



H2R DESIGN

PRESS, MEDIA,
& AWARDS

ABOUT H2R DESIGN

H2R is a young, dynamic London/Dubai based design firm founded by Hasan and Husain Roomi; a pair of young dynamic UK born brothers with Middle Eastern background, along with their partner Jacqui Shaddock, who've been designing some of the most renowned commercial and hospitality spaces across continents.

Supported by a design team with broad global experience, H2R maintains a diverse commercial portfolio with a primary focus in the hospitality sector. As the various disciplines of design often overlap and integrate, H2R endeavors to offer a total concept; this includes branding and identity design, bespoke furniture and fitting design, salvaging and appropriation and even sourcing site locations. The result is unique and customized spaces that respond to client briefs.

With projects such as Tom & Serg, The Sum of Us, Paperfig, Leopolds of London, GIA, Symphony, TWO at Symphony, Parkers, Candylicious, Hardee's and Alamein Hotel in Egypt, in addition to a wide spectrum of others, H2R Design is now on the global design map.

Clients include Emaar Hospitality Group, Emaar Malls, Roya International, Al Abbar Enterprises, Mohamed Al Hilal Group, Pizza Express, Foodsters and many more.

H2R Design don't just design incredible commercial spaces, they design destinations.

STUDIO

PROJECTS

AWARDS

SHORTLISTED

STUDIO

You are Here : [Brief](#) > [Business](#) > [Design](#) > [Dubai](#) > [H2R](#) > [Interior](#) > [Interior Design](#) > [Urban Design](#) > [Urban Dubai](#) > [Urban Regeneration](#) > [Design](#) > [Dubai](#) > [H2R](#) > [Interior](#) > [Interior Design](#) > [Urban Design](#) > [Urban Dubai](#) > [Urban Regeneration](#) > [H2R: Design for an urban life](#)

H2R: Design for an urban life

The design team bringing urban cool to the city



©ITP Images

08

December
2015

Kate Hazell

f t @ G

Breaking one of the sacred rules of starting any business – never involve family, you would expect Dubai-based design firm [H2R](#) to crash and burn. Co-founded by Hasan and Husain Roomi, along with their business partner Jacqui Shaddock, the Iraqi brothers may occasionally not see eye-to-eye on a project's aesthetics, but that doesn't stand in the way of them creating some of the city's coolest design spaces. Have you been to [Tom & Serg](#)? Or it's spin off cafe, [The Sum of Us](#)? What about [Clinton St Bakery](#)? All these spaces were designed by H2R.

The design squad, who all met and used to work together in London before relocating to Dubai at the beginning of this year, also work on branding, identity design, bespoke furniture, fittings, salvaging, appropriations, artist collaborations, operational concept drivers and architectural consultancy, bringing some much-needed cool to the city.

Esquire sat down with the two brothers to chat about giving Dubai a much-needed urban edge.



Hasain and Hasan Roomi with their business partner, Jacqui Shaddock

Esquire: It must be tough running a business with a close family member?

Hasan: The biggest obstacle is also a very positive thing. We know each other inside out, so when things go well, we are on the same page and fuel each other's creative passion. On the flipside, we know each other inside out, so there's no polite holding back of opinions around here. We're lucky Jacqui, our third (unrelated) partner, can help balance out the highs and lows, and cast a deciding vote when needed!

ESQ: Where do you get your inspiration from?

Hasain: The client brief, the essence of the brand, the innate personality of the space, and the conceptual story all combine to inspire our designs. We have a moto, 'It's not where you take things from; it's where you take them to'. To create spaces with influence and soul, spaces with meaning and depth, it is not just about creating 'pretty' spaces but functional, operational, essential and collaborative ones.

ESQ: Was there a defining moment in your lives that made you want to become designers?

Hasan: For us, the process of developing into designers wasn't a definitive one, it was never a light bulb moment. An eager interest in automotive design from a very young age encouraged us to pursue this field. We have always been enthusiastic of anything related to design. We constantly evolve in our wanting to create spaces for people to dine in, drink, socialize, work and shop.

ESQ: What are the toughest challenges you face when creating these kind of spaces in Dubai?

Hasain: As mentioned earlier, we don't like to tackle a project by thinking of the best

way to make the space look beautiful. We like to make sure everything we think of, when developing our designs, adds value, whether it is to trigger an emotion, create a mood, or allow some kind of interaction between the users and space.

Hasan: It's not always easy to induce soul and authenticity into projects, especially in the Middle East, with its urban landscape and limited material supplies. However, we have found that honesty is the best approach to any design project.



The Sum of Us cafe, designed by H2R

ESQ: Do you approach each space differently?

Husain: Yes, we definitely do approach each space differently. The first factor we look at differently would be the concept and offering, secondly the client, the demographic, their targets and goals, and thirdly, the context and surroundings of the space.

ESQ: If you could be another designer for a day, who would it be?

Hasan: Sometimes it's tricky to agree on one thing since we can have different opinions, but it's never a challenge. In the studio, we are all Apple obsessed people, so we would love to trade places with Sir Jony Ive (maybe even slightly longer than a day). Although product design is quite different from what we do on a daily basis, the attention to detail and considered human interface in his products are beautiful things. He once said, 'the best ideas start as conversations', which is exactly what we believe!

ESQ: How would you advise someone who wants to start a design career in Dubai?

Husain: There are huge benefits to being a designer in Dubai. It's a global hub and a cultural melting pot – it's a very exciting place to be right now. However, Dubai only showcases a small amount of what the world has to offer. Our advice would be: travel, explore, be discerning, trust your instincts, and try to understand the conceptual and artistic design processes as well as the technical ones. They are not always as highly valued but are truly invaluable.

ESQ: Looking back at your career's starting point, would you change anything?

Hasan: We believe it's not about where you've been but where you're going. Our starting point has brought us to where we are now, so we wouldn't change a thing except maybe the few times we've turned up at meetings accidentally wearing matching shirts. That was embarrassing.



Hasan and Husain in their design studio in Dubai's industrial Al Quoz

ESQ: How do you define success and have you reached that point yet?

Husain: If success is defined by loving what you do then we are already there and are grateful for it every day. Although if success is defined by having time to breathe in a busy week, we're still working on that one!

ESQ: How do you split your work between Dubai and Londo?

Hasan: We are a very small team, and as such, have the need, and privilege, of being very selective with our projects. We split our time between London and Dubai when our projects and clients need us. We wish we were capable of escaping Dubai's summer heat!

ESQ: What was the first space you've designed and has that affected the way you approach your other spaces?

Husain: Our first project as a complete team (Hasan, Husain & Jacqui) was a small Italian boutique in Knightsbridge, London. There was no budget, ridiculous time-frames, and sky-high stress levels, but, the satisfaction of seeing our ideas come to life had us hooked. The only lingering effect of this experience is we realised at the time was we make a great team and love challenges. We knew we were on the right track when H2R came to life!

