BOUTIQUE design

HOSPITALITY REINVENTED

DECEMBER | 2019

COLLECTIVE SOUL

GREG BRADSHAW, KRISTINA O'NEAL, ADAM FARMERIE, WILLIAM HARRIS

AVROKO

WINNER

FAIRMONT MALDIVES SIRRU FEN FUSHI

SHAVIYANI ATOLL, REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES

THE DESIGN FIRM: Hirsch Bedner Associates (HBA), Singapore

THE MUSE: Everyone's day dream—getting stranded on a deserted island. If you did, what are a few things you'd hope to find? How about an open-air restaurant with an all-bamboo bar that makes you feel like you're submerged in an effervescent glass of champagne? Or maybe a 200-m. swimming pool that traverses the length of the island? So much yes...

The Fairmont Maldives is a 120-villa love letter to the country's 1722-sq.-ft. Sirru Fen Fushi island, penned by HBA in Singapore. Guests can choose their experience, from a beachfront retreat to an over-water hideaway or even a jungle-tented villa. All feature furniture and finishes inspired by found objects and natural ecosystems discovered by the team as they walked the shores, including fishing nets, locally woven baskets and wood carvings. These translated into elements such as the woven headboards that flow from the ceiling, hand-troweled plaster walls and artfully-knotted ropes that hold glowing glass balls throughout the resort. Pops of copper and turquoise throughout are subtle reminders (as if you need them) of the majesty of the ocean and the sun.

THE MAGIC: Keeping the great escape great. The extreme seclusion was both a blessing and a challenge as, with nowhere to go, HBA had to make sure guests stayed as enraptured over a week or more as they did the first moment they stepped off that 55-minute seaplane ride from the Maldivian capital of Malé. That meant telling the island's story, with spaces like the resort center that houses local craft and art pieces, as well as an olfactory cabinet displaying indigenous herbs and historically-traded spices that can be found in the guestroom amenities.

THE MAVERICK MOVE: A mind-bending, semi-submerged tidal gallery of 16-ft.-tall sculptures constructed from more than 500 "starfish" constructed from ceramics that are non-toxic, marine-grade compounds, free from pollutants and designed to attract fish and crustaceans. Land, sea and art collide in the Coralarium—conceptualized by British environmentalist and eco-artist Jason deCaires Taylor—as the installation's hard shells catch and hold biomass which encourages coral larvae to attach and thrive, bringing each structure "to life."

THE MESSAGE: Barefoot luxury is in the eye of the beholder, as is the theory of indulgence. While many restaurants offer dining near the shoreline, HBA also offered a more edgy option in the robatayaki Japanese restaurant. A fabric ceiling flows from above, and a feature mosaic wall is inspired by Yakuza tattoos.

SOURCES

OWNER: Ian Lien; **OPERATOR:** Accor, Issy-les-Moulineaux, France; **DESIGN FIRM:** Hirsch Bedner Associates (HBA), Singapore: Robbyn Carter, partner; Jolina Quirol, project director; **ARCHITECT:** SCSY Studio, Singapore; **PURCHASING COMPANY:** Cairncross Martin, Sydney, Australia: **GENERAL CONTRACTOR:** Zinta Lanka Holdings, Sri Lanka; **DESIGN CONSULTANTS:** Canvas Art Consultants (HBA), HBA Graphic Studio, Singapore (art); **ART & ACCESSORIES:** Canvas Art Consultants; **BATH & SPA:** Kohler; **FABRICS:** sourced by Zinta Lanka Holdings; **FLOORCOVERINGS:** sourced by Zinta Lanka Holdings; **FURNITURE:** manufactured by Zinta Lanka Holdings; **LIGHTING:** BO STEIBER; **SIGNAGE:** HBA Graphic Studio; **SURFACING MATERIALS:** sourced by Zinta Lanka Holdings; **WALLCOVERINGS:** sourced by Zinta Lanka Holdings; **WINDOW TREATMENTS:** sourced by Zinta Lanka Holdings

WILL PRYCE