

J JACQUES
F FERRIER
A ARCHITECTURE

Nakâra 4* Residential Hotel, Cap d'Agde, France

Architectural team: Jacques Ferrier Architecture

Consultants :

Structure: André Verdier

Fluids: ARGETEC

Roads and networks (VRD): TECTA

Control office (bureau de contrôle): Qualiconsult

Client: Promeo

City: Cap d'Agde, Hérault (34), France

Competition: laureate project in 2012

Completion: 2015

Area: 9 700 sqm

Cost: 12 M€

Démarche environnementale: BBC

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Program:

4* residential Hotel:

- One hotel with 54 rooms
- Two collective buildings with, together, 107 rooms
- A village of 42 villas
- Services: swimming pool, sauna, steam room, seminar room, fitness room.

Architectural Description:

Agde, an ancient town founded by the Greeks, is now renowned as a mass summer tourism destination on the Mediterranean coast. Its wide range of accommodation options means it has become one of Europe's foremost tourist resorts. This new hotel and holiday home development will extend southwards at the extreme end of the Agde shoreline, in an area that is still relatively undeveloped and where individual housing districts predominate.

Seaside architecture has often been distinguished by its freshness of inspiration and ability to innovate without appearing to do so. Since the 1950s, the contemporary style has been expressed in a light, unconventional manner from the coast of the French Riviera to Venice Beach via Miami. But with globalization and the intensification of tourism, coastal development has deteriorated significantly.

Unlike so many recent leisure facilities, which are either luxurious or strictly functional, our project focuses on the quality of the holidaymaker's experience and aims to create a sense of place. The project

is therefore in keeping with an openly Mediterranean vision and breaks with the shallow banality that characterizes the recent growth in mass tourism.

Large openwork walls in white concrete cohesively punctuate the various developments. They function as filters, putting distance between the shared areas - gardens and swimming pool terraces - and the more intimate room area. The dual facade system creates an in-between space, an extra space that is neither part of the building's interior nor its outside areas. The balconies project into this ambiguous space and give a feeling of being simultaneously inside and outside.

Large white trellises provide depth to the facade and trap light and shade in a continuous kinetic effect. They create a vibrant background for the joyful ballet of holidaymakers' silhouettes, and are illuminated at night to create a soft, subtle ambiance.

We wished to develop a calm, peaceful setting with this project, in counterpoint to the intensity of mass tourism. The animation does not come from the buildings themselves but from the manner in which they allow themselves to be penetrated by the life of the seaside, and their ability to react and respond to the Mediterranean light. This is an architecture of climate and atmosphere.