

Lighting a Jewel

The new Bvlgari Hotel & Resort Dubai is the latest jewel in the crown of the luxury designer brand, with a beautiful, understated lighting design from Metis Lighting and Delta Lighting Solutions.

PROJECT DETAILS

The Bvlgari Hotel & Resort Dubai, UAE

Client: Meraas

Architect/Interior Designer: Antonio Citterio Patricia Viel, Italy

Lead Consultant: WSP, UAE

Lighting Design Concept: Metis Lighting, Italy

Lighting Design Development: Delta Lighting Solutions, UAE

Photography: Catalin Marin





Opened in December 2017, the Bvlgari Resort & Residences Dubai is the latest jewel in the designer brand's luxury hospitality collection.

Situated on Jumeira Bay – a manmade island carved into the shape of a seahorse – the 158,000sqm resort was conceived as an 'Urban Oasis' for visitors and residents alike. Designed by Italian architectural firm Antonio Citterio Patricia Viel (ACPV), the resort is a 'first-of-its-kind' development for Bvlgari, both in scale and magnitude. The complex features the hotel building and villas, six residential buildings with 173 sea facing apartments, fifteen private mansions and Bvlgari's first Marina and Yacht Club, and is intended to resemble a traditional seaside village in southern Italy. The architects worked alongside Italian lighting design studio Metis Lighting, who have worked on several projects for the brand, to develop the architectural and lighting design concept for the resort, drawing inspiration from traditional design, combined with Italian architecture and accentuated by Middle Eastern touches. Local firm Delta Lighting Solutions carried out the lighting design development and execution, while Huda Lighting supplied the fixtures and luminaires. Metis Lighting has been working with ACPV and Bvlgari for more than fifteen years, dating back to

the Bvlgari Hotel Milan in 2002, and Marinella Patetta, co-founder of Metis Lighting alongside Claudio Valent, explained how collaborative their work with ACPV is. "The lighting project is launched together with the architectural and furniture design," she said.

"The initial brainstorming involves a two-way exchange of ideas. We often start from sharing initial renderings, so a strong idea for the interior or architecture may guide the lighting proposal, or vice versa: an interesting lighting solution can change details or materials in the project." In creating the lighting design, Patetta explained that Bvlgari has certain design standards and guidelines for the main lighting criteria, such as lighting levels and scenario control, but added that these are not very restrictive and are "totally in line" with ACPV design, meaning that they are fairly easy to adhere to.

Once the lighting design concept was created, Metis and Delta Lighting Solutions worked to ensure that it was implemented effectively. Patetta continued: "Most of our work after the concept is focused on maintaining and developing the initial ideas without substantial variations."

"It may seem to be easy, and some clients believe that our work is finished once the concept is completed. In reality, we are aware that the next step is to manage and solve difficulties and clashes

Previous Page The Bvlgari Hotel's stunning façade is illuminated with Traxon Lighting's Nano Liner Allegro in the coral-esque *brise soleil*.
Above Recurring motifs, such as an eight-pointed star, were used throughout the hotel, as well as in the bespoke, custom-made decorative light fixtures from AggioLight, reinforcing the Bvlgari brand.

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**"When you walk into this hotel,
you get the feeling of luxury
and elegance, but it is done
without being ostentatious"**

Ziad Fattouh, Delta Lighting Solutions







that will arise during the coordination between all consultants and equipment.”

The lighting concept for the resort aimed to recreate the warmth and simplicity of a charming Mediterranean village. The approach was very minimalistic and subtle, with all architectural light fittings, provided by the likes of Traxon, Flos, Light Contract, Lucent Lighting, LED Linear, KKDC, Erco, acdc and Radiant Lighting, concealed and kept in warm colour temperatures.

The remarkable design for the resort features a blend of styles, fusing traditional design, contemporary Italian architecture and Middle Eastern touches, and Patetta believes that Italy’s mixed heritage led to the varied design.

“Italy is a bridge that connects northern Europe to the southern shores of the Mediterranean,” she said. “We are a sort of melting pot, and many influences of Islamic architecture are present everywhere, especially in southern Italy.”

“Furthermore, as architects and lighting designers, we really appreciate some typical elements of Islamic architecture, such as geometric decoration, the contrast of light and shadow, lantern projections and light reflections on water. The specific combination of those elements and their interesting development provided by ACPV’s

interior design was very inspiring for our work.”

Once the lighting design concept was in place, Delta Lighting Solutions was brought in to handle its development and execution. Although joining the project halfway through its development, Ziad Fattouh, Managing Principal of Delta Lighting Solutions, says that he enjoyed the process. “It was a fun project to do even though the concept was defined, and we feel we were able to continue to influence the outcome in the subsequent stages,” he said. “The project’s end result depended strongly on getting the details right, which was achieved through the detailed design stages and three years of post-contract work.”

Patricia Lopez-Yanez, Associate at Delta Lighting Solutions, added: “Our aim was mainly to support in the realisation of the vision by providing our input and lighting design expertise.”

