

THE FOUR SEASONS ALGIERS HOTEL

ALGIERS, ALGERIA

2014

Located in the heart of the city of Algiers, El-Hamma is a dilapidated residential district intermingled with the remains of light industry and warehouses, in a fast-growing process of gentrification and urban regeneration.

This transformation has been politically spearheaded by public and local authorities, starting with the renovation of surrounding landmarks, such as the Martyrs Monument, the National Library and the magnificent Botanical Garden. This process aims to transform the area into the new business hub of the Algerian capital, within which, the proposed Algiers City Centre – property of Qatari investor, Sheikh Faisal bin Qasim Al Thani –, will be a leading tourism destination. Devised as a mixed-use centre, it comprises two hotels, 5- and 4-star respectively, with conference centre, Spa, health-club and restaurants, a small shopping centre with supermarket, movie theatres, food-court and family entertainment centre. The main hotel, which will act as an anchor to the whole development, was initially proposed to be operated by Four Seasons Hotel & Resorts.

Algiers City Centre is a mixed-use ensemble of three aggregated buildings; a retail podium, whose facade is largely absorbed by the two hotel towers that stand on top of it. The design of the ensemble is very much inspired in Algiers urban identity, with references to its renown white facades (*d'Alger la blanche*) and the complex decorative geometry of the Arab-French Art Deco period. The architectural expression of these volumes seeks to reconcile a classical tectonic expression with contemporary design, creating a timeless image. An allusive and non-mimetic inspiration seeks typological references in the transition of late-modern classical composition of the 1950s, notably in the architecture of Fernand Poullion and its enduring presence in Algeria. Revisiting a recurrent theme in the architecture of Algiers' tall buildings, the facades result from a tripartite composition, starting with a colonnade and a *piano nobile*, followed by a large body composed by pilasters, and finally crowned by an attic with a rooftop pergola. Furthermore, the idea of ornamentation is present in the *bas-reliefs* of the pilasters, with subtle variations between the two buildings, evocative of Maghrebian motifs.



Location: Hamma, Algiers, Algeria

Client: Sarl SAPIA (H.E. Sheikh Faisal bin Qassim Al Thani)

Operators: Four Seasons Hotels & Resorts and Rotana Hotels & Resorts

Scope of services: Master planning, architecture, interior design and landscape architecture

Project brief: 5-star hotel and conference centre (340 keys), 4-star business hotel (208 keys) and commercial podium with f&b, retail and entertainment

Gross built area: 48,500 sq. m (Four Seasons Hotel) plus 23,800 sq. m (Rotana Hotel)

Estimated construction cost: EUR 110m and EUR 49m

Project status: 2014 (concept design and planning permission)