



Lanterns in the yard © Alan Keohane

The Mamounia is a legend

The first time we visited La Mamounia, we had that strange and comforting sensation of time slowing down, of life becoming simpler. Keeping hold of that feeling, we walked around the different spaces, breathing in their potential. Our approach is simple. We put absolute trust in our intuitions, which were registering a slight imbalance of energies between the grandiose promenade – the Allée Majorelle – with its Italian bar and restaurant, and the other social venues such as the Churchill Bar and the Le Français restaurant. Strolling around and happening upon chance encounters with unusual and magical places became our scenario for this new story.

“Everything must change so that everything can stay the same,” wrote Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa in *The Leopard*. Like a director who opens his film with a long tracking shot, where the camera plunges forwards into the view that leads towards the garden, we had the feeling of being a spectator, that everything is in place, as if it had been there forever; because it is this reassuring sensation of time standing still that calls us to peace. And yet on closer inspection, the lights have been redesigned to add a touch of warmth and modernity; in order to remain forever suspended in a present without end, La Mamounia has to reinvent itself perpetually.

- La Mamounia -

16.11.2020

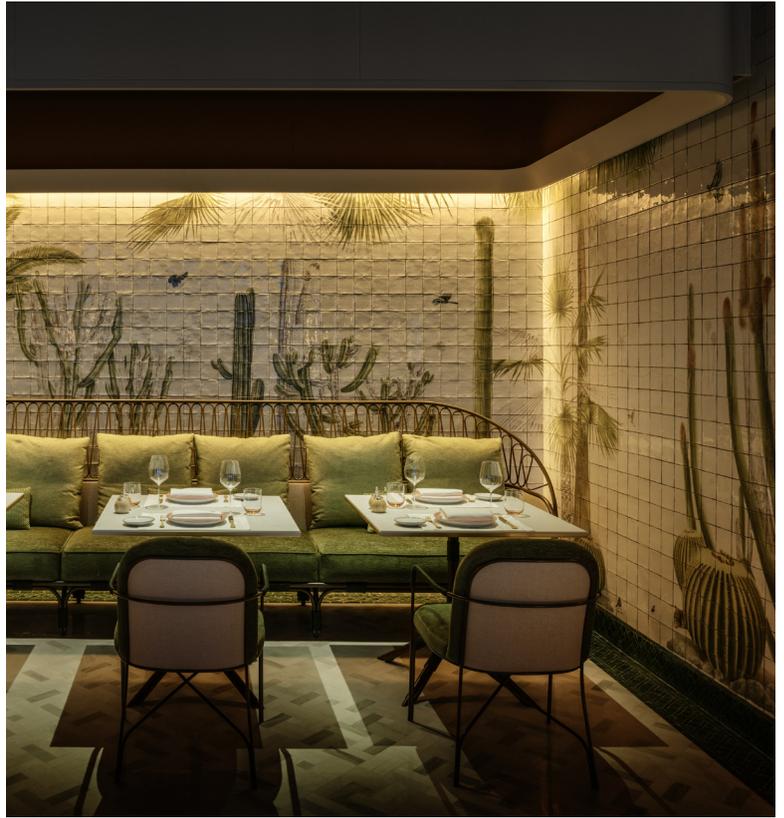
Staying at La Mamounia should be a succession of unique experiences, with the different restaurants being the main players in promoting this adventure. Each of them has its own character, all are complementary. We opened up the walls of the former Italian restaurant and transformed it into L'Asiatique by Jean-Georges Vongerichten, a sensual and intimate space. The original traditional Moroccan decor merges perfectly with the spirit of the chef's cuisine. It is the furniture that makes the transition between the two worlds, with a mixture of Chinese, Japanese and Thai influences. We gave great importance to the lighting, and Stéphane Carratero came to weave his magic so that as night falls, L'Asiatique becomes a restaurant for lovers.



Restaurant "L'asiatique" © Alan Keohane

- La Mamounia -

16.11.2020



Restaurant "L'italien" © Alan Keohane

Nearby, the former restaurant Le Français becomes "L'italien", also under the management of Jean-Georges Vongerichten. It has been enlarged, taking on the form of a winter garden. The relationship between the restaurant and the garden is absolute. The large glazed windows that enclose it open generously onto the vegetation to let in light and cool air. Sanjit and I adore Italy. We spend a lot of time there, for work as well as for pleasure, so it was a joy to associate that great Italian combination of refinement and simplicity with the spirit of La Mamounia. The cooking takes place in front of your very eyes, which is a captivating spectacle, it is the essence of life. We placed the kitchen at the centre of the space, beneath a huge glass installation. A verdant frieze running more than 20 metres along the back wall seems to mirror the garden, adding to a sensation of being somewhere between real and unreal, the past and future. Whether for a family, couple or group of friends, "L'italien" is a first choice for a sophisticated and relaxed occasion.