ESQ: Anything you're dying to do in the future?

Hasan: There is no specific aesthetic we would like to use in the future, but as we grow and learn, we are more and more interested in our social responsibilities as designers

ESQ: Anything you're dying to do in the future?

Hasan: There is no specific aesthetic we would like to use in the future, but as we grow and learn, we are more and more interested in our social responsibilities as designers – how the materials and construction we use affects, not only the direct aesthetic experience of that venue, but also what it says about our attitude in the world we live in. We would love to involve more renewable, reclaimed, and environmentally respectful materials and processes as we move towards a more sustainable (but still beautifully designed) future.

ESQ: What makes you get out of bed in the morning?

Husain: The thought of new ideas, inspiring clients and fun projects get us out of bed in the morning.

Hasan: Coffee keeps us going. Deadlines get us going even faster (often also fuelled by coffee, which gives you more motivation). But seriously, we love what we do, and feel lucky to get to do it each day, that's enough motivation for us.

ESQ: What are your ultimate goals for the future?

Husain: Aside from world domination, our ultimate goal is to keep creating amazing spaces and continue being inspired by our work and team.

DOWNTOWN DESIGN

EXPLORING THE WORLD OF RESTAURANT DESIGN WITH H2R DESIGN



25-28 OCTOBER
2016 DUBAI

[Home](#) > [News](#) > [Industry News](#) > [2016](#) > [06](#) > Exploring the world of Restaurant Design with H2R

EXPLORING THE WORLD OF RESTAURANT DESIGN WITH H2R

Downtown.Design



In a two-part series Downtown Design speaks to top restaurant design firms about designing for the food and beverage industry.

This week we are in conversation with H2R, a London & Dubai based design studio that designs destinations, environments, brands and experiences.

Established by Husain and Hasan Roomi and run along with their partner Jacqui Shaddock, H2R is a growing team of driven and inspired individuals who come with broad global experience. With a passion for creating exciting spaces for people the team live, love and breathe design.

H2R designs destinations, environments, bespoke furniture and fittings, brand identity and experiences, with a primary focus on the hospitality and retail sectors.



What best describes your style and approach to design?

We don't define ourselves with a particular style but have a well-rounded approach to all of our projects. The inspiration for all our designs starts with the client brief, the essence of the brand, the innate personality of the space, and the conceptual story all combine to inspire our designs: to create spaces with influence and soul, spaces with meaning and depth. It's not just about creating "pretty" spaces but functional, operational, essential and collaborative.

Tell us a little bit about the first food and beverage project you designed in Dubai and what you learnt from it

The first food and beverage we designed in Dubai was [Tom & Serge](#) in Al Quoz. [Tom & Serg](#) represents a culinary meeting of minds bringing the spirit of Melbourne's urban laneway culture to the residents of Dubai. The clients brief was to create a space that reflected their passion for food, their creativity, and their commitment to quality while expressing a bit of the rebellious, anti-establishment attitude that keeps the [Tom & Serge](#) experience surprising, fun and a bit cheeky. Being our first project in Dubai, we learnt a lot

about approval and construction processes in the Middle East, which perhaps shuffled some of our priorities around slightly during our design process - some of the things we took for granted in London, like the availability of beautiful textured reclaimed materials, were a bit more challenging here, so we make sure to dedicate the time early on to sourcing and ensuring the final products are fit for the concept.



The Middle East is seeing a rise in the culture of beautifully designed restaurants serving great food, how do you think good design heightens the gastronomical experience?

We believe that good design heightens every experience. With media (social and otherwise) the way it is, people have generally already seen images of a restaurant's space and branding before they arrive. The environment is the first thing they see on arrival -it creates the first point of communication for the brand story, and the design on the restaurant effects all of our senses: sight (lighting, finishes); sound (acoustic treatments); smell (openness of kitchen, mechanical services); and touch (seating comfort, cutlery, textures). If the story is consistent and well developed, the gastronomic side of the concept then adds the next layer, resulting in the clarity of story that an amazing restaurant experience needs.

What design challenges are exclusive to food and beverage, and hospitality design?

Unassumingly, hospitality design requires an in depth understanding of social psychology! It requires an ability to get inside the heads of the multiple user types that need to feel comfortable in a venue. It also involves designing spaces that can have very different moods and functions from day to day, and even throughout the course of one day.



Please tell us about one of your most challenging projects and why?

It's difficult to be too specific about the challenges of a project - with [The Artisan](#) we had such a wonderful client and a beautiful concept to work with, but there were a few tricky base build MEP (Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing) and services issues that reared their head far too late in the design process. This led to a few stressful moments on site, and some complete re-designs. Also, the level of detail involved in a concept as refined as an [Enoteca Pinchiorri](#) restaurant meant the knock on effect of minor changes was extreme, and all needed to be coordinated vigorously! We were lucky to be working with fantastic contractors and MEP designers, so we all survived and are in love with the result!

What do you think is the future of restaurant and bar design? What trends do you see emerging?

We are at a time where there is no one valid aesthetic direction. There are millions of different trends we could discuss, all of them perfectly acceptable, that could become hugely successful venues, which is why following 'trends' in aiming for success can be very misleading.

Consumers are more discerning now, and the only thing that really matters is the seamless execution of a good idea. A strong, well defined story, and authenticity in the delivery of that story. The narrative of a venue's concept has to feel real, it can't be forced, and everything must hang off the concept naturally.

So the future of restaurant and bar design sees us (the interior and branding professionals), working far more closely with the chefs, the managers, the musicians, and anyone else who has any kind of impact on the overall experience.



Which city in the world would you see as the best for emerging restaurant/hospitality design?

Right now, Dubai is the place to be! We are in the centre of the well-travelled world. We are designing for a client and end user that has seen the world (and usually gets back to see it often), so we need to be on our game!

What would be your dream project/commission?

We would have loved to have collaborated with [Zaha Hadid](#) on a project love to design a cultural landmark!



What advice would you give to budding restaurant/hospitality designers?

Don't focus on the architectural design without considering the whole user experience. For a venue to be successful, all the elements of the concept need to be fundamentally linked and working together. Trust your instincts, but don't be too stubborn to challenge your own thinking.

To read more news from Downtown Design click [here](#)

To learn more about H2R click [here](#)

“This eventually meant we didn’t have time to contemplate working full time for anyone else, and so H2R as a business just seemed to happen organically,” explains Hasan.

Advertisement

“The brother dynamic is definitely a huge advantage to us on the communication front, although we’d be lying if we said it was always smooth sailing. Depending on who you ask, we each take care of everything!”

Hasan adds that at H2R, the focus is on spaces that are properly integrated and coordinated with a single vision. The emerging studio offers its clients a full concept design package, from interpreting the original brief to transforming it into reality.

