

DESIGN DESTINATIONS

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FIVE Palm Jumeirah

This luxurious hotel exudes a secluded “beachside village” ambience with an inside-outside aesthetic and thoughtful design details that inspire complete relaxation

TEXT BY ELEANOR JOSLIN

Thanks to an idyllic cove-like location at the base of the Palm Island’s trunk and clever, inclusive architecture, the sprawling resort of FIVE Palm Jumeirah Dubai is like a private five-star village, where guests are immersed in the most blissful holiday bubble as soon as they step through its mesmerising glass cube entrance.

Named after its parent company, FIVE Holdings, the hotel is the first of the real estate company’s hospitality portfolio, with its second hotel, FIVE Jumeirah Village Dubai under construction.

Sixteen floors doesn’t sound high in the UAE, but FIVE Palm Jumeirah Dubai is designed laterally in a striking amphitheatre style, with 477 rooms and suites, including 221 signature penthouse-style apartments located within the wings of the hotel which hug the beachfront. It’s this design, creating the impression of a private bay with stunning views of the Dubai Marina skyline and the calm Arabian Gulf, that makes you feel like you’re a world away from the bustle of the city.

‘We decided not to use any curvature but only strong lines and angles in the architecture; this simple concept is more timeless,’ says Nabil Akiki, CEO of real estate development at FIVE Holdings, who played a lead role in conceptualising the design of the hotel. ‘In addition, the elevation is not very decorated; we don’t believe in such embellishment. The huge void at the entrance, with the “jewellery” of the cube in the middle is a strong enough statement.’

Indeed it is, and the capacious design and striking installation inside is an Instagrammers delight as they enter the hotel. The large cube of glass houses intertwining double helixes made from teak wood, symbolic of DNA, with echoes of traditional Islamic architecture. Above the cube a void dominates, topped by the hotel’s ballroom.

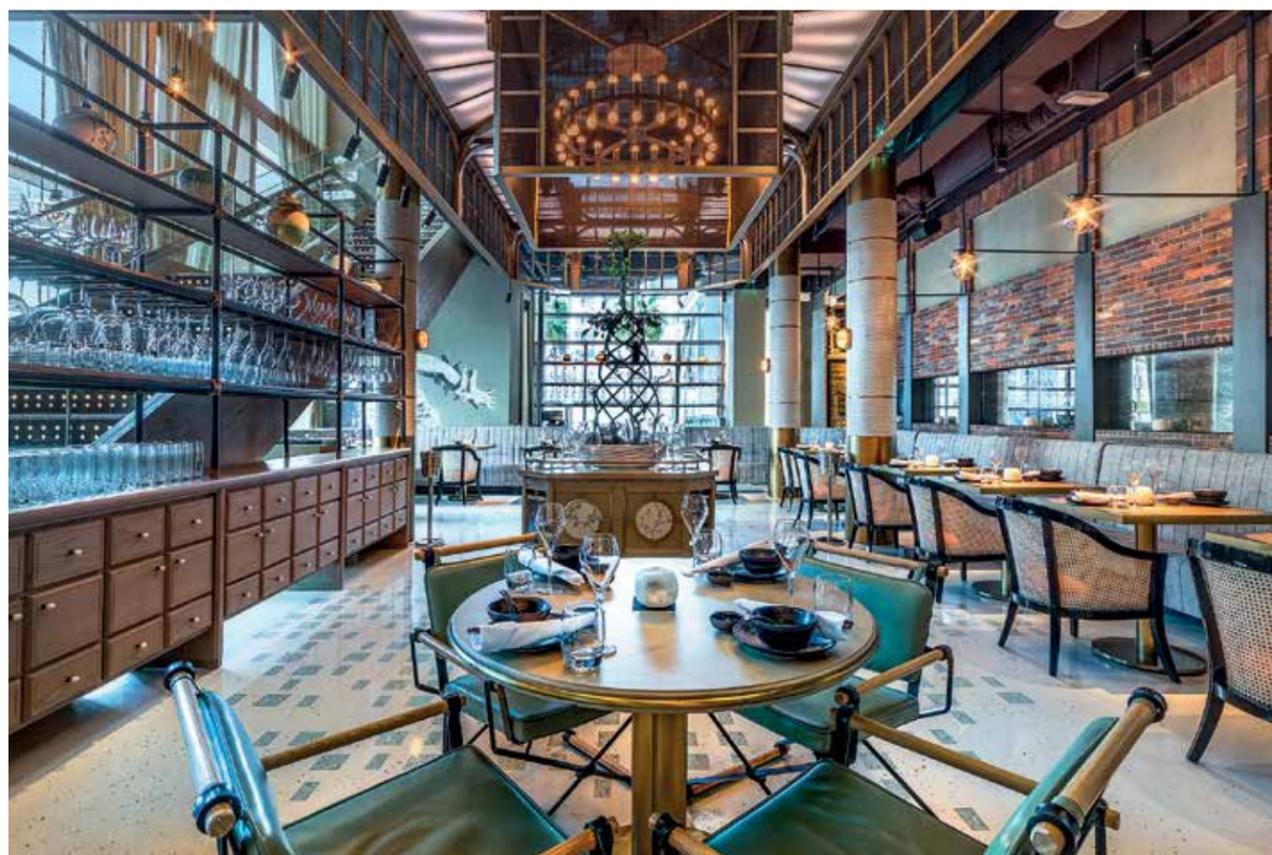
While space and volume were important factors in the hotel’s architecture, more so was the inside-outside feeling, seen in both the façade and interior design. “We believe strongly in experiencing the inside out, and the outside in,” adds Nabil. “The design philosophy we had focused on integrating the two spaces, inside and outside, seamlessly and making them one space.”

