

Interiors

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Designers of the year

The 2010 annual review



Cutting edge

Kitchen suppliers to know



Heimtextil Frankfurt

Onwards and upwards



Bright prospects

The HongKong Lighting Fair Autumn edition



WA International

Responses from: Amy Careless,
business development manager
www.wa-international.com

Established: 1993
Number of staff: 45

Principals: Claire Craig, design director

Offices: We have a representative office in London, with all our design work being undertaken in our Dubai Studio.

Projects of note

We designed the Al Maha Desert Resort, which was the centre of Dubai's heritage and conservation efforts. More recently, we completed The Address's flagship hotel in Downtown Dubai, which has won multiple awards.

Recent projects

The One & Only on Palm Jumeirah is our latest project. Earlier this year, we also finished a themed Arabic hotel in the middle of the desert on an old camel trail, the Tilal Liwa Hotel in addition to the more contemporary Sofitel Dubai Jumeirah Beach, the Mövenpick Hotel Jumeirah Beach and the Ibis & Suite hotels next to Mall of the Emirates, Dubai.

Sumptuous: Bath in the couple suite, One & Only, The Palm



Contextual: Al Badiya restaurant at Tilal Liwa hotel, Abu Dhabi, and the lobby of One & Only, The Palm (facing page)



We have been luckier than most interior firms in this region throughout the recession. This year we have opened five, very unique hotels, which is just a staggering number



Future plans

Next year, Abu Dhabi will open its doors to a new Sofitel hotel. We have also just broken ground in Riyadh for the capital's third tallest tower – an exclusive Kempinski Hotel. We're also working on Starwood's Luxury Collection Hotel in Ajman, and the JW Marriott in Baku, Azerbaijan – weekend 'getaway' destinations all.

Design approach

We believe that to be successful, we need to stay loyal to the client's brief and meet the operator's requirements of functionality, yet at the same time create an interior that meets the highest international standards, whilst providing a unique and memorable experience for the guest.

Business philosophy

We believe that we need to precisely interpret our clients' individual needs at the outset, and appreciate that every project



presents an opportunity to create a uniquely distinctive and memorable experience.

Most proud of...

It's very hard to choose! Certainly there are some projects in our portfolio which have gained international acclaim, which we do very much pride ourselves on, however every project is unique – and each was a labour of love for our team – as such, we really are proud of all our work!

Design inspiration

One of the things that is always noted and respected with our projects is that no two look the same – we don't have a "house-style" – instead we strive to create one-of-a-kind interiors, each and every time.

We employ a team of interior designers specifically chosen from around the world for their experience – all



of whom bring with them their own ethnic creativity. This gives us an inherent advantage when it comes to meeting the requirements and aspirations of our clients. Our designers also love to travel – in so doing, either consciously or subconsciously, they collect new ideas, finishes and materials that inspire our future designs.

The ideal client is...

A client with a great brief that challenges our creative abilities!

Highs and lows of 2010

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Looking ahead

The opportunity to continue to design distinctive hotels and resorts.

One project you wish you'd designed

Probably The Chedi in Muscat – it's well proportioned and the interior and exterior architecture flows effortlessly.

Love the Middle East because...

This region has access to some tremendously skilled craftsmen: be it intricate plaster works, specialist carved joinery... these are trades that are not employed as much in the West, primarily because of price. And although we obviously still have budgets to adhere to here, it can often feel like our imagination is our only limitation!

Latest work: One & Only, The Palm's Zest restaurant (right), standard king room and bath (below)