Husain notes: “Our philosophy is to keep pushing boundaries, to keep delivering spaces that meet our clients’ briefs and to craft great experiences for the users of the space. We always strive to give each project its own personality, which is catered directly to the concept and brand.”

While H2R launched itself in London, England, it recently established a second branch in Dubai in October 2014. With the two offices, the Roomi brothers have managed to achieve a massive international reach.

Hasan explains: “Our hearts are torn between London and Dubai. They are both incredibly inspiring cities for different reasons. We think it adds a layer of design-thinking to our work that helps us stand out from other local design firms. We have a pretty broad global experience within our team in Dubai, and there is a bit of travel involved, so we have to be constantly communicating – Skype is our best friend.”

He adds: “We launched in Dubai in October last year, mainly driven by the amount of work that was coming to us from here, and business so far has been great. We have been lucky to have some incredible clients, some really fun projects and plenty of new things on the horizon. Our team has grown and we have loved setting up the new office.”

According to Husain, the new office has a fun and lively atmosphere – but when it comes to working on detailed elements of each project, visitors will catch a number of staff putting on headphones to aid focus. He adds that H2R encourages its clients to stop by for workshops, keeping the process transparent and collaborative.

“There also seems to be a dangerously constant flow of bottomless coffee,” he jokes.

H2R has an impressive portfolio filled with food and beverage projects, retail and workspaces. As Husain puts it: “We do love the opportunity that food and beverage design gives us – they are exciting spaces, where the operations and the people influence the environment as much as the other way around.

“This is a challenge for us as designers, and pushes us to solve spatial problems creatively, as well as allowing us to really develop a brand and concept into a space. That said, and for the same reasons, we also love and have experience in both retail and workplace design. We have actually noticed that these three sectors

tend to merge in their thinking and approach. We like to think that we design spaces for people, whether they are working, learning, eating, drinking or shopping.”

H2R’s portfolio includes projects like Paperfig Deserts in Sharjah, Tom & Serg Café in Dubai, The Sum Of Us Café in Dubai, Disiac in London’s Soho district and Breteuil in London. It’s not fair to ask them to choose favourites, but the brothers say they thoroughly enjoyed working on Tom & Serg as well as The Sum Of Us.

According to Hasan, the success of these projects can be chalked up to the coherent vision, understanding and collaboration among the entire team, a combination that brought forth refreshing spaces for Dubai.

“This combination, among a few other elements, gave us the necessary ingredients and tools to push the boundaries in design and create unconscious benchmarks,” Hasan adds

> [Inspiration](#) > [Editor's Picks](#) > [The Roomi brothers talk design, pushing boundaries and world domination](#)

Posted 06/03/2016 EDITORS PICKS / INTERIOR DESIGNERS / PEOPLE [Leave a comment](#)

The Roomi brothers talk design, pushing boundaries and world domination

STAFF WRITER



1/8

Most Recent

[Issa design creates a refreshing concept for the Vertu health bar](#)

[Georgian designer Tinatin Kilaberidze debuts custom furniture collection](#)

Born and raised in the United Kingdom, Iraqi brothers Hasan and Husain Roomi started out building their careers by taking on a few small projects in London while they completed their studies and worked for other design companies.

When they started to get a lot more work due to word of mouth, the Roomi brothers decided it was time to step away from their permanent positions and start their own studio – H2R Design.

PROJECTS

COMMERCIAL
Interior design

H2R Design reimagines the historic Alamein Hotel in Egypt with a fresh approach

The Dubai-based design studio has remodelled the beach resort with contemporary Mediterranean interiors



Taking cues from the 1960's nostalgia and charm of the historic Alamein Hotel, H2R Design has recently completed the large scale renovation of the property. The up and coming design studio, which has recently created successful commercial and hospitality spaces in the region, collaborated with Emaar Hospitality, who spearheaded the restoration project.



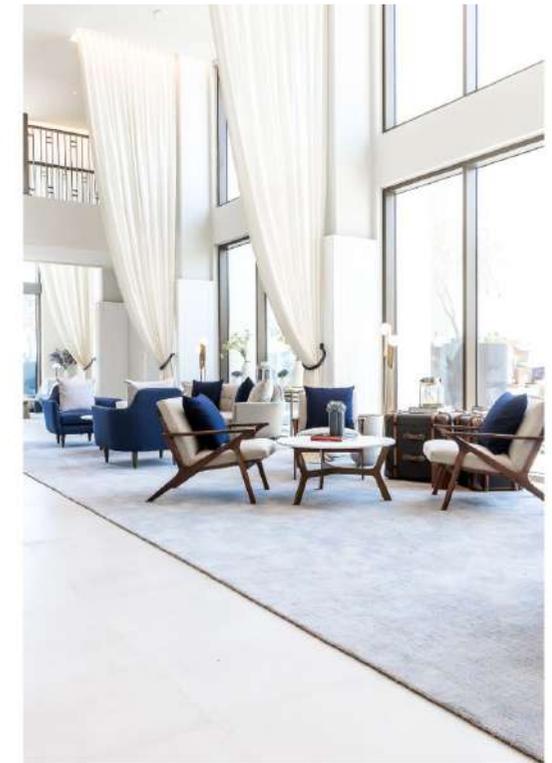
Located in Egypt's northern coast, it houses 190 rooms including luxury chalets, seven suites and two presidential villas. Throughout its 50-year history, has been frequented by celebrities, artists and bohemians.



While keeping the cultural context and heritage intact in their design strategy, the design firm has rejuvenated and created a modern boho-chic style. One of the main design schemes in the project was to integrate the surrounding seaside environment into the nature of the property.



The design theme for the project was a retro refurbishment including contemporary interiors, which paid subtle tribute to the glory days of when the resort first opened. Referencing vintage influences such as yesteryear Egyptian music and cinema, the design team created a link back to the hotel's former celebrated guests.



"Throughout the property, we wanted to create a sense of refined classics and translate that through materiality, the furniture pieces, fixtures and equipment," explain Hasan and Husain Roomi, the founders of H2R Design. "We used clean lines layered with textures to bring a modern mid-century experience and comfort twist to the mesmerising vistas."

In order to successfully achieve a blend of vintage charm and contemporary elegance, H2R Design used a lot of natural white washed timber, light and breezy elements reflecting the

coastal region, fabrics and upholstery suitable for the beach environment. The colours were meticulously selected to compliment the natural landscape (muted blues, light greys, off whites and accents of deep blue to reflect the everchanging colour of the sea. Metal was also used as an accent, adding elegance to the joinery, furniture elements and lighting, which played an integral role in illuminating the spaces.



As the most prominent space in the hotel, H2R Design instilled strong elements for returning guests to not only see the renovation, but to experience within the first impression. The prominent architectural features of the lobby include the welcoming central double volume lobby colonnade and atrium, which help open up the surrounding vistas.



