



LIGHT + BUILDING PREVIEW

DARC'S WOMEN OF LIGHT

LINDSEY ADELMAN





## Mesmerising Mondrian

The Mondrian Doha in Qatar is a five-star destination designed by **Marcel Wanders** and operated by global hospitality company sbe. The interior draws on local knowledge and exhibits innovative materials and techniques, while using bespoke designs and Wanders' signature style to create a truly holistic, sensual and memorable experience.

The Mondrian Doha is the first of three hotels set to open in the Middle East from lifestyle hospitality company sbe. Introducing the Mondrian brand to the region for the first time, the lavish 270-room hotel has been designed in collaboration with world-renowned Dutch designer Marcel Wanders, along with South West Architecture, which was responsible for the design of the building. Guests can choose from five distinctive room categories including a penthouse suite, studio suites, one and two bedroom suites and a range of standard guest rooms, all of which share the universal design details of Swarovski crystal chandeliers and sumptuous bespoke furniture hues to mirror the desert.

The hotel incorporates bespoke Marcel Wanders design features with influences from the beauty of local patterns, ornate Arabic writing and historic souks. Standout

elements include giant columns with golden eggs, a 'tree of life' comprised of flowers, falcon video art, giant shisha patterned carpets, ornate stained glass and intricate mosaic tiling.

Speaking with **darc** about his involvement in the project, Wanders says: "I was approached by sbe and Sam Nazarian and they were very involved in the process and clear in what they wanted from the start. When working so closely with a client you have to position yourself in a unique way. It has to be totally collaborative, with as little hierarchy as possible. In the case of this project, it was particularly challenging because we were bringing so many elements of the culture and we had to agree on what would be the best representation of the region and the best ways to feature it. "The opportunity set before us was to create an incredible destination for international and local travellers alike. They

wanted a luxurious destination hotel where all of the guests' desires would be catered to, as well as a fantastic destination for the locals to experience the culinary venues. With eight restaurants and bars - some of which are entirely new to Qatar, Middle Eastern cuisine is at the heart of Mondrian Doha's food and beverage offering, along with internationally renowned chefs. "The client worked alongside us to help design within this thriving artistic region, brimming with innovation and possibilities. The challenge was to get people to be on the same page... I allowed everything in the local culture to influence and affect me in a personal way - from customs to clothing styles to architecture and even language. The region is so rich with heritage that it brought a heightened sense of reverence and responsibility to this project. Design is all about passion and there is no creation without emotion... The end result is a



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destination where guests never have to leave because all of their desires are met.” The essence of One Thousand and One Nights, a collection of Middle Eastern folk tales and stories, has influenced the design of the space, which is detail-orientated and complex, with a number of facets, levels and layers. Structurally the building is shaped like a falcon, with many references to the national bird of Qatar also found inside. “The client helped us define how the city has grown immeasurably over the past few years, transforming itself from a modest fishing village into a global visionary capital.

With the concept of One Thousand and One Nights storytelling as our guide, we created a hotel that is sensitively rooted in local Arabic culture and the embodiment of Arabia as experienced through a lens that mirrors the modern reality of Doha.” Within the hotel, guests discover two types of decorative lighting, Wanders and his team included bespoke lighting elements such as the oversized bell lamp in the lobby and the oversized Pillar lamp, alongside this, most of the crystal chandeliers are custom made especially for the project. “As an interpretation of the local culture and art,

the design includes a custom made local lantern with a modern touch,” continues Wanders. “The project would not be complete without the touch of luxury spark sprinkled throughout the hotel. Aside from providing mood lighting, they are also part of the main feature of the interior space.” Four main decorative lighting suppliers were partnered with in the design of the Mondrian Doha; Preciosa created most of the customised crystal chandeliers, Moroccan Bazaar furnished all of the local decorative lanterns and lighting; general decorative lighting throughout was created





by Moooi; and Sia & Moore Architecture were responsible for the Pillar lamp base and shade.