Lopez-Yanez added that, despite coming in once the initial designs and concepts had been completed, there was still room for creativity on her part. “While working on this project, we learned that creativity is not only used in the initial conceptual, artistic phase, but that creativity is essential in developing ideas and turning them into a reality.

“Taking the ideas from the architect and executing them takes a lot of imagination, empathy and dedication. A nice render that has been presented to a client is a dream, and sometimes can be very difficult to recreate.”

The sheer scale and complexity of this project meant that transforming the initial vision into a reality required a lot of collaboration and coordination between the architects, engineers, lighting suppliers and lighting designers. Because of this, Lopez-Yanez and her team had a vital role to play. “The complexity of this project was evident in the design phase, but we got to experience it even more during the site supervision phase, when the design had to be executed by the contractor,” she explained.

“At one point we had daily meetings on site to discuss different details, and if required, come up with solutions on the spot to solve problems, due to time pressure.”

An example of this came in lighting the hotel’s façade. This is defined by a warm glow of coral-like brise soleils or sunscreens made of matt white GRP, which is a reference to traditional shading techniques in the Middle East. As the brise soleils follow an irregular geometry, this made it difficult to integrate the Traxon linear light fittings. As Lopez-Yanez explained: “With over 30

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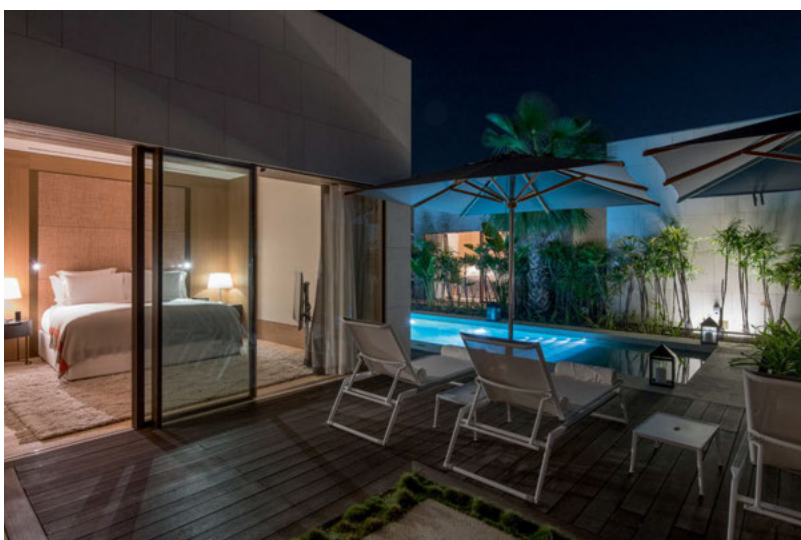
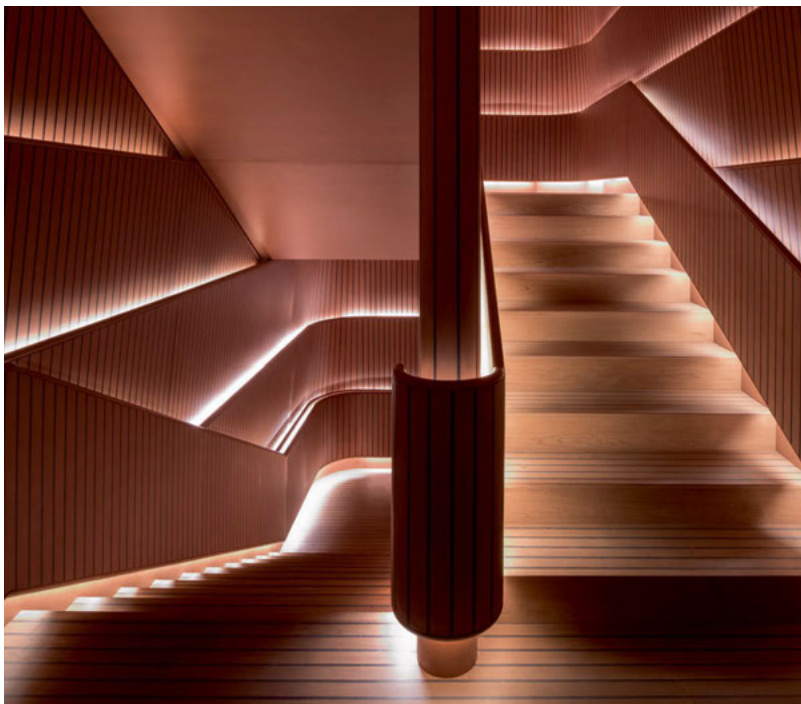
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different variations of the same typical detail, it was one of the most complex exercises, as it required coordination between the architect, engineers, the manufacturer of the brise soleil, and of course the lighting.

“We also faced different challenges in the interior areas where all the architectural fittings were designed to be concealed, so a lot of coordination had to happen between the different contracting teams on site.”

The way in which all parties came together to collaborate on this project is a testament to its success, and Lopez-Yanez feels that this teamwork helped to make what could have been a difficult project a lot easier to complete.

