



# Chinese Houses of Southeast Asia: The Eclectic Architecture of Sojourners and Settlers

*Ronald G. Knapp*

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Over a period of several years, noted Chinese cultural historian Ronald G. Knapp traveled throughout Southeast Asia, searching out homes built by the first generations of successful Chinese settlers during the late eighteenth to the early twentieth century. In *Chinese Houses of Southeast Asia*, Knapp presents an eye-opening account of how Chinese migration into Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam spawned a unique hybrid architectural style that combined Chinese, European, and local influences.

Many of these overseas Chinese heritage homes are disappearing, but Knapp—along with renowned photographer A. Chester Ong—visited a number of the shophouses, bungalows, villas, and mansions that remain.

More than three dozen of these elegant residences form the core of this book, and through essays, historic photographs, paintings, and line drawings, Knapp draws an illuminating portrait of each residence along with background information about the families who built and lived in them. These profiles reveal the entrepreneurial spirit of the Chinese as well as their social and economic circumstances. A stunning marriage of scholarship and photography, *Chinese Houses of Southeast Asia* explores a little known branch of Chinese architecture and provides a new perspective on Chinese migration, settlement, and identity in Southeast Asia.

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