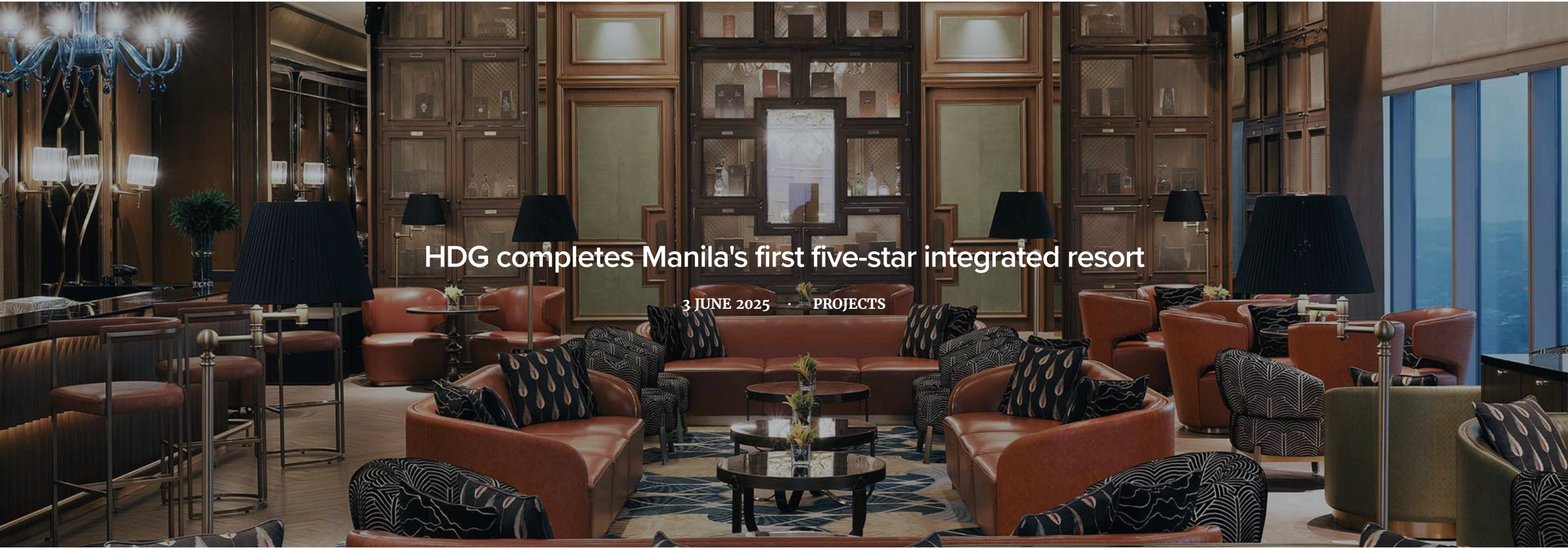
SLEEPER



HDG completes Manila's first five-star integrated resort

3 JUNE 2025 · PROJECTS

The final phase of Solaire Resort North, the Philippines' first five-star integrated resort, is now complete, with interiors by Samantha Drummond and her company Habitus Design Group (HDG).

With a goal to elevate the local economy and reenergise the potential for local and internation tourism in Quezon City – the largest city in Metropolitan Manila – the 38-storey resort was designed by international architects Aedas.

Habitus Design Group was appointed in 2018 as specialists in managing the design of highly complex, large volume spaces requiring connectivity and adjacencies combined with a luxurious, creative aesthetic.

The resulting interior plan includes 530 guestrooms and suites, 14 F&B venues, a 1,800m^2 ballroom, conference and meeting rooms, a spa and gymnasium and pools, as well as a high-end retail avenue and four gaming levels.

Drawing on regional references, the interior experience was designed to contrast with the bustling, crowded, urban experience of modern Manila. Drummond's concept was to create an urban tropical oasis indoors, one that offered a sophisticated world that captivated and had a strong sense of place.



Running through the resort's design is a subtle botanical theme, expressed in intricate details developed in over 12,000 drawings: motifs, materials, patterns, colour palette, lighting and art.

Plants, flowers, fronds, foliage, grasses, seeds, ferns and trees are expressed in wallpapers, sculpture, bespoke chandeliers and specially commissioned art. Natural materials and different textures are found in the tropical hardwood flooring and joinery, locally woven textiles, hand-blown glass, leather detailing and rare marbles.

Drummond's designs are warm and rich, balancing luxury and cosiness by layering details, the artful interplay of texture, colour and scale colliding with occasional surprise elements and dramatic effects, with masterful lighting bringing it all together in harmony.

Arts and crafts were a significant component of the design and used to give an authentic sense of place, with every piece in the complex created by a local artist.

In the reception, counters made from Nero Marquina marble, finished off with an aged gold leaf counter face, and hand-blown crystal chandeliers create a luxury arrival.



The 350 large guestrooms and suites intentionally have a neutral backdrop to create a timeless ambience, allowing carpets, rugs, upholstery, cushions, artwork and lamps to showcase their lively colours, textures and

dramatic patterns.