"Alamein Hotels has been open since the 1960's and throughout its existence, has had a prestigious and loyal guest following," says Jacqui Shaddock, partner at H2R Design. "We intended to retain these guests and also revive their experience while encouraging a new generation of visitors. When transforming the hotel from the day to night scenarios, we focused on maintaining a welcoming and intimate ambiance, that would instantly make guests feel at ease."



Each guest suite has been designed to capture the outside and seamlessly balance it with the interiors. The renovation was also met with some challenges for the team, such as the resort being fully occupied when the work began.



Given the antiquity of the building, accurate drawings of the site were not available and records of the many ad-hoc architectural changes were no longer available. The structure was unclear until a demolition commenced, and the H2R Design team had to continually adapt the design to suit new the discoveries on the site.

As champions of sustainability, H2R Design hired local contractors, manufacturers and suppliers to reduce carbon footprint.

H2R DESIGN HOTEL DESIGN ALAMEIN HOTEL



Revival of the retro!

The refurbishment of Al Alamein Hotel in Egypt by H2R Design is a style salute to the 1960's when the hotel first opened.

Design changes bring freshness and new appeal to the existing property and that's the case with the historic Al Alamein Hotel in Egypt from Emaar Hospitality Group that just reopened after a retro-themed facelift. The immensely rich Egyptian heritage and stunning sea views makes this property incomparable to others.

The new designs are a blend of vintage charm with contemporary style taking the inspirations from the old golden age era of Egyptian music and cinema. The design firm responsible for this amazing makeover is H2R Design founded by brothers – Hasan and Husain Roomi in 2012. H2R Design is a young and progressive design firm with its offices in London and Dubai.

Hasan explains the design motivation behind this project: "The inspiration for the hotel was refurbished retro – modern interiors, nodding back to the glory days of the 1960's when the resort first opened. We aimed to rejuvenate the guest experience with a careful

renovation by retaining the utmost respect for the heritage of the site, but maximising and amplifying bay views."

The refurbishment projects are always challenging in the sense that the privacy of the guests and staff workflow should not be affected. Husain says: "The resort was fully occupied when the project commenced, and no accurate as-built drawings existed of the site, which had undergone many ad-hoc architectural renovations. The structure was unclear until the demo commenced at the end of the season. This meant we had to constantly adapt the design almost daily to suit new discoveries on site."

The absolute focal point of the re-imagined experience is to amplify visions of the water, opening up spaces and vistas as much as architecturally possible, and using the interior treatments to frame and emphasise the view. The idea is to re-create the guest experience through the revitalisation of the public spaces, activation of external spaces, and a restoration of the guest



Hasan Roomi



Husain Roomi

room interiors as well as transitional spaces between. Featuring 189 rooms including luxury chalets, Al Alamein Hotel has several enhanced features that maximise its beachfront location.

Hasan and Husain made sure that they work in the most sustainable manner like they have worked with the local suppliers and contractors in this project, and manufacturers to reduce carbon footprint.

Here's the design tour of this fabulous property:



Relaxed and open air-beach hangout is decorated with coastal-inspired furniture and pendant lights



Looking out over the Mediterranean, the rooms combine a calm ambience with contemporary styling and classy design



Metal is extensively used as an accent to add elegance to joinery and furniture elements



The hotel stay experience in Egypt

By G&G Magazine • 22 Sep, 2018 •

H2R Design, the young dynamic design studio creating some of the most renowned commercial and hospitality spaces, completed the grand renovation of Egypt's celebrated Al Alamein Hotel.



The design team remodeled the 1960's Mediterranean beach hub's interiors creating a serene escape injected with premium furnishings to elevate the hotel stay experience. A project that was full of challenges and complexities also proved to be one of H2R Design's most rewarding assignments.



The resort and residences feature 190 rooms including luxury chalets, 7 suites and 2 presidential villas. It is a pearl in the Egyptian northern coast seaside, and throughout its 50-year history, has been frequented by celebrities, artists and bohemians.





H2R Design was insistent on keeping the cultural context and heritage in their design strategy, however they wanted to rejuvenate and create a modern boho-chic style while integrating the surrounding seaside environment into the nature of the property. The design theme for the project was a Retro Refurbishment including contemporary interiors, which paid subtle tributes to the glory days of when the resort first opened.



H2R Design combined vintage styles conjuring the sense of nostalgia to the golden age of Egyptian music and cinema and added references to the famous guests the hotel has hosted.



In order to successfully achieve a blend of vintage charm and contemporary elegance, H2R Design used a lot of natural white washed timber, light and breezy elements reflecting the coastal region, fabrics and upholstery suitable for the beach environment. The colours were meticulously selected to compliment the natural landscape (muted blues, light greys, off whites and accents of deep blue to reflect the everchanging colour of the sea. Metal was also used as an accent, adding elegance to the joinery, furniture elements and lighting, which played an integral role in illuminating the spaces.

SEARCH



FOLLOW US



ARCHITECTURE & INTERIORS • ART & DESIGN • IN STORE • STYLE • ESCAPE

TRAVEL • 15 October 2018

Five hotels for the perfect Middle Eastern getaway



ITP IMAGES

From the lobby to the rooms, it's all in the details that bring the Oberoi Beach Resort Al Zorah to life. Touches of bold colour and tropical patterns can be found throughout the luxury resort.

Indulge in scenic views, crystal clear shorelines and captivating history with these five hotels located across the Middle Eastern landscape.



5. Alamein Hotel, North Coast, Egypt



Nestled in the heart of Egypt's northern coast, the historic Alamein Hotel has recently undergone a large-scale renovation undertaken by up-and-coming Dubai-based design and architecture studio H2R in collaboration with Emaar Hospitality Group. Housing 190 rooms including luxury chalets, seven suites and two presidential villas, the hotel has in its 50-year history been frequented by celebrities, artists and bohemians alike, and now boasts a retro refurbishment that includes contemporary interiors, paying tribute to the glory days of when the resort first opened. While keeping the cultural context and heritage intact in their design strategy, the firm's aim was to rejuvenate and create a modern boho-chic style, while integrating the surrounding seaside environment into the nature of the property. The design theme also references vintage influences of Egyptian music and cinema, creating a link back to the hotel's former celebrated guests. alameinhotel.com

HOTELS

ESCAPE

TRAVEL

DESIGN

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

H2R Design showcases its versatility in designing two diametrically opposite facilities: a pizza outlet and the revamp of a celebrated hotel of the 1960s.



H2R Design, a young and dynamic design studio that is behind some renowned commercial and hospitality spaces in the region, has added two distinct clients to its growing portfolio: an international pizza chain in the UAE and a resort hotel in Egypt.

When global pizzeria franchise Pizza Express entrusted H2R Design to design a restaurant in Matajer Shopping Mall, University City Sharjah, it wanted something that would stimulate minds and satiate the hunger of diners. The project was completed and handed over earlier this year.

