

DSA DIGEST

The official newsletter of DSA Architects International



Winner for Hospitality Project Design at the Architecture Leaders Awards 2023

The entire team has been enhanced by the creative and technical hurdles that we have successfully overcome, and we are thrilled to have been able to deliver a magnificent establishment, one that we are immensely proud to add to our ever-growing portfolio.

Congratulations to our team at DSA, our partners, particularly our Client, Bahrain Real Estate Investment - Edamah, local engineering firm MSCEB, Jumeirah Hotels & Resorts and to everyone who've contributed to the successful completion of a world-class resort.

DSA have participated in the recent Architecture Leaders Awards 2023 and were thrilled to win the award for Hospitality Project Design for the Jumeirah Gulf of Bahrain Resort & Spa.

The ceremony held on 21st March at Sofitel Dubai The Palm was attended by DSA project team, Vinoj Velappan, Sabeer Nambalakkandi, Rachael Khanak, Maher Fleifel, and Lee Ton.

It has been truly a privilege to work on such a prestigious project, which challenged and stretched us in the right ways.





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Urban Planning & Design Specialists

Multiple award-winning architect with over 12 years' experience in master planning and urban design, Mahmoud Saad, recently joined DSA as Urban Planning Lead to help expand the company's master planning and urban design expertise.

With passion on sustainability, smart design and innovative approaches to contemporary life, Mahmoud's experiences locally and abroad have cemented an interest in the effect of Design on society, environments and quality of life.

DSA offers comprehensive urban planning and urban design services, which integrate landscape architecture, planning, infrastructure, resiliency, sustainable development, and economics. Our professionals from various disciplines work together to positively impact cities and communities through integrated design that addresses social space, cultural relevance, infrastructure, active mobility, natural habitats, and resiliency.

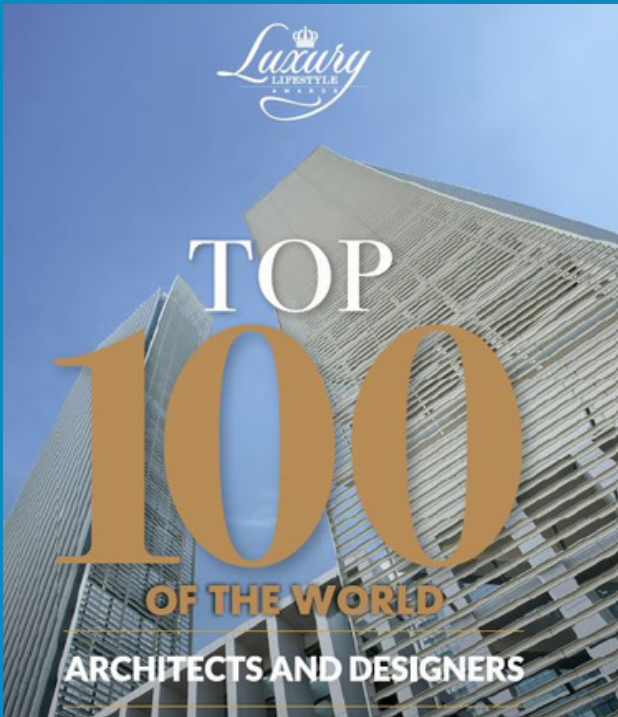
Our approach is guided by systems-thinking and supported by innovative tools and engagement strategies to empower decision-making that is mission-driven, data-informed, agile, and inclusive.

Creating exceptional and sustainable outcomes for our clients is our goal, and we do this safely and consistently for every client, regardless of the challenge or location.



Recognition

DSA Refines Success with Remarkable Designs



We are honoured to be included in the 2022-23 Top 100 Architects & Designers of the World by Luxury Lifestyle Awards Winners!

The success of the firm is attributed to a number of pillars – sustainability, technology implementation, and a strong team to support design and quality management.

DSA Architects International has a very humble approach to its extensive portfolio of grand designs. In 2022 alone, the list of awards almost seems endless and now DSA has been awarded by Luxury Lifestyle Awards for the Top 100 Architects and Designers in the world.

DSA Architects International is truly one of the most aspirational architectural firms in every aspect of their business. The success of the firm is attributed to a number of pillars – sustainability, technology implementation, and a strong team to support design and quality management.

“Projects delivered by DSA are inevitably creative, innovative, respectful of their surroundings and, with a focus on structured, managed, and collaborative delivery. Through our added-value specialist design management service that we provide as standard, we provide the highest levels of coordinated, quality technical documentation.”, says Peter Davison, Managing Director, DSA Middle East.

