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THE MAGAZINE OF
SUSTAINABLE FLOORING
AND DESIGN

hospitality

DESIGN SOLUTIONS

BROADLOOM
is still big business

Specifying TILE for
STYLE

HBA:
designing
the world's
luxury hotels

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SPRING 2014



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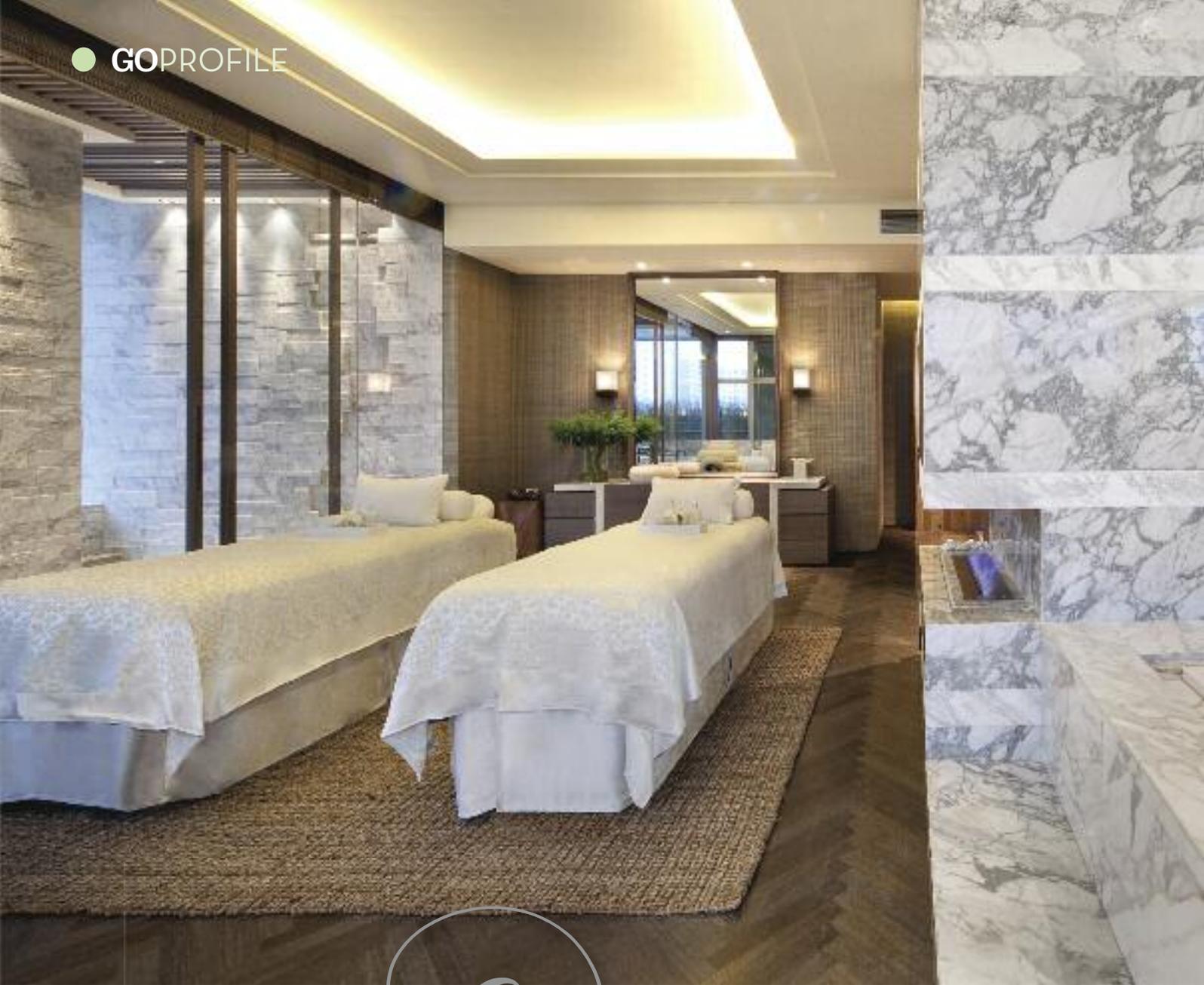
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HBA:

Luxury

BY LIZ SWITZER

Renowned hospitality design firm Hirsch Bedner Associates (HBA) has, since 1964, created some of the world's most admired luxury brand hotels, resorts and spas, casinos and cruise ships.

HBA's competitive edge, firm principles said, comes from being finely attuned to ever-changing industry trends in equal measure with the ultimate objective, which

is to add value and raise standards while enhancing a project owner's brand. Its international presence, deep experience and vast industry knowledge enables its architects and designers to identify design trends at the source - the sophisticated traveler - and ultimately define design standards at a global level, creating signature looks for today's luxury brands.

With more than 1,200 designers around the globe in 16 offices, and recent expansions in Asian and U.S. markets, HBA now has locations in Los Angeles, Atlanta, San Francisco, London, Hong Kong, Beijing, Shanghai, Tokyo, Singapore,



DEFINED

Melbourne, New Delhi, Dubai, Moscow, Istanbul, Bangkok and Manila.

