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INTERNATIONAL HOTEL DESIGN

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PRODUCTS



Matteo Thun

MATTEO THUN + PARTNERS

MATTEO THUN, PRINCIPAL

Can Faik talks to Matteo Thun + Partners Principle Matteo Thun about his experience at all levels of construction and design – and how that has earned him a reputation around the world as a creative leader within the field of hospitality...

Founded in 2001, Matteo Thun + Partners is an architecture and integrated design practice acting on an international scale. Specialised in high-end hospitality projects and luxury residences, Matteo Thun + Partners counts local individuality, 360 degrees sustainability and timeless design to the main and most important characteristics. The location, the spirit of the place, the sensitive approach to the client's vision determines the architecture, interior and product-design concepts of the Milan, Munich and Shanghai based practice.

Tell me about your role at Matteo Thun and Partners?

I established my studio in 1984 in Milan and in 2001 Matteo Thun + Partners was founded. I am the principal. Together with my partners Luca Colombo and Antonio Rodriguez, and a team of more than 70 international professionals, architects, interior, product and graphic designers, the interdisciplinary challenge has become the successful formula of the office.

What five words would you use to describe Matteo Thun and Partners?

Sustainable, holistic, quality- and goal-oriented, pure and fast.

How long have you been involved with hotel design?

More than 20 years. The first internationally known hotel was the Side Hotel in Hamburg that our interior-team is refurbishing right now.

What do you love about being a designer?

Being an Italian architect, it means the same to me to work in small and large scale. The constant approach and challenge is to find new solutions and to realise innovative products and projects.

Where do you draw your inspiration?

From nature, from the arts, from my family and my teams.

Have you noticed any particular trends in hotel design?

Digitalisation. Guests will appreciate digital facilities to book, organise and create their stay with their mobile phones. The reception and the public spaces – the first impression will be all more important. Individuality counts.

With so many hospitality designers in the industry, how does Matteo Thun and Partners stand out from the rest?

The location, the spirit of the place determines our architecture and interior concepts – this is the strength of our office. Our teams work from micro to macro, interdisciplinary and collaborate on the same projects together. Operating this way means that all different parts harmonise and come together as one.

For FFE-Services we established MATTEO THUN ATELIER last year. It is a digital B2B platform inspired by the long experience developed over the field's architecture, product design and interior. Iconic furniture and lighting collections can be 'dressed up' and customised with various combinations of colours and fabrics. MATTEO THUN ATELIER blends Italian historical know-how, tradition and the demands of hospitality budgets.



How is the current economic climate affecting the hotel design market? And has Matteo Thun and Partners felt the effects?

There are cost pressures in every segment. However, we believe in a strong dialogue with our clients and dedicate a lot of time to find solutions within the budgets given.

We just accomplished the 'roll-out-concept' for the German hotel chain IntercityHotels – two new hotels have been opened recently and about eight new hotels are to follow within the next two years. Thanks to the intense collaboration with the great teams of Deutsche Hospitality in Frankfurt, the concept was realised within the predetermined cost framework. The interior features natural materials, is timeless with no overstated gestures or pseudo-modern forms and can easily be multiplied to fit to different locations.

What is the biggest thing the company has learnt over its years in the industry?
Flexibility – and the competence to combine style and cost engineering.

How would you define your 'hotel style'?

Sustainability includes economical and ecological characteristics. We do not pursue a 'design modernity'. We go for a different strategy: it is called timeless.

What does design mean to you?

Timelessness. We count sustainability and stylistic longevity to the main and most important characteristics throughout all our projects. Less weight and more light, pure and clean lines, save resources and energy.