H2R Design approached the project with the theme of curiosity for knowledge and good taste, according to Hasan Roomi, who founded the London/Dubai-based practice along with his brother Husain.

"The design was an academically-inspired version of the popular pizzeria that holds on to the restaurant's playful attributes.

H2R Design was tasked to propose a design concept that remains true to the Pizza Express brand tagline of being stylish, creative and relevant. When developing the design, the team reverted its thinking and mindset back to that age of discovery and designed a space that is welcoming and cool to be seen in.

"We wanted to design a space that relates to the constant and chaotic life of students.

In aiming to evoke a feeling of intrigue, discovery and experimentation, the design sparks the curiosity of students through the use of a show kitchen, as most Pizza Express restaurants do," Hasan tells ABDULAZIZ KHATTAK of *Gulf Construction* magazine.

A combination of geometric wall patterns adorning the walls and the usage of diagonally striped floor tiles and coloured patterned timber wall strips are aimed to bring in a sense of fluid movement into the space. Mirrors, artwork, and neon signs are key elements positioned to identify directly with the students.

Each corner has an educational component to trigger interest, such as the mathematical figure of Pi on a feature wall that subtly includes Pizza Express.

Wall lights in the shape of test tubes are used, along with a neon sign at the entrance spelling out 'Food for Thought' adding to the quirky features and details, while not taking away from the identity of Pizza Express. The convex mirrors represent the basic physics principles of reflection and refraction of light, which by extension is a design principle that H2R Design used quite literally to engage the target audience (students).

"The concept behind the interior aims to channel the culture and attitude of university life. It is a space for thinkers and trend-



Pizza Express ... featuring wall lights in the shape of test tubes.

setters. We wanted to create a space that fills their souls not only with the wonderful Pizza Express menu but also through the strategic use of design elements to capture their curiosity," explains Hasan.

Furthermore, it was important for H2R Design to add the illustrative design ideas and to ensure that the features of the restaurant cater to a variety of demographics, whilst keeping an equal level of sophistication, says Husain.

The show kitchen had to be carefully designed adhering to mall restrictions, minimising the visibility of cooking equipment.

gulfconstructionworldwide.com

Interiors



Alamein Hotel ... designed in a modern boho-chic style while integrating the surrounding seaside environment.



This created the opportunity to skew and rotate the kitchen and angle it within the space, allowing the team to configure the restaurant into zones.

The bar counter is an architectural feature that opens up the serving area, welcoming diners to walk through. It adds dimension to the open space, similar to the geometric and dynamic feel of the wall patterns. The counter creates an angle in the space that references the dynamism and complex routine of students.

Husain says H2R Design wanted the seating to appeal to the inquisitiveness of the students by allowing them to explore the variety of seating ranging in comfort and sturdiness. Diners are invited to walk through the space, adding to the theme of curiosity – and encouraging them to find the 'it' spot.

ALAMEIN HOTEL EGYPT

H2R Design has also recently completed the grand renovation of Egypt's celebrated Alamein Hotel. The design team remodelled the 1960s Mediterranean beach hub's interiors, creating a serene escape infused with premium furnishings to elevate the hotel stay experience. A project that was full of challenges and complexities also proved to be one of H2R Design's most rewarding assignments, says Hasan.

The Alamein Hotel restoration project was spearheaded by Emaar Hospitality.

The resort and residences feature 190 rooms including luxury chalets, seven suites and two presidential villas. Located on the Egyptian northern coast seaside, it has been frequented by celebrities, artists and bohemians throughout its 50-year history.

H2R Design was insistent on keeping the cultural context and heritage in its design strategy. However, it wanted to rejuvenate and create a modern boho-chic style while integrating the surrounding seaside environment into the nature of the property.

The design theme for the project was a 'retro refurbishment' including contemporary interiors, which paid subtle tributes to the glory days of when the resort first opened. H2R Design combined vintage styles conjuring the sense of nostalgia to the golden age of Egyptian music and cinema and added references to the famous guests the hotel has hosted.

"Throughout the property, we wanted to create a sense of refined classics and translate that through materiality, the furniture pieces, fixtures and equipment. We used clean lines layered with textures to bring a modern mid-century experience and comfort twist to the mesmerising vistas," says Hasan.

In order to achieve a blend of vintage charm and contemporary elegance, H2R Design used a lot of natural white-washed timber, light and breezy elements reflecting the coastal region, and fabrics and upholstery suitable for the beach environment. The colours were meticulously selected to complement the natural landscape (muted blues, light greys, off whites and accents of deep blue to reflect the ever-changing colour of the sea). Metal was also used as an accent, adding elegance to the joinery, furniture elements and lighting.

• **Reception and lobby:** As the most prominent space in the hotel, H2R Design instilled the wow factor for returning guests to actually feel the ambiance and experience in their first impression.

The prominent architectural features of the lobby include the welcoming central double-volume lobby colonnade and atrium, to help achieve the design focus of opening up the vistas and views.

• **Rooms and suites:** The guestrooms were designed to show the heritage of the hotel, refined with a soothing colour palette and furniture pieces to immerse the guests in tranquility.

"Alamein Hotels has been open since the 1960s and throughout its existence has had a prestigious and loyal guest following. We intended to retain these guests and also revive their experience while encouraging a new generation of visitors. When transforming the hotel from the day-to-night scenarios, we focused on maintaining a welcoming and intimate ambience that would instantly make guests feel at ease," explains Jacqui Shaddock, partner at H2R Design.

The renovation posed some challenges for the team, as the resort was fully occupied when the work began. Given the antiquity of the build, accurate drawings of the site were not available and records of the many ad-hoc architectural changes were no longer available. The structure was unclear until demolition commenced, and the H2R Design team had to constantly adapt the design (almost daily) to suit new discoveries on the site, Shaddock says.

As promoters of sustainability, H2R Design hired local contractors, manufacturers and suppliers to reduce the carbon footprint. The team took care of all the technical details while working closely with the project architects, hotel operations managers, and subcontractors, making sure all local standards were implemented. ■

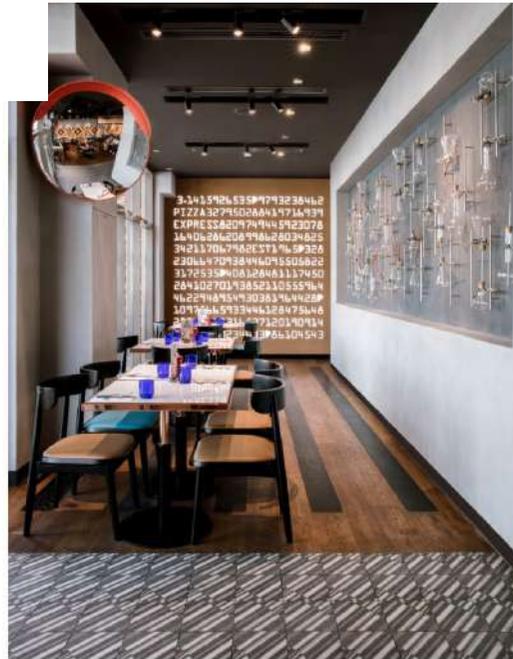
Projects

H2R designs education-themed Pizza Express in Sharjah's University City

H2R Design combines a natural material palette and neon signage for new Pizza Express outlet



Dubai and London-based H2R Design has been commissioned by Pizza Express to design its newest chain located in Motejer Shopping Mall in Sharjah's University City.



