapore.

About Capital Land

CapitaLand Limited (CapitaLand) is one of Asia's largest diversified real estate groups. Headquartered in Singapore, it owns and manages a global portfolio worth \$129.1 billion as of 30 June 2019. CapitaLand's portfolio spans across diversified real estate classes which includes commercial, retail; business park, industrial and logistics; integrated development, urban development; as well as lodging and residential. With a presence across more than 200 cities in over 30 countries, the Group focuses on Singapore and China as its core markets, while it continues to expand in markets such as India, Vietnam, Australia, Europe, and the USA.

Client:	CapitaLand
Design Architect:	Safdie Architects
Executive Architect:	P&T Group International Ltd
Design Institute:	CQADI (Chongqing Architectural Design Institute)
Structural Engineer:	Arup
MEP Engineer:	Parsons Brinckerhoff
Landscape Architect:	Williams, Asselin, Ackaoui & Associates
Facade Engineer:	ALT
Signage & Wayfinding:	Pentagram + Entro
Lighting Consultant:	BPI (Brandston Partnership Inc.)
Interior Design:	CL3 Architects Ltd. (Hotel & Convention)
Interior Design:	The Buchan Group (Retail)
LEED Consultant:	Arup
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