

ARCHITECTURE, DESIGN, INTERIORS + PROPERTY

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The Power Issue
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WORDS – ANEESHA RAI

This year, we celebrate the interior designers, architects and product designers from the region on our radar; from emerging talent to the visionaries and the global firms with local presence. We uncover the projects past, present and their aspirations for the future in shaping the region's design landscape.





Claire Craig, Design Director WA International

WA International is a Dubai-based award-winning interior design studio of luxury hotels and resort properties worldwide, with over 20 years of experience in the hospitality market. Established in 1993, the firm has worked with top hotel and resort brands in Dubai, London, Abu Dhabi, Bahrain, Riyadh, Luxor, Mumbai, Buenos Aires, Addis Ababa and Zanzibar to name a few. With a focus on timeless interiors, the firm has built a reputation of innovation, originality, and exceptional style. The talented team brings diversity of experience, fresh perspectives, and excellent technical expertise.

Noteworthy projects include the Park Hyatt Zanzibar, where the firm undertook the restoration of a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and the Park Chalet Autograph Collection and Pik Palace Autograph Collection in Azerbaijan, drawing inspiration from the majestic Caucasus Mountains for both resorts. Among the firm's latest projects is the Ngorongoro Lodge Meliá Collection in Tanzania, which is particularly exciting as it lies on the edge of a crater. "Due to its remote location on the edge of the Ngorongoro Crater, restoring and refining existing features was our conscious decision," shares Craig. "Considerable replanning of all the interiors also exposed the unique qualities of the existing structure." The firm has also completed over 20 hotels, resorts and branded apartments in Dubai including One&Only The Palm, The St. Regis Downtown Dubai and Sofitel Dubai The Obelisk.



Looking ahead, 2025 promises to be another fascinating year for WA International, with several projects underway. "We always love working on projects in locations with clients who share our view of designing destinations which celebrate the local culture and complements its natural environment. We have several exciting projects we are working on at the moment which includes properties in Luxor, Jaipur, Lusaka, Saudi Arabia and Dubai," shares Craig. On being asked what empowers Craig and her team, she shares, "The embodiment of enthusiasm, energy and inspiration provided by our clients and their trust and confidence in us to deliver their vision." When being asked what the firm's house style is, Craig shares, "It's always been about respecting our clients' brief and creating spaces that people love to visit and spend time in."