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R4M Engineering

Aria Retreat&Spa Quintessence of Nature and Freedom Cima, Como, Italy

In a setting merging earth and sky on Lake Lugano, Aria Retreat&Spa is a temple of energy that will leave you feeling as light as the wind. Opened in summer 2021, this new luxury hotel is close to Canton Ticino in Switzerland and it was designed by architect Carlo Bacchini from R4M Engineering as a blend of light, air and freedom that integrates perfectly into the environment. This sense of balance and respect for nature was something that Lapitec, a Veneto-based company specializing in sintered stone made of an amalgam of natural minerals, helped achieve by providing 2,000 sq. m of stone slabs for cladding. The design of the resort follows the natural slope on which the complex is located, looking out onto the Italian section of Lake Lugano across 40,000 sq. m of garden. In total, the resort has five restaurants and as many pools, tennis courts, a fitness center, a private beach and a wellness facility. The entire complex has been designed to

minimize the impact on the environment through the use of sustainable technologies and materials, such as photovoltaic panels, automation solutions that reduce consumption, and surfaces made solely from wood. Lapitec's large, sintered stone slabs were used for the ventilated envelope, partly because they do not absorb water and are scratch-resistant. The hotel has a three-floor central section with a pitched roof, and two wings, all clad in Lapitec. The main building is characterized by large porticoes with arched, rectangular and square openings, changing with the different levels. The lighting design is the

work of architect Giorgio Colombo from the Light+Arch Consultancy studio, and it exalts the use of vertically placed sintered stone panels in the Bianco Artico shade with a Lithos finish. The same panels are used for the stringcourses. The fronts of the adjacent volumes are in contrasting Grigio Cemento and Terra Moca shades, with the communal exterior areas and the spa built on the terraces in Terra Ebano. The same shades are returned to at the back of the complex, facing the hill with long balconies, and in various internal spaces. The overall effect is of pure design and elegance.

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