

Entrepreneur[®]

EXECUTIVE MIDDLE EAST

LIFESTYLE

LEGENDS



ALAN FAENA / FAENA
BENJAMIN WAN / COYA
CHADI FARHAT / SBE
CHRISTOPH HOFFMAN / 25HOURS
EVGENY KUZIN / KITCH-IN
FERIT ŞAHENÇ / D.REAM INTERNATIONAL
FETTAH TAMINCE / RIXOS
FLAVIO BRIATORE / MILLIONAIRE

GAURAV BHUSHAN / ACCOR
IZU ANI / KITCH-IN
JÉRÉMIE TRIGANO / MAMA SHELTER
JOELLE MARDINIAN / MAISON DE JOELLE
LOUIS ABI ABOUD / ACCOR
MARK WILLIS / ACCOR
NAIM MAADAD / GATES HOSPITALITY
OMAR JACKSON / X BY OJ LIFESTYLE

SANJAY DWIVEDI / COYA
SÉBASTIEN BAZIN / ACCOR
SÉBASTIEN PICAULT / PARIS SOCIETY GROUP
SHARAN PASRICHA / ENNISMORE
SPENCER WADAMA / SLS DUBAI
TEVFIK AKDAĞ / D.REAM INTERNATIONAL
YANNIS STANISIERE / COYA
YIGIT SEZGIN / ACCOR



A singular vision

Faena Group founder and President **Alan Faena** is bringing his brand's artistic voice to the Middle East by **MEGHA MERANI**

The phrase “unperturbed hotelier” may sound like an oxymoron in the midst of an ongoing global pandemic, but it perfectly fits the description of Alan Faena. That’s because, even as the global hotel industry has experienced its most devastating year in history, his latest deal is a dream come true.

The Argentine entrepreneur, famous for his pioneering hotel projects in Miami and Buenos

Aires, has signed a partnership with international hospitality conglomerate Accor to grow his brand— from two resorts, to around a dozen worldwide, including in Dubai where he’s currently planning his largest and most ambitious luxury development.

“This partnership goes beyond the pandemic,” says Faena, the visionary fashion designer-turned-property developer and founder of the Faena Group. “I began talking to Accor a year before the pandemic began, and I found the perfect partner to expand worldwide. It has always been our dream to share the Faena ethos and artistic vision around the globe, and with Accor, we are turning this dream into reality.”

IMAGES COURTESY FAENA GROUP

Faena’s small but powerful foothold as a global leader in luxury lifestyle is well established. *Condé Nast Traveler’s* 2020 Readers Choice Awards named Faena District Miami Beach the #1 hotel in Miami and #2 hotel in the wider United States, and the twelfth highest ranked property in the world, while Faena Buenos Aires was listed among the top 20 best hotels in South America.

As a part of the new venture, Accor, the largest hospitality company in Europe and the sixth-largest worldwide with nearly 5,000 hotels across 110 countries, will now manage the brand’s bestselling properties. Faena will work in partnership with Accor to break new ground, developing Faena Districts in select destinations, a move that is expected to become a catalyst for exponential growth owing to the artist’s deeply personal and distinctive avant-garde approach.

The Districts, a real-estate concept that he first originated in Buenos Aires and later imported to Miami, are one-of-a-kind holistic environments anchored in inspiring cultural experiences, which integrate luxury residences and hotels, celebrated epicurean concepts, original experiential retail, wellness and healing, soulful entertainment and cutting-edge interdisciplinary art.

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The multi-award-winning Faena Districts are internationally renowned for shifting the gravitational center of cities, expanding their social footprint and becoming new cultural epicenters. The concept is renowned, for example, for transforming Miami’s mid-beach neighborhood’s faded hotels and condominiums into a thriving cultural hub. The multi-award-winning US\$1.2 billion six-block district is anchored by the 169-room Faena Hotel. The property’s Art Deco theatrical aesthetic in high Gatsby style was conceived by Oscar-nominated filmmaker Baz Luhrmann and his wife Catherine Martin, an Academy Award-winning costumer designer. >>>



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With hotels now scrambling to adapt or rework existing projects to evolve with the realities of the public health crisis, Faena’s timeline holds the advantage of building with an eye on the future of tourism. Its Dubai development, co-financed with Accor and set to be bigger than its landmark Miami location, is expected to open doors in 2023. “As Faena expands, we plan to continue rethinking hospitality lifestyle and shaping the path for groundbreaking concepts, setting new industry standards in the creation of inimitable environments rooted in culture, positively transforming cities, shifting old paradigms and becoming new international cultural epicenters,” the founder adds.

With the city’s penchant and reputation for all things luxurious, it’s no surprise that Dubai is top on the list for Faena’s next project. Frequented by celebrities like Beyoncé and Rihanna,

Faena’s hotels boast frills like a butler service for every guest, and various other innovative experiences to satisfy the lavish travel expectations of the affluent, crafted in collaboration with a collection of artists, designers and architects including the likes of Philippe Starck, Rem Koolhaas, Norman Foster and Damian Hirst.

With experience across a wide range of industries including hospitality, entertainment, art, fashion and real estate, Faena says he looks at each development as a unique combination of art, lifestyle, technology, service, nature and sustainability. “Dubai is a unique place, with similarities to Miami, with the atmosphere, the weather, business and culture,” Faena says. “I believe Dubai is a city that has been evolving and transforming for the last decade, and I am interested to bring the Faena way of doing things to such a vibrant city that continues to change and evolve.”

At this point, it’s worth noting that the Gulf region’s hospitality sector is heavily dominated by luxury, and Dubai has spent a greater part of the past decade promoting itself as a top luxury destination. But when asked if this would affect his brand’s standing in the market here, Faena was quick to dismiss that notion. “We do not compare ourselves with others in hospitality,” he declares. “We are unique, and we have our own voice.” ■



Clockwise from top left:
Alexandre Arrechea and Alan Faena
Photo by Oriol Tarridas for Faena Art

Faena Miami Beach
Photo by Todd Eberle

Faena Forum, designed by Rem Koolhaas and the OMA team, led by Shohei Shigematsu



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