

Checking In

01. FAENA HOTEL MIAMI BEACH

Launched: November 2015

Extravagant interiors by movie duo Baz Luhrmann and Catherine Martin include 2,500m of red velvet, while the 'cathedral' lobby has eight large-scale tropical murals by Argentine artist Juan Gatti. The Saxony Theatre will host shows, while the first floor houses the South American-inspired spa, Tierra Santa.

02. FAENA HOUSE

Launched: 1 September 2015

Occupation of this 18-storey Foster + Partners-designed residential tower has already begun. Kitchens are custom-designed by Molteni&C and bathrooms are by Permasteelisa, while amenities for residents include a spa and fitness centre and a private beach club.

03. LANDSCAPING

Gardens by Raymond Jungles square with his name. Dense, verdant and as textured as you'd expect when 800-plus new trees are planted in eight city blocks. Anywhere in the Faena District not architecturally developed is Jungle territory, which adds a welcoming constancy.

04. FAENA VERSAILLES CLASSIC AND CONTEMPORARY

Launch date: 2017

Formerly the Versailles Hotel, the now residential Faena Versailles Classic will have interiors by William Sofield and a new tower, the Faena Versailles Contemporary, by architect Brandon Haw. Deco references marry with the horizontal curvature of the buildings either side of it.

05. FAENA BAZAAR, MARINA AND PARKING

Launch date: spring 2016

Rem Koolhaas' OMA has worked up a building-within-a-building to create the Faena Bazaar on Collins Avenue - a mix of retail, rotating pop-ups, and brand and artist collaborations. Even parking gets the architect treatment, with OMA's prismatic box.

06. FAENA FORUM

Launch date: April 2016

Building on Miami's growing status in the arts, the Faena Forum is the District's beating cultural heart. Designed by OMA, the rotunda is useful for large-scale installations, while the facade includes 335 windows.

07. CASA CLARIDGE'S FAENA MIAMI BEACH (INSET)

Launched: 2014

Casa Claridge's is a guest house with reimagined Spanish-style interiors wrapped around an inner courtyard. An artist-in-residency platform includes the Elevate programme, where artists create immersive experiences within the lift.

THE VISION OF HOTEL AND CULTURAL IMPRESARIO ALAN FAENA, THE FAENA DISTRICT, PHOTOGRAPHED IN OCTOBER 2015, IS TRANSFORMING AN EIGHT-BLOCK STRETCH OF MIAMI BEACH INTO A THRIVING ARTS, SHOPPING AND RESIDENTIAL HUB

Beach club

A new hotel makes waves amid the rising architectural tide of Miami's Faena District

PHOTOGRAPHY: KRIS TAMBURELLO WRITER: GUY DITTRICH



Out of shot, beyond
Faena Bazaar (05)

Checking In

1.3m THE TOTAL SQUARE FOOTAGE OF THE FAENA DISTRICT

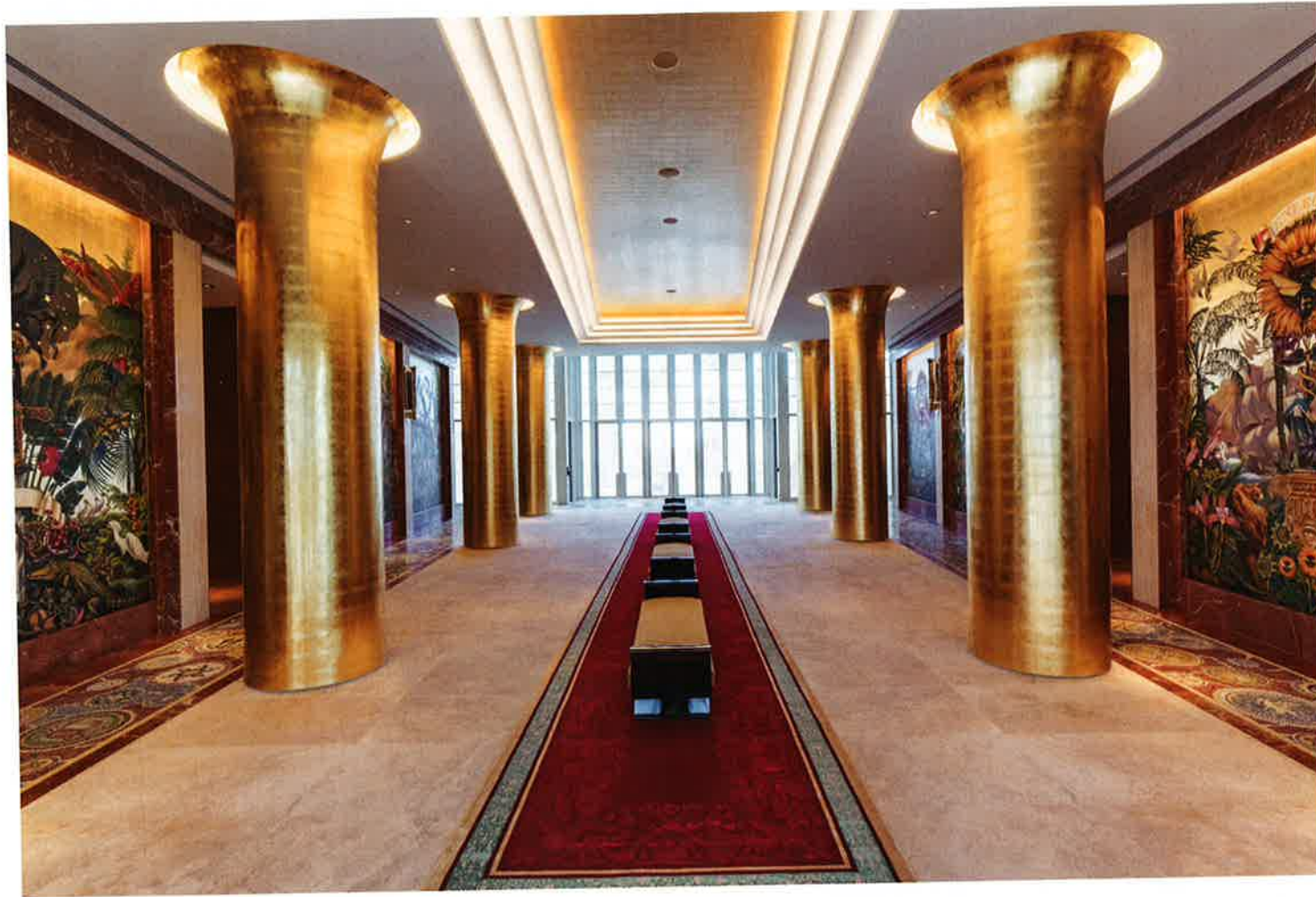
335 WINDOWS IN THE STRUCTURAL FACADE OF THE OMA-DESIGNED FAENA FORUM ARTS CENTRE

