

INTERIOR DESIGN

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are to dazzle



Turkish Delight

Modernism ascetic? Experience Hillside Su, architect Eren Talu's sinfully sybaritic hotel in Antalya, Turkey

text: jen renzi photography: ken hayden



Previous spread: At Hillside Su in Antalya, Turkey, the facade's mirrored lower level reflects a covered driveway. The building, part of Turkey's first Design Hotels property, is by architect Eren Talu.

Above: Goldfish bowls top cutouts in the up-lit counter of the Corian-clad reception desk. The nearby window's double-layered textured Profilit glass imparts an underwater feel.

Opposite: Six rotating disco balls—each 6 feet in diameter—descend from the mirrored ceiling of the nine-story atrium lobby. For seating, Talu layered terry-covered mattresses on backlit acrylic slabs. He chose Stefano Giovannoni's Bombo stools for the bar and restaurant flanking the lobby.

Picture yourself by the pool, reclining on generous cushions, shaded by umbrellas of woven straw. To one side stretches the Mediterranean Sea. Beyond rise the snow-capped Taurus Mountains. Having It All somehow starts to seem possible.

And it almost is at Hillside Su, a resort in Antalya, Turkey. If you left the iroko-wood deck surrounding the pool and crossed a wooden bridge flanked by tangerine trees, you'd find yourself at a building that consummately performs the destination hotel's delicate balancing act: creating a palpable sense of place while appealing to the tastes and expectations of a culturally diverse clientele.

That becomes even more of a challenge when the destination in question is a melting pot of sensibilities, as is decidedly the case in the southwestern Turkish port of Antalya. A popular resort, it boasts pristine beaches, funky art galleries and restaurants, and a cityscape peppered by ancient Greek, Roman, Byzantine, Ottoman, and Seljuk architecture. "The area is very global. It offers such extremes all very close to one another—modern and ancient, rich and poor, hectic and calm, urban and natural. Hillside Su reflects those contrasts," says Edip Ilkbahar, executive vice president of the Alarko Tourism Group. Ilkbahar oversaw the construction of Hillside Su, Turkey's first Design Hotels property.

Eren Talu Architecture's sensual, minimalist scheme abstracts natural forms into stylized design elements. Ubiquitous reflective surfaces represent the sea. Playful lighting effects recall the region's intense sunlight. And the tangerine tree, native to Antalya, becomes a motif. Standing at attention along the open-air corridors lining the hotel facade, perky tangerine trees can be seen through a window grid fronting the atrium lobby. "Symmetry and repetition impart modernist overtones to a natural element," explains Ilkbahar—though these particular tangerine trees are fake, for easy maintenance.

The nine-story atrium lobby is more nightclub than port of call. Six gargantuan disco balls, each 6 feet in diameter, spin above a row of benches—slabs of internally lit acrylic topped by mattresses and plump cushions covered in cotton terry. Tucked behind mirrored columns to either side of the lobby, a bar and restaurant present mirror images of each other, with Stefano Giovannoni's Bombo stools pulled up to a 66-foot-long communal table topped in white Corian. →