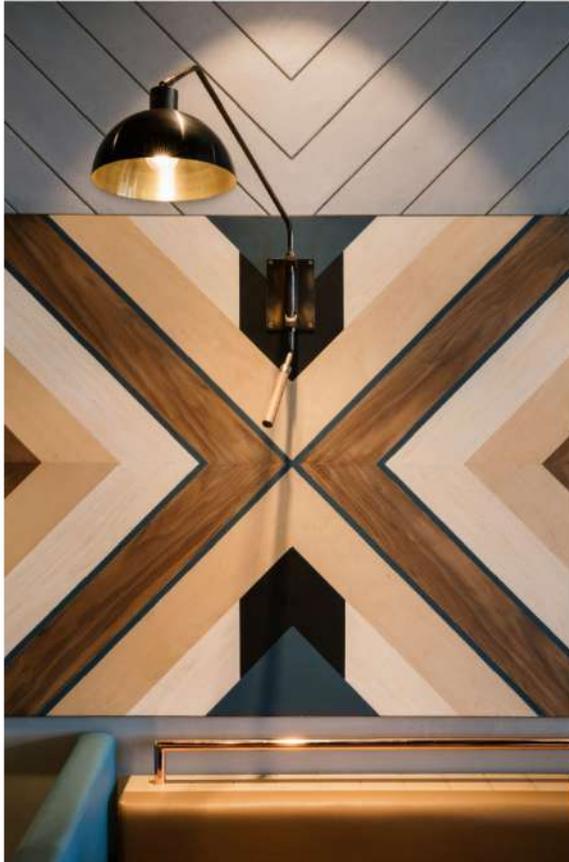
While aiming to remain true to the brand's tag line of 'stylish, creative, and relevant', H2R took inspiration from the eatery's academic location, with every corner designed to 'trigger interest'. One such inspiration is a feature wall using the mathematical figure of Pi which integrates the eatery's branding.



"We wanted to design a space that relates to the constant and chaotic life of students," the design team explained. "In aiming to evoke a feeling of intrigue, discovery, and experimentation, the design sparks curiosity of students through the use of a show kitchen, as most Pizza Express restaurants do."



The show kitchen was designed to adhere to the strict mall restrictions - which minimised the visibility of cooking equipment - however this created an opportunity to skew and rotate the kitchen and angle it within the space, allowing the team to configure the restaurant into zones.



The interiors showcases a range of natural materials, with the majority of the seating space completed using coloured patterned timber wall strips which was intended to add a sense of movement to the space. Geometric wall patterns and diagonally-striped floor tiles also make up the space.

To cater to a students, the designers used artworks and neon signage, including wall lighting in the shape of test tubes; while convex mirrors represent the principles of reflection and refraction.



"The concept behind the interior aims to channel the culture and attitude of university life," H2R explained. "We wanted to create a space that fills their souls not only with the wonderful Pizza Express menu, but also through the strategic use of design elements to capture their curiosity."



H2R Design's Two at Symphony restaurant has been shortlisted for the CID Awards under the Food and Beverage category. You can view the full CID Awards 2018 shortlist [here](#).

H2R DESIGN

SHARJAH

RESTAURANT INTERIORS



Posh Perch

Inspired by '40s Chinoiserie with a nod to Park Avenue, Doris Chair by Jonathan Adler will make your guests green with envy. The open arm detail and Ming-inspired base adds sculptural flair, but it's still a comfy perch for reading. Upholstered in striated pear velvet with a moody black lacquer base. www.jonathanadler.com

To know...

This year, Mineheart will be collaborating with luxury watch brand, Larsson and Jennings based at 53 Monmouth St at Seven Dials for the London Design Festival 2018 from 15th - 23rd September. Taken from the words of Larsson&Jennings, "we reimagine classic design, bringing art and precision to you everyday" - this is an ethos that we strongly support at Mineheart, we are excited to be bringing you this unique and curious collaboration!" www.mineheart.com



Food for Thought

H2R Design an exciting new design studio based in Dubai and London, creating some of the most renowned commercial and hospitality spaces, was appointed by Pizza Express to design the latest chain of the restaurant franchise. Located in Matajer Shopping Mall, University City Sharjah, H2R Design approached the project with the theme of curiosity for knowledge and good taste. They designed an academically inspired version of the popular pizzeria while holding on to the restaurant's playful attributes. The project was completed and handed over earlier this year. www.h2rdesign.com





P 78-80
h2rdesign.com

H2R Design, Dubai (AE)
H2R Design is a Dubai-based design studio, established by two brothers and supported by a globally experienced design team. They strive to capture the essence of brands through identity, architecture, and interior design. By working across these disciplines, they are able to create unique and customized spaces for every project. They don't just create awesome spaces, they design destinations.

H2R DESIGN
Pizza Express
2018



P 248

78



DESIGN 32-DUBAI

H2R DESIGN
Two at Symphony
2018



P 248



WORKS

SLANTED 32-DUBAI

H2R DESIGN
Gia, 2018



P 248



80

DESIGN 32-DUBAI

H2R uses Italian terrazzo to create timeless design for new cafe in the Dubai Mall



Dubai-based design and architecture studio H2R has created a cafe in The Dubai Mall featuring Italian Terrazzo slabs and pastel furniture to create a timeless and elegant interior.



Two at Symphony is the F&B extension of luxury fashion boutique, Symphony, created by two Emirati sisters, transitioning spatially from a boutique store to a contemporary cafe. The design is intended to create a 'secret oasis', exuding a sense of tranquility, complete with hints of luxurious design details.



Soft pastel tones emphasise the openness and movement throughout the space, extending from the open entrance from the boutique that provides visitors with an overall view of the interior space.



Italian terrazzo add a striking element to the space, creating a sense of timeless elegance, contrasting with the more solid white marble and brass accents.



A central bar is the main feature of the design, featuring illuminated petals that hover overhead, referencing leaves falling in the wind.

The Two symphony cafe is located in Dubai Mall's Fashion Avenue



Love That Design

Projects ▾ Inspiration ▾ Companies ▾ Products ▾ Articles ▾ About ▾ Search... Q



Symphony, Dubai

1 Nov, 2018



[H2R Design](#) was tasked with designing the interiors of Symphony, which relocated to its new double-storey home within the Fashion Avenue Extension at The Dubai Mall.

