



Framing the View

Located on the banks of Yanqi Lake near Beijing, Sunrise Kempinski Hotel pays homage to both landscape and architecture

HK\$48
US\$18
€15



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+ Hirsch Bedner Associates CEO Ian Carr on the company's 50th anniversary

Beyond the ordinary

Text: Peace Chiu Photography: Courtesy of Iniala Beach House

The Iniala Beach House stands apart from other luxury resorts not only for its world class designs by 10 top international designers, but also for giving back to the community



Situated on Natai Beach, just 20 minutes north of Phuket International Airport, is the Iniala Beach House. Mark Weingard, founder of the resort, once owned a house at the site, severely damaged when the devastating tsunami hit the island in 2004.

In rebuilding, Weingard — with his keen design eye — wanted to create a beach resort that fires the imagination of the luxury traveller who has seen everything. So he approached 10 world class designers, who were then given carte blanche to create different spaces with the brief that each room must be out of the ordinary, yet practical and comfortable. The result is a cornucopia of design, fusing

traditional Thai architecture with organic and contemporary forms. Iniala boasts three villas, each with three suites, a living room, dining area, private spa, private pool and large deck area. The resort also has a penthouse, a children's hotel and a fine dining restaurant — Aziamendi — helmed by Eneko Atxa, whose modernist Basque restaurant Azurmendi was the first in Biscay to be awarded three Michelin stars between 2007 and 2012.

The largest of the three villas, the Collector's Villa, features designs by Brazilian designers Campana Brothers, Joseph Walsh from Ireland, Mark Brazier-Jones from New Zealand and Jamie Hayon from Spain.

At the centre of the villa is the Ceramic Courtyard. Its design concept is inspired by Humberto Campana's visit to the Wat Arun temple in Bangkok and the manufacturers of celadon, a traditional Thai ceramic, in Chiang Mai. The courtyard consists of pillars in blue and green celadon with motifs of elephants, flowers and turtles. Over 3,500 pieces were used in the process and 800 man hours were needed to create this finish.

Humberto carried his artisan and ceramic theme into the main living room of the Collector's Villa. Each gable end wall is encrusted with thousands of ceramic plates, cups and bowls, inspired by the use of ceramics in Wat Arun. This space acts as the 'sea', with the room itself looking over an infinity pool and straight onto the azure blue waters of the Andaman Sea.

Top

Each gable end wall of the main living room of the Collector's Villa is encrusted with thousands of ceramic plates, cups and bowls, inspired by Bangkok's Wat Arun temple

Facing page

A view of the Villa Bianca from the beach



Top
Thai designer Eggarat Wongcharit's inspiration for the Andaman and Similan Suites is nature and Thai culture, with the beds and sofas reminiscent of temple stupa, as well as silkworm cocoons

Facing page from top
The Matryoshka Suite is inspired by the Matryoshka, or stacking doll, which is a well-known Russian icon • The floor of the Penthouse is covered in a special green edition of their Cipria sofa.

The special edition Starfish sofa dominates the room and provides a perfect central seating space to relax. The Grinza armchairs and side tables in leather were specially designed for this space. The roof detail is in woven rattan and was inspired by the golden sand from the beach.

Another highlight of the Collector's Villa is a 20-seater cinema, where the Campana Brothers were inspired to create a 'cinema of nature'. Humberto came up with an interior design using coconut matting, an abundant natural material found in Thailand, complemented by a special green edition of their Cipria sofa.

Also designed by the Campana Brothers is the Pearl Spa, an interior inspired by the inside of an oyster. The walls and ceiling of this private spa are covered in mother of pearl,

complemented by gold and bronze furniture and original artwork of Indonesian artist Rocka Radipa.

Walsh created the Carpenter's Chamber in the Collector's Villa and curated some of his finest works to be displayed in the extraordinary space. The centrepiece is the spectacular bed, which is an amazingly fluid sculpture. The room is divided by the exquisite Enigmum wall and the lounge area is perfect for relaxing.