Sustainable principles of eco-friendly materials, energy conservation, and waste reduction are top of mind for DSA. The firm constantly considers the environmental and social impacts a project may have on its surroundings, regardless of whether the region has sustainability regulations or not. DSA believes in designing low-energy consumption designs as a general reaction to the world's energy crisis. For each project, careful thought and consideration go into providing design solutions that connect the project's design with cultural traditions and location.

DSA is truly at the forefront of its industry in terms of innovation and technological advances. The firm invests in the latest technology and provides its staff with appropriate training. Thus far, they have over 200 projects created in BIM – Building Information Modelling technology, which assists all stakeholders of the project to create a clearer project vision and accurately plan, collaborate, and execute solutions. DSA also utilizes the latest Revit platform technology.



The team is led by management professionals that have extensive experience in delivering a diverse set of projects – from small-scale to large-scale commissions within the hospitality, residential, commercial, retail, and educational sectors. With a team spread internationally, DSA recognizes that a structured approach is a must and employs a number of procedures to ensure delivery is according to brief.

DSA understands that a positive attitude of conviction is what bridges the gap between what customers desire and what is delivered. DSA celebrates long-term commitment from employees with the utmost gratitude. The company bolsters performance with developmental growth plans, team buildings, and fitness challenges and also offers health screenings.

Article Source: [Luxury Lifestyle Awards](#)



Peter Davison

MANAGING DIRECTOR DSA MIDDLE EAST

Peter Davison leads the DSA Architects International Middle East office and has over 25 years of experience based in both the UK and the Middle East, with exposure to all major international markets. Davison has directed design on a plethora of complex, mega-projects, from feasibility and concept stages to documentation and delivery, with a proven track record of success.

DSA Architects International are a leading Architectural Design & Lead Consultant Services Business, delivering landmark, sustainable buildings and environments across the globe from strategic locations in the Middle East, Africa, Europe and Asia. With a unique passion and 'can do' approach, we combine 'International Expertise with Local Knowledge' to realise signature projects, from creative inception through to completed handover.

“Over our 38-year history, we have evolved into an internationally recognised and renowned business, with a strong reputation for excellence across the hospitality, residential, commercial, retail, and educational sectors, whilst also maintaining our reputation as a boutique style firm who are able to offer a personal and bespoke service tailored to the individual needs of our clients,” comments Davison.

Davison has led every aspect of project design, achieving creative, sustainable, and innovative solutions that meet and often exceed, expectations in all areas. He has experience in all major project sectors, including hotels and resorts, commercial offices, residential, retail, highrise, mixed-use, and pharmaceutical design.

Davison leads the team with an empowerment mindset and drives the expansion of DSA Middle East's network and areas of operation, ensuring that DSA's high standards of quality in all aspects are maintained and that the practice's long-term vision and goals are aligned and followed.

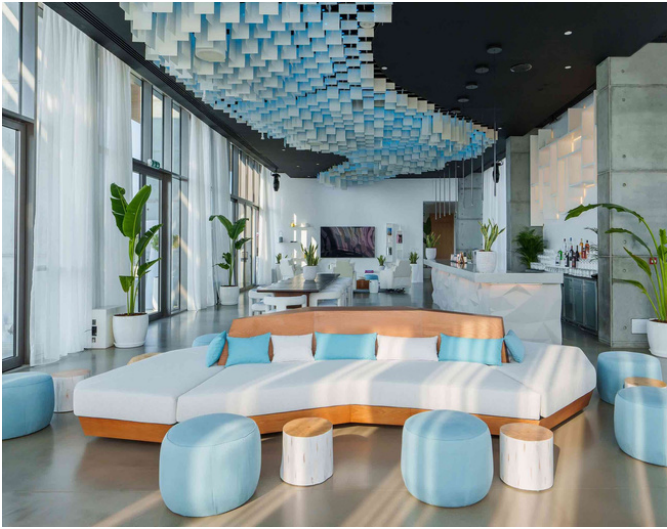
Since DSA's original establishment in 1985, the company has developed massively in scale, scope and diversity. As a multiaward-winning practice, DSA is recognised for creating unique, exciting and timeless architectural experiences, always with a sense of place relating to their location and cultural traditions.

Our passionate leadership is strongly supported by teams of highly-qualified, experienced and talented designers, management professionals and technical experts, selected from the international arena and with a proven track record of success in our field.

In all scenarios and with every type of development the firm delivers, they consistently look to provide the highest levels of creativity, innovation and technical excellence as standard and consistently push the boundaries of new technology and innovation.

Davison says: “The beginning of 2023 has been extremely promising. Many exciting mixed-use projects in KSA, for various PIF entities, are currently in the works, and we are also extremely busy with various other hospitality, residential, and commercial developments in the UAE and across the region.”

