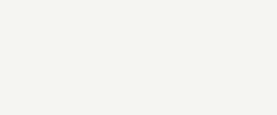


DESIGN

# Interview: Baranowitz + Kronenberg Studio

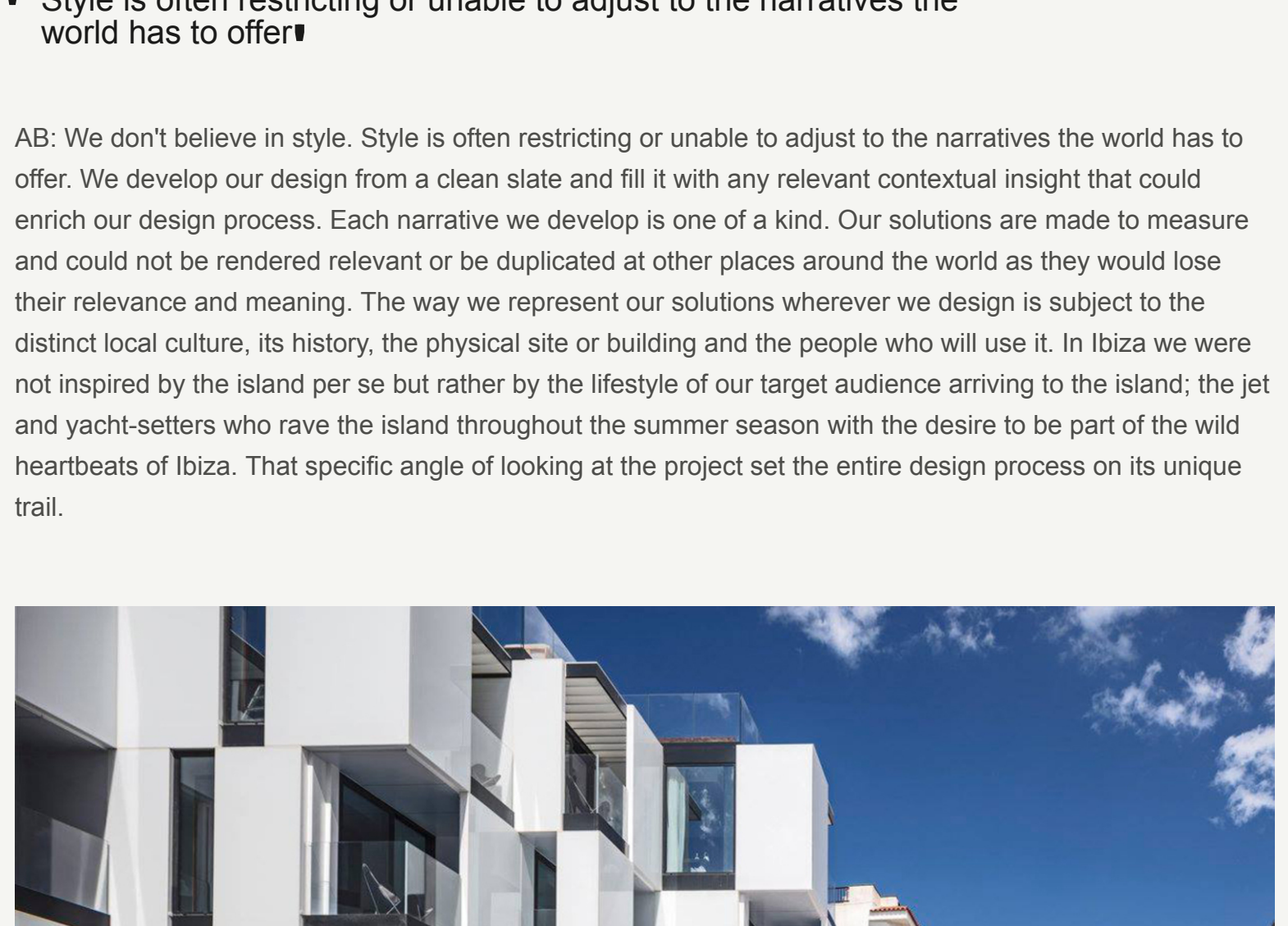


**Process, inspiration and why the design team behind Ibiza's Sir Joan hotel doesn't believe in "style"**

by **Katie Olsen**  
on 15 March 2018

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Contemporary stereotypes surrounding Ibiza are drenched in mega-clubs, day parties, super-yachts and plenty of EDM, but one of the island's newest hotels, [Sir Joan](#), is an oasis that harks to the island's heyday. While the property (located on Passeig Joan Carles I) feels exclusive, it's also inclusive and relaxed—with