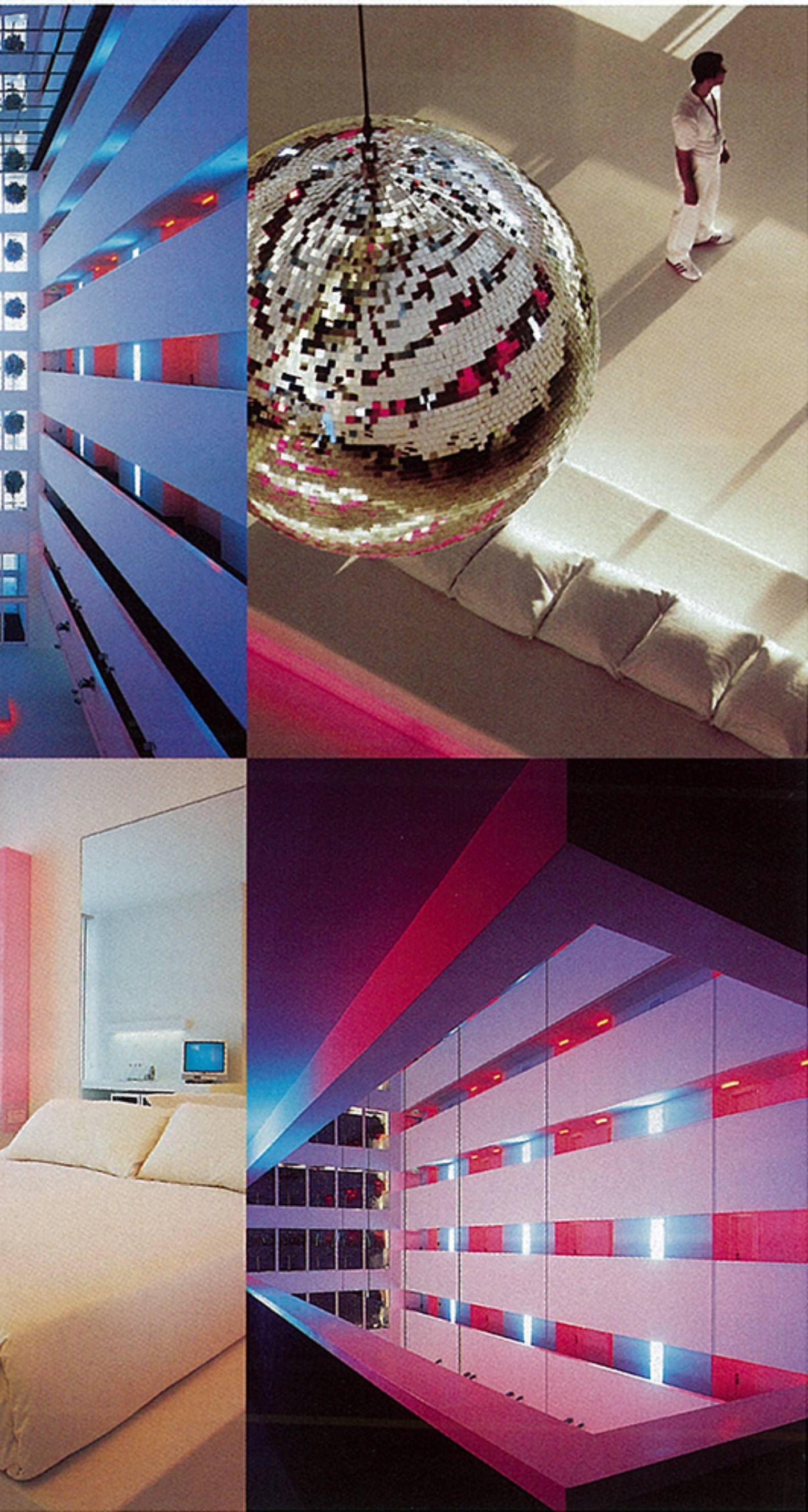




Opposite: Woven-straw umbrellas made by local artisans shade the pool's iroko-wood deck. The Taurus Mountains rise directly from the Mediterranean Sea beyond.



Above: At one end of the pool, a mirrored partition hides the men's and women's showers and changing rooms.



by's front window grid
pine trees lining the hotel
dors; photography: Tamer
s are also covered in cot-
n left: On either side of
d headboards, fluorescent
at the flick of a switch. Red
est room doors. Photogra-


dd pattern to the driveway
surface.

With mirrors multiplying ad infinitum—even the ceiling is mirrored—you can't quite tell up from down. Which is deliberate. "Surprises and mysteries are unveiled as you move through the hotel," says principal Eren Talu. Reception hides in a separate ground-floor room, where goldfish bowls cap a row of cutouts in the desk's up-lit Corian top.

If you make it past the lobby's many temptations, you can head up to your room via windowed elevators with uninterrupted sea views. Virtually all of the 294 guest rooms overlook similar vistas through windows shaded by simple plastic vertical blinds. Epoxy coats the all-white guest rooms' floors as well as desks and platforms for sofas and beds. Flanking the oversize mirrored headboards, custom fluorescent fixtures change from white to pink to red as desired.

"There's a purity and sweetness to the rooms, yet they're very sexy," says ilkbahar. "The design overturns the expected black-painted walls and heart-shaped tubs in favor of more playful touches like lava lamps and fishbowls." And cushioned balcony lounges for open-air slumber sessions.

For flat-out sex appeal, there's the 9½ Weeks suite—entirely worthy of its saucy film reference. The 3,660-square-foot space features a larger-than-king-size bed, a shower for two, a Jacuzzi, a pool table, and a home-theater system. ErenTalu took care of the glitter factor not with another disco ball but instead with a 10-foot-tall rotating Christmas tree covered in disco mirror. Of the suite's two terraces, one is currently being outfitted with a miniature-golf course.

Amenities available to all guests include banquet facilities, state-of-the-art meeting rooms, squash courts, and a spa and fitness area. And shops on a lower concourse offer far more than postcards and toothpaste. One boutique sells only Alessi products—for the design-forward traveler. 

PROJECT MANAGER: Yael Bahar. PROJECT INTERIOR ARCHITECTS: ASLIEKE; MERVE YONEYMAN.

DESK CORIAN (RECEPTION): DUPONT. TEXTURED GLASS: PILKINGTON. STOOLS (BAR, RESTAURANT): MAGIS. DECKING (POOL AREA): PEMAFLOOR. GENERAL CONTRACTOR: ALKE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY AND TRADE CO.