The New Nikki Beach Celebration Suite



Nikki Beach Resort & Spa Dubai has finally opened its one-of-a-kind Celebration Suite. Positioned above the beach club and features stunning range of amenities, it offers a space where brands and partners can activate, and guests can host private celebrations alongside impressive accommodations.

DSA are proud to have designed and transformed the the first floor over the Nikki Beach Club into an impressive suite which features three lavish bedrooms with its own private balconies, a large living room with a 100" flat screen TV and a state-of-the-art, three-dimensional ceiling installation with ten lighting options, a private elevator, full kitchen plus a dining room for up to 16 guests, custom pool table, and a high end surround-sound system.

***"Largest suite in
Dubai with a size of
1,045 square meters."***

Nikki Beach style is unique to the brand. With pristine white, urban concrete and flashes of turquoise, as a base line of the design, the Celebration Suite style is raised up a notch with gigantic, walk-in rain showers and slick, uncluttered amenities. All features have been thought out carefully with the operator and executed perfectly.

Outside the suite, guests will find a jacuzzi, outdoor bar, and large terrace with an ocean-facing 82-square-meter infinity pool. Guests will definitely feel like the king of the Beach Club.

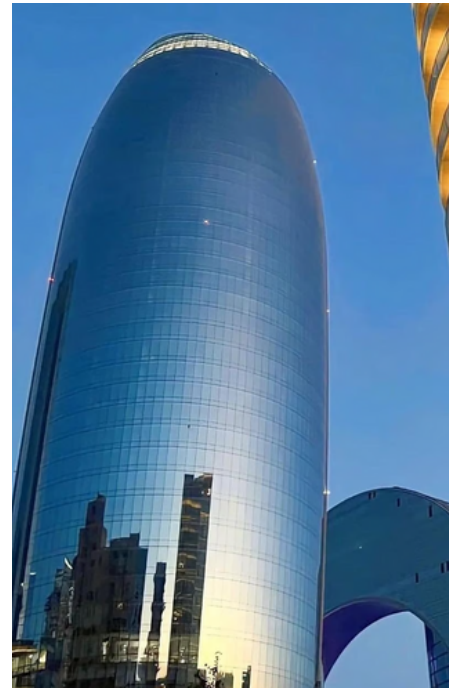


Creativity is experienced by the guest from the moment of arrival, marked with a cool waiting area before going through the elevator up to the first floor. A subtle designed wall feature takes the guest's eyes up to the first floor through the staircase double volume, building up the surprise. The experience begins before you leave the lift, with a TV showcasing Nikki Beach and music getting you in the mood. Once the door opens, the bespoke pool table is in front of you, with the space opening to the lounge area and terrace on the left and the bedrooms on the right. The guest is welcomed by a blue painting that keeps him intrigued. An intuitive, shimmering light feature above the party lounge/ living area, controlled by a unique playful lighting and sound system.

The Celebration Suite truly offers a vibrant and glamorous venue with its beautifully designed interiors and impressive amenities.

The Crescent Development is Almost Complete

A stunning view of the Crescent Development in Baku, Azerbaijan as construction continues. This prestigious mixed-use complex built on the coast of the Caspian Sea comprises of a luxury 7-star hotel La Luna, a shopping mall, residential tower, office tower and underground carpark. Designed by DSA for Gilan Holding, the project is set to be an iconic landmark that will establish the city as a world-class destination.



Images courtesy of www.skyscrapercity.com

5-Star Hotel in Abuja, Nigeria

A stunning concept design is completed by DSA for a large 5-star luxury hotel & conference with split-level Penthouses in Abuja, Nigeria.



6ixty Iconic Tower Begins Foundation Work



Construction has commenced on what will soon be one of the tallest towers in the heart of the New Capital City in Cairo, Egypt. Designed by DSA for Al Borouj Misr, the premium 40-storey tower with a built up area of 78,000 m², features unique modern architectural design and will comprise of serviced apartments and branded residences, as well as retail and commercial units.

With initial sitework and extensive underground testing complete, 6ixty Iconic Tower has kicked off construction of the foundation for the anticipated mixed-use establishment. Its construction is expected to wrap up by the end of 2024.

Image courtesy of Al Borouj Misr at Skyscrapercity



Luxury Lodge in Kafue National Park, Zambia

An exciting luxury tented lodge created & designed by DSA is going to be developed on the banks of the hippo filled river in Kafue National Park in Zambia.



Understanding Colours with Zélia Simões

Zélia Simões, architect from DSA Europe office participated as an author and member of the editorial and scientific committee of the publication "Colour: Urban Space, Architecture, and Design". This is a bilingual publication on colour - in two separate volumes - with an international scientific committee of researchers, which aims to disseminate the research undertaken in the multidisciplinary area of colour. The publication celebrates the existing collaboration between APCOR - Portuguese Colour Association and the Lisbon School of Architecture - Universidade de Lisboa's colour research structures: Colour Lab and Colour and Light Research Group. The book launch was held in 16th February at the Lisbon School of Architecture.