plenty of cleanly designed and sun-drenched common spaces. Designed by [Baranowitz + Kronenberg](#) and [Ribas & Ribas Architects](#), the 38-room boutique hotel pays subtle homage to yacht life, but remains sophisticated and polished—not gimmicky. We spoke with Alon Baranowitz and Irene Kronenberg about their approach to designing a space that embraces socializing while offering a sanctuary for introverts, and why they don't believe in "style."

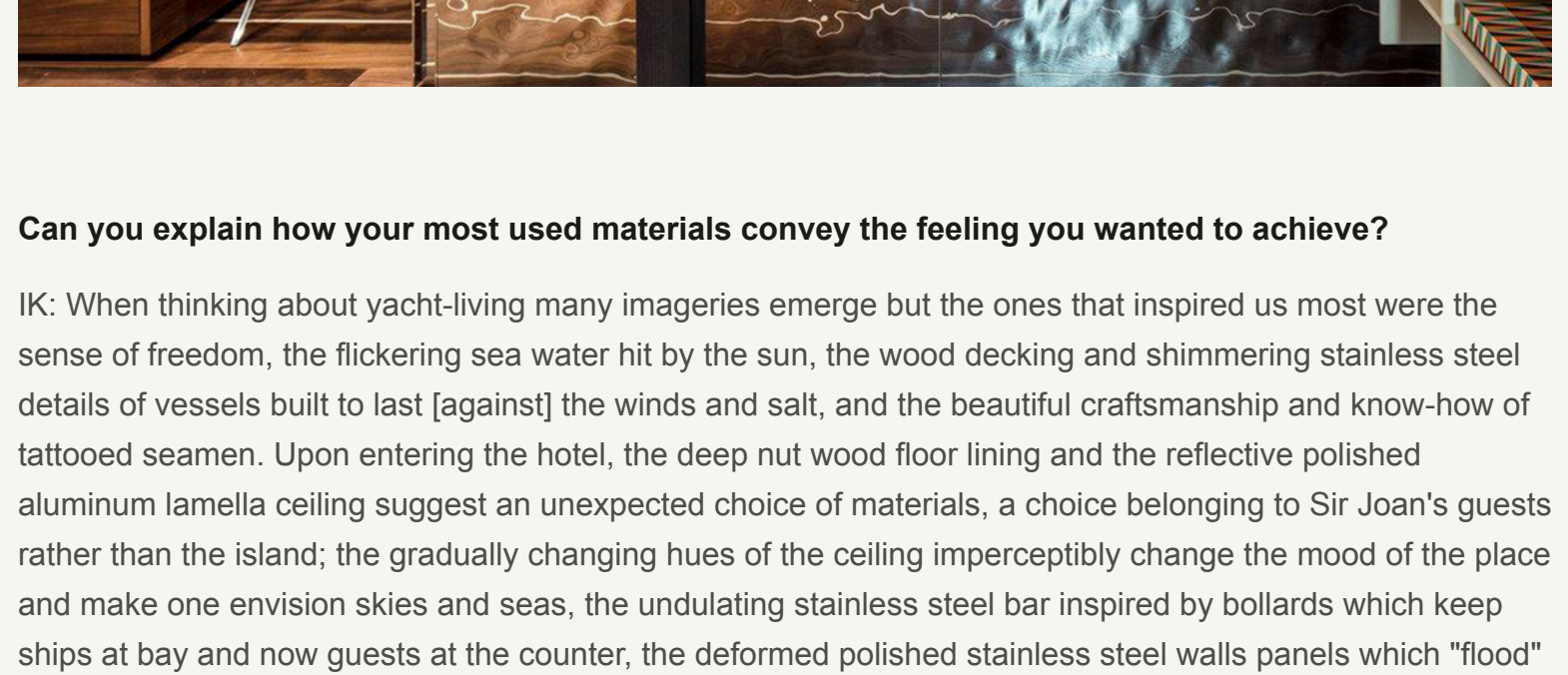


**Was there a specific brief that you needed to follow with the interiors of the hotel? What were some of the elements or styles that you needed to achieve?**

