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*Notable Projects: AYANA Resort and Spa, Bali; Anantara Peace Haven Tangalie Resort, Sri Lanka; Conrad Rangali Island, Maldives; The Ritz-Carlton Bali, Indonesia*

WATG is one of the world's leading integrated design firms, offering a wide range of services comprising strategy, planning, architecture, landscaping and interiors for urban locations, tourism and resort destinations. Along with Wimberly Interiors, a design studio of WATG, it has 11 offices in the US, the UK, Canada, UAE, Singapore and China. In 2017, the hospitality design giant designed over 240 projects in 52 countries on four continents on behalf of distinguished brands such as Bellagio, St Regis, Hard Rock, Nobu, Six Senses, Four Seasons, Fairmont, Ritz-Carlton, Viceroy, Belmond, Rosewood and Hyatt.

**How much does the location influence the design?**  
 Our design process and philosophy focus on creating a sense

of place and communicating the unique story of the locale. Our clients trust us with creating a guest experience and a design narrative that resonates, bringing a resort destination to life with spectacular results that embrace the essence of the country, the site, and the dream of the client.

For example, in one of our most recent projects, the AYANA Komodo Resort, located in Flores, Indonesia, has an amazing location on the edge of the archipelago. The area's rich cultural and ecological landscape has shaped WATG's design for the resort. The resorts' guest wing has a curving shape and rough textured roof that emulates the form of the Komodo Dragon. The architecture also draws inspiration from traditional



RIMBA JIMBARAN BALI BY AYANA

batik patterns and sea life to create an informed identity for the hotel. Located in a lagoon with extraordinary marine life and coral sand beaches, the design ensures visitors feel immersed in luxury on the edge of civilization.

**How do you tackle environmental issues in your hospitality design?**  
 Sustainability is imperative. It is in our DNA to consider best practices to reduce the impact to the environment, use locally sourced and appropriate materials and leverage the natural landscape and resources. We also do extensive research to ensure our designs are culturally sensitive.

Discovering green and responsible ways to enhance a design is integral to the enduring success of a design and essential for creating a better vision of the world. We strive to stay ahead of the curve with new construction techniques, and innovation within landscape design will help us deliver low-impact, beautiful hotels.

**What are the current trends in hospitality design?**

Guests are seeking transformational experiences and, more than ever, we are tasked with designing adaptable spaces to provide hoteliers with the opportunity to reinvent and stay fresh. Arts, entertainment, participatory events, and activities are all part of an integrated design and operations programme. Resorts are becoming adaptable spaces that can easily switch to accommodate meetings, art exhibits, and new exciting F&B concepts. This constant reinvention entices guests to return for a fresh experience every time. The AYANA Resort and Spa in Bali is a good example - over the past two decades they have refurbished and extended their spa, added new restaurants, entertainment spaces, wedding venues, a salt-water pool, and the popular ever-evolving Rock Bar.

Guests wish to share their experiences through their social



AYANA KOMODO RESORT, WAECICU BEACH



RIMBA JIMBARAN BALI BY AYANA

channels, making social media a huge marketing tool for the destinations we design. The 'wow' factor is no longer limited to the arrival experience, it must flow throughout the entire resort, including their activity programme.

We are seeing an increase in indoor/outdoor clubs on rooftops, cliffs and beaches. These venues often require little capital investment but need a unique concept to prove successful. Guests demand authenticity, everything needs to feel local and immersive, from the location and ambiance, to the culinary offering and overall brand. With all successful projects, you need to have an innovative owner and operator and a world-class design team that can collaborate to bring a shared vision to life.

**Are there any locations in Indonesia that are growing rapidly?**

We are seeing an elevated interest in Lake Toba, and development is pushing ahead on Flores Island. <sup>10</sup>