

KATARA SERVICED APARTMENTS

DOHA, STATE OF QATAR

2014

Located in Ras Abu Aboud Street, at the gateway of Doha's waterfront and next to the former airport, this serviced apartments' building was devised to complement the beachfront cluster of Marriott-operated hotels, which comprises The Ritz-Carlton Sharq Village & Spa resort and the Marriott Doha hotel; a site with excellent accessibility, conveniently located just outside the city, just a 10-minute drive from Hamad International Airport.

With the recent relocation of the airport, the owner – Qatar's sovereign fund hospitality group – saw the opportunity to increase the offer by building on a vacant parking lot of the Marriott hotel. Although not a beachfront property, the latter being largely occupied by the Ritz-Carlton, it still has stunning bay views from several angles.

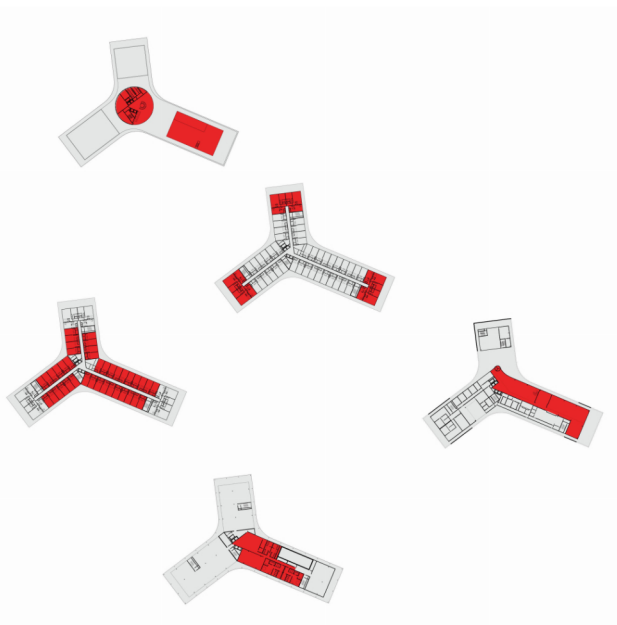
This 11-storey apartment building has been conceived in a Y-shaped plan, with its lengthiest wing extending along the North axis of the plot, in order to maximize waterfront exposure and create a great arrival experience.

Actually, whenever views are a key factor, Y-shaped buildings are a recurrent design strategy throughout the 20th-century, – two of the most prominent being the unesco headquarters, in Paris, and the central offices of Swiss food conglomerate Nestlé, built in Vevey, on the shores of Lake Geneva. In Doha's case, this Y-plan takes full advantage of the plot's generous size to make the most of the views, while yielding an extremely efficient floor plan in terms of double-loaded apartment units, with elevator cores at the junction of the Y, and emergency escapes located at the extremities.

Guests arrive straight from a low speed service lane in Ras Abu Aboud Street and are greeted by an embracing concave facade that welcomes them into a spectacular drop-off which is naturally shaded below the building's bridge-like shape. The double-height lobby aims to seamlessly extend the welcoming experience of the drop-off into the reception, while directing guests to the reception and concierge right in front and access to the elevators.

The main public areas are on the ground floor, namely, lobby, reception, all-day dining restaurant, convenience and grab-&-go, in addition to both areas. On the mezzanine level, directly accessible from the lobby, there is a generous function centre with six large and flexible meeting rooms. Above the mezzanine floor, there are 10 floors of double-loaded apartment units, all surrounded by large balconies, where residents can enjoy the outdoors at least 6 to 8 months of the year.

This all-balcony facade has been conceived to appear as a floating structure of slabs hovering over a solid base. On the floors above, this overhang, created by the winding balconies, is complemented by a system of rotating columns which progressively reduce in size according to floor height. Crowning the ensemble, on the 11th-floor, a rooftop infinity pool with bar; a spa and a relaxation area, complete this residential building.



Location: Ras Abu Aboud Street, Doha, State of Qatar

Client: Katara Hospitality

Operator: Edition by Marriott

Scope of services: Architecture (in collaboration with Extrastudio), interior design and landscape

Project brief: 5-star serviced apartments with 260 keys (1-bedroom/ 200 units; 2-bedroom/ 60 units)

Plot size: 8,690 sq. m

Gross built area: 53,775 sq. m

Construction Cost: QAR 550m

Project status: 2014 (design competition)