The article "Bairro Alto: Chromatic Proposal", by Filipa Santos and Zélia Simões presents a reflection on the chromatic materialities and immaterialities of public and private initiative, in one historical neighbourhood of the city of Lisbon. Colour has a complex, heterogeneous presence and it is constituted as an element whose characteristics, throughout centuries, admit different forms of structuring, appropriation, and production of architectonic and urban space.

The idea for the article started within a curricular unit of the Masters in Colour in Architecture (2003/2004).



COLOUR URBAN SPACE ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN

"Colour, transforming itself uninterrupted by the variation of light, awakens the senses that allow human beings to perceive a reality in space and time with different values and meanings." (Santos & Simões, 2021: 87)

Zelia and Filipina chose a historic neighbourhood in Lisbon, recognised as an alternative, bohemian meeting place of different social classes. These characteristics, over the centuries, enabled the construction of an identity that made it an important anthropological, environmental and historic reflection of the city.

When designing a building, Zelia explains that colours, shapes, patterns, textures, among other elements, affect our spatial and temporal experience of space. They communicate an impression to the user; this sensory perception triggers an emotional reaction that can affect us in a positive or negative way.

Therefore, they can be used to enhance spatial characteristics, such as: morphological, historical and cultural appropriateness, aesthetic statement, references and spatial orientation, identity, communication, ergonomics, comfort, etc.

CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR PROMOTION!



Suji Sugathan

Promoted from Senior Arch. Technician to Senior BIM Manager



Jolish Chengammal

Promoted from Senior Technologist to Senior BIM Manager



Nived Puthussery

Promoted from BIM Coordinator to BIM Manager



Monika Sekaran

Promoted from Junior Architect to Architect



Viju Antony

Promoted from Senior BIM Modeller to BIM Specialist



Ansal Shereef

Promoted from Architect to Senior Architect



Christ Vincent

Promoted from BIM Modeller to Senior BIM Modeller



Manish Uthaman

Promoted from BIM Modeller to Senior BIM Modeller

CELEBRATING **20 YEARS** WITH DSA



Zinon Marinakos

Managing Director, Africa
South Africa Office



Colin Fletcher

Associate
South Africa Office



Victor Segapo

Document Manager
South Africa Office

New Team Members

MIDDLE EAST OFFICE

Markus Canta

Document Controller
Joined on 02 Jan 2023

Prajakta Bhavar

Project Coordinator
Joined on 24 Jan 2023

Pankaj Trivedi

Senior Design Manager
Joined on 30 Jan 2023

Vidya Abhishek

Senior Architect
Joined on 02 Feb 2023

Mahmoud Saad

Urban Planning Lead
Joined on 6 Mar 2023

Dipti Aggarwal

Project Coordinator
Joined on 20 Mar 2023

Surya Feby

Senior Architect
Joined on 20 Mar 2023

Reem Almansoori

HR | Office Admin
Joined on 3 Apr 2023

Jenelyn Lim

Accountant
Joined on 3 Apr 2023

Poppy Goodall

Bid | Marketing Coordinator
Joined on 10 Apr 2023

Mohammed Sami Baydoun

Senior Design Manager
Joined on 24 Apr 2023

HYDERABAD OFFICE

Aakanksha Sahu

Architect
Joined on 1 Feb 2023

Dilip Vasupalli

BIM Coordinator
Joined on 6 Feb 2023

Syed ImtiyazAli

BIM Modeller
Joined on 15 Feb 2023

Kalki Teja

Project Coordinator
Joined on 16 Mar 2023

Harsha Rai

Junior Architect
Joined on 3 Apr 2023

Vijayakumar Kumaravel

BIM Modeller
Joined on 10 Apr 2023

Mateen Syed

BIM Coordinator
Joined on 10 Apr 2023

Ashwitha Sunkara

Architect
Joined on 17 Apr 2023

Shweta Pawar

Senior Architect
Joined on 1 May 2023

Praveen Kumar

BIM Coordinator
Joined on 1 May 2023

KOCHI OFFICE

Ann Mary Biju

Bid Coordinator
Joined on 23 Jan 2023

Muthupattan Madasamy

BIM Modeller
Joined on 1 Feb 2023

Praveeth Nair

Junior Architect
Joined on 3 Apr 2023

BELGRADE OFFICE

Nenad Davidovic

Architect
Joined on 8 Dec 2022

Spasoje Lucic

Architect
Joined on 4 Jan 2023

Tamara Radovic

Architect
Joined on 3 Apr 2023

STAR OF THE MONTH



Dilip Nampi
IT Manager

Middle East Office

Reliable & always there to support when needed. Even under pressure, he never fails to accomplish his tasks with a smile.