Alon Baranowitz: Sir Hotels is a contextually and culturally driven lifestyle brand. Considering the sheer size of the site and the existing edifice to be developed, the notion of a "Member's Club" presented itself quite intuitively. Looking at our competition, we couldn't identify anything on the island that followed this conceptual approach. Hence, we came up with a narrative that positioned 'Sir Joan' as an exceptional hospitality venue; 38 keys and a great F&B concept which makes for the living room and outdoors to function as one holistic retreat.

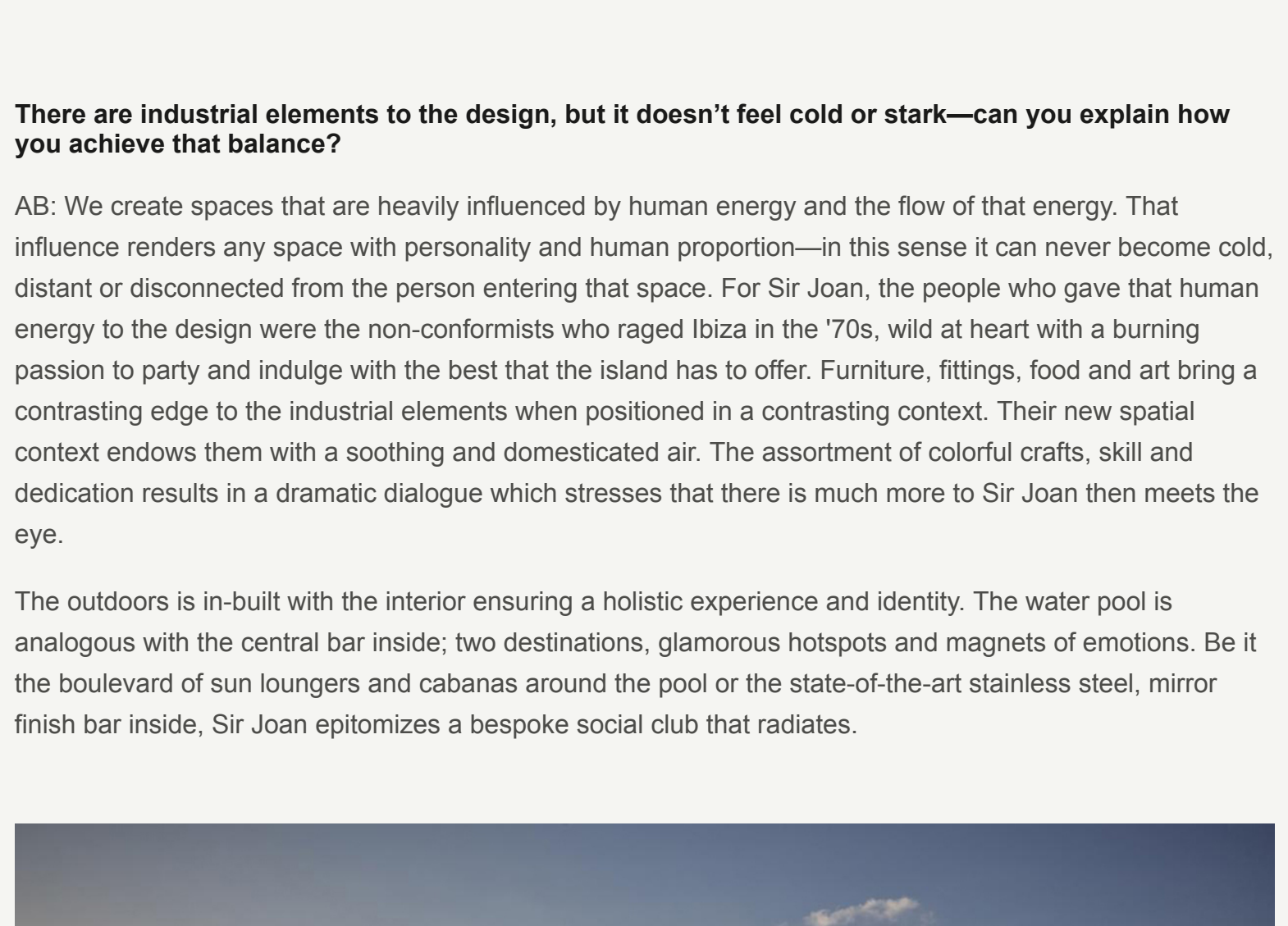
**■ Style is often restricting or unable to adjust to the narratives the world has to offer**

