

# Design

Middle East

Interiors and Architecture from the Gulf,  
Levant and Beyond

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**SPECIAL EDITION**  
FEBRUARY 2021

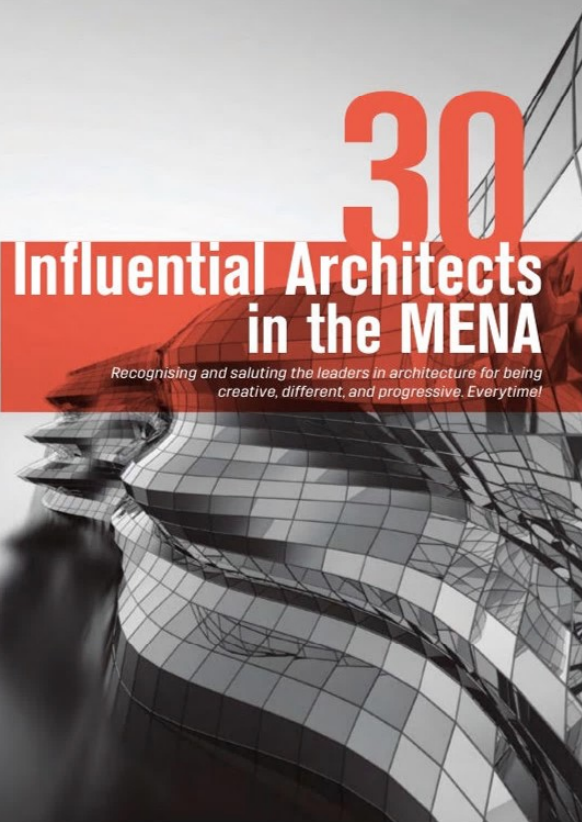
**THE  
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OF  
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and the  
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# 30

## Influential Architects in the MENA

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# ART DECO LUXURY

## SOFITEL DUBAI THE OBELISK

WHEN FRENCH ART DE VIVRE MEETS ANCIENT EGYPTIAN HERITAGE  
IN THE HEART OF DUBAI

WORDS | CHANTAL SACRE

**I**nspired by the Luxor Obelisk in Place de La Concorde in Paris, Sofitel Dubai The Obelisk emerges from the lifestyle destination of WAFI at the heart of Dubai, blending a touch of French decadence and Egyptian heritage with the very best of the local UAE culture. In Ancient Egypt, an Obelisk was a prominent monument, built to commemorate people, events or even to honor the gods. Today, Sofitel celebrates the iconic design and architecture of an Obelisk crowned with a gold pyramidion, standing out and up in Dubai's skyline. A 230-meter property welcoming people to the French *Art de Vivre!*



**GUESTS ARE IMMEDIATELY TRANSPORTED TO THE VALLEY OF THE KINGS AND QUEENS IN LUXOR, AS THEY'RE WELCOMED INTO THE STRIKING 18 METER-HIGH LOBBY.**

Conceived by Arkiteknik International Consulting Engineers under the direction of developer MKM Commercial Holdings LLC, with interiors designed by WA International, The Obelisk is an architectural masterpiece where timeless Egyptian symbols elegantly embrace Art Deco lines and curves, orchestrated by the elegant touch of French sophistication. Rich colors, bold geometry, glamour and luxury are *au rendez-vous* at Sofitel Dubai The Obelisk.

Visitors experience a grand arrival upon entering Sofitel Dubai The Obelisk as they walk through the magnificent doors of a grand Pylon – the colossal gateway of an Egyptian temple. Through the striking architecture and lavish interiors, grandeur runs throughout: Passing mounted statues of Anubis, the Egyptian god of mummification and the afterlife, and guided by the ceramic flooring showcasing the Nile, guests are immediately transported to the Valley of the Kings and Queens in Luxor, Egypt, as they're welcomed into the striking 18 meter-high lobby. 33

