

Exploring Java-China Fusion in Interior Design of Beauty Spa and Wellness Senopati

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ABSTRACT

The 2019 Savvy Sleeper study pinpoints Jakarta as a global center grappling with remarkably elevated stress levels, stemming from urban congestion, economic uncertainties, and socio-political challenges. A Regus survey underscores a substantial 64% Surge in stress levels in Indonesia, posing significant risks to both physical and mental health. In response, urban residents increasingly turn to healing activities, with spas emerging as vital contributors. Prasetyo et al.'s (2022) research emphasizes the favorable impact of spa experiences on stress reduction and overall well-being, stressing the need for thoughtfully designed spa facilities. The efficacy of spa experiences pivots on interior design, shaping ambiance and elevating relaxation. Recent studies underscore the importance of infusing elements of nature and cultural aesthetics into spa design to create a serene atmosphere. The fusion of Javanese and Chinese design elements, denoted as "Java-China design," presents a captivating aesthetic embraced in modern luxury interior design, embodying cultural exchange and synthesis. This essay probes the intricate interplay between Javanese and Chinese design elements in interior design, emphasizing themes of tradition, innovation, cultural identity, and globalization. Drawing inspiration from Rosemary Killmer's approach, the methodology for shaping the Java-China Fusion interior design at Yu Rirakkusu Beauty Spa ensures a thorough and effective design strategy. Dubbed *Omah TuiNa*, this design seamlessly melds Javanese elements with modern luxury aesthetics, promising guests a rejuvenating experience that extends beyond mere architectural confines. Positioned as a scholarly discourse, *Omah TuiNa* delves into the convergence of cultural narratives and the enduring quest for wellness, aiming to provide guests with a retreat-like experience within the urban landscape.

KEYWORDS

Healing
Spa
Javanese
Chinese
Rejuvenating
Experience

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INTRODUCTION

Jakarta, as a bustling metropolitan city with high levels of stress, has seen a significant rise in public interest in health and wellness facilities, particularly spas, which offer solutions to alleviate the pressures of urban life Prasetyo et al. (2022). In this fast-paced and challenging environment, Jakarta's urban population increasingly seeks spaces that support both physical and mental balance. The interior design of spas plays a crucial role in creating an atmosphere conducive to relaxation, relying on natural and cultural elements to provide a holistic, soothing experience (Eronen, 2019).

However, despite the growing popularity of spas, there is still a lack of research specifically addressing how interior design can integrate cultural elements to create a deeper, more immersive experience.

Spas and wellness facilities are often focused solely on technical aspects and physical comfort, while the cultural dimension of design is frequently overlooked. Yet, the integration of cultural elements can enrich the spa experience, offering visitors a more authentic and calming environment. One approach increasingly accepted in contemporary interior design is the fusion of design elements from different cultures, such as Javanese and Chinese design. Java, with its rich artistic heritage and philosophy, and Chinese culture, introduced through the Maritime Silk Road, share a long history of cultural exchange that has influenced architecture and art in both regions (Munandar, 2020). This blend of aesthetics not only creates visual beauty but can also enhance the emotional and spiritual experience within a spa setting.

The fusion of Javanese and Chinese elements in the Yu Rirakkusu Beauty Spa and Wellness Senopati creates a visually harmonious space, blending Javanese batik with Chinese-inspired furniture and latticework. This design approach symbolizes cultural connectivity and modern elegance. The Java-China Fusion concept reflects a cross-cultural dialogue that influences global interior design, from luxury resorts to urban residences, highlighting the appeal of rich cultural diversity.

Yu Rirakkusu Beauty and Wellness Spa in Senopati, Jakarta, offers an ideal opportunity to explore this cultural fusion in a modern context. However, to date, there has been no in-depth research on how Javanese and Chinese design elements can be integrated into spa spaces to create an environment that is not only aesthetically pleasing but also promotes physical and mental well-being. This study aims to fill this gap by exploring how the fusion of traditional Javanese and Chinese design elements can create a harmonious and calming space, while also responding to the modern urban need for holistic wellness.

Previous research has extensively discussed the importance of spa interior design in creating an environment that supports relaxation (Eronen, 2019) and the positive impact of spas on mental health (Prasetyo et al., 2022). However, no research has specifically explored how the integration of Javanese and Chinese cultural elements can be applied to spa interior design, particularly in the context of Jakarta, a city with a historical background of trade and cultural exchange between these two cultures. The novelty of this research lies in its in-depth exploration of the fusion of traditional Javanese and Chinese design elements in a modern context, as well as its impact on the spa user experience. This study will also contribute significantly to the body of literature on contemporary interior design that combines both local and global cultural elements.

