

BLINK PUTS ITS MARKER ON THE SAND AT TWO BEACH RESORTS

THE NATION

Blink Design Group has designed two beach resorts, in Sanya, China and Goa, India respectively that shows the group's experience in architecture and interior design in hospitality building.

Blink's fully integrated, end-to-end suite of services now spans advisory, identity, master planning, architecture and interior design.

Founded by Clint Nagata in 2006 and operating out of Bangkok, Singapore and New Delhi, the company designs hotels, resorts, restaurants, clubs, spas, and residences for leading global brands.

The 300-key Marriott Xiangshui Bay resort in Sanya, Hainan Island, is nearing completion, featuring cutting-edge contemporary design, including a lobby inspired by a fold-

ing Chinese paper lantern and a rooftop bar and fitness centre. It will open in 2014 and is not far from the Conrad Sanya, another Blink masterpiece which scooped the World's Best Luxury Hotel at the Hospitality Design Magazine Awards in 2012.

In India's most famous resort town, Goa, Blink is behind a very different kind of Hilton resort, with just 100 keys, arrayed along a steep hillside, and based upon a colonial-era Goan village, featuring a collaboration on interiors with famous Indian fashion designer Tarun Tahiliani. The Hilton Goa is scheduled to welcome its first guests in 2015.

Blink founder and creative director Clint Nagata said both projects represented significant strides forward in establishing the firm's pure architecture credentials, as both were green field sites where Blink

had total control of exterior and interior design in two of Asia's key resort markets.

"Lots of eyes are on Sanya and Goa, as the two leading resort destinations in the two Asian 'superpowers,'" he said. "So I'm delighted Blink has put its marker in the sand as architects of note, as well as burnishing our credentials as one of the region's big players in hospitality interior design."

Blink associate director of architecture and lead architect on the Goa project, Christopher Chua, said designing the resort at Saipem, on a steep hill set back from the beach but boasting spectacular views, had been at once "challenging and fascinating".

"This is not your typical beach-front resort, nor is it a typical Hilton. In fact, it's one of the smallest Hiltons to be built," he said. "Our

research and delving into local culture and history gave rise to a Goan village concept. The bases of the main structures were inspired by the Portuguese colonial era and Goa's beautiful laterite stone forts, so we have used fort-like walls and laterite widely at the base of the main guest room structures.

Nagata, who is design lead on the Marriott Resort, said it, too, was a departure for a leading luxury hotel brand. "It's very modern design, very un-Marriott like. There are no red cushions in the lobby, although perhaps the Marriott red subliminally inspired our use of red aluminium panelling on the exterior.

"Most striking is the folding, undulating box that comprises the lobby structure. The original inspiration was a Chinese lantern. It's almost like origami and very differ-



A PERSPECTIVE of the Hilton Goa shows interiors created in collaboration with famous Indian fashion designer Tarun Tahiliani, and is scheduled to welcome its first guests in 2015.

ent, sitting upon a reflection pond.

Nagata said he looked forward to the launches of both resorts, and to further fruitful collaborations with projects bearing the Marriott and

Hilton badges. Blink is also the design firm behind the new Regent Phuket and Regent Bali, with Regent properties in Taipei, Indonesia and China also on the drawing board.