Restaurant "L'italien" © Jouin Manku

LA MAMOUNIA
MARRAKECH

Jouin manku

press release

- 3 -

- La Mamounia -

16.11.2020

La Mamounia's swimming pool is a must. It sits perfectly within the garden, with a little island that appears to float in the middle adding an air of charming fantasy. A day spent next to the pool or in the garden is an extra gift that

La Mamounia offers its guests. You just want to stay forever.

The pool pavilion is the land of plenty; we wanted to make it a celebration of generosity and pleasure. In the middle sits a blue ceramic fountain, around which gravitates a curving bar offering a range of temptations, each more appetising than the next, all beneath a vast circular chandelier made out of fabric and brass. For the bar we used one of our favourite materials, enamelled lava stone. It is indestructible and the little crackled effect covering it gives the charm of passing time. A door opens into a new space, which Sanjit calls "the temple of sugar".

In the middle of this space sits a block of peach-coloured marble with a surface of polished, hammered copper, which displays the inventions of the world's greatest pastry chef, Pierre Hermé.

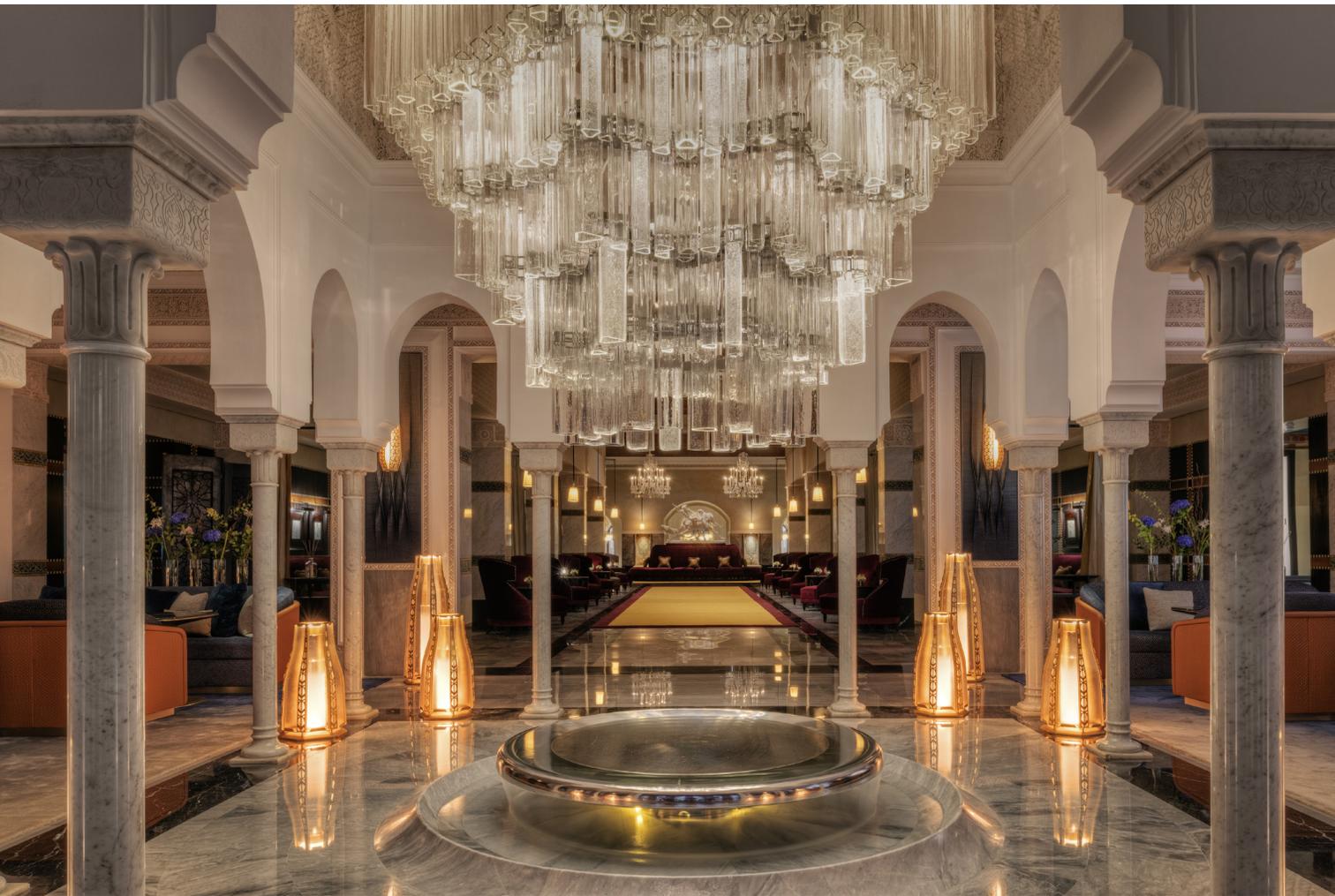


Swimmingpool pavilion © Visual Studio for Jouin Manku

- La Mamounia -

16.11.2020

After rethinking the restaurants, we turned our mind to surprises for the guests. You will have to stroll around to discover them. The first is on the way to the spa and occupies two spaces. It is Pierre Hermé's salon de thé, designed around the principles of Moroccan tearooms with their banquettes facing one another along the walls. They are orientated towards the centre of the first space, where we have installed a fountain that seems to erupt from the marble floor. The water reflects a huge glass chandelier. It is the focal point of the salon and clearly visible from the lobby. Designing our projects, we call these types of installation "les objets extraordinaires", extraordinary objects. Their purpose is to amaze, to catch the onlooker's eye, to mesmerise them and incite them to come closer. As the tearoom is not on a main route through La Mamounia, we needed to create a sufficiently powerful architectural feature to bring life to this space; this is the primary function of the luminous sculpture.



Tea room © Alan Keohane

The experience continues in the adjoining courtyard, the Moroccan riad in all its splendour. We love this place, so quiet, so perfect in its geometry. We just added some seating and lanterns to make guests want to pause here quietly and taste one of Pierre Hermé's creations, taking time for pleasure.

