

La Terrazza Segreta at Villa Eden

Harry McKinley • Photography courtesy of Matteo Thun • May 7, 2019



The immense Lake Garda, in northern Italy, has long been a pull for holiday-makers and the Gardone Riviera, on its western shore, is a particularly storied pocket. Historically attracting artists and poets, it was here that fascist leader Benito Mussolini spent his last days, holed up in a grand hotel by the water's edge. Amid this backdrop of rich Italian heritage lies **Villa Eden**, an \$80 million development from Signa Holding that mixes a glossy clubhouse with seven design-led villas.

Rolling across 840,000 square feet of manicured hillside, by Enzo Enea, the resort brings together the talents of acclaimed architects David Chipperfield, Richard Meier, and Sphere's Marc Mark, each of whom worked on their own distinct private residences, while **Matteo Thun** headed up the design of the public landmark apartment buildings and clubhouse.

While the Villa Eden Gardone project was officially launched in 2015, last year it revealed that the 70-cover La Terrazza Segreta restaurant, featuring a refined menu overseen by chef Peter Oberrauch, who is equally known for his work at Austria's Chalet N, famed as the world's most expensive ski chalet. "The resort needed a center point," explains Thun.

Using suppliers from Thun's home region of South Tyrol, the restaurant is both a study in locality, but also where the resort's modernist credentials are most transparent. It features a dramatic glass façade in alternating variations of blue, intended to both literally and figuratively reflect the colors of the nearby lake. "It's all about lucidity, clarity, and lightness," he says, "and with its bright wooden floors, classic shapes, and generous proportions, it works to thematize the essence of the good life so fitting for a holiday destination."

Ultimately, La Terrazza Segreta reflects a contemporary vision of the region with Thun's guiding principle being a sense of sustainable development. "We chose local materials and sought simple and reliable systems that work with low-environmental impact," he says. The restaurant boasts zero carbon dioxide and zero waste, for instance.

Thun's concern for lightness runs through the rest of the public spaces and the Clubhouse guestrooms, which use sharp but soothing white to lull visitors into a relaxed state. The resort in many ways is merely a comfortable edifice from which to appreciate the ebbing lake.