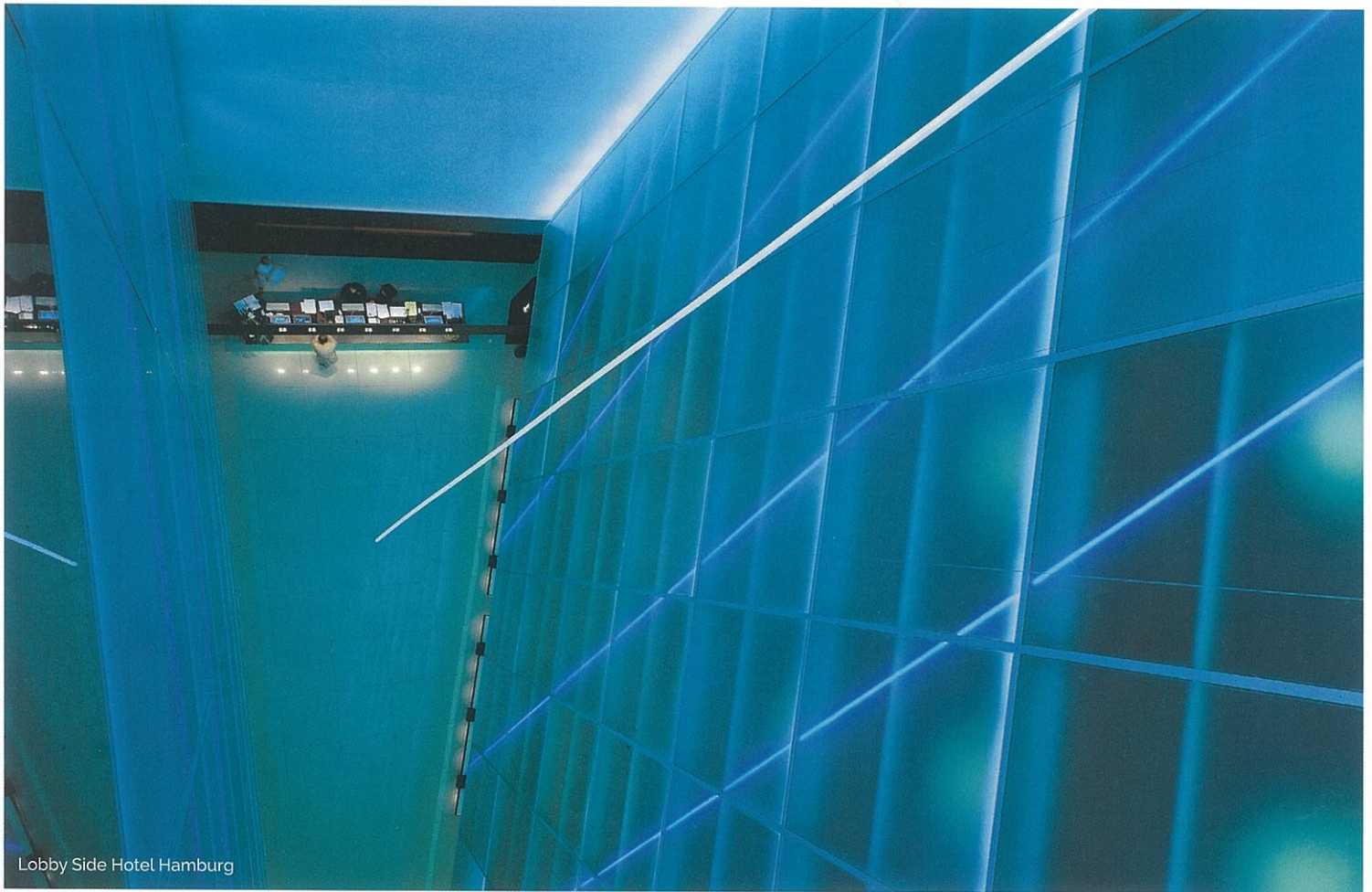
What do you want in a hotel room?

A perfect bed and an excellent shower.

What's your favourite part of a hotel?

The lobby and a good hotel restaurant offering regional food. Entrance lobbies as social encounters are important providing a multi-use space. >





Lobby Side Hotel Hamburg

Have you seen exceptional growth in any part of the world in hotel design?
China...of course.

What has been your favourite project to date?
The next...

What's next for Matteo Thun and Partners?
We are working on two challenging and exciting healthcare projects – HEALTHY LIVING HOTEL, Bürgenstock, a medical hotel in Switzerland that offers highly qualified medical care and treatments and is due to open end of this year. The other project is a Patient Bed House and REHAB of the largest University Orthopaedics in Europe. Located in Germany, the 240-bed project will house orthopaedic patients in a building that takes the relationship between physical space, hospitality, and patient care to a level rarely seen in hospital environments.

Where currently ranks highest on your travel wish-list?
Honestly? I travel so much that I love to go to my house in the mountains.

Where do you see hotel design in the future?
'Healthy living' will be key. It will be crucial with regard to full sustainability in

terms of energy saving, but also with regard to the spa treatments, the ease to navigate the rooms and the quality of the restaurant's food.

What would you say are the three best places you've ever stayed?
The Ritz in Paris, the Puli in Shanghai, and the Villa Treville in Positano.

Let's finish with the issue of personal and work life balance. How do you aim to achieve a good balance and what do those closest to you think of your attempts?

In Milan I do yoga and pilates regularly. My wife Susanne and I love healthy, regional food so I try to leave the office at about 7pm to have dinner at home. When travelling, I strive to see exhibitions and go to galleries. The weekends we love to enjoy nature as much as possible by walking, swimming, and skiing.



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