- La Mamounia -

16.11.2020



Churchill bar © Alan Keohane

In the evening, a door opens into the Churchill Bar. The bar has always been here and is a landmark for regular guests. We gave it a complete redesign to make it ultra-intimate, a sanctum in smoked oak, in the middle of which is a block of sculpted black marble. Not forgetting La Mamounia's past relationship with railways, the proportions of this space echo those of a Pullman carriage. The Churchill is also the entrance into a new provision: the cinema. We really indulged ourselves in conceiving the dream experience, mixing culture and comfort. We can't wait for another viewing of *The Man Who Knew Too Much*, which Hitchcock filmed right here.



Movie theater © Alan Keohane

- La Mamounia -

16.11.2020



Enoteca © Visual Studio for Jouin Manku

We now turn to the enoteca and the tents. These are new arrivals to La Mamounia and a big surprise for the guests. The tents form a transition zone between the swimming pool and L'italien. Slightly raised to sit back from passage, comfortably installed and protected from the sun, guests can spend a special moment here. You can take lunch, or just read a book. Victor Hugo's poem *La Sieste*, perhaps?

One of these tents takes the visitor to the Enoteca. You descend down into the ground to a trove where the treasures discovered by the sommeliers of La Mamounia have been stored. A beautiful table in stone and lava stone sits beneath a large opening in the roof, from which light is diffused through a chandelier of cords, illuminating the liquids to reveal their secrets. This work is typical of the exceptional skill of the Moroccan craftsmen, which we have carried through into the 21st century. The fundamental ambition of this project is that La Mamounia should be the living example of the continued reinvention of a culture.

- La Mamounia -

16.11.2020

STUDIO JOUIN MANKU :
Pascal Legrand, Antoine Bonichon, Margaux Lafuente,
Céline Allard, Olivier Evrard, Alexandre Doucin,
Bruno Pimpanini, François Isonne, Gaultier Bigot, Julien Lize

ARCHITECT OF RECORD :
OGER Maroc

LIGHTING DESIGNER :
Voyons Voir

GENERAL CONTRACTOR :
CMS

OUTFITTER :
TDM, Barcelone

CRAFTSMAN :
Pietro Seminelli
Cédric Peltier
Marie Hélène Soyer (Emaux Métaux)
Pierre Frey

CUSTOM MADE CHANDELIERS :
Lasvit
Véronèse

CUSTOM MADE FURNITURE :
Cassina

CUSTOM MADE LIGHTS :
Brossier Saderne

PHOTOGRAPHY :
Alan Keohane

PRESS CONTACT:
14septembre
Lucie Fayard
luciefayard@14septembre.com
0044 (0) 7462075563