Every room is different and every room is a surprise; that was the inspiration behind the design of the Boudoir by Weingard and Brazier-Jones. Awash with silks, crystal and metallic structures, the space is a sanctuary from the tropical sun with playful and whimsical interiors, as well as a drinks trolley inspired by a vintage motorcycle.

The Owner's Suite, designed by Hayon, was originally Weingard's bedroom. The designer has created a bright and welcoming beach suite with an elegant interior and whimsical details, such as the 'clown' door and lamps. The whitewashed wood and airy feel give this a true beach house feel. The terrace is private and has a sun lounger table and chairs, as well as built-in loungers on the terrace.

The next biggest villa is the Villa Siam, designed by Thai designer Eggarat Wongcharit. It has a contemporary Thai design and is inspired by Thai culture and Buddhism.

For the Lotus Suite, dozens of bronze lotus flower leaves adorn the walls and ceilings above the bed and the artwork in the bathroom depicts the movement of water and fish. This suite has many references to traditional Thai craftsmanship, including hand-cut gold and silver mosaics traditionally found in the temples.





The Andaman and Similan Suites have uninterrupted views of the beach and the turquoise Andaman Sea and a 18m lap pool separates these suites. The Thai designer's inspiration for these suites is nature and Thai culture, with the beds and sofas reminiscent of temple stupa, as well as silkworm cocoons. The ornate bamboo detail adds to the fluid organic nature of these rooms.

Also in the Villa Siam is the Temple Bell Spa, inspired by a Thai temple bell. The dome is covered in gold leaf and inscribed with sacred Buddhist texts translated into English.

Finally, Villa Bianca combines the designs of Russia's Philosophy of Design and Spain's A-cero. The former designed the Matryoshka Suite, inspired by the matryoshka, or stacking doll, a well-known Russian icon. The large round bed takes the doll outline as the headboard, as does the outdoor bath and the chair.

Meanwhile, Joaquin Torres' architectural firm A-cero has created two spectacular and dramatic interiors for two beach-front suites. Each suite has a bed with dramatic proportions and the forms of these beds are inspired by the interior of a shell. A-cero also designed many unique furniture pieces for these spaces including a vanity chest.

The Penthouse is the only one-bedroom accommodation at Iniala and includes a kitchen, living and dining areas, a bedroom and a pool. Upon entering the Penthouse, one immediately feels the floor melt away under your feet as it is covered in a special material that makes one feel like he or she is walking on sand. The centrepiece of the bedroom is a suspended bed in white leather. A collaboration between Weingard and British-born Graham Lamb, Iniala's chief design director, the Penthouse is futuristic, innovative, surreal and sensual.

For little ones, Iniala boasts the Island of Iniala, a kids' hotel designed by children's designer Christopher Jones. Children of all ages can take part in activities in the space such as arts and crafts, outdoor play and cooking classes. There is also an option to sleep over in one of the tree houses or a cave under the watchful eye of Iniala nannies.

According to Danny Drinkwater, CEO of Iniala International, Iniala gives 10 per cent of revenues directly to charitable and community causes through the Inspirasia Foundation, thus benefiting the local community as well as inspiring guests and employees. The foundation is a private strategic philanthropy foundation supporting many health and education projects across Southeast Asia. Inspirasia was set up to help people in Indonesia after Weingard's fiancée Annika Linden was killed in the Bali bombings of 2002. ●



Left from top

Awash with silks, crystal and metallic structures, the Boudoir is a sanctuary from the tropical sun with playful and whimsical interiors, as well as a drinks trolley inspired by a vintage motorcycle • The Temple Bell Spa is covered in gold leaf and inscribed with sacred Buddhist texts translated into English • The centrepiece of the Carpenter's Chamber is a spectacular bed, which is an amazingly fluid sculpture