2,000 GOLD LEAVES IN ARTIST JUAN GATTI'S MURALS IN THE FAENA HOTEL LOBBY (BELOW)

1,000 BUILDERS ON THE FAENA DISTRICT SITE ON ANY GIVEN DAY OF ITS CONSTRUCTION

65,000 SQUARE FEET OF MARBLE IN THE FAENA HOTEL'S PUBLIC SPACES

15 THE NUMBER OF SHOPS, INCLUDING ARTIST COLLABORATIONS AND POP-UPS, IN THE FAENA BAZAAR



THIS PAGE, AN OCEAN-FRONT SUITE AT THE FAENA HOTEL MIAMI BEACH, WITH CUSTOM FURNITURE INCLUDING A HANDCRAFTED DINING TABLE

OPPOSITE, THE HOTEL'S 'CATHEDRAL' LOBBY FEATURES EIGHT VIBRANT MURALS DESIGNED BY ARGENTINIAN ARTIST JUAN GATTI, AND 632,000 MOSAIC TILES ON THE FLOOR

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he Faena District Miami Beach is the second part of Alan Faena's second act, a transformation from fashion designer to cultural engineer. It is the sequel to his first real estate project at Puerto Madero in Buenos Aires, which followed success in the fashion industry in Argentina, his country of birth.

Known for his uniformly white wardrobe, including a fedora, Faena is in ebullient form, walking the site at least three times a day as his project in mid-Miami Beach comes to life. 'It is the future. A unique, utopian city for the mind that thinks in 360 degrees,' he says. A typically bold statement from a man – in his 51st year – whose ambition remains undiminished. For Faena, though, it is more

than that – 'unique' is a word he uses frequently. This project has a point of view and coherence that comes from thinking big.

Faena isn't leaving anything to chance. The massing of the architecture either side of Collins Avenue, the main drag of Miami Beach, sees four larger beachfront towers cradle the Faena Forum, an arts-retail-parking triumvirate from OMA that backs on to Indian Creek. Sandwiched between a couple of historic piles are two new residential towers, the recently opened Faena House and Faena Versailles Contemporary, both designed by architect Brandon Haw, who was still with Foster + Partners when Faena House was initiated. The facades of both new buildings create a unity with the

art-deco heritage of the former Versailles Hotel (now the residential Faena Versailles Classic) and the Miami modernist architecture of the former Saxony Hotel, now the Faena Hotel Miami Beach and the catalyst for the whole development.

Originally built in 1948 by businessman George Sax, the hotel – which hosted Hollywood royalty from Marilyn Monroe to Frank Sinatra – was the first luxury property to grace Miami Beach, instigating the myriad luxury hotels that now line the strip. 'We are bringing the old Saxony back to life with ambitious and beautiful design and materials,' says Faena of the 169-room property. In a bid to move away from traditional hotel conceptions, Faena enlisted

a movie duo, director and producer Baz Luhrmann and costume designer Catherine Martin to oversee the top-to-toe renovation. 'They can create magic and elevate people,' he justifies. The lavish reinterpretation sees public spaces such as the grand 'cathedral' entrance brought back to their former glory – but now adorned with dramatic gold leafing and specially commissioned murals by artist Juan Gatti – and theatrical guest rooms that encapsulate old-world grandeur with lashings of sumptuous Faena red velvet and cool blue-tiled bathrooms.

The final parts of the plan are similarly curated. The importance of public art is seen in installations from Antwerp-based Studio Job and US artist Jeff Koons, while the

'It is the future. A unique, utopian city for the mind that thinks in 360 degrees'

cultural programme of the Faena Forum is guided by executive director Ximena Caminos, Faena's wife. Similarly, the retail offerings in the Faena Bazaar will nurture emerging talents rather than compete with the luxury goods hub into which Craig Robins' Design District has evolved.

The Faena District is only the second neighbourhood to be given 'District'

designation in Miami Beach since the Art Deco Historic District in 1979. Mid-Beach was latterly associated with the wrinkly-skinned retirees that still exist in body-beautiful Miami, but as the spectacular wave of luxury hotel developments testify, the area is undergoing a seismic change. Faena has orchestrated a gifted array of strong-willed talents to create a harmonious symphony that marries heritage with modernity. 'When you get into these eight blocks, you really feel everything is connected,' enthuses Faena of his vision. 'That allows creativity to expand to all these different sensations.' ★

Faena Hotel Miami Beach, 3201 Collins Avenue, tel: 1 305 524 8800. faena.com. Rates from \$745