

# Monaco Yacht Club & Residences Design Q&A With Bernardo Fort-Brescia, Founding Principal Of Arquitectonica

By Andres E. Caceres  
March 11, 2021

The Côte d'Azur meets the shores of Miami Beach at Monaco Yacht Club & Residences, the highly anticipated twelve-story enclave of just thirty-nine luxurious waterfront residences and a private marina slated for completion Fall 2021.

We sat down with **Bernardo Fort-Brescia**, founding principal of the award-winning international architecture firm, **Arquitectonica**, to learn more about his design inspiration for the nautically-themed, boutique Bayfront condominium.



*Bernardo Fort-Brescia, FAIA, Arquitectonica*  
Photo Credit: Courtesy of Arquitectonica

## **At just 12 stories, how did the boutique nature of Monaco Yacht Club & Residences inspire your design?**

The scale of the building lends itself to a more exclusive and private living experience. It allowed us to offer discreet arrival to the units, fewer residents per floor, and proximity to the water.

## **Did it present any unique challenges or opportunities?**

The challenge is always how to ensure all units face the water. That is the greatest asset south Florida offers. The broad frontage and favorable ratio of width to depth of the site allow the building to be situated parallel to the water's edge that provides an

opportunity for increased sightlines of the dramatic widening of the Intracoastal Waterway offering expansive views of a lagoon-like setting.



Photo Credit: Courtesy of Monaco Yacht Club & Residences

**From vision and concept, can you describe your design process from the beginning?**

We begin always seeking the perfect layouts. We think of the eventual user and the lifestyle expected of an urban resort like Miami Beach. If I had to define the feel it is best described as relaxed luxury. Another aspect is the connection with nature the spaces needed to flow to the terraces. Because of the amazing weather in Florida, exterior living is an important part of the living experience. Outdoor living is key to relaxed luxury.

**What was your design aesthetic for Monaco Yacht Club & Residences?**

We thought the architecture had to have a nautical feeling. We wanted the residents to feel that they were on a luxury yacht because due to the proximity to the water one may not see land from an interior vantage point. Therefore, the idea of a yacht club emerged.



Photo Credit: Courtesy of Monaco Yacht Club & Residences

**Where did you draw your design inspiration from?**

I have always liked the coastal towns of the Italian Riviera and the sleek romantic designs of the yachts cruising the waterways. Yacht design has an aerodynamic aspect combined with warmth and elegance. This led us to combine white sweeping lines and warm tones that are reminiscent of the finest Italian yachts.

### **How did you adapt your design philosophy to the project?**

Every project is unique to its place, purpose and scale. This project is unique and its low-slung proportions, fluid horizontal lines, soft curved geometries resulted in a design fitting to the time and place. It still falls within our brand of waterfront modernity, but with a twist that makes it fitting for the personality of the program and place.

### **Now let's talk about the role that Monaco Yacht Club & Residences' location in Miami Beach's coveted MiMo District played on the building design.**

### **How will the building's design reflect Miami and North Beach?**

Miami Beach is a 20th-century resort. Its architecture is decidedly modern and referential to the principles of the early modern masters. Many of its buildings are also inspired in naval architecture and this building continues that tradition, but in a more contemporary way, with more glass, larger terraces, and more organic fluidity of its curves rather than more traditional rigid geometries.



Photo Credit: Courtesy of Monaco Yacht Club & Residences

### **Are there any design features unique to Miami that were incorporated?**

The outdoors identifies Miami's brand. This building takes that branding seriously by using the roof as a pool deck. That ensures exposure to the sun, the ocean breezes, and long-distance views from a very special vantage point. There is nothing more romantic than panoramic sunset views of the intercoastal and downtown Miami beyond.

### **How does the architecture reflect the building's natural surroundings and blend of the outdoors with the interior living?**

One of the important aspects of the design is the amount of glass between the living areas and terraces. The indoor-outdoor feeling is key to tropical Florida living, more so if that feeling flows beyond the habitable spaces, into the water and the horizon.

**How did the building's Bayfront location on one of the area's last remaining waterfront parcels inspire the design?**

Life on the water is both calming and invigorating. The opportunity to design on the water's edge is always an inspiration for any project. There is an abundance of water activity with marinas along the seawalls and docks on both sides of the lagoon. The early morning rowers from the nearby rowing club crews add charm and dynamism to the project.



Photo Credit: Courtesy of Monaco Yacht Club & Residences

**Explain how you incorporated the private marina into the project design. How did this amenity influence the overall property design?**

The marina is integral to the design idea of the project and is part of the overall composition. The nautical design of the building continues into the actual naval architecture of the moored yachts in the marina along the waterfront of the site allowing the building and the yachts to coexist harmoniously.

**Let's discuss your method for working alongside an interior designer, such as Italian master architect Piero Lissoni on this project. How do your design philosophies complement each other? What do you think the end result will reflect?**

We have worked with Piero before. We understand each other. We are both modernists, believers in the power of forms, of geometric purity, of the richness of materials within the boundaries of sophistication. Piero is the ultimate artist when it comes to interior



design, his designs work well with our architecture. He blurs the boundaries between architecture and interior design so they appear seamless.

**What is special or different about working on a project like MYC? What did you learn?**

The beauty of this project is its human scale. Seldom in Miami Beach are there sites with this sense of an enclave for few residents who appreciate clean architectural lines and calm elegant interiors in a one-of-a-kind waterfront setting within the ultimate tropical global city that is Miami Beach.

For more information about Monaco Yacht Club & Residences, call 305.508.9832 or visit <https://monacoyachtclubresidences.com/>.