The aim of this study is to explore an interior design concept that combines Javanese and Chinese cultural elements at Yu Rirakkusu Beauty Spa and Wellness Senopati, with a focus on its impact on the spa experience and the well-being of visitors. The study seeks to understand how design elements such as color, materials, layout, and cultural motifs can contribute to an environment that promotes physical and mental wellness. Furthermore, this research will identify the challenges of integrating different cultural elements into a cohesive space.

METHOD

The methodology for designing the Java-China Fusion interior at Yu Rirakkusu Beauty Spa and Wellness Senopati is inspired by Rosemary Killmer's detailed approach in *Designing Interiors*. By adopting Killmer's branching design process, the foundation is laid with a careful alignment of

the analysis phase, equivalent to the programming stage.

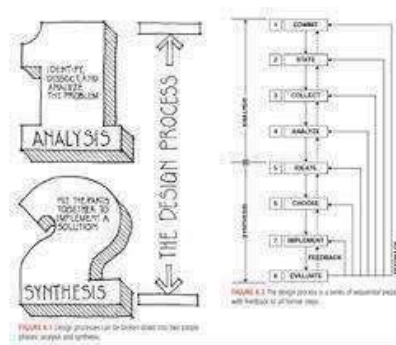


Figure 1. Design Process

(Source : *Interior Designing*, Rosemary Kilmer, 2014)

This design framework utilizes Killmer's two-phase methodology, starting with the meticulous alignment of the analysis phase, which mirrors the programming stage. It then smoothly transitions into the synthesis phase—the creative design process aimed at formulating solutions to the challenges identified in the previous analysis phase. This deliberate and structured approach ensures a comprehensive and effective design strategy.

1. Commit: Begin with thorough data collection to understand the project's objectives and design challenges.
2. State: Explore Java and Chinese cultural elements, identifying design problems through traditional symbols, color palettes, materials, and spatial arrangements.
3. Collect: Aggregate the cultural and practical information from the previous stages to form a robust foundation for analysis and ideation.
4. Analyze: Transform collected data into viable design solutions through systematic analysis, addressing specific challenges at Yu Rirakkusu Beauty Spa and Wellness Senopati.
5. Ideate: Generate and explore design concepts, materials, and color palettes, emphasizing creativity and innovative solutions.
6. Choose and Implement: Select the most viable design alternative and develop it into a refined, comprehensive final design, ensuring seamless integration for optimal results.
7. Evaluate: Continuously refine the design through iterative consultations and adjustments, aligning with operational and experiential goals, and incorporating feedback for ongoing enhancement.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The "Omah TuiNa" design concept at Yu Rirakkusu Beauty Spa and Wellness blends Javanese cultural elements with modern aesthetics to create a serene and immersive experience. "Omah," representing a Javanese home, goes beyond architecture to embody a living canvas where traditional details are subtly integrated. TuiNa, the ancient massage art focused on energy balance, is central to the spa's identity, emphasizing rejuvenation and beauty. The design merges tradition and contemporary style, crafting an elegant sanctuary where every choice contributes to a narrative of relaxation and cultural resonance. Thus, Omah TuiNa becomes a sophisticated exploration of cultural harmony and therapy.



Figure 2. Javanese Interior (*Source: Arsitag*)

In assessing the building, the designer aims to create an environment that radiates a natural, peaceful essence rich in cultural heritage. The goal is to shape an inviting, natural, and bright atmosphere that aligns with the chosen contemporary Javanese style. Given the declining popularity of traditional Javanese architectural norms—driven by society’s tendency toward novelty and a desire for fresh environments—the designer has opted for a synthesis of traditional and contemporary elements to inject a modern touch and avoid monotony.

When examining Javanese design more broadly, it becomes evident that natural stone, bamboo, rattan, and wood are frequently used materials. Traditionally built Javanese homes often feature unique flooring made from patterned tiles or plastered cement. The intentional integration of traditional and contemporary design not only refreshes the visual appeal but also addresses the challenge of maintaining interest in traditional Javanese aesthetics. This careful blend ensures a vibrant and engaging living space that balances respect for tradition with modern sensibilities.



Figure 3. Modern Luxury Chinese Interior (*Source: Pinterest*)

The essence of Javanese-Chinese design lies in the harmonious fusion of contrasting philosophies and aesthetic sensibilities. Javanese design, rooted in symbolism drawn from nature, mythology, and spirituality, emphasizes harmony with the natural environment (Septianti, 2024). Traditional elements such as open spaces, organic forms, and intricate carvings find resonance in the spa's interior.