As far-flung as HBA's many designers and architects may be, they all embrace the same hospitality design philosophy: to create a unique sense of place that is the result of a unique response to location, architecture and client vision. The work ethic and corporate culture embraces

those who are committed to perform effectively in order to provide clients with the ultimate in well-conceived, innovative design solutions, and the result is nothing short of visionary hospitality design.

"HBA has been a leading force within hospitality design for decades, and with that comes a huge responsibility as everyone's eyes are on us to see - and judge -

Despite having 16 offices around the world, the HBA design philosophy is consistent: provide clients with innovative design solutions that are nothing short of visionary. From left: HBA blended wood and marble in the spa treatment rooms at the Grand Hyatt Shenyang in northern China, while the Four Seasons Guangzhou lobby features a thoughtful and artistic integration of the building's ultra avant-garde interior spaces.

what we produce," said HBA partner Christiane Kaalund. "To be in the limelight ensures we go the extra mile to provide the very best design and the very best service, as we are primarily in the service industry. This sets us apart from the philosophy of many design firms and gives us the opportunity to excel in what we know

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 how to do. With experience also comes a deep understanding of how to make a client happy, which is a main focus and a big part of HBA's philosophy."

HBA projects are unique in that they are a materialization of the company's constant pursuit of being a creative incu-

bator for its employees. Confident in its experience from opening over 1,000 hotels, HBA encourages its 1,200-plus designers to take calculated risks that build upon a foundation of architectural and design theory while challenging antiquated industry standards. "In its diversity, our internal creative communities

reveal an experiential ballet of solid design solutions that directly reflects the variety of design aesthetics of our extensive portfolio," said Darryl Long, HBA associate. "True design is most beautiful when it is least regulated."

But hospitality design is an area in which the design and architecture industry is just scratching the surface. Historically, much of the design solutions and responsibilities have weighed heavily on the building's architecture and the overall MEP functionalities and systems. "We are consciously and strategically paying more attention with regard to influencing the building elevations and their geographic relationships," Long said. "We are taking a different approach to guest room planning in order to bring natural light into otherwise dead zones. And we are utilizing reflective and refractive materi-

als in unorthodox manners as a vehicle for light in natural daytime conditions."

This sense-of-place design aesthetic dovetails with sustainable design efforts as HBA uses "every opportunity" to specify reclaimed materials (architectural materials, flooring, casework, woodworks, etc.) and adhesive materials that exceed environmental standards, Long added.

HBA is also pursuing LEED accreditation on several projects in the U.S. market where the firm is broadening its presence. In March 2013, HBA launched an integrated, budget-conscious Studio division in the U.S., following successful launches of model Studios in Shanghai and New Delhi. The new Los Angeles-based division works on a wide range of projects from small- to medium-sized hotels, resorts, private residences, restaurants, nightclubs and offices.

"For budget-driven hospitality projects in the U.S., the multi-disciplinary approach gives owners the ability to outsource and completely streamline project execution while maintaining greater control over project schedules and budgets," said David Dunphy, principal of Studio in Los Angeles. "All of this can happen while still providing excellent design that relates directly to the bottom line."

HBA FAST FACTS

World's largest design firm

- 49** years of designing hotels
- 16** offices in 13 countries
- 1,200** employees worldwide
- 1,250** completed hotel projects
- 90** hotels designed in 2013
- 30** resorts designed in 2013
- 50** restaurants designed in 2013
- 245** projects designed in 2013



Studio HBA will fill a void in the U.S. hospitality market by offering an array of design services for mid-tier and limited-service hotel projects – both areas that are experiencing strong growth. Studio, in fact, is “doing very well and is in expansion mode,” Dunphy said. “We are hiring and have just opened Studio offices in Atlanta, Dubai, Beijing and Melbourne to augment our U.S. presence here in Santa Monica and existing offices in Singapore, Shanghai and New Delhi.”

In the U.S., HBA is working on two new hotels in Santa Monica, one at the end of Route 66 and another near the Santa Monica Pier. They are a Courtyard Marriott and Hampton Inn, both LEED Gold projects. For the Courtyard Santa Monica, the flooring in the public spaces will most likely be a stain directly applied over a concrete slab to save in both transport and installation of new materials. In the Hampton Inn, HBA is proposing terrazzo flooring made with recycled marble content.

The firm is also doing a new 44-unit luxury extended-stay project called Plaza La Reina just off Wilshire Blvd. in Westwood in the classic Mission style of Old California, as well as a full renovation of the existing Hilton Woodland Hills Hotel.



Studio is known for its ability to take hotel brands normally known for being prototypical and repetitious and create unique solutions that interpret required brand functionality while being tailored, cutting-edge solutions, Dunphy said. Both the Courtyard and Hampton Inn Santa Monica are examples of this approach and have been conceived as virtual boutique hotels.

“So, ultimately, with much hard work over a few continents and a few crossed fingers, the point is to start with something so simple as not to seem worth starting, and to end with something so paradoxical that no one will believe it,” Long said.

FROM LEFT: The Four Seasons Hotel Shenzhen’s FOO restaurant is accessed via a floor-lit entrance with a contemporary wire sculpture above; the Alpina Hotel in the Swiss village of Gstaad employs weathered reclaimed timber throughout the building, and the Il Lago St. Petersburg restaurant’s interior design features a unique column/chandelier in the form of a weeping willow tree with a trunk made of selenite, with swaying branches represented by pendants.