Zoom out

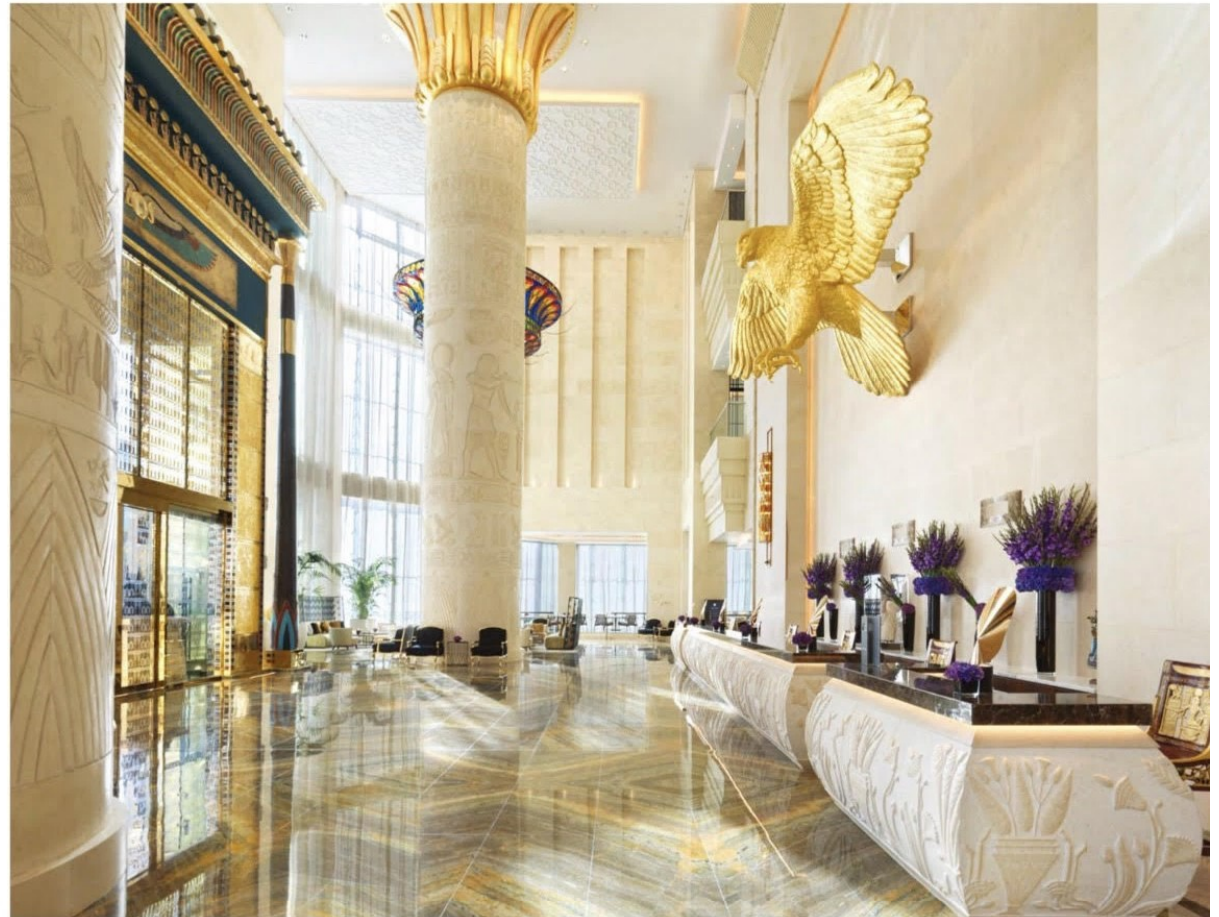
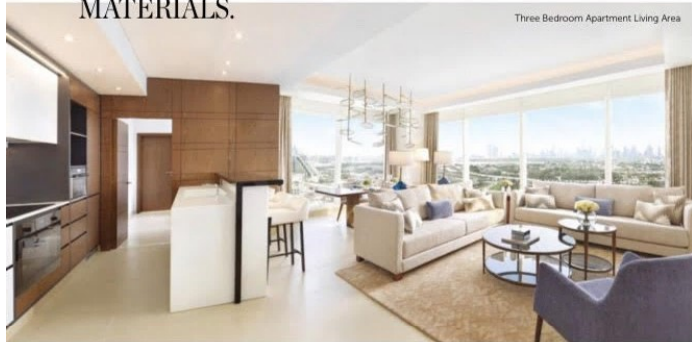
Majestic pillars are engraved with hieroglyphics and adorned with swathes of gold, and a monumental 9×4 meter golden falcon, timeless symbol of "Horus" the Egyptian god of sky and national bird of the UAE, overlooks the entire area. On each side of the golden gate, the glamour and elegance of the Tiffany inspired chandeliers overwhelm the eyes. Handcrafted in Egypt and weighing three-tons each, the Nile lotus-shaped chandeliers are an impressive blend of French design and Egyptian symbolism.

