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Hotel design

MKV defines the arrival experience in three Greek projects

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Grand Hyatt Athens, situated in the heart of the capital; Mykonos Riviera Hotel & Spa overlooking the harbour of Chora; and Mitsis Rodos Village Beach Hotel & Spa on Rhodes.

Exceptional hotel lobbies make enduring memories. Whether framing breath-taking views, offering instant refuge from the world, providing a community hangout or a quiet space to relax, they are the hotel's all-important opening statement to guests and set the tone of the experience to come. **MKV Design** has recently completed three stunning lobbies, each one part of an on-going design project being handled by the practice, all in Greece but completely different from one another in style and purpose. They are: **Grand Hyatt Athens**, situated in the heart of the capital; **Mykonos Riviera Hotel & Spa** overlooking the harbour of Chora; and **Mitsis Rodos Village Beach Hotel & Spa** on Rhodes.

Mykonos Riviera Hotel & Spa

Just as the Mykonos capital, Chora, tumbles down the rockface to the Aegean Sea, the Mykonos Riviera is terraced down the hillside. The reception lobby begins as a cave-like, window-less space flowing from the ground level arrival beneath an elevated infinity pool and opening out at the far end with a seating area and windows looking over the sea. The genius of the design is the deep, glazed "windows" punched through the ceiling under the pool. By day, this means that the space below is constantly alive, shimmering with reflections of water and sunlight from above. In the evening, it is illuminated by fibre optic lights embedded into the walls shining like stars in the night sky. Both floors and walls are in polished concrete, and decoration is kept to a minimum with only a playful knotted rope swing and rope screen behind the reception desk to embellish the space. The custom-designed reception desk is finished in mirror, reflecting and amplifying the magical light and shadows all-around.

Grand Hyatt Athens

The new Grand Hyatt Athens is located on one of the city's busiest thoroughfares, connecting the centre with the Athenian Riviera. A conversion of what was previously a Marriott, this is a modern hotel for business and leisure where a sense of grandeur and formality reflects its new brand while also anchoring the arrival experience with subtle hints of ancient Athenian heritage.

The white marble of the facade has been translated into the interior, beginning with the re-planned, double-height reception lobby. Large, deep-veined, chamfered marble slabs clad the walls, columns have been re-clad with a of hint classical Greek form, sunlight glances through the space and a specially-designed installation of oversized ancient Greek coins introduces a touch of antiquity in this otherwise contemporary architectural space. This is a lobby where guests can retreat from the heat and noise of the street into an almost cathedral-like ambience where pure lines and geometrical grids bring calm and sense of sanctuary. Materiality is key, with rich textures, white Dionysos and Alivery Grey marbles, black metal, mirrors and brass. An immense chandelier – the only item preserved from the previous lobby - has been restored and returned to preside over the entrance volume.

Mitsis Rodos Village Beach Hotel & Spa

Located by the Mediterranean Sea on the south coast of Rhodes, Mitsis Rodos Village Beach Hotel is all about its seaside location as arrival in the lobby makes clear. The flow of this large, outward-looking space is carefully planned to provide a choice of experiences - night bar on one side, day bar on the other, intimate niches and seating areas in the centre of the action. A glazed lounge completes the procession, overlooking an outdoor pool and gardens and, finally, the sea and far horizon – the entire enfilade clearly visible from the moment guests arrive. A striking ceiling feature, in woven bronze stainless steel reminiscent of traditional Greek craftsmanship, holds the collection of spaces together and leads the eye onwards. A patchwork of pebbles in the lobby floor echoes the ceiling feature above.

The interior aesthetic is clean, translating into a choice of furniture which hints at Danish design inspiration, here and there introducing splashes of rich colour in the upholstery into the overall palette of natural pale stone and light timbers. Flooring is in Lipica Fiorito stone, its three different finishes – polished, flamed, and honed – helping to articulate this large space.