AB: We don't believe in style. Style is often restricting or unable to adjust to the narratives the world has to offer. We develop our design from a clean slate and fill it with any relevant contextual insight that could enrich our design process. Each narrative we develop is one of a kind. Our solutions are made to measure and could not be rendered relevant or be duplicated at other places around the world as they would lose their relevance and meaning. The way we represent our solutions wherever we design is subject to the distinct local culture, its history, the physical site or building and the people who will use it. In Ibiza we were not inspired by the island per se but rather by the lifestyle of our target audience arriving to the island; the jet and yacht-setters who rave the island throughout the summer season with the desire to be part of the wild heartbeats of Ibiza. That specific angle of looking at the project set the entire design process on its unique trail.



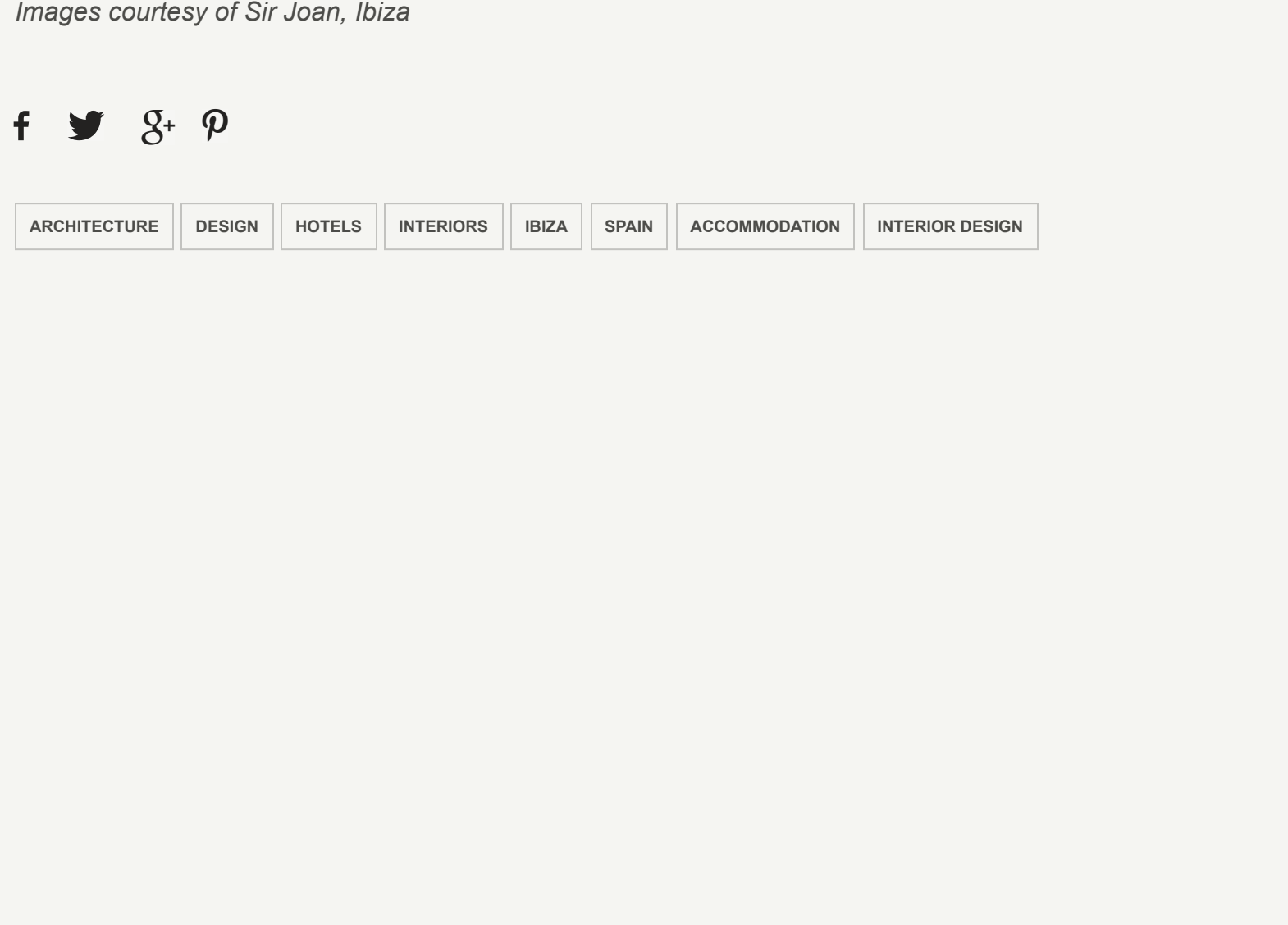
**Was there an overall vibe/mood you tried to create with the hotel, or is each room/area different?**