**GUESTROOMS AND SUITES ARE MODERN AND SPACIOUS, DRESSED IN NEUTRAL TONES AND COMPLEMENTED BY ART DECO LINES AND CONTRASTING MATERIALS.**

French marble, well-known for its striking colours and patterns giving it the magnitude which made it so popular for use in places such as the Palace of Versailles and the Georges V hotel in Paris, is blended in Art Deco throughout the property. 498 luxury guestrooms and suites and 97 furnished and serviced residences with swirl patterned floors and floor-to-ceiling windows give more visual access to the beauty outside with an abundance of natural light. Depicting ancient Egyptians' daily life, carved walls spanning from the eighth to the 17th floor can be seen from the corridors.

Guestrooms and suites are modern and spacious, dressed in neutral tones and complemented by Art Deco lines and contrasting materials. The touch of French elegance is found in every room and suite with Lanvin toiletries and Hermes amenities.

Among the highlights are three outstanding and unparalleled suites designed by award-winning firm Duccio Grassi Architects on floors 47, 48 and 49: The Imperial Suite, the Presidential Suite "Cleopatra" and Ambassador Suite "Napoleon" are the height of French luxury and refinement. The presidential suite has a private terrace located on the 48th floor, offering spectacular views of Dubai and ideal for hosting exclusive events. »



**BRASSERIE BOULUD**

Blending Art Deco and Modern design with bright royal colors of white, black, gold and burgundy, Brasserie Boulud offers a true French Brasserie experience. In true Art Deco fashion, a soaring mirrored ceiling accentuated by modern chandeliers adds to the overall air of elegance. Incomplete patterns on the marble floor of the brasserie reflect the flooring seen in the historic temples of Luxor. Designed by celebrity chef Daniel Boulud and inspired by the French art de vivre, the restaurant offers French contemporary cuisine, rooted in tradition. The venue represents Chef Daniel Boulud's casual approach to fine dining.

**TAIKO**

From Amsterdam to Dubai, Taiko offers sensational experience of award-winning Asian cuisine, flavors and textures from across Asia. Curated by Atelier EPJ, the darker Asian style interiors with red touches take patrons on a journey into the vernacular and lore of Asian culture. Revolving around a char-fired robata grill, the show-kitchen highlights the dining experience, and a 45 degrees angled sushi stages the drama of food preparation. Decorated in cherry blossoms in spring, lush greens during summer and glowing red acorn in autumn, the center of the dining area is dominated by an enchanted 'tree' metaphorically representing the significance of the four seasons - The tree changes every year as a part of the Taiko New Year celebration.



Taiko Dubai

**THE NINE**

A symbol of the nine lives of an Egyptian cat, The Nine gastropub is an invitation to explore Ancient Egypt while enjoying masterfully created cocktails and classic English culinary highlights. With an unparalleled architecture and a sensual feline twist, entering The Nine is like travelling in time, discovering the story of the goddess Bastet - the ancient Egyptian goddess of protection and the three pyramids of Giza; Menkaure, Khafre and the Great Pyramid of Khufu symbolised in the three inverted triangles hanging from the ceiling at the bar area.



The Nine Gastropub

**BIJOU PATISserie**

A *bijou* in the heart of the hotel lobby, the patisserie is a paradise of sweet indulgence. Taking center stage, a prominent marble counter brims with an array of delicate pastries and countless delicious treats. With bold geometric forms visible on the ceiling, an overall ivory colour palette, curving furniture and smooth polished surfaces, the Art Deco theme makes it perfect for an afternoon *gouter*.

**LA VERANDA**

La Veranda is the perfect space for parties, social gatherings, pre or post function area and more. Accommodating up to 150 people in an indoor alfresco experience, a skylight ceiling changes the mood lighting according to the hours of the day, providing guests the effect of sitting on an outdoor garden terrace in the open azure sky with streaks of cloud trailing across.

**SOLEIL POOL & LOUNGE**

Inspired by the waters of the Mediterranean, Soleil Pool & Lounge is an idyllic haven equipped with a sunken pool bar, chic private cabanas and a modern French patio. This luxurious space offers guests the full French Riviera experience with neutral and nautical tones running through the décor. With white finishes and poolside luxury, Soleil Pool & Lounge offers guests the opportunity to immerse themselves in French luxury and *joie de vivre*. With the choice between the standard cabana and the VIP cabana, each will transport guests to a different destination, from Santorini in Greece and Capri in Italy, to St Tropez in France and Ibiza in Spain. The VIP state-of-the-art and fully furnished cabanas are fitted with privacy curtains, showers as well as a Jacuzzi. ■