January

Zarko Ratkovic
Senior Architect

Belgrade Office

Willing to go the extra mile to deliver impeccable work. He goes above & beyond to achieve great success for the team.



Shihab Moideen
Sr. Architectural Technician

Kochi Office

Always there to guide & help the team for any project. His work ethic & involvement are admired by everyone in the team.



February



Filip Mikić
Architect

Belgrade Office

Delivered an impressive & consistent level of work. Has an initiative & always gets the job excellently done.



Anjaly Sunny
Architect

Kochi Office

Never fails to step up when needed. Has continuously proved herself to be a person with great potential & exceptional skills.

Julie Anne Lemos
Document Controller

Middle East Office

Has an exceptional work ethic & positive attitude to any task at hand. Has the ability to take every responsibility with utmost sincerity.



Ibrahim Khalil
Document Controller

Middle East Office

Always goes the extra mile to develop and improve the DSA's site systems and Document Control procedures.



March



Sonja Vulic
Architect

Belgrade Office

Delivered impressive results and a remarkable team player who successfully finds solutions to any problems.

Viju Antony
BIM Specialist

Kochi Office

A go-to person for project related concerns. Thanks for the support and hard work that you always put in our work every single day.



Promoting Health and Wellbeing at Work

At DSA, we make sure to incorporate wellness into our workplace and our employees lives. We care about the minds and bodies of our people, and so we have partnered with Safe Hands UAE and Beneple, to develop effective employee wellness programs to enrich our company culture and improve overall wellbeing.

Creating a healthy workplace is one of our top priorities, hence, we ensure that the programs put in place are linked to our wellbeing goals of having work-life balance, as well as enhancing productivity and organisational performance.



Giving Back

As our way of giving back this holy month of Ramadan, we have distributed over 250 iftar meals to our hardworking labourers in Al Sajaa Industrial Labor Camp in Sharjah.

Thank you to everyone who've contributed to this cause!





Meet the
DSA
SPROCKETS
CYCLING TEAM



DSA in Partnership with Liwan SA

DSA Managing Director for KSA, Tim Goodall has met with Mr. Abdullah and Mr. Abdulrahman Al-Duhaim, CEO of Liwan Real Estate Company, during his recent visit to Riyadh. They have discussed Liwan's aspiration of launching iconic residential and commercial projects that not only cater to the living and social needs of vibrant societies, but also establish admired and distinguished landmarks to urban living.



We are also excited to announce the signing of our agreement with Liwan on a new integrated residential and dynamic retail destination, which will cater to the contemporary and progressive lifestyle of modern society.

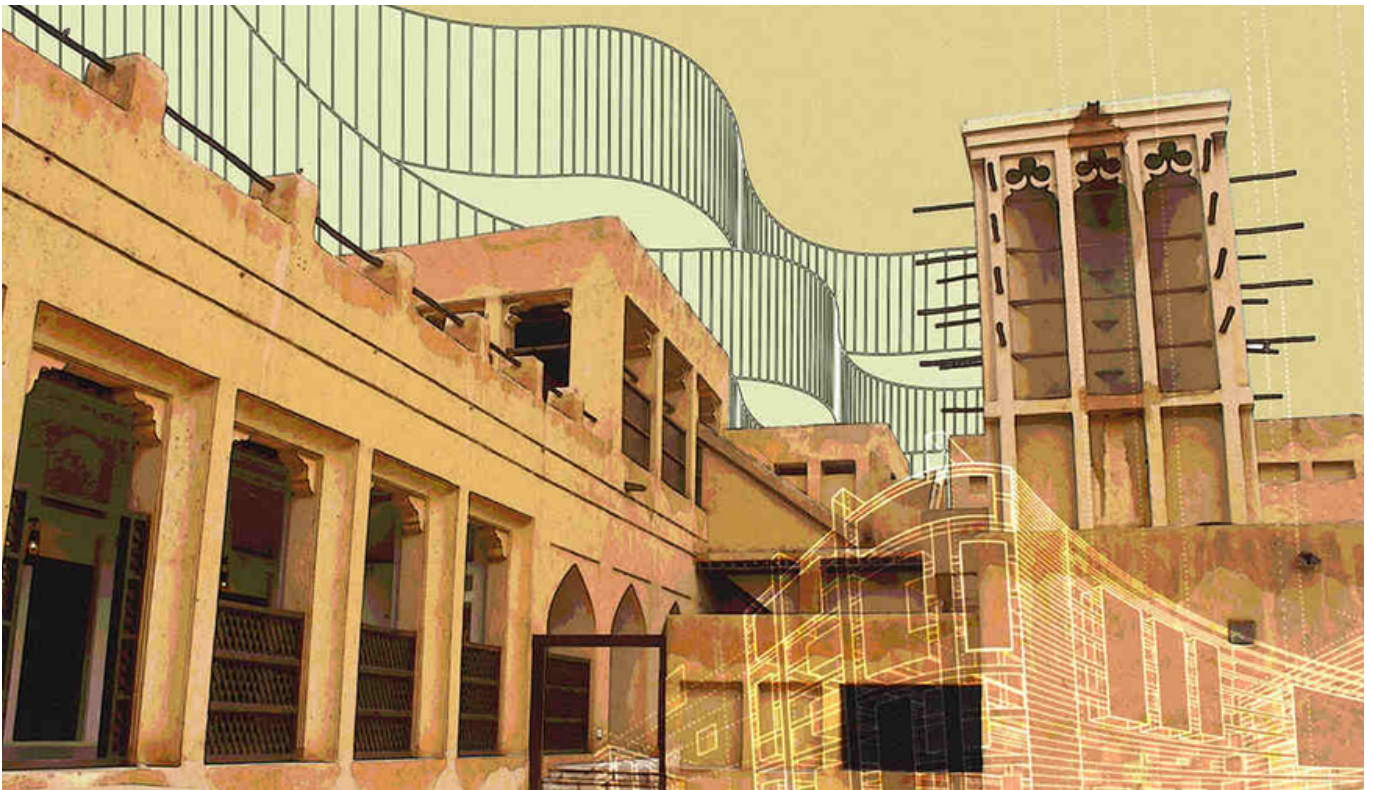
DSA are the design architects of one of their newest projects, the KARD Development, an innovative and stylish living space with an active retail destination.