Irene Kronenberg: Our design introduces an air of a luxurious and a personal marine vessel running as an undercurrent throughout the spaces. As a vessel, Sir Joan manifests an introverted space to enjoy, discover and lose oneself in while delighting in a vibrant breeze of place and culture. The social spaces are carefully orchestrated to embrace any mood and mindset. The movement through these spaces evokes a holistic spatial arrangement as venues are infused together with an air of an easy-going free spirit where anything could be celebrated anywhere and where public and private are merely in the eyes of the beholder.



**Can you explain how your most used materials convey the feeling you wanted to achieve?**

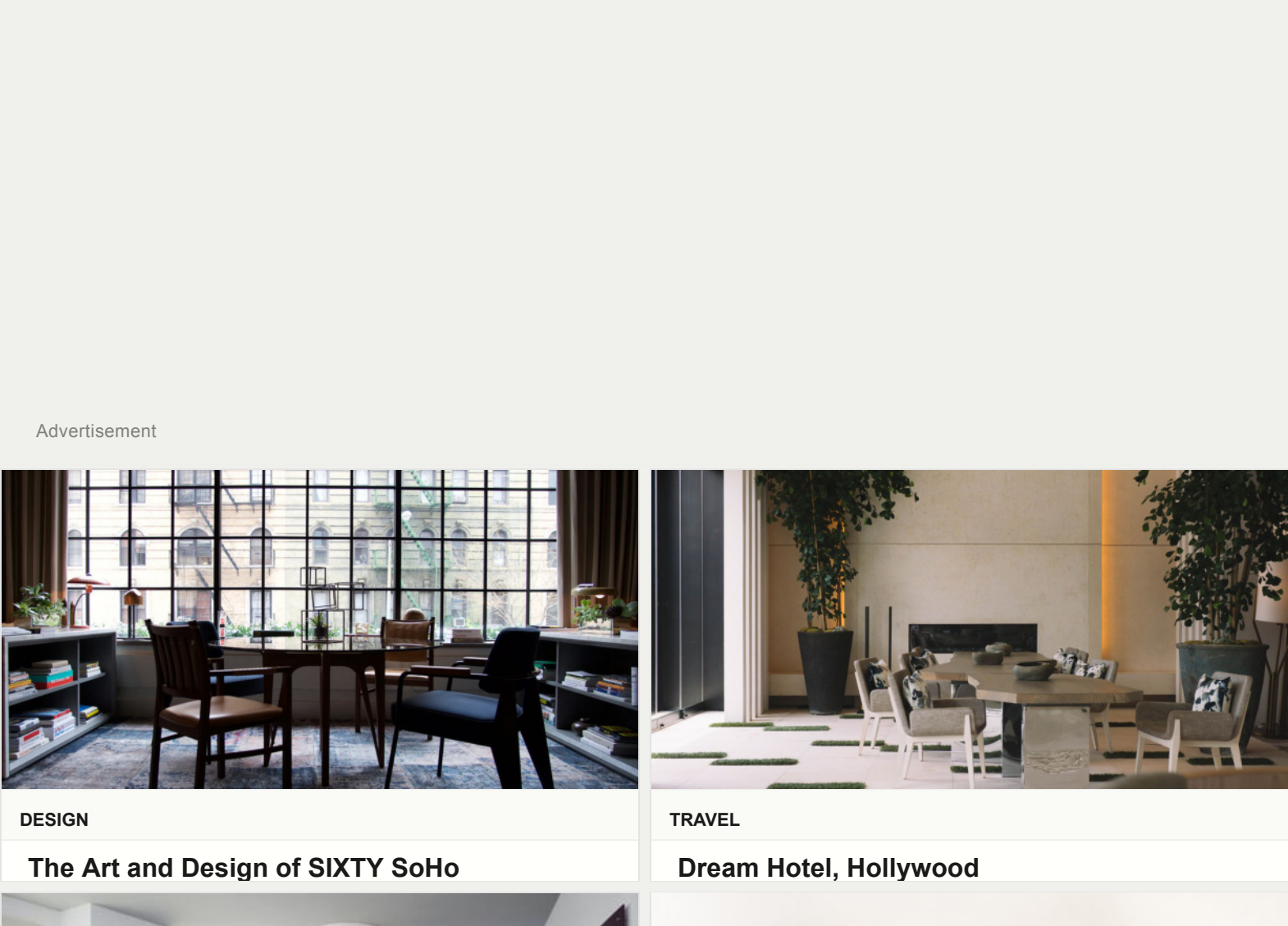
IK: When thinking about yacht-living many imageries emerge but the ones that inspired us most were the sense of freedom, the flickering sea water hit by the sun, the wood decking and shimmering stainless steel details of vessels built to last [against] the winds and salt, and the beautiful craftsmanship and know-how of tattooed seamen. Upon entering the hotel, the deep nut wood floor lining and the reflective polished aluminum lamella ceiling suggest an unexpected choice of materials, a choice belonging to Sir Joan's guests rather than the island; the gradually changing hues of the ceiling imperceptibly change the mood of the place and make one envision skies and seas, the undulating stainless steel bar inspired by bollards which keep ships at bay and now guests at the counter, the deformed polished stainless steel walls panels which "flood" Sir Joan with cascades and shimmering reflections and the "tattooed" carpet which embodies the essence of visionary seaman and enigmatic voyages. Ascending the upper decks of Sir Joan, the flickering turquoise water of the Balearics hover from above as skies of sorts.



