

Divine *inspiration*

A stunning modern hotel hidden in the Arizona desert provides a *wealth of ideas for interior décors*

Stepping through the giant 25-foot gates, visitors to the Scottsdale Mondrian hotel in Arizona are welcomed to this desert destination via a sweeping entrance way carpeted by stencilled vine leaves. This is just the beginning of an intriguing adventure into the Garden of Eden, the theme of which has dominated Benjamin Noriega-Critz's interior design.

Modern glamour and the story of Adam and Eve can be discovered at every twist and turn within this sophisticated hotel, located in the heart of Old Town Scottsdale. The designer revealed to Utopia the motives, materials and magic behind the hotel's interior to inspire you to create a stunning décor at home ●●●





"As the hotel is inspired by the Garden of Eden the Asia de Cuba restaurant is the farm within the garden. The rooster, which presides in portraits, the ceramic fruit baskets, the Murano glass chandeliers that resemble hanging bananas and the large egg sculpture all help to reinforce the theme." Benjamin says of the hotel's sleek restaurant, which combines elements of Asian and Cuban cuisine, served sharing-style. The restaurant is divided into a variety of seating areas; the bar, table and chairs and various shaped banquettes. By using a mirror top for a particular table in Asia de Cuba, lighting illuminates the guest from below creating a flattering effect. Another simple, yet stunning effect, are the pure white chairs upholstered in faux leather.

"I wanted the room to feel like an informal farm dining room in which the food is the most important graphic element, therefore everything had to look white. The guest is focused on the dishes and not on the décor. The variety of seating within a pure white environment makes you feel as if you are a star. People and food provide the colour," explains Benjamin, who designed the restaurant's patio (top right) following the same principle of a white canvas as a backdrop for the food.

Following the theme of the Garden of Eden the hotel's Red Bar (below) represents temptation. A red palette was used in abundance, with a rich velvet type fabric selected to cover the huge comfortable banquette seating inside and a lipstick red fabric to cover the wrap-around banquette outdoors. "Provocative beds in red and white polka dot sit in front of a grand fireplace, as if you were in a large family Den," says Benjamin.

Hidden from the hotel's entertainment is the calming Agua spa, again designed in pure white for purity. "The use of pure white makes the guest feel special because colour comes from the user," the designer reveals. White drapes suggest softness and by making them short, watermarks can be avoided. A floor of white octagonal ceramic tiles has been carefully selected within the Agua (middle) to remind guests of traditional romantic bathrooms.



"We added the intense blue wall to minimise the contrast of the blue and green tiles. To the blue wall we added a lot of hooks with 'wings' as if they were birds flying over the room. A garden vine decal was added to the mirror to tie it with the 'Garden of Eden' inspiration," says designer Benjamin Noriega-Ortiz ●



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