

# Wa International marks its 20th anniversary

## Design firm to showcase award-winning projects at Dubai event

INTERNATIONAL hospitality interior design firm, Wa International turns 20 this year and will celebrate its 'coming of age' at CityScape Global 2013 in Dubai this month. Exhibiting at the real estate event for the 11th year, Wa International will showcase some of its past award-winning hotel designs ranging from Al Maha Desert Resort and Spa to the One&Only The Palm Dubai, as well as its latest five-star projects spanning across countries like Argentina, Azerbaijan and Dubai.

Years before Dubai became globally renowned for luxury hotels, Wa International began its quest to change the face of hospitality design in the region. Two decades on, with 40,000 bedrooms in 66 high-profile hospitality projects across 25 countries, Wa International has become a name synonymous with quality, innovation and award-winning design.

Celebrating its 20th anniversary this year, Wa International, which began as a team of just four, has grown into a company with 15 nationalities, and a team of 41 associates and interior design specialists.

Winners of numerous international awards for projects such as One & Only The Palm and The Address Downtown Dubai, Wa International boasts a portfolio of stylish and iconic projects both locally and internationally. The more recent completion of the JW Marriott Absheron, a flagship property in Baku, Azerbaijan was the recent recipient of the award for Best Hotel-Europe at the International Hotel Awards in London 2012-1013 and silver awards at Illumni Infinity Award for Hospitality Lighting. These properties and subsequent awards have succeeded in positioning Wa International firmly on

the global design map.

Lead by design director, Claire Craig, Wa International believes that just as no two clients have the same requirements, no two design solutions have the same approach. And evidence of this philosophy is apparent in every one of Wa International's design projects over the past 20 years.

Claire and her senior associates Joey Samera and Helen Skea are intuitive designers with an appreciation of history, culture and the latest trends.

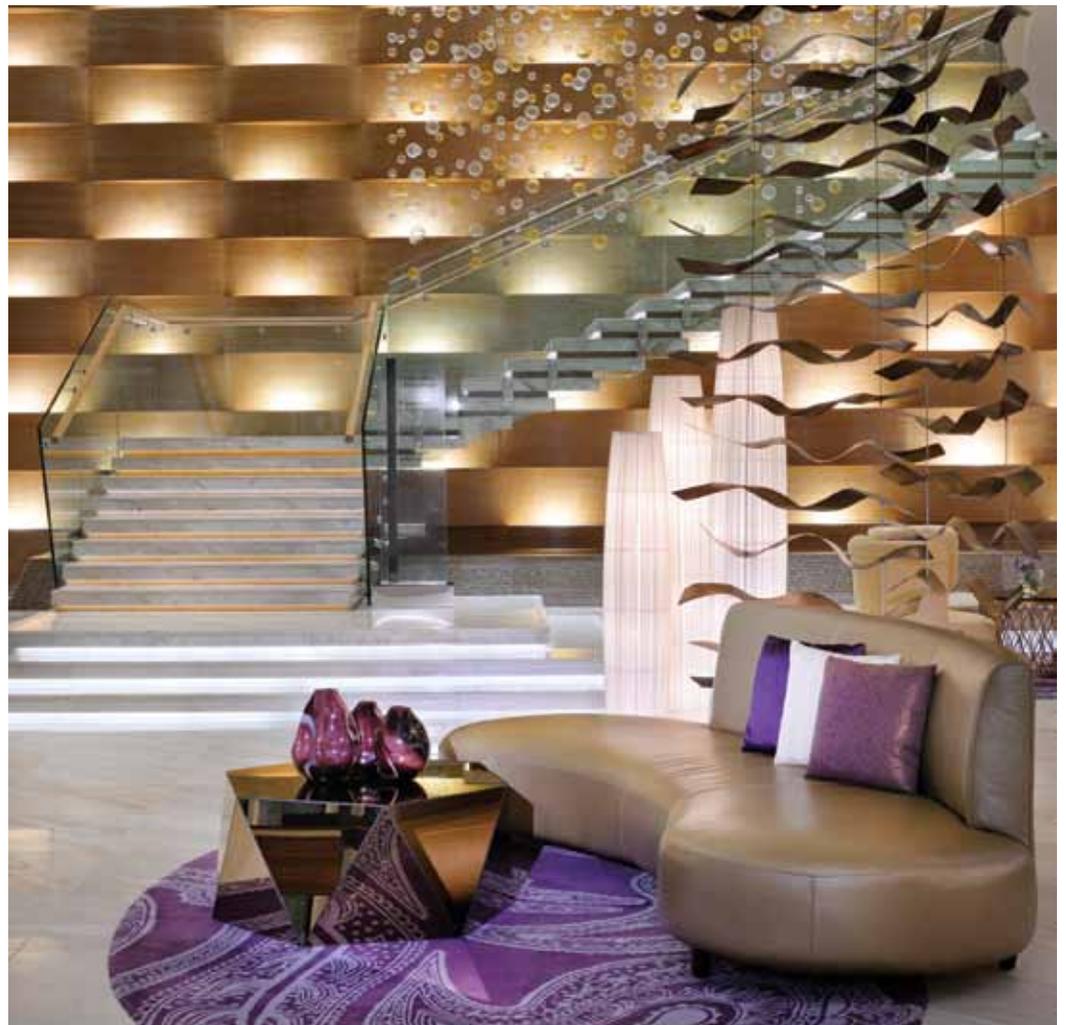
"The complexity of the culture

and its indigenous architecture in every country we work in, is always our first inspiration as each project is designed individually with no standard template. We begin every project with intense research into its location, delving into its historical past and present including the surrounding landscape; always ensuring that the latest trends are appreciated but a unique perspective is introduced," said Craig.

Revealing more about the company's future plans and projects in development, she said: "We have two luxury ski resorts in Azerbaijan

which are already well underway. Located in the north-east corner of mount Shahdag part of the Caucasus range, both hotel resorts are due to open in the latter part of 2013. Also under construction and due to open within a year from now are a Starwood Luxury Collection property, a Marriott and a Park Hyatt in Zanzibar."

Combined with a desire to push boundaries in design, the future has a great deal to hold for Wa International as a driving force in the design of hotels and resorts across the globe.



**Award-winner:** JW Marriott Absheron in Baku