**There are industrial elements to the design, but it doesn't feel cold or stark—can you explain how you achieve that balance?**

AB: We create spaces that are heavily influenced by human energy and the flow of that energy. That influence renders any space with personality and human proportion—in this sense it can never become cold, distant or disconnected from the person entering that space. For Sir Joan, the people who gave that human energy to the design were the non-conformists who raged Ibiza in the '70s, wild at heart with a burning passion to party and indulge with the best that the island has to offer. Furniture, fittings, food and art bring a contrasting edge to the industrial elements when positioned in a contrasting context. Their new spatial context endows them with a soothing and domesticated air. The assortment of colorful crafts, skill and dedication results in a dramatic dialogue which stresses that there is much more to Sir Joan than meets the eye.

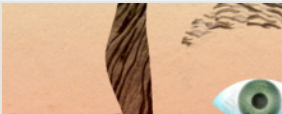
The outdoors is in-built with the interior ensuring a holistic experience and identity. The water pool is analogous with the central bar inside; two destinations, glamorous hotspots and magnets of emotions. Be it the boulevard of sun loungers and cabanas around the pool or the state-of-the-art stainless steel, mirror finish bar inside, Sir Joan epitomizes a bespoke social club that radiates.



**Were there any specific areas or issues that you had challenges with? Any problems you felt especially proud to overcome?**

