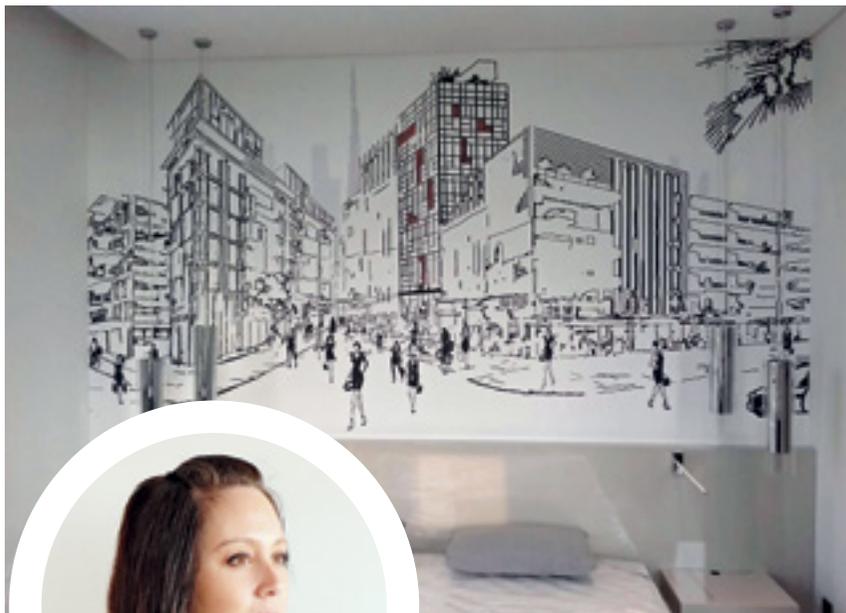


# STANDOUT ART



Hotels and restaurants across the globe are investing millions in art. Many believe that in the current competitive climate, such initiatives can make an important difference to the guest's experience. **Lindsey Gildea**, creative director at Dubai-based 17A Art Consultants, speaks about art as an added value in hotels and F&B outlets

While guests booking stays at UAE establishments might not necessarily be choosing a hotel or restaurant on the basis of the paintings displayed there, art can stop us in our tracks. If done well, it will be remembered and talked about. For example, the Raffles Hotel Le Royal Monceau in Paris has over 300 revolving artworks. It also has an 'Art Concierge', as the property's mission includes being dedicated to art and culture.

While the UAE art market is strong, it is also still evolving. We might not be quite in line yet with how international hotels are engaging with art, but growth understandably needs to be organic. Hotels

make the perfect spaces to support a local art scene and distinguish one facility from the competition.

## Right from the start

Integrating art early on into design makes for the perfect scenario, as it allows the art and interior to develop together. There are many questions that need to be asked when considering art for a hotel, just as when approaching any new design. These include: What is the context? What experience do you want to give your guests? Do you plan to include local, national and/or international artists? Is the focus on emerging or established career artists or a mix? Through our relationships with regional artists and the local art scene, as well as international artists, we are able to curate pieces that will create an impact in a hotel, introducing works that interact with the interior design and enhance the story being conveyed.

As an example, when commissioning the murals created for Dubai's Buddha Bar, we ensured that they were exactly what was required for the interior. Steve Chambers, a Dubai-based artist, used a variety of methods to create the murals. Initial sketches and samples were submitted to ensure that the colors, reflections and weights of line achieved the desired effect in the light of the interior. La Villa Hotel's artwork was commissioned to reflect the contemporary and chic surroundings of City Walk's architecture and retail environment. Dubai-based artists Melvin San Miguel and Kriti Dixit worked on devising the murals within each of the



hotel guest rooms. His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum's quotes from 'Flashes of Thought' were made three dimensional in stainless steel and installed on each level of the hotel. The Intercontinental Dubai Marina's artwork includes the Giacometti-inspired sculptures, named 'The Travellers', two 7.5-meter-tall pink stainless steel geometric sculptures, which dominate the lobby entrance. The calligraphy murals by well-known Omani artist Saleh Shukairi and other art installations make this hotel an art gallery in its own right.