In the photo: Tim Goodall, DSA Managing Director - KSA, Liwan representatives; Amgad Elghamrawy - Control Director, Abdulrahman Al-Duhaim - CEO, and Waleed Elsayed - Design Director.



**DSA Middle East
Managing Director,
Peter Davison visits
our growing team in
Kochi to personally
share the company's
exciting plans and
projects for 2023.**

Middle East Homes - Blending the Old & the New



Learn how modern architecture can be influenced by old constructs from our Design Principal, Maher Fleifel, on his recent interview with Karishma Nandkeolyar from Fast Company Middle East.

At a time when sustainability is often defined by a slew of standards and certifications rather than the lived, spatial experience, old Middle East homes give a more nuanced definition inspired by the use of traditional materials and a stronger connection between architecture and nature.

They are a palette cleanser for the high-budget, ostentatious projects that the Middle East has been known for in recent years.

In the deserts, surrounded by rainbow sand, pelted by sun rays, and grazed by a rush of wind, people think of solutions that protect them from the harsh elements but also insulate, ventilate, and make life a little more manageable.

Today, in a time of concrete and glass, these lessons on construction still hold for those willing to pay attention. "Traditional architecture responds to a major factor that affects this region, which is the harsh summers," says Aparna C., an architect and green building consultant at GlobalTech Safety and Environmental Consultants, Dubai.

"Factors such as extreme heat, wind, and bright daylight, generally considered negative aspects in the region, can be used to the advantage of the built structures in modern architectural designs to make more environmentally friendly and sustainable developments."

She says one such element encompasses the use of wind towers or Barjeel. These wind towers channel the air, directing in cooler air and expelling warm air, lowering the room's temperature indoors. In older times, water would be placed under the channel drawing in the air from outside; as the air passed over the pool, it would naturally cool, resulting in an ancient day air conditioning system.

Maher Fleifel, Senior Associate and Design Principal of UAE-based DSA Architects International, speaks of how the thickness of the walls matters when it comes to temperature control as well. "The improved performances of the building materials help achieve thermal performance with thinner walls and larger window openings," he says.

"Walls used to be thick, using the thermal mass to retain the heat (or the cold) between inside and outside. Modern architecture uses materials build-ups that achieve a similar effect through multiple layers and composition of materials, combining aesthetics and performance."



Then there is the question of the sun's trajectory, which plays a significant role in constructing a home.

"The sun study is also a key element in modern architecture, inherited from ancient techniques. The creation of shaded courtyards, for example," he adds.

BLENDING OLD AND NEW IDEAS

These well-ventilated courtyards often use the wind tunnel strategy to stay usable throughout the year. "I've worked on numerous buildings where we took that kind of strategy of an internal courtyard. [We think about] how to create those shaded spaces. So we can blur the indoor and outdoor experience without sacrificing comfort. Courtyard houses are a traditional way of building from back when. But the problem with a courtyard is, how [do] you bring the winds into it? If the house completely captures it, how do you become a cooled-off space when the building surrounds it? Wind towers," says Roger Schwabacher, Design Principal at American design, architecture, engineering, and urban planning firm HOK.