“It was a daunting experience at first, knowing how big and complicated the scale of work was, but we worked with very proactive people who made the design coordination a lot easier,” she said.

“There was a lot of back and forth with the discussions in terms of the design issues we encountered on site and providing optimum solutions for these issues. It was very important though that we met the design expectations of the client while still maintaining the design integrity of the building and its architecture. In this regard, I

believe that we were able to achieve that.”

Alongside the integrated architectural lighting from Osram, acdc, LED Linear, Aldabra and Lini LED, among others, the Bvlgari Hotel & Resort features a number of decorative and bespoke fixtures created exclusively for this project, with custom downlights from Lucent in all guest rooms, custom linear cove lighting from Light Contract, and decorative suspended lights from AggioLight.

Metis Lighting and ACPV designed all the custom elements with clear references to Bvlgari’s brand identity, using motifs such as the eight-pointed star, and the geometric sequence of circles and squares. According to Patetta, these were “conceived almost as if they were ‘jewels’ to catch the eye and enrich the visual experience of the clients”.

“In complete harmony with the interior design, lighting is also used to recall the luxurious and unique character of the Bvlgari brand and bring it to the new hotel’s building,” she added.

Although the resort does feature a number of decorative fixtures and focal points, for the most part the lighting remains minimalistic and subtle, with a hidden warmth. It is this concealed beauty that Patetta feels makes the lighting scheme stand out. “We believe that a lighting project is successful

Previous Page The architectural lighting throughout the hotel was hidden, recessed into the walls and ceiling, creating a subtle, minimal lighting scheme with a hidden warmth.

Far Left With more than 30 different variations of the same typical detail, illuminating the brise soleil was a complex exercise, requiring coordination between the architect, engineers, brise soleil manufacturers and the lighting.

Top Left Linear lighting provided a soft, subtle lighting for the Yacht Club staircases.

Top Right Spot lighting from Flos provided illumination in La Galleria.

Bottom Left Alongside the hotel, the resort also includes villas, six residential buildings with 173 sea facing apartments, fifteen mansions and a Marina Yacht Club.

Bottom Right Statement bespoke decorative pieces from AggioLight provide a focal point amid the hidden architectural fixtures.

PROJECT

Top Linear lighting from Radiant and Aldabra provides a soft, gentle illumination to the hammam spa area, adding to its luxury feel.

Bottom All of the bespoke fittings were designed by Metis Lighting and ACPV with clear references to Bulgari's brand identity, and were "conceived almost as if they were 'jewels' to catch the eye."



LIGHTING SPECIFIED

acdc Galaxy
acdc Iglu
AggioLight bespoke fixtures
Aldabra VIX
Arcluce Inground 110
Arcluce Ray 25
Arcluce Tantum
Baulmann Leuchten
BCM Creta
BCM LED Tube
BCM 2167/U1W-1/3
BCM 3339/TOP80
Flos Black Line
Flos Mini Beam
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when nobody perceives, at first contact with the space, that functional lighting exists," she said. "If you first notice a technical lighting fixture, then the general location, something is not appropriate.

"We consider it a success when a beautiful chandelier draws attention to itself and also seems to light up the room, creating a sophisticated ambiance. In reality, that special atmosphere is due to the presence of countless technical devices."

Fattouh agrees that the subtle use of light adds to the sense of luxury that Metis and ACPV worked to create, adding: "The light was meant to be as discrete as possible, integrated and hidden, and used only to help capture the mood of a space.

"The lighting scheme helps accentuate the richness of the finishes, and creates a sense of drama and luxury. Light was used sparingly and carefully, and only where we needed it, while avoiding the flattening effect of too much ambient light.

"When you walk into this hotel, you get the feeling of luxury and elegance, but it is done without being ostentatious. Instead of using high ceilings and large chandeliers in the lobby to create a sense of luxury, you instead notice the highest quality finishes and the amount of thought put into detailing and integrating things such as light fittings, furniture and so forth.

"When entering the lobby and many other public spaces, one thing that you will not notice are any visible light sources, instead you only see the light effects where needed."

The Bvlgari Hotel & Resort Dubai is the latest in a string of impressive, grand projects completed in the Middle East, and since its opening, it has been labelled as one of the best new luxury hotels in the world, and for Lopez-Yanez, it was exciting to be involved in such a project, particularly in this emerging market.

"The scale of projects in the Middle East never ceases to amaze me," she enthused. "Coming from South America, there were a few 'big' projects like government buildings and airports that I worked on, but in the Middle East the scale of the projects is completely different.

"Architects and designers have come to the UAE to build a new country. The cities are like a blank canvas, where a lot of freedom is given to us to build the biggest and most ambitious architectural pieces."

With their range of hotels, Bulgari's aim is to convey the timeless glamour and heritage of its own Roman jewellery, and thanks in part to its beautiful design, this latest jewel is set to shine for generations to come. ■

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Project: Bvlgari Resort Dubai - Dubai, UAE
Lighting Design Concept By: Metis Lighting
Architecture By: ACPV
Design Practice By: Delta Lighting Solutions



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