“Regardless of the space in which we are designing, every piece of lighting extends the overall concept,” says Wanders. “This particular project called for a signature feel with international and modern twists. We brought a local feel to a layered experience of beauty, poetry, transparency, complexity and surprise.

“As a whole, the lighting in any interior space we design is meant to guide the guests’ experience. The lighting brings

mood and direction - a visitor’s feelings are informed by the colours, brightness and shadows created. This helps to make guests feel connected to a space and the concept. Lighting can draw your eye, letting you know what to focus on and what to take away from a room or area experience.

“We crafted the Mondrian Doha to be a contemporary classic, with interior settings that feature everything from locally-inspired fabrics and materials to bespoke items that connect to local culture. Conceptually, we have married local culture with a modern design aesthetic. It is a great feeling when

**Opening spread** The Mondrian Doha entrance features a custom designed, oversized bell chandelier from Marcel Wanders.

**This page** 1. The Pillar Lamp by Marcel Wanders greets hotel guests in the atrium. 2. Bespoke made chandeliers adorn the lobby lounge space. 3. One of the standard guest rooms at Mondrian. 4. The female changing room that leads to the hotel's Espa spa.

**Next page** 1. The pool area continues the hotel's aesthetic. 2. Lee Broom Decanter lights bring the Smoke & Mirror bar to life. 3. The conference hall featuring bespoke made chandeliers. 4. A second look at the Smoke & Mirror bar lighting elements.





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the work is finally completed and you have carried a concept from beginning to end. “This project was about guests creating their own collection of a thousand stories during their stay. To help them do that, in the lobby they discover an oversized gold leaf bell with a crystal chandelier that celebrates their arrival.

“In the lounge, we’ve placed a surreal white forest highlighted by giant white ‘Trees of Life’; then in the multipurpose hall, three colours adapt intriguing atmospheres. We placed a striking, custom-designed four-level high spiral staircase in the atrium that leads guests up to a viewing platform. In other places, there are giant columns with golden eggs, falcon video art, ornate stained glass and intricate mosaic tiling placed to inspire feelings of nostalgia.

“I’m so proud of the entirety of the project

and what it means to the people of this region. In staying true to our design and the Mondrian ethos, this hotel has been created to be a fantasy-like environment and a multi-layered sensory experience that at times feels abstract. Each day in this luxury hotel destination will offer a new discovery and the creation of a new memory.”

[www.marcelwanders.com](http://www.marcelwanders.com)

### *design details*

THE MONDRIAN HOTEL, DOHA, QATAR  
CLIENT: SBE  
ARCHITECT: SOUTH WEST ARCHITECTURE  
INTERIOR DESIGNER: MARCEL WANDERS

### *lighting specified*

BESPOKE PILLAR LAMP / BIG BELL & SMALL BELL  
/ ONE MINUTE TABLE LAMPSHADE BY MARCEL  
WANDERS  
VARIOUS BESPOKE CHANDELIERS BY PRECIOSA  
SAINT TROPEZ BOUTIQUE TRADITIONAL ARABIC  
HANGING LAMPS  
FLOS SKYGARDEN; CAN CAN HANG LAMP &  
WALLFLOWER - BY MARCEL WANDERS  
FLOS TAB T - BY BARBER OSGERBY  
FLOS MISS K TABLE LAMP - BY PHILLIPE STARK  
LEE BROOM DECANter LIGHT RANGE  
MOOOI STANDING & TABLE LAMP & PAPER  
CHANDELIER XL BY STUDIO JOB  
MOOOI VALENTINE TABLE LAMP  
MOOOI LOLITA FLOOR LAMP BY NIKA ZUPANC  
MOOOI FAROO BY MARCEL WANDERS  
WALL-MOUNTED DIESEL FOSCARINI CEILING LAMP  
TOM DIXON LUSTRE PENDANT