"So you can scoop the wind up from high and bring it down into space. And it's a wonderful way of using [a] very low-tech solution to cool those spaces. And we've interpreted that in some of our modern structures," he adds.

It's about blending the old and the new. Old ideas get new life when tech takes an interest. "We can study it [how to channel wind tunnels], you know, on the computer, model, and figure out exactly how it will work. So we do get those flows of winds across the spaces, and we can model the shadows from different times of the year," says Schwabacher.

He adds that material indigenous to the land makes for interesting building foundations. "We've looked at natural clays and have that be part of the walls on the exterior. And then we've looked at materials that don't absorb too much heat from the sun.

Article Source: Fast Company Middle East, March Issue

In the Middle East, you don't want to have metal buildings because it's too hot to the touch. So you work with regional stones, local quarries; we've done glass fiber reinforced concrete, which is a high-tech material, but you can add pigments to it so that it looks like a stone or it looks like the sands, things that are high-performance materials, but feel organic, to where you're building," he adds.

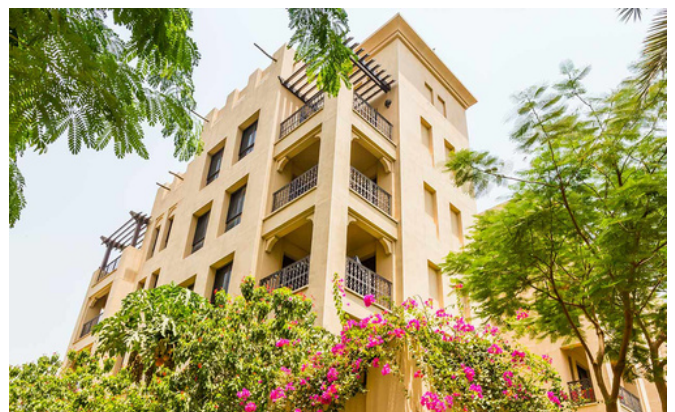
PRACTICAL USE OF WATER

Another idea drawn from tradition was the practical use of water, which can dry out in the desert climate. Schwabacher recalls the Saudi project King Abdullah Petroleum Studies and Research Center (KAPSARC), planned by HOK, where the community was built around a dry 'river bed' that could harness stormwater a few times a year.

"That park becomes green as kind of a lush park, you know, through the central spine of the site. And we have our houses and buildings off to the side of," he says. He adds that native flora was used to conserve scarce resources and revitalize the neighborhood, creating pockets of shade and comfort for the people in the area.

In the UAE, these building techniques have been applied, says Fleifel, to the Old Town Residences, "a project that not only uses the aesthetics of the Emirati architecture but also applies the same principles of orientations, courtyards, airflow studies, and shading."

One subtle way of cooling the air while stylizing the home was the use of latticework over windows; it not only made for a privacy screen and helped with shade but also cooled the air as it rushed into homes.



Aparna C. says: "Mesh patterns on exterior walls as a cooling method, building orientation based on the sun path, verandahs, porches, and courtyard, are some of the examples of traditional architecture which can be incorporated in modern designs in skyscrapers as well as low rise buildings."

While the first lessons on ingenuity were undoubtedly the result of our forefathers' study of architecture, physics, and elements, today, we can use technology to fine-tune these elements and integrate the structures into modern constructs.

DSA Is Dedicated to Doing More With Less

Founded in 1985 with the establishment of Ridler Shepherd Low Architects (RSL Architects) in Johannesburg, South Africa, DSA as it stands today is a company evincing massive developments in scale, scope, and diversity.

“We have delivered projects in over 30 countries around the world, whilst providing the highest levels of creativity, innovation and technical excellence as standard, and consistently pushing the boundaries of new technology and innovation,” relates Scott.

“This is always with a recognition and appreciation of the local history, culture, and a sense of place from one location to the next. Our core principle is to provide design solutions that offer a clear sense of place relating to their location and cultural traditions.”



This ethos has been of central importance to the successful delivery of landmark, sustainable buildings, and environments across the globe from strategic locations in the Middle East, Africa, Europe and Asia.

“With a unique passion and ‘can do’ approach, we combine international expertise with local knowledge to realise signature projects, from creative inception through to completed handover.”

This ethos has been of central importance to the successful delivery of landmark, sustainable buildings, and environments across the globe from strategic locations in the Middle East, Africa, Europe and Asia.