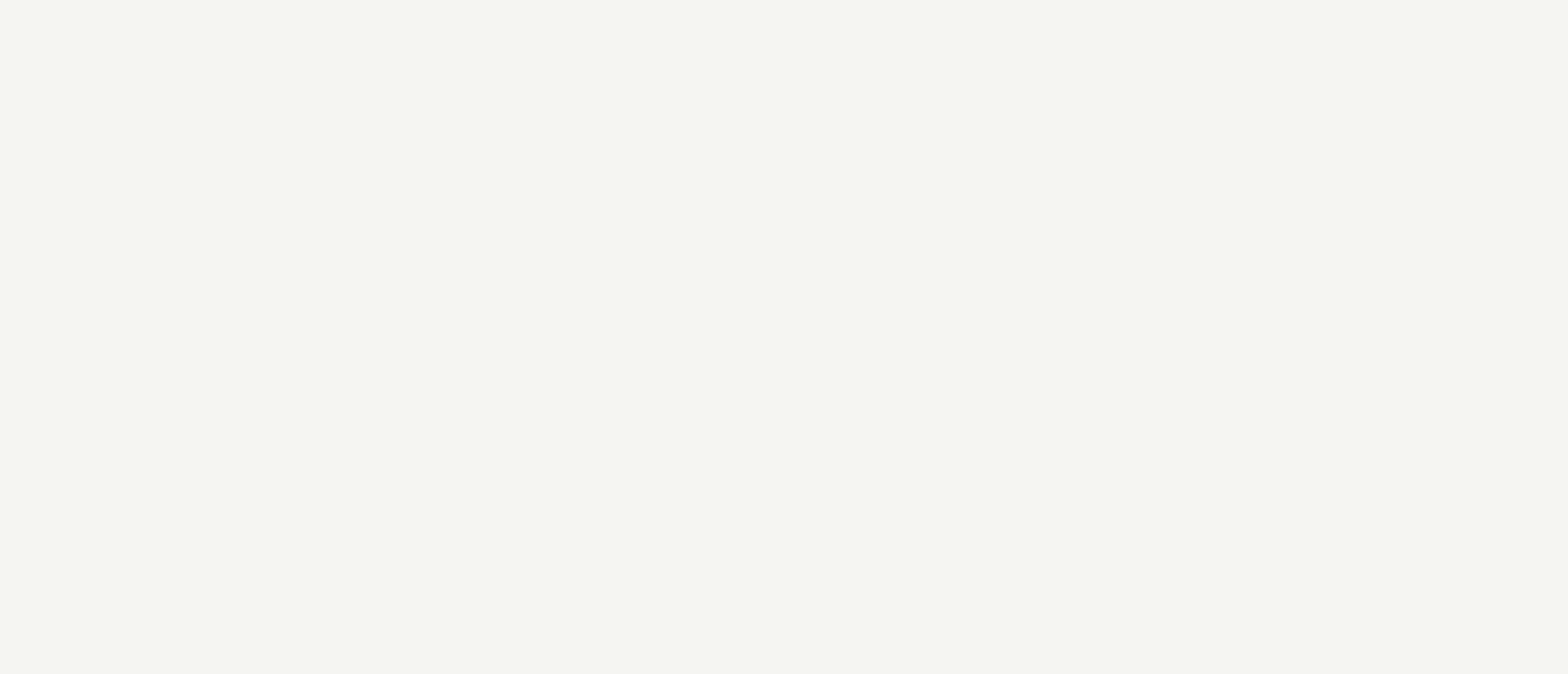
AB: The road is busy, the roundabout is not particularly gorgeous but as soon as you enter the world of the Sir Joan, all of these things fade away. It is always a magical feeling if you can pull off a project that feels like it has always been there and will always be there. All these challenges fade away as you "anchor" at the hotel.

