



