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the architecture & interior design international magazine | middle east

EXPO

SAILING FROM MILAN TO DUBAI

Focus: three pavilions
at EXPO Milano 2015
Kuwait, Brazil and Spain

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023 SAILING FROM MILAN TO DUBAI

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Classical modernity: a duplex in Paris



Mypickone Studio Design

Work
Duplex Apartment
Location
Paris, Boulevard St.Germain
Project Year
2016
Architecture and Design
Marianna Piccolo
Interior Design: Marianna Piccolo
Size and total area
400 sqm
Image credits
Courtesy of Mypickone Team

Located in Boulevard St. Germain, one of the most charming places in the heart of Paris, this Duplex is one of the latest luxury residences designed by Mypickone Studio Design. Situated in Dubai, the studio is perfectly suited to the most selective cosmopolitans, thanks to its young Italian principal, Marianna Piccolo, who balances the pleasure of bespoke style with the most urban and refined taste levels.

Her "Design Philosophy" is based on designing by subtracting because, as she claims, «beauty is hidden in simplicity». In her works, she tries to harmonize the environment with the essential and functional elements using a subtracting approach to reach simplicity as the key to success. The idea that usually simple things are the most complex and challenging to deal with, has characterized her style.

In fact, she combines her two different souls, or, as she often says, her two different "genes": the Asian ones, which allow her to optimize space in everything, and the Italian ones, from which come the attention to detail and the eclectic style. She grew up working in fashion and studying design in Italy at the Politecnico in Milan, where she embraced the Coco Chanel and Mies van der Rohe's slogan "Less is more". The first lesson she learned came from the well-known architect Marco Piva, whom she worked for, who recommended her to think "outside the box" and be inspired by people's needs, values and desires in order to become a good designer.

«He taught me to fly high and not let anyone stop me», she said. So she decided to pursue international opportunities and in 2008 moved to Dubai. In 2012, she founded her first office, Mypickone Studio Design, situated in the Dubai Design District, the place where the Creative Community is gathered. She stated: «Since I moved to Dubai my professional experience has improved and been culturally enriched due to contact with other cultures and multiple nationalities». In all of this however she has preserved her own identity making people recognize her style and say: «This is my pick one!». That's the explanation to the studio's name. Since it was opened, it has always been focused on creating exclusive and sophisticated environments, without compromising functionality and comfort living, aiming at the predominance of a modern style, treated however with elegance and simplicity in a minimalistic classical and traditional way. >



Thanks to this, her designing approach is a balance between style and usability. All these features can be seen in the luxury Duplex in Paris made up of two old apartments located in a 16th century historical building in the famous Boulevard St. Germain. The designer decided to differentiate the two floors of the residence according to the client's wishes. So the first floor is very formal and elegant while the second floor is much more cosy and homely. The first aim of the project was to create a strong contrast between the historical boiserie and the ceiling. This can be appreciated in the entrance, the designer's favourite place, where a huge spiral staircase in aluminium is juxtaposed with the ancient boiserie and ceiling frame. Here you get the first impression of what the house will reveal.

«You immediately have the feeling of how the rest of the house should be», she stated. Attention is focused on the spiral staircase with its bright elements, which seem like white tapes making an interesting contrast with the neutral tones of the walls and floor. The light is captured by the ceiling frame and reflected by mirrors and glasses. Parisian doors, chandeliers and other elements have then been added to emphasize this contrast. The project faces both the past and the future: while the structure maintains a classical style, lighting and furniture are modern. Starting from this concept, the old style of some elements, such as the windows and the ceiling frame, has been preserved. In the dining and living room, attention is created by the reflections and transparencies of the materials used, from the gold wall to the crystal chandeliers, placed everywhere. >



The old boiserie has also been maintained, although with some additions of different flavours of Parisian style such as the Versailles parquet in the common areas and the French style Herringbone parquet in other rooms. Other important elements, that contribute to create an eclectic style, are the French glass door between the dining and the living room and some vintage chandeliers and sconce for the walls. Instead modern style elements come from Italian furniture and lighting, chosen among brands such as Living Divani, Baxter, Minotti, E15, Cassina, Glas Italia, Flos, Davide Groppi, Rubelli Fabrics and others. Sometimes furnishings and style nourish the sinuous lines given by the architectural elements, as in the dining room with its peculiar circular shape.

Everywhere the simplicity of the design can be seen, a modern style mixed with some Asian or Japanese notes, such as the screen used both in the living room and in the bedroom. Here the minimalism is also created by materials and by linear and metal frames on the walls. While all the rooms are in soft hues, in each one you can see a coloured element of furniture- green, blue, orange, purple - which contributes to underline the contrast between classical and modern style. After all the project responds to the client's request of a good and beautiful design thanks to a good combination of functionality and aesthetics. «For me the concept of beauty, limited to the aesthetic, is very subjective, not even a judge can say what is nice and what is not», as she remarks, «Instead a combination of functionality and aesthetics must be "beautiful"!».

Consuelo Isabel Astrella