Images courtesy of Sir Joan, Ibiza

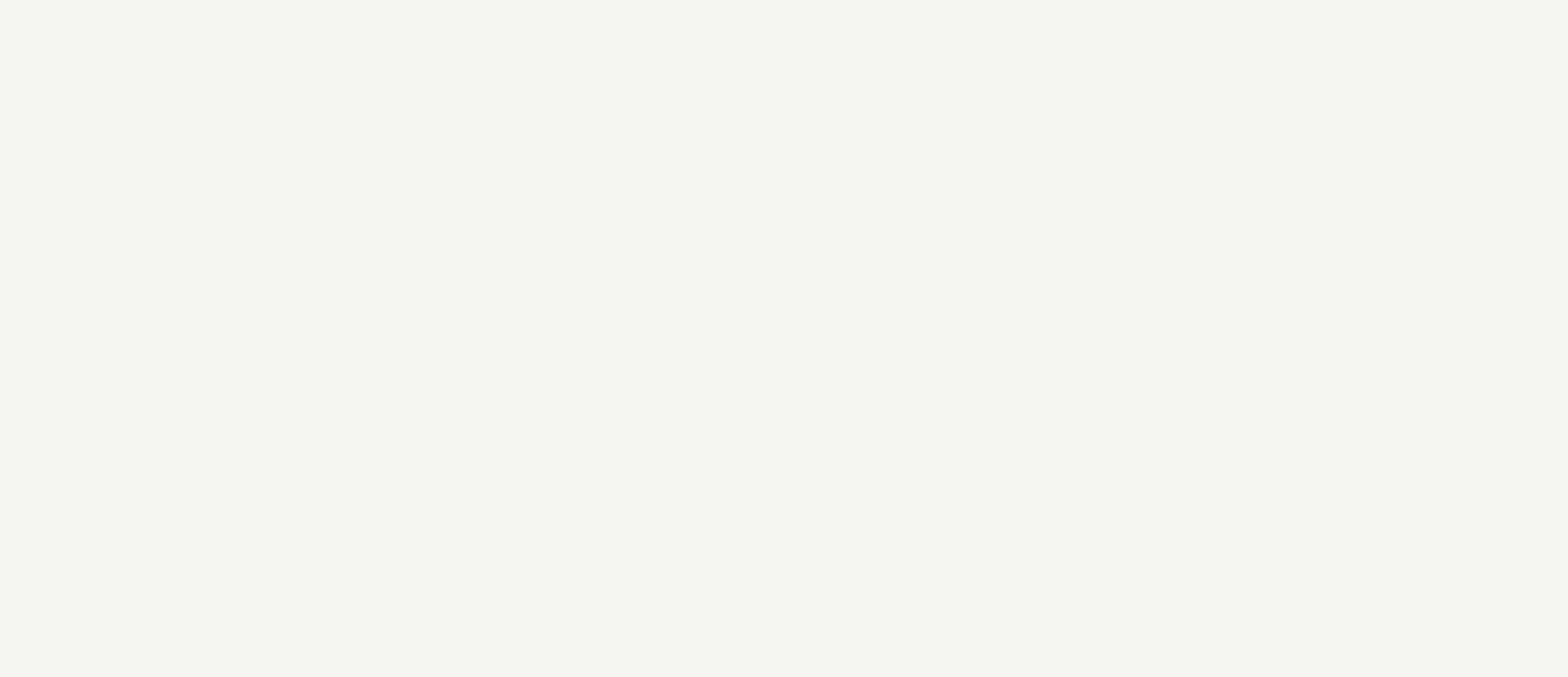


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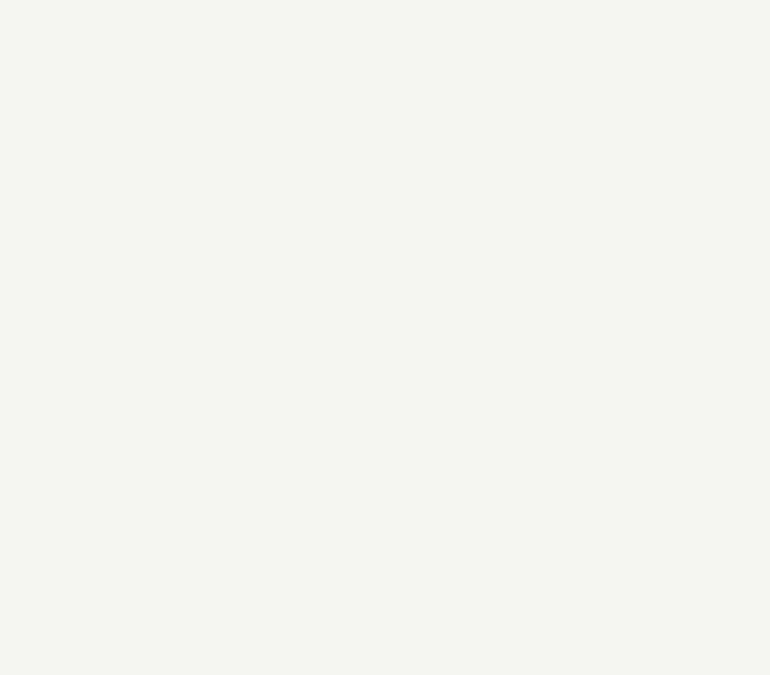


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