Suites frame city views from their entrance lobby and are zoned to suit guests' wishes for both privacy and interaction. Natural materials, books and leather evoke a tactile and emotional experience. The art pieces displayed in each suite differ to give each room its own unique style and feel.

To ensure that warmth dominates the suites, Drummond prefers to use timber for flooring: "I love having timber floors. They give a feeling of cosiness, and they feel residential and therefore comfortable."

Bathrooms are luxurious and clad with different marbles, including Dora Grey, Crema Marfil and Fawn Tan. All are generously sized and designed to accommodate at least two people in comfort, with double vanities and bathtubs standard in all.



Lighting is a very considered aspect of the design scheme, adding character, ambience and charm. The chandeliers exemplify the collaborative nature of Drummonds' approach to design, working with outstanding

craftspeople throughout the world to bring her vision to life.

Several custom chandeliers evoke the natural world, including a dramatic steel and bohemian handblown crystal chandelier in amber and golden hues with a seeded texture, developed with and manufactured by Preciosa Lighting.

Another handblown crystal chandelier by Hunat Lighting, conjures the image of autumnal fallen leaves cradled by the wind in the Solaire ballroom, while the amber and red crystal chandelier inspired by eucalyptus leaves in the Dragon Bar was developed with and manufactured by Lasvit Design.

Art also plays a significant role in resort, and the interiors reflect the owner's vision by showcasing Filipino work. In collaboration with Manila-based gallery/creative production group, Tarzeer Pictures, Habitus and Tazeer ensured all art was procured with only local both emerging and established Filapino artists.

"I wanted it have to have a strong Filipino identify and story to it so that guests would know where they were. I wanted it to have an identity and to be authentic," says Drummond. "By using art strategically, it gives you a familiarity and it feels exotic, but you know it's local and there's a story to it."



The focal point of the entire project is ‘Mangrove’ by US-based Nikolas Weinstein; the world’s largest supported glass sculpture at 28.1m long, 35.4m wide and 26.7m tall, weighing 13 metric tonnes, with over

11.3 km of glass tubing.

‘Mangrove’ realises Drummond’s original concept, and is inspired by the intricate root systems of mangrove trees, undulating upwards through the 30-metre-high atrium where it blends into the building’s urban oasis theme, appearing to grow out of the architecture.

As sunlight from the skylight above filters through, it creates a kaleidoscope of hues, enhancing its presence. “When I first saw the atrium, I was captivated by the natural light pouring in from above,” said Weinstein. “My goal was to design a sculpture that reaches for that light, much like a tree, planted firmly at the base yet extending upwards.”

Samantha Drummond emphasises: “Our collaboration embodies the spirit of innovation and artistry that defines Solaire. We believe ‘Mangrove’ will draw guests into an immersive encounter with the beauty of nature in an urban setting and entice visitors into the ground floor space, before their attention is drawn to the upper levels and, as a result, they travel further into the resort’s interiors.”

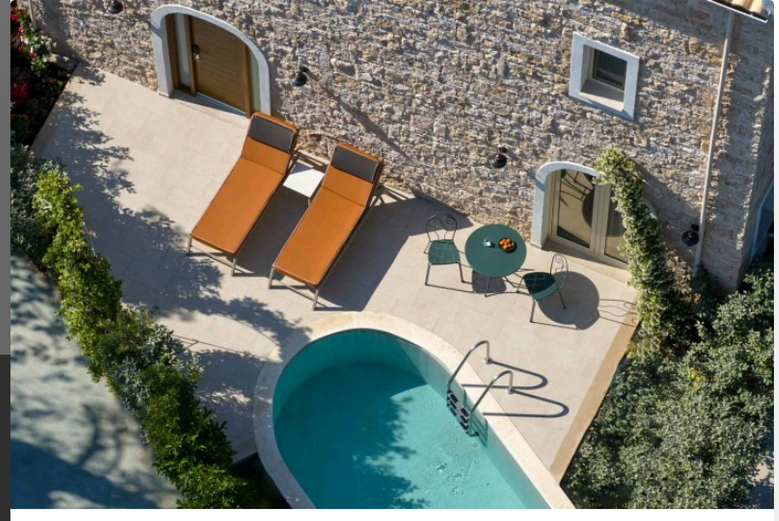
Apart from the piece ‘Mangrove’, all the art in the hotel is by locally based artisans from a wide spectrum of cultural backgrounds, ages and disciplines, from basket weavers to textile makers, to painters, sculptors and potters, often emerging talent that had never had such a platform to showcase their work before.

A large-scale metal sculpture was also created by Bea Valdes of Valdes Designs for the hotel’s porte cochère. ‘Alon’ – meaning wave in Filipino – is an 11m installation that captures the essence and rhythm of the ocean, translating the fluidity of water into the language of metal. With its organic yet structured lines, ‘Alon’ reflects a delicate balance between strength and resilience, mirroring the force, tranquillity, and constancy of the waves.

Now fully completed, HDG's interiors for Solaire North express modern luxury in a way never seen before in the Philippines, creating a game-changing, premium destination for locals and foreign visitors alike.

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