## Pleasing guests

Hotels increasingly want artwork to respond to the needs of their guests. Visitors seek a hotel reflecting their identity or one, which projects an image of who they aspire to be. This is why art needs to stand out and evolve in the same way that restaurants introduce new flavors or food presentations, giving the guest a new and interesting experience. Each piece is carefully considered for each space, not just in size and design, but also with the guest's experience in mind, along with its relationship to the adjoining space and artwork. Guests can have the information about the artwork and artist sent directly to their mobile devices. In one of our recent hotel projects, we curated the artwork so the guest could be taken on a journey through the hotel and actually learn about the history and heritage of the country through the aesthetic of contemporary art. [17a-artconsultants.com](http://17a-artconsultants.com)

# 10 TIPS ON HOW TO BUY ART FOR A HOTEL



**Laure d'Hauteville**  
*Founder and Fair Director*  
 Beirut Art Fair

1. Buy colorful and large pieces of art, as they have a greater impact.
2. Place big sculptures and artistic photography in common spaces.
3. Refrain from placing sculptures in rooms as they risk getting broken.
4. Stay away from politically related and dark-colored artworks reflecting sad subjects.
5. Refrain from using posters, videos and installations.
6. Oil on canvas are more valuable and

send out a message to guests that you are a connoisseur.

7. Abstract art conveys the image of a trendy hotel, which is appreciated by most guests. Designer furniture could also be important.

8. Buy art pieces from local galleries that promote local artists. These galleries will be happy to tell their buyers that your hotel is also their customer, providing you with additional advertising. It's very important for your clients to know that you care about the heritage of your country and supporting local artists.

9. Making art magazines or small guides about local art galleries available to guests is a nice touch. Consider letting the local Ministry of Culture know that you care about the country's heritage. You will then benefit from the help of an official authority in developing your image in a way that differentiates you from the competition.

10. Use your art collection as an advertising medium. Whether through social media or your website, broadcasting your passion for art will set your hotel apart and enhance your reputation and image as a contemporary property.  
[beirut-art-fair.com](http://beirut-art-fair.com)



# ART-INVOLVED



As the first edition of the Beirut Design Fair draws closer, HN spoke to **Guillaume Taslé d'Héliand**, founder and director, and **Hala Moubarak**, cofounder and head of exhibitors relations, to find out more about this milestone event

## Why did you decide to found Beirut Design Fair?

**Taslé d'Héliand:** Our vision was to promote recognition of Lebanon's proper place, at the forefront of creativity in the region. Beirut Design Fair aims to become an annual meeting place for discovery, exchange and business opportunity, for both amateurs and professionals of design throughout Europe, the United States, the Middle East, the Gulf and Asia.

## How important is design in Beirut?

**Moubarak:** Lebanon is distinct from other Arab countries, thanks to its Mediterranean positioning, its blend of cultures and the urban character of Beirut. We have a history and a collective memory, a spirited nature, and the freedom to create without limits and in complete independence. The work of Lebanese designers is the fruit of innovative, moving and elegant ideas; sometimes, research and the desire to preserve ancestral craftsmanship can provide an invaluable creative inspiration.

## How do you inject design into a hotel or restaurant's various facilities?

**Taslé d'Héliand:** Decoration is one of the most elegant ways in which a hotel can differentiate itself. It contributes instantly to creating an atmosphere. This ambience may evolve over time or according to the seasons, for example. Apart from the colors, floor coverings and curtains, the first components of the decoration will be furniture - contemporary, antique, vintage, design or simply functional, alongside art, which can also be contemporary, modern or classic. Some hotels have made art or design one of the essential components of their positioning; in Beirut, I'm thinking, for example, of Le Gray Hotel and Smallville Hotel, both of which have clearly established themselves with contemporary art and design, in very different registers.



**Gordon Campbell Gray**  
*Founder*  
 Campbell Gray Hotels

## WHEN PASSION FOR ART AND HOSPITALITY MEET

"Hotels are creations. Design, adventure, food, service and excitement are surely all ingredients which you would hope to find in hotels. Art must also sit high on this list. It has always been for me a crucial aspect of living, whether at home or when traveling. To summarize, art should always be a vital part of the creation of an exciting and great hotel."