Javanese society’s distinctiveness shines through in their deep commitment to cultivating a peaceful culture. Peace, exalted as the foundation for fostering a tranquil and stable daily life, carries not only social implications but also profound personal meaning for individuals of Javanese descent (Rianingrum, 2015). In Javanese culture, the advocacy for peaceful environments is strongly embedded in the principles of harmony and collective solidarity that are highly valued (Pujiyono, 2017).

Symbolism plays a crucial role in Javanese culture, particularly in the concept of home, which

reflects the inner thoughts and emotions of the people (Syam, 2017). Within this intricate cultural framework, terms like "grija" or "dalem" hold deep significance, often evoking the symbolism of Mount Agung as a vital source of life (Utomo, 2016). The importance of the home extends beyond its physical structure, encompassing social, cultural, and economic dimensions, highlighting the values of community and harmony that are central to Javanese society (Tarigan, 2022).

The traditional Javanese home is more than just a physical dwelling; it serves as a profound symbol representing a philosophy of life and cultural heritage (Pitana, 2024). The adornments that grace these homes offer a glimpse into the rich cultural tapestry of Java, conveying deep meanings and providing homeowners with a platform to express their unique identities (Cahyono, 2017). Within this cultural context, symbols and emblems play an essential role, not only adding decorative charm but also facilitating communication between individuals and their surroundings (Susanto, 2020). Through intricate carvings, ornamental motifs, and carefully chosen decorations, the traditional Javanese home becomes a repository of living cultural values, fostering a deep sense of connection and belonging among its inhabitants while serving as a tangible expression of cultural pride and identity (Misgiya, 2020).

Conversely, Chinese design, influenced by Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism, prioritizes balance, symmetry, and symbolic motifs (Fauzia Nurrahma Dewi, 2023). The principles of Feng Shui, optimizing harmony and energy flow, contribute to the spatial layout of the spa, adorned with symbols such as dragons, phoenixes, lotuses, and motifs of good fortune (Febra Muyusari Muyusari & Asril Asril, 2024).

In examining the historical trajectory of Chinese design, significant attention is given to how traditional customs and cultural norms influence the realm of interior aesthetics. Chinese culture, navigating between the forces of modernization and the preservation of cultural identity, serves as a central focus in scholarly discourse (Lawson, 2020). The integration of traditional Chinese elements into contemporary interior spaces has become a widespread trend, observed both in China and globally (Purnomo, 2020). Of the 35 research papers reviewed, 13 extensively explored the profound impact traditional Chinese elements have in shaping interior design methodologies, highlighting the growing recognition of cultural heritage rooted in Chinese design principles.

According to (Li, 2016), a significant shift has occurred in modern life, where there is a greater emphasis on technological advancements and the enrichment of spiritual well-being. This shift has led to a heightened focus on enhancing overall living spaces. As a result, traditional Chinese elements are now blended with contemporary interior design, giving rise to a new ambiance known as neo-Chinese, which satisfies both traditional cultural values and the practical needs of modern living spaces (Wu, 2020). To enhance the spatial and visual effects in living areas, various decorative techniques such as combining vessels, calligraphy, paintings, landscapes, and other traditional Chinese art objects are used (Liu, 2020). (Wei, 2022) explored the incorporation of Mawei patterns into interior design, highlighting their significance in terms of national identity and cultural characteristics. These patterns seamlessly merge with modern furniture and interior elements. Similarly, (Lu, 2018) emphasized the visible focus on cultural and traditional aesthetics even in contemporary Chinese interiors and public spaces. This emerging trend reflects a broader societal recognition of the importance of preserving cultural heritage while adapting to modern living standards.

In Chinese interior design and public spaces, there is a notable trend of blending traditional artistic elements, particularly through decorative artwork. (Zhou, 2010), highlighted this practice in Anhui Province, where small ornaments featuring motifs such as plants, flowers, and mythical creatures are common. These traditional elements blend effortlessly with minimalist modern designs, demonstrating their adaptability and enduring relevance. (Zhou, 2010) underscored the importance of integrating traditional Chinese culture with contemporary design, reflecting society's desire to harmonize cultural heritage with modern functionality.

(Chai, 2022), defines Oriental design as the integration of theoretical, philosophical, and practical elements from Eastern culture into Chinese interior design. (Du, 2021), notes that incorporating Oriental principles like minimalism and light techniques revitalizes modern design, combining cultural essence with contemporary innovation. (Chai, 2022) further explores sustainable

innovations in Oriental design, demonstrating a commitment to both cultural heritage and modern challenges.