[Al Abbar Enterprises](#) handled the project management for this luxury, multi-brand boutique, that provides women a tailored shopping experience with a variety of new and renowned global designer brands.

"Keeping the concept of a symphony as our inspiration, we envisioned the store to be approachable, refined, feminine and spirited, helping women express their unique individual identities with the perfect dress and accessory for every occasion," says Hassan from H2R. "The space allows the merchandise to stand out, while still maintaining a strong architectural identity."

Inspiration was drawn from the name of the store, which is a musical composition or a blend of sounds that create beautiful harmony. The design flows seamlessly, showing intricate elements and quality craftsmanship throughout, and reflecting the expert curation, customisation and personalised services available.

An illuminated staircase plays a vital role in the holistic experience and adds to the symphony theme. The staircase connects the ground floor, where the accessory boutique and signature fashion brands reside, to the first floor, which houses the florist and perfume sections.

Warm-toned lighting, curved walls and panelling, and the blending of spaces creates a distinct element of balance and harmony. Alongside rails, counters and shelves, a backlit alabaster accessory wall houses shelves with shoes and bags, and adds to the interchangeable elements of the display. The backlit wall also exudes luxury and further promotes a light and airy ambience.





f t g i

Homegrown luxury fashion store – [Symphony](#) – recently unveiled its impressive new flagship within The Dubai Mall’s Fashion Avenue extension. Spread over 10,000 sq ft, Symphony spans two floors and stocks over 80 international and regional brands. On the ground floor you will find a curated mix of Symphony’s signature brands – including ready-to-wear and elegant evening gowns, shoes and accessories and a dedicated jewellery boutique for Alabbar Designs. On the first floor, [Kadi Boutique](#) have their first ever florist, there’s a beauty section and there’s Two at Symphony – a sleek modern eatery and cafe.

Symphony founder Salama Alabbar and her husband, Sheikh Mubarak AlKhalifa partnered with one of the world’s biggest brands for this momentous occasion – Coca Cola. The soft beverages icon worked closely with Symphony to create a totally bespoke bottle design, which has been done in Symphony pink and features a sketch of the Dubai skyline with the Burj Khalifa proudly standing tall at the centre. To celebrate, the store is currently displaying a striking window featuring hanging bottles and a huge, man-size bottle at the centre. The collaboration marks the first in a series of exciting things to come for Symphony 2.0.

On Thursday the 26th of April 2018, the new Symphony flagship officially opened its doors for the first time for a magical private event. To celebrate his wife, Salama, and her much-loved fashion concept, Sheikh Mubarak had a bespoke piece of music created: The Symphony Valse, which was played by a 45-piece orchestra during the evening celebrations. A heartwarming video featuring Salama’s father, HE Mohammed Alabbar and timelapse footage of the impressive new two-storey fashion and lifestyle destination being constructed also played during the VIP event.

Symphony, Fashion Avenue at The Dubai Mall is now open, step inside with The Huntr’s exclusive picture gallery below...



HUNTR

REVIEWS GUIDES THINGS TO DO NEWS + FEATURES #THEPEOPLEOFTHEDUBAI



Brew Cafe Dubai: Speciality coffee and slick interiors in Jumeirah

f t g+ p

Brew Cafe Dubai first started life as a tiny little bolthole of a gem on Jumeirah Beach Road. Now, years later, thanks to its epic brews and Dubai's growing coffee community scene, it has upped sticks and debuted a fancy new, spacious home. Join The Huntr as we present our exclusive look inside...

Located just two doors down from the original location, Brew Cafe 2.0 is officially now known as simply: Brew. The new coffee spot features ample seating options and a breakfast menu with easy eats like chia pudding, plus freshly-baked pastries, desserts and cakes – including the best-selling basque burnt cheesecake. Don't miss it.

This Umm Suqeim gem is the ideal spot to enjoy a cracking cup of coffee with friends, colleagues or clients, or to come and get some work done and enjoy some tasty eats.

Insider tip: Brew Cafe Dubai is open daily from 7am until 11pm.

Customer Rating

0 Ratings

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

ADD TO HITLIST





The screenshot shows a web article from TimeOut Dubai. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the TimeOut Dubai logo and a dropdown menu. Below the logo is a horizontal menu with categories: NEWS, CHRISTMAS OFFERS, RESTAURANTS, BRUNCH, BARS & NIGHTLIFE, LADIES' NIGHTS, THINGS TO DO, and FILM & TV. The article title is "First look: Inside brand-new Candylicious in DXB" with a subtitle "Lollipop trees, a giant chocolate bar and a Burj Khalifa cake". The author is Emma Pearson, and the date is September 17, 2018 2:25 PM. There are social media share icons for Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, WhatsApp, and Email. The main image shows the interior of the Candylicious store, which is a vibrant, colorful space with purple walls and a large central display of sweets and candy trees.

The internationally-adorned sweet shop Candylicious has opened in Dubai International Airport – and we've had a sneaky peak inside the fizzing, whizzing world.

It's no surprise that the inside of Candylicious is bursting with bright colours and sweet treats in all different shapes and sizes.

However, in true DXB style, this is no ordinary store as it has been given an entirely different design to the others around the world.

In the middle of the store there is colourful wall inspired by Atlantis The Palm, which leads onto a huge 3D Dubai city.

Lying beneath the famous Candylicious tree, adorned with swirly lollipops and giant candy canes, is a mini city sprawled with Dubai landmarks.

The streets are decorated with purple branched pink gumball trees, macaroon stacks, lollipops and toffee apples.

Meanwhile mini eggs and marshmallows with faces mimic people walking around the city.

Two red jelly beans lie sunburnt (be careful of the city's sunshine) across from white striped candy cane Ferris wheel – a nod to the world's biggest wheel being built on Ain Dubai opposite JBR beach.

There's a pink and white striped tiered cake replicating the Burj Khalifa, standing tall amongst a Burj Al Arab Jumeirah, a cupcake topped building, a candy cane city of skyscrapers and a mini landing strip with brightly coloured planes and chocolate bars lying around.

While a colossal chocolate bar is teeming with different slabs of the good stuff to enjoy, too.

And that's all before we've even begun with the abundance of crunchy, gooey, chewy, colourful, chocolaty treats and sweets you will find inside.

We won't spoil the surprise... just head down and see for yourself.

AWARDS



AL ALAMEIN HOTEL
RUNNER UP - HOSPITALITY
PROJECT OF THE YEAR





TWO AT SYMPHONY
HOSPITALITY CAFÉ AWARD





TWO AT SYMPHONY
DESIGN OF THE YEAR AWARD



The Middle East's architecture, design, interiors + property magazine

identity®

ISSUE 181
YEAR SIXTEEN
NOVEMBER 2018
A MOTIVATE PUBLICATION



Colour wash: new bathing spaces with a splash of colour
Countdown to Downtown: exclusive Dubai Design Week preview
Simply the best: celebrating the 2018 Identity Design Awards winners
+ Design Pioneers Part One: presenting the UAE's dynamic entrepreneurs



WINNER

Hospitality - Café + Design of the Year*

H2R Design Two at Symphony

Located in the luxurious Fashion Avenue Extension of The Dubai Mall, Two café is the evolution of the Symphony brand, its high-end fashion retail sister. The designers sought to create a sophisticated and timeless dining destination, seamlessly bridging the fashion concept and the café experience.