On an interview with Tommy Atkinson from Energy Focus magazine, DSA Group Managing Director, Mike Scott, explains how we adhere to responsible innovation for two of our projects, the Cap Vermell Grand Hotel in Mallorca, Spain and Hyatt Regency Erbil Residences.

“Designs that fully consider the use of eco-friendly materials, energy conservation and waste reduction are always our goal.”

RESPONSIBLE INNOVATION

According to Scott, this commitment is integral to DSA's core business, and becomes an even more acute focus as time goes on with a number of key developments having recently emerged.

“Obviously, with many of our major projects being hospitality-driven we are mandated to generate a portion of our own energy, from our own lot through some form of renewable energy. In Portugal and Spain, for example, we are no longer allowed to heat external swimming pools without using a renewable source - the last work we undertook in Cap Vermell Grand Hotel in Mallorca, Spain saw us tasked with producing 10% of our energy consumption onsite in order to comply.

“Lately we have been increasingly using geothermal as an option on a domestic scale, in upmarket housing,” he describes as one element of DSA's response, “in order to support air conditioning systems for heating and cooling. It is not yet sufficient to provide for the hot water as well - although we do achieve some heat recovery on the AC return pipework - instead we use photovoltaic panels to heat the water, which means that for this too we have a renewable source of energy, a combination that represents a typical approach and framework for us going forward.

“It is inarguable that geothermal is an expensive solution as an investment,” Scott recognises, “but in the long-run with regards returns there are no general, additional costs. This is dependent on the location around the globe of course, as we are entirely reliant on what we are gaining naturally from the earth itself, but we are able to go down between 90-120 metres with our boreholes which then provides the requisite energy for the heat or cooling systems to function from that.”

There has been a veritable litany of similar initiatives which Scott relays, all of varying degrees of complexity in their implementation and integration.



“We have also used wind turbines in the past although these are, it goes without saying, somewhat more difficult to conceal than most things which we aim to do where possible. When it comes to PV panels, for example, we avoid where possible sticking them onto the outside of buildings. It is a constantly evolving science, though, and already there is the option with very modern buildings to use vertical wall panels, akin to those promoted previously by Tesla, which we are anxious to explore.”

“Pellet power is another area that holds promise for us, in using wood pellets to heat water, and this is in fact how we accomplished the 10% target at the Cap Vermell Grand Hotel project.” Such a staunch and all-encompassing dedication to this duty has attracted the attention of a wealth of likeminded companies.

MORE WITH LESS

“We have several U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Accredited Professionals among our team, and we use their experience and know-how to challenge ourselves to search for creative solutions focusing on optimum technical performance through the life cycle of the building,” Scott summarises. LEED provides a framework for healthy, efficient, carbon and cost-saving green buildings, a globally recognised symbol of sustainability achievement backed by an entire industry of committed organisations and individuals paving the way for market transformation.

“Good building practice is about doing more with less and DSA believes that low-energy design should be the product of appropriate building analysis and design solutions, with the incorporation of common sense sustainable principles,” says Scott, and this ethos of good sense and prudence really need not entail a full-scale operational overhaul or a complete shift in thinking.

“It is really as simple as designing only with materials that are readily available, to begin. If you start importing from all over the world this means great difficulty in achieving those key LEED requirements. It is about going back to designing sensibly, with the materials at your disposal.”

“It is where LEED, and Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) - the environmental assessment method for buildings and communities - come into their own to engender long-term benefits to running costs, helping the client to make key decisions and present ways in which to reduce the overall cost and footprint of the building.”

“In the hospitality industry, a lot of the time we are trying to create an environment that has a certain image and style,” Scott adds, “so to then add a tower behind that vista with a wind turbine sitting atop it is likely to jar somewhat. Especially in five-star hotels clients simply do not wish to see that, nor photovoltaic panels, but they do want to know that we are doing everything we can to save energy. There is a real disjunction there.”

One of these landmark five-star developments for DSA has been the Hyatt Regency Erbil Residences and the launch of its 93 stylishly furnished serviced apartments. DSA Architects International was appointed in 2017 to complete and transform the previous residences, to meet all the expectations of its Hyatt branding embodied by vibrant, luxury hotels where lifestyle meets select service.

With the residences' adjoining 204-guestroom hotel Hyatt Regency Erbil set to open in 2026, DSA's involvement ranged from consultation on the apartments to the redesign and fitting out of the public areas and back of house to create modern, long-stay business-orientated accommodation.



“On this project we coordinated with interior designers, taking on their proposals and seeing them through to construction that included high-quality bespoke furniture,” Scott concludes.

“The development is ideally placed to fulfil the Hyatt Regency mission of bringing people together and fostering connections, a vital role in an uncertain world. Working on this project gave us all an insight into another culture, a lively world well worth seeing which we got to know through this project.”

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