

Paragon-designed Mbabane Hilton Garden Inn wins at SAPOA Awards

The Mbabane Hilton Garden Inn in Swaziland, which won at the recent SAPOA Awards for Best International Project, is one of Paragon Group's first projects for an international hotel chain. According to project architect Jarred Pincus, the 124-room, eight-storey development has been designed specifically for Hilton's entry into the Swaziland market.



The project, which was completed in April this year, has been carried out in conjunction with Steve Hall Development Consultants, for the Buna Group on behalf of the Swaziland Public Service Pensions Fund (SPSPF). The main contractor was a joint venture between Aveng Grinaker-LTA with Du-Van Developments and Roots Construction in Joint Venture, known as the ADR JV.

The main spaces of the hotel have been designed to create vertical separation and privacy between public and private or guest amenities. The tower portion of the building, with its swooping and undulating feature façade, is architecturally differentiated from the base of the building, and is solely dedicated to hotel guestrooms and hotel facilities.

Public areas on the ground floor include a reception, restaurant, bar, lounge, and conferencing facilities comprising four meeting rooms of varying sizes, with two of the larger rooms separated by sliding-folding doors with the flexibility to become a single large conference room.



Porte-cochere entry

Reception and the main hotel entrance are located adjacent to the on-grade, on-site guest parking, where guests are greeted with a generous porte-cochere entry. The main guest parking is located to the rear of the site, while additional parking is provided in an existing parkade close by.

The entrance to the building is reinforced by a full-height internal atrium that forms the central and primary focus space of the building, overlooked by all the guest-room corridors. The central atrium, which houses the restaurant, bar, lounge, and conference break-out facilities, also features skylights. These spaces also link to the ground-floor landscaping and deck spaces via two large sliding folding doors.

The guestrooms are all accessed via full-height glass scenic lifts leading from the ground-floor lobby. Guest amenities are housed at the first floor, and include a guest laundry and fitness centre that looks out onto the landscaped pool deck, a dedicated guest amenity with a lap pool, low-level children's swim area and garden.



The main feature is the performance-rated façade design with undulating and varying sized windows, depending on the orientation. There is also a huge landscaped deck on the ground floor with trees and indigenous planting to cool down the building. “It isn’t specifically Green Star rated and designed, but standard best practice has been applied,” says Pincus.

In terms of the challenges associated with the design, Pincus points to the raking columns required due to the large central void. “Getting services to a lot of rooms in very controlled spaces was also interesting from a technical aspect.”

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