The stunning chandelier is a fascinating focal point. It was created as a porcelain sculpture by Canadian artist Alissa Coe, who endeavours to create objects that capture the elegance and strength of the natural world, using minimal form and the finest materials and craftsmanship. Attention on this feature light piece was focused on its sophisticated details and on ensuring it achieved the desired functional results.

As the guests transition from the Symphony store they can still sense the same harmony in the café's airy, light feeling, as well as in the celebration of quality craftsmanship. However, the subtle differences in textures and flooring create a gentle demarcation of brands. The design creates balance and symmetry between the sophistication of detail and colour and the slightly rougher texture of the unrefined materials.

The judges were impressed by the innovative solutions that instantly give the space a special identity. They also enjoyed the compelling choice of materials and furnishings that make the space comfortable while maintaining its fresh, contemporary spirit.

FINALISTS

AlRawi
rca (Pallavi Dean Interiors)

Drop Coffee Shop
L.S. Design

HOSPITALITY - CAFÉ
Two at Symphony



Hasan Roum and Hassan Roum of H2R Design with Garoia Kassis, Managing Director, Luxury/Vision

two at Symphony
by H2R Design



Hasan Roum and Hassan Roum of H2R Design with Eddy Abou Khalil, General Manager, Cosentino ME

*Design of the Year voted for by attendees on the night

NOVEMBER 2018



SHORTLISTED

Events

CID Awards 2018 shortlist: Interior Design of the Year: Food and Beverage

These are the finalists for the 2018 CID Awards Interior Design of the Year: Food and Beverage



We are pleased to announce the shortlist for the 2018 CID Awards, which will take place on Wednesday, September 19 at the Joharah Ballroom in the Madinat Jumeirah. This year, we have received 420 submissions across 18 categories from 114 companies throughout the region. Over the coming week, we will be releasing the names of the finalists in all the categories.

Interior Design of the Year: Food and Beverage

Two Cafe, Dubai, UAE by H2R Design



Two Café, located in the Fashion Avenue extension in the Dubai Mall, sits alongside its sister establishment, a retail offering called Symphony. Inspired by the boutique, the café reflects a light and refined sensibility, but also displays a strong use of craftsmanship. An effortless use of textures, colours and materials summarises the project.

The Dek on 8 – Bishop Design LLC

The client brief was to create a new, exciting rooftop venue and refurbishment of the Pool Deck area within the Media One Hotel. The client called for a versatile to its seating arrangements allowing for both daytime pool relaxation and evening lounge scenarios. The innovation applied was in the intelligent morph seamlessly between daytime, afternoon and night time scenarios allowing sun loungers to become sofa groupings through the clever use of its vers



by Staff Writer

We are delighted to present the shortlist for the Commercial Interior Design Awards 2017. Today, we reveal the line-up of finalists for Interior Design of the Year, Outdoor Design award.



INTERIOR DESIGN OF THE YEAR: OUTDOOR DESIGN (NEW)

El Chiringuito Ibiza Dubai – Anarchitect

Iamimil – Stückman Tribe

Parker's KSA – H2R Design

Private Villa, Jumeirah – DesertINK

The Dek on 8 – Bishop Design LLC

Gwerty, Media One Hotel – LW Design



COMMERCIAL INTERIOR DESIGN AWARDS

INTERIOR BOUTIQUE DESIGN FIRM

COMMERCIAL
Interior design

PROJECTS PEOPLE INSIGHT PRODUCTS EVENTS Q

Pallavi Dean Interiors

From Mrs B salun and Sheena centre to Edelman HQ, Pallavi Dean Interiors team continues delivering bold and inspiring designs for commercial, reside



by Staff Writer
Thu, 10 Aug 2017 01:10 PM

We are delighted to present the shortlist for the Commercial Interior Design Awards 2017. Today, we reveal the line-up of finalists for **Interior Boutique Design Firm of the Year**.



INTERIOR BOUTIQUE DESIGN FIRM OF THE YEAR

Bishop Design LLC

Broadway Interiors LLC

H2R Design

Kahler Design

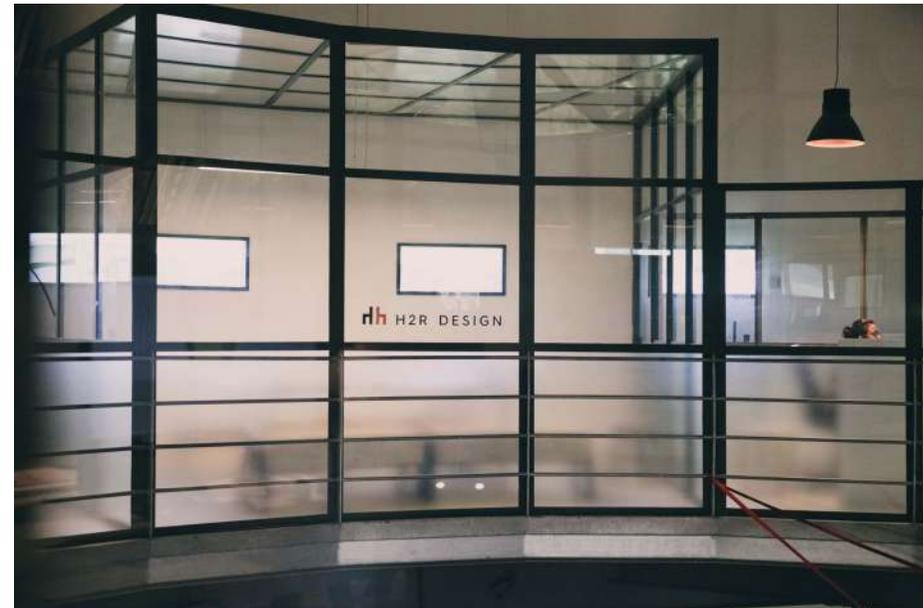
Keane

LXA

MMAC Design Associates

Pallavi Dean Interiors

We have already published image galleries and shortlisted projects under the following categories:





The Courtyard Bldg.
Al Quoz 1 Street 4B,
Dubai, United Arab Emirates

info@h2rdesign.com

+971 04 338 9005

[!\[\]\(84c418c60a6a559d256a380c0687ebe5_img.jpg\)](#) [!\[\]\(866bed1ff0881dbe2b73e54f8a754469_img.jpg\)](#) [!\[\]\(a78bbee24727f36663651569fc505dc5_img.jpg\)](#) @h2rdesign