

BOUTIQUE design

HOSPITALITY REINVENTED

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DYNAMIC DUO

JOHN PRITZKER AND NIKI LEONDAKIS
COMMUNE HOTELS + RESORTS



OUTSIDE IN

Supersized images of natural scenes help create memorable experiences within the walls of two very different Portuguese hotels by interior designer Nini Andrade Silva.

BY MATTHEW HALL

FRONT DESK, SACCHARUM HOTEL RESORT & SPA

NICK BAYNTUM (HOTELS AND ANDRADE)

GUESTS CHECKING into the Saccharum Hotel Resort and Spa on the Portuguese island of Madeira find themselves standing in front of a supersized image of a sugarcane shoot. Some 600 miles away, those entering the Furnas Boutique Hotel Thermal & Spa on Sao Miguel Island within the Azores archipelago encounter a 32-ft.-tall image of a nearby natural wonder, the Salto do Prego waterfall.

Those two spaces are the handiwork of Portuguese interior designer Nini Andrade Silva, whose firm is affiliated with the Saraiva + Associados architecture practice. And in both instances, she was drawing nuanced inspiration from the hotels' respective locales. The sugarcane at Saccharum alludes to the sugarcane mill that once stood on the hotel's site, while the waterfall at Furnas represents "an expression of the enormous power of nature," the designer says.

As with her previous efforts – including the Hotel Vine, also on Madeira Island, and the B.O.G. Hotel in Bogota, Colombia (see *Boutique Design*, November+December 2012, page 78)—these latest two efforts by Silva reflect her knack for balancing the imaginative and the practical.



FRONT DESK, FURNAS BOUTIQUE HOTEL THERMAL & SPA



NINI ANDRADE SILVA
SARAIVA + ASSOCIADOS, INTERIOR
DESIGN BY NINI ANDRADE SILVA

FURNAS BOUTIQUE HOTEL THERMAL & SPA

THE WATERFALL IMAGE in the reception area might make guests crane their neck when they walk into Furnas, but once they look down, they're likely to be entranced by a sinuous white line that runs through the carpet in the reception and lobby areas. That linear focal point reflects the fact that the hotel sits in the midst of one of the highest concentration of thermal hot springs in Europe. "Its undulation symbolizes the lava flow from a volcano, and the color white symbolizes the steam from the springs," explains Silva.

The hotel builds on its access to those hot springs via a thermal circuit of pools, showers, Turkish baths and saunas. As a counterpoint to those vaporous wellness environments, much of



SPA, FURNAS

the rest of the hotel's color palette is given over to browns, greens and blues. "Brown symbolizes the strength of the earth, while green represents nature in general and blue, the surrounding Atlantic Ocean," says Silva.

Also sprinkled throughout the Design Hotels property are subtle references to the island's past. "For example, the importance to the Azorean people of their ancestors' emigration to the Americas is reflected in the placement of such objects as recovered travel chests," says Silva. Further reflecting the hotel's embrace of days gone by is an extensive use of candles throughout, which the designer says serve to "transform the space into something magical."



RESTAURANT, FURNAS

PROJECT PARTICIPANTS

FURNAS BOUTIQUE HOTEL
THERMAL & SPA

OWNER
Explorer Investments

OPERATOR
DHM Discovery Hotel
Management

DESIGN
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Design by Nini Andrade Silva

ARCHITECT
Saraiva + Associados

GENERAL CONTRACTOR
Somague Ediç es Engenharia SA

ART
Nickolas Bayntun

BACK-LIT WALLS
For-arte

CASEGOODS
Costa & Frias SA

**FABRICS/FURNITURE/LIGHTING/
SEATING/TABLES**
Esboço Interiores

FLOORCOVERINGS
SimetriFloor

WALLCOVERINGS
Vescom Portugal



LOBBY, SACCHARUM

PROJECT PARTICIPANTS SACCHARUM

OWNER
AFA - AFAVIAS Engenharia e Construções, SA

OPERATOR
Calhetur Empreendimentos Turísticos e Imobiliários

DESIGN
Saraiva + Associados, Interior Design by Nini Andrade Silva

ARCHITECT
RH + Arquitectos

LIGHTING
Ideia Luminosa
Esboço Interiores

MIRRORS
Italbox

SEATING AND TABLES
Esboço Interiores

WALLCOVERINGS
Vescom Portugal
Dupla DP

SACCHARUM HOTEL RESORT & SPA

THIS HOTEL IS housed in an ultra-modern, layer cake-like building that was created by RH + Arquitectos. That ocean-facing structure is surrounded on its back side by mountains, and it looks much like a spacecraft that's landed and is being cuddled by the earth.

"While the outside of the building faces the future with clean and contemporary lines, the inside celebrates the past through such touches as the use of brown brick and stained concrete floors that harken back to the site's days as a sugarcane mill," says Silva.

In addition to the oversized image of sugarcane at the front desk, the staple is represented throughout the space in several other iterations, including wood slats and sculptures, and a separate image set of sugarcane shoots that grace the curving walls of the spa. "Those images convey realism and drama, but also reflect the immense, underappreciated beauty of sugarcane," says Silva. The hotel also includes visual allusions to two other important local products, honey and brandy.

Silva notes that Saccharum is the latest of several design projects she's done in her native Madeira. "I used to say I belong to the world, but Madeira is both my homeland and the place I most feel at home," she says. "I am honored and enriched to work here." ●



SPA, SACCHARUM