

# JETSETTER

A woman with blonde hair, wearing a wide-brimmed straw hat and a red and white patterned poncho, is sitting on a large, smooth, light-colored rock in a shallow river. The water is clear and greenish, reflecting the surrounding lush greenery and large boulders. The background is a dense forest with moss-covered rocks.

## SÃO TOMÉ AND PRÍNCIPE

The Land  
of Coffee  
& Chocolate

## NO PAINÉ NO GAIN

Preserving  
Chile's Parque  
Nacional Torres  
del Paine

# DEVINE DOWNUNDER

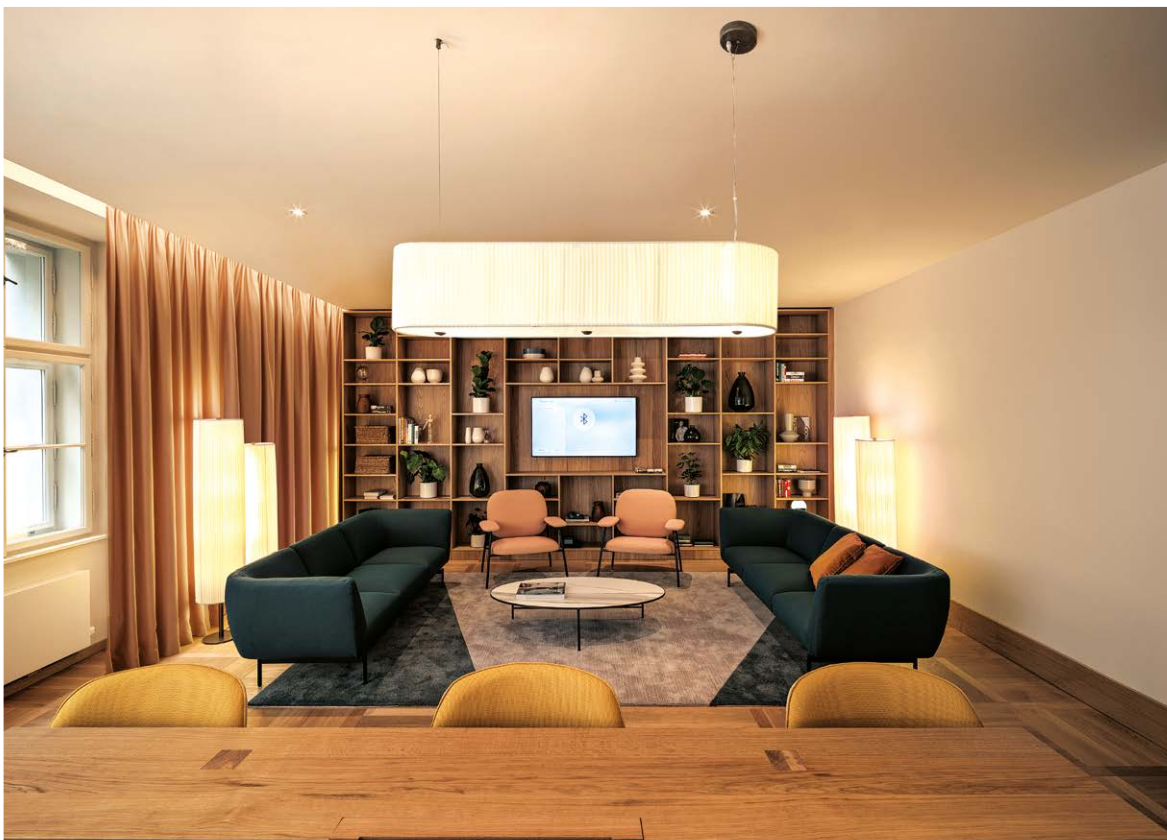
AUSTRALIA'S MOST INDULGENT HIDEAWAYS

VIENNA ■ PHILIPPINES ■ DUBLIN ■ BANGKOK ■ PARIS



# ITALIAN Inspiration

Italian architect and designer **Matteo Thun** talks attending the Venice Biennale aged six, his latest hotel in Prague, and new retreats in Bavaria with **Helen Dalley**.



From left: Matteo's latest project, The Julius in Prague

**Tell us about your most recent project, the Julius in Prague. Which aspects of it are you most proud of and what were some of the biggest challenges you had to overcome with this build?**

The Julius Prague was born to create an experience suitable for medium to long-term stays in the vibrant Czech capital. For the design of the project, which represented the debut of a new hospitality concept, we started designing a timeless scheme in tune with new expectations back in 2018 that represented a contextually aware, nomadic way of living. With The Julius we wanted the historic palace in the centre of Prague to become a temporary, contemporary home.

**You were inspired by Czech artists Mucha and Kupka; does art often inform your work, and if so, who are some of the artists that have inspired you?**

Art influences me a lot, on every journey, everywhere. I haven't missed a Venice Biennale since I was six years old, and that was the best gift my parents could have given me when I was a child. Wherever I find time I consume art – in museums, in churches, in galleries. If you ask me to name the one artist that I always revisit, then it's Caravaggio.

**What projects are you working on right now?**

Two years ago, we opened an office in Munich, since we'd been working on a lot of projects in German speaking countries. Right now, we're working on four projects at four different Bavarian lakes. The physical and mental health of guests is the focus of all these healthcare hotel projects. Fasting, simple, healthy nutrition and self-discovery are the focal points: the patient becomes the guest.

**You are headquartered in Milan and Munich. How do these cities inspire your design?**

Both cities are very European and steeped in history. They have beautiful historic architecture, *palazzi* and buildings and are separated only by the Alps. Munich is one of my favourite cities in Germany. In addition, both cities' inhabitants respect, love and live traditions.

**You founded the Memphis Group in 1981 and your eponymous design studio in 1984. After so many decades in the design business, how do you stay inspired?**

I'm very curious in many ways and like to find new, innovative solutions to design, whether that's finding more sustainable energy concepts for a hotel or discovering the latest recyclable material to design a product. I'm also inspired by the young partners in the studio that I'm in constant exchange with.

**What have been the biggest changes in the design landscape in the last decade and how do you expect the next decade to unfold?**

The last decade was about the comeback of craftsmanship and going back to natural materials. Now it's all about bringing this to the next level, with recyclable, renewable materials that also convey beauty.

**You were a pupil of Austrian artist Oskar Kokoschka and Italian artist Emilio Vedova at the Salzburg Academy. Tell us about them and their influence on your work.**

I learned to 'see' with Oskar Kokoschka, who was celebrated for his expressionistic portraits and landscapes, and this was brilliant training to concentrate on the essentials of art and design. As for Vedova, he was the Joseph Beuys of Italy, and one of the most important artists to emerge from the Italian art scene, Art Informale, which took an experimental approach to painting and sculpture.

**Aside from your own work, which hotels/developments did you admire in 2022?**

I'd say the Das Chateau Royal in Berlin. In this hotel, 93 different contemporary artists with strong ties to Berlin have contributed works to each of the 93 rooms, and the works will be on permanent display at the property.

**Will 2023 be a big year for you, workwise?**

Yes, together with international clients, we introduced several new products at Milan Design Week, and will also be finishing several hospitality projects by the end of 2023 and spring 2024; longer-term projects include The Langham Murano, which is scheduled for completion in 2025. The aim of my work is to make life easier, better and healthier for all members of society. [matteothun.com](http://matteothun.com); [thejulius.eu](http://thejulius.eu)

