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spring 2006 | The Spa Issue

Forrest Designs the Alluvian Spa

Ufland Spices Up the Chopra Spa

Hunter's In-Room Spa at the Mayfair

Spa Style Hits the Market

Robert D. Henry Designs a Chameleon: NYC's G Spa & Lounge



Vegas Hits Puberty

We went to three design firms who currently have their hands in the big sand box known as Las Vegas and asked them how and why the city will grow up to become more than just "the strip."

— BY: ANN MARIE MARANO

Clarissa Richardson, Richardson Sadeki



What is your role in the changing landscape of Las Vegas?

I think we have been one of many involved in changing the interior landscape of Las Vegas. Bathhouse Spa at the Hotel at Mandalay Bay that we designed definitely instills a European/New York design aesthetic. It is unexpected in its anti-Vegas approach which is stripped of unnecessary decoration.

How do you feel that your project(s) gives a unique perspective to a city that's constantly reinventing itself?

Bathhouse Spa had a simple client brief: create a spa never seen before in Las Vegas. I think we did that by taking the design of the spa to a purely spatial one, complemented by high-end services and a unique identity.

Why is the city being re-invented now and how can those in the hospitality industry learn from this?

The Las Vegas visitor is becoming more discerning, and now the city has to appeal to a multitude of tastes.

The big, glitzy, fancy hotels most often associated with Las Vegas are a fantastic part of Las Vegas culture.

Now the city is reinventing itself to cater to more sophisticated clientele, such as the cosmopolitan business traveler and people looking at Las Vegas as a destination beyond casinos.

What are some trends you are seeing now/think we will see as the city begins to turn?

The trend is alternative lifestyle and more intimate hospitality design — the boutique hotel model. Las Vegas is becoming a lifestyle and cultural destination moving beyond pure entertainment and gambling. Health, sports, and beauty amenities are tied into this very appealing trend.

Bathhouse Spa

What are some properties you are excited to see build up?

The Hotel at Mandalay Bay was the first of its kind in modeling itself on the boutique hotel model. Visitors want to spend time in their rooms as opposed to the rooms being purely supplemental to the casino.

Project CityCenter which is being developed by MGM will be exciting to see as it moves forward.

What can we expect as far as design/layout goes?

With regards to interiors, more emphasis will be placed on lifestyle-oriented amenities, such as spa facilities.

Hotel room design will become more elaborate as well as in-room amenities. The casino will be another amenity as opposed to the focal point. With regards to exterior architecture, I think an explosion is about to take place. To date, design focus has been on interior space and not on the skyline. With developments like CityCenter et al, I think this is going to change. Las Vegas has the potential of challenging and embracing the notions of architecture — this means anything can happen.