This is evident throughout the hotel: the FIVE Residences along the wings, comprising of two-, three- and four-bedroom penthouses, boast spacious terraces and private swimming pools with views across the sea; the Delisserie café features Moroccan-inspired floor tiles that spread from inside the deli, across the public corridor, and outside over the terrace; the dominance of glass throughout the hotel constantly draws the eye outwards to the sea; likewise, the splashes of teal in the lobby and bedrooms bring in hints of the ocean.

Designed by Yabu Pushelberg and Nao Taniyama & Associates, the interiors feature a serene palette of neutral colours to aid relaxation and the inside-outside ambience. Natural materials abound, as does the sense of utmost luxury, applied in a ▶

Opposite The exquisite lobby exudes opulence, with marble reception desks flanked by gold screens and floor-to-ceiling glossy teal doorways. Note the marble on the floor complements the guest bathrooms. **Below** FIVE Holdings worked closely with P&T Architects and Engineers to create a memorable hotel with a striking façade.





Above Maiden Shanghai is modelled on the concept of a youthful girl-about-town, with its multiple dining and DJ areas designed in an open, urban style. **Top** With its terracotta arches and views outside, Quattro Passi captures an Italian piazza, guided by the restaurant's Michelin-starred Italian founder, chef Antonio Mellino.



Clockwise from top The guest suites are designed in calm colours and natural materials laid in geometric patterns. In the guest bathrooms, diamond-shaped pieces of grey Italian and Greek marble are laid out in 10 different configurations, including staggered cubes that reflect the hotel's architecture. The glass cube at the entrance features DNA-style helixes and looks through to the 60-metre swimming pool and the beach beyond.

contemporary design aesthetic. The bedroom suites feature hexagons of natural stone on the floor and a three-dimensional wall feature behind the bed, made from hexagons of wood. There's a hint of Art Deco, with a custom-made lacquered teal bar and round brushed-bronze mirrors and pendant lights. You can feel the authenticity of the materials around you – the stone is cool underfoot, you'll need the hotel slippers! – and the finishes are the best you'll see in Dubai.

The en-suite bathrooms are a stunning display of design and artistry, with a heavy, dark wood door sliding back to reveal a cocoon of grey diamond-shaped marble pieces applied in geometric compositions that change as you look at them.

The spa area continues the geometrical design aesthetic. A beautiful marble staircase sweeps like an ocean wave up to a concrete garden with large cubes that house private treatment rooms; triangles – flying over the walls of each cube like a flock of birds – dapple the treatment rooms with atmospheric shadows, while in the evening they cast light outwards, highlighting the graceful design.

No detail has been overlooked or skimmed on – even the towel racks in the gym are inset with onyx. If you want a luxurious staycation, you won't find better; FIVE really does live up to – and exceeds – its name in terms of rating.

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