


Head of Luxury

Business myopia is not something you can accuse Morgan Parker of. In defiance of economic storms, the feisty president of Taubman Asia remains buoyant about his company's plan for a 500,000-sq ft luxury mall in Macao Studio City by 2011

"One hundred luxury brands have committed to the project," says Morgan Parker, with an air of assuredness that seems to have been drained off the retail sector of late. The dashing 36-year-old is talking about his company Taubman Asia's new pet project, a 140 luxury retail haven called Mall at Studio City. And he's feeling mighty bullish about its prospects.

The Mall at Studio City is part of the US\$2.5 billion Macao Studio City, a sprawling, 1.4 million-sq ft playground in the Cotai district that will integrate a casino, world-class theatre, luxury retail, entertainment (including the world's first Playboy Mansion outside the US), and a bevy of six-star hotels such as the Ritz-Carlton, W, Marriott and The Tang Hotel by China Club and Shanghai Tang's founder David Tang. It will also be the region's first development to integrate television and film production facilities with the aforementioned lures. Once completed in three years, the entire development is set to rival the Venetian Macao in both scale and moneyed excess – think Universal Studios but quadruple the decadence and you're halfway there.

A full-page photograph of Morgan Parker, president of Taubman Asia. He is a man with long dark hair, smiling, wearing a dark pinstriped suit, a white shirt, and a light green tie. He is standing on a balcony with a metal railing. The railing has the name 'Taubman' engraved on it. In the background, a city skyline is visible at night with some lights on. The text of the article is overlaid on the left side of the image.

Beneath Taubman Asia president Morgan Parker's dapper surfer exterior lies a sharp retail mind driving the development of two of Asia's largest shopping malls, Macao's Mall at Studio City and Seoul's Songdo Shopping Centre

With The Mall at Studio City, the young president of Taubman Asia knows that his company's share in the project is a crucial element of the development's mix. But far from feeling the pressure, he is confident and optimistic, and doesn't see why the retail arm shouldn't take off.

"Macau represents the best portal to China. A large percentage of luxury sales are made by mainland Chinese in Hong Kong. Mainland Chinese are the best informed shoppers. Come 2015, the Chinese consumer will be the largest consumer group in the world," Morgan reasons. And looking at the list of flagships lined up so far from A. Lange & Söhne and Berluti, to Ermenegildo Zegna and Van Cleef & Arpels, with more brands expected to be announced throughout the year, there is no reason not to share his optimism.



Opening in 2011, Macao Studio City features a retail-centric design, making The Mall at Studio City the showpiece of the project. Its prime location adjoining the immigration centre, light rail and its mid-position on Cotai will make the mall Asia's most luxurious shopping centre

POWER BROKER

With his slightly tousled medium length hairstyle and five o'clock stubble, and a sharp ensemble of white shirt, green tie and pressed trousers, Morgan looks like an off-duty surf celebrity at a red carpet premier. But get past the 36-year-old's laddish good looks and one finds a strategic mind who understands the intricacies of a shopping mall like the back of his hand.

Leading the Asian arm of Taubman Centres, a global leader in the shopping centre industry, Morgan is tasked with acquiring, managing and developing lucrative retail real estate projects in Asia. Having been in Hong Kong since 2005 to start Taubman Asia, the Brisbane native now oversees the company's operations in three offices with 30 employees across Asia. That Taubman Asia has been on a fast track under his charge shouldn't come as a big surprise.

His professional CV is as impressive as they come. Prior to joining Taubman Asia, he was the former head of Morgan Stanley Real Estate Fund's retail management and operations business in Asia. Before that, he worked as an executive with leading Australian corporate firms like Lend Lease and Macquarie Bank in Asia, where he was responsible for a variety of real estate investment, development, management and advisory initiatives, engaging different markets in Asia, including China, Korea, Japan, Taiwan, Singapore and Indonesia.

"Most of my life has been in real estate and investment banking," says the law degree holder who spent more than 13 years in Asia developing real estate projects. "With law, you're just pushing papers. I wanted to be doing the deals, not the guy documenting the deal. I came to Taubman Asia because I was really in love with retail and with the sexiness of retail. Shopping is the leisure activity of the 21st century."

Retail Track

Morgan's brushes with retail are by no means pedestrian. He was responsible for the development of a 500,000 sq ft shopping mall at the base of Taipei 101 ("This project taught me the complexities and compromises of mixed-use projects, particularly ones that involve retail") and was responsible for creating a new investment and management capability in retail at Morgan Stanley.



The first floor will be home to a large department store



Lotus Bridge connecting to The Mall at Studio City - Macao. Studio City is strategically located next to the Lotus Bridge immigration checkpoint, linking the complex directly to Zhuhai's Hengqin Island

PICTURES COURTESY OF TAUBMAN ASIA

OFFICE LUXURY

Offices of Taubman Asia Woods Bagot



Every project is a new challenge, and every client has their own unique needs. The design team at Woods Bagot worked closely with the client to create a space that would be as comfortable as it is functional. The project involved a complete renovation of the office space, including the reception area, lounge, and conference rooms. The design team worked closely with the client to create a space that would be as comfortable as it is functional. The project involved a complete renovation of the office space, including the reception area, lounge, and conference rooms.

The use of bold materials, such as black, white, and red, adds a modern touch to the office environment. The design team worked closely with the client to create a space that would be as comfortable as it is functional. The project involved a complete renovation of the office space, including the reception area, lounge, and conference rooms.

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