

One&Only Royal Mirage

Dubai, UAE

Award winning Dubai based interior design firm, Wa International, creates a new look for one of the world's top luxury resorts – the One&Only Royal Mirage...

The One&Only Royal Mirage is located on the tranquil shores of the Arabian Gulf. Within this expansive beautifully landscaped 65-acre property, three distinctive One&Only resorts exist: The Palace, The Residence & Spa, and The Arabian Court.

Wa International were appointed to create a new look for all three properties consisting of almost 400 guestrooms 63 suites and 2 Royal suites. The Palace lobby lounge, the executive lounge, Celebrities restaurant & bar and Eauzone restaurant & bar have also undergone major refurbishments.

Their inspiration for the refurbishment came from the dramatic Arabian architecture of the three properties. Wa International introduced new arabesque inspired built-in features such as etched mirrors and screened mashrabiya niches with ottoman patterns. Creating interiors which express a timeless glamour was also their motive when sourcing and designing furniture pieces as well as deciding the colour palette. Soft creamy white damasks were used on the larger upholstery pieces establishing the perfect understated background. To excite the senses,

vivid colourful accent cushions, jewel tone lamps and contemporary accessories have been precisely placed throughout.

Fabrics sourced from exclusive Fabric Houses such as Pierre Frey, Osborne & Little and Jab perfectly compliment One&Only's uniqueness. Custom designed lamps from Heathfield and Preciosa also compliment One&Only's individual style. Deep pile axminster carpets and handtufted loose rugs were also designed by the Wa International team to once again ensure One&Only's distinctive style.

For the redesign of the glamorous Celebrities Restaurant and Bar and the casual Eauzone Restaurant and Bar, Wa International created two very different venues. Celebrities exudes mystique and romance, huge turquoise blue crystal chandeliers adorn this classic contemporary interior. This is the place Royals, Presidents and Celebrities dine.

Eauzone is the complete opposite. This casual comfortable venue has been completely reinvented. Backlit glass painted walls with abstract seaweed imagery provides the overall background to this savvy interior. Finishing touches are yet to be unveiled to this very chic Dubai destination.

One&Only Royal Mirage, Dubai
Interior Design: Wa International
Brand: One&Only
www.oneandonlyresorts.com



Design Director, Claire Craig of Wa International speaks to Can Faik about the great opportunity she had in transforming the world renowned One&Only Royal Mirage, Dubai...

Tell me about your role at Wa International and your role while working at the Royal Mirage?

As Design Director for Wa International I am involved in all

our projects during concept and planning stage with our Associates and Senior Designers.

With the Royal Mirage refurbishment which we have been involved with for the past 4 years I was involved throughout, working with two of our talented FF&E designers Stephanie Blocher and Wioletta Kusmierska.

What was it like working on the One&Only Royal Mirage, Dubai?

Olivier Louis the General Manager of the One&Only Royal Mirage is an absolute delight to work with. He has impeccable taste and appreciates quality design.

What was the inspiration behind the redesign concept of the One&Only Royal Mirage, Dubai?

The dramatic Arabian architecture of the three properties: The Palace, The Residence and The Arabian Court, was our primary inspiration. We wanted however, to update the original interiors with unique furniture pieces which still maintained a somewhat classic appeal but reinterpreted in a fresh new way. We also made subtle adjustments to the interior architecture of all the rooms and suites by using etched mirror panels, arabesque screened niches and a creamy white colour palette with bold colourful accents.

How long has the refurbishment taken? And was it

completed while the hotel was still open to guests?

As previously mentioned we have been refurbishing the One&Only Royal Mirage for the past 4 years. Most of the noisy works have taken place over the summer month's which is Dubai's low season. All three properties have various wings of rooms which could be closed individually but the hotel never completely closed.

Have you noticed any particular trends in hotel interior design?

Although this is not a new trend but more an evolving trend, it is the function of the traditional lobby lounge. These areas are now used for checking-in, eating, drinking, reading, business meetings, surfing the net, watching a film on your iPad, even skypeing and checking-out. The traditional lobby lounge has become the heart of the hotel. They are larger with much more seating and numerous functions all happening at the same time. Our inspirational story for the interior design concept of all our hotels begins in the entrance lobby and lobby lounge.

How many people did you work with on the design project?

The team was myself, Stephanie Blocher, Wioletta Kusmierska and our art consultant Thuraya Kamber. To present our ideas, rendered plans and elevations were produced in house by Edwin Ting and Sheila Calalang and visuals were produced by Eiland a wonderful artist who still produces lovely watercolour paintings for us. Siddhesh Raut produced the detailed drawing packages and also project managed all three property refurbishments.

What has been your highlight while working on this project?

The highlights for me have been the wonderful compliments we have received from Olivier, his team and his returning guests.

Were there any challenges faced?

For The Palace it was craning in a ½ ton marble bathtub into one of the Royal Suites on the 3rd floor of the building. Inspecting furniture in unairconditioned spaces during the hot Dubai summer months can also be quite exhausting but it's a challenge we all enjoy.

Have you noticed any particular trends in hotels in Dubai?

The popular raw concrete venues seen throughout the world have, of course also reached the Dubai shores. Our challenge is recreating an authentic, aged, stripped-out space in a building that's probably not more than 10 years old.

What would be your dream hotel project?

We have just completed two Ski resorts in the Caucasus Mountain range of Azerbaijan which were definitely on my list of dream projects. Destination resort properties anywhere.

What's next for the One&Only Royal Mirage, Dubai?

During the summers of 2013 and 2014 we also refurbished Celebrities and Eauzone both bars and restaurants at One&Only Royal Mirage. We have just been asked to refurbish more areas. Our team are presently busy researching for the new 'look'.