Evolving Chinese aesthetics blend modern luxury with traditional elements, refining cultural heritage beyond mere ornamentation. This approach creates spaces that harmonize with traditional charm while appealing to contemporary tastes, aiming to rejuvenate traditional arts in a modern context. This approach emphasizes the distinctiveness of Chinese design amid global trends, defining its national and cultural characteristics.

The Javanese-Chinese design style, characterized by expansiveness and tall facades, combines simple geometric forms and neutral tones for a sleek look. Large windows and unconventional shapes, along with natural materials and innovative lighting, contribute to a fresh sense of contemporary luxury.

By blending modern luxury with Javanese and Chinese elements, this design avoids monotony and achieves cultural adaptation that balances tradition with modernity. The Javanese-Chinese style harmoniously combines *Batik Kawung*, a symbol of Javanese community and spirituality, with traditional Chinese window lattice motifs. This fusion not only preserves cultural richness but also deepens spiritual and ethical understanding through intricate symbolic patterns.



Figure 4. Batik Kawung (Source: Kompas, 2022)

The "three-cross-six" pattern on Chinese window lattices is created by cutting straight and diagonal grids, resulting in several equilateral triangles. Each group of triangles has six diamond-shaped petals, symbolizing state authority, the connection between heaven and earth, and the meaning of all directions. This symbol represents the origin of everything at the intersection where the heavenly and earthly realms meet.

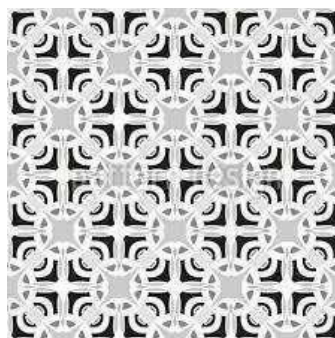


Figure 5. "three cross six" pattern (Source: Pattern Design)

The fusion of Batik Kawung and Traditional Chinese Window Lattice designs for this space reflects deep philosophical symbolism of purity, nature, and cosmic harmony, perfectly aligning with the spa's theme. This design adapts both Batik and lattice elements to create a modern, luxurious ambiance that avoids antiquity and monotony.

This innovative concept blends Javanese and Chinese cultural elements into a lavish presentation, celebrating heritage while advancing Indonesian cultural identity. It offers a sophisticated environment that contrasts with conventional designs, providing a unique, tranquil retreat from urban chaos.

The architectural aesthetic is enhanced by intricate patterns like kawung and truntum batik

from Central Java, combined with oriental lattice work. These elements serve as cultural touchstones, reflecting Javanese heritage while adding elegance and sophistication, creating a harmonious blend of tradition and modernity.

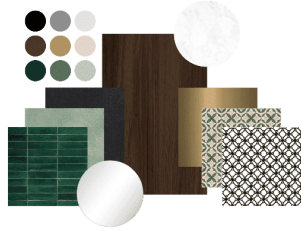


Figure 6. Material Scheme
Source : Author Document)



Figure 7. Lobby view 1
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Figure 8. Lobby view 2
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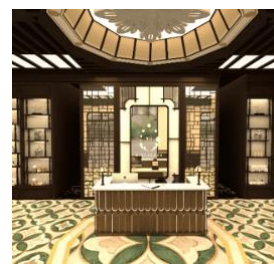


Figure 9. Lobby view 3
Source : Author Document)



Figure 10. Salon view 1
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Figure 11. Salon view 2
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Figure 12. Salon view 3
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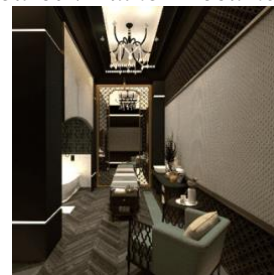


Figure 13. Private view 1
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Figure 14. Private view 2
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Figure 15. Private view 3
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CONCLUSIONS

Yu Rirakkusu, a premier beauty spa and wellness retreat, celebrates "Indonesian beauty" through traditional Javanese and Chinese treatments, using ingredients from both cultures. The spa's design preserves cultural heritage by blending modern luxury with traditional elements, enhancing the overall cultural experience for its customers. This thoughtful integration elevates the aesthetic appeal and fosters an atmosphere of peace and rejuvenation, embodying a harmonious fusion of tradition and innovation. The Javanese-Chinese design at Yu Rirakkusu exemplifies a cross-cultural dialogue in interior design, promoting tranquility and global cultural connectivity. However, this research is limited by a lack of empirical data on the design's impact on mental and emotional health, as well as the constraint of focusing on a single case study. Future research is recommended to expand the study to other spas with similar designs, exploring the long-term effects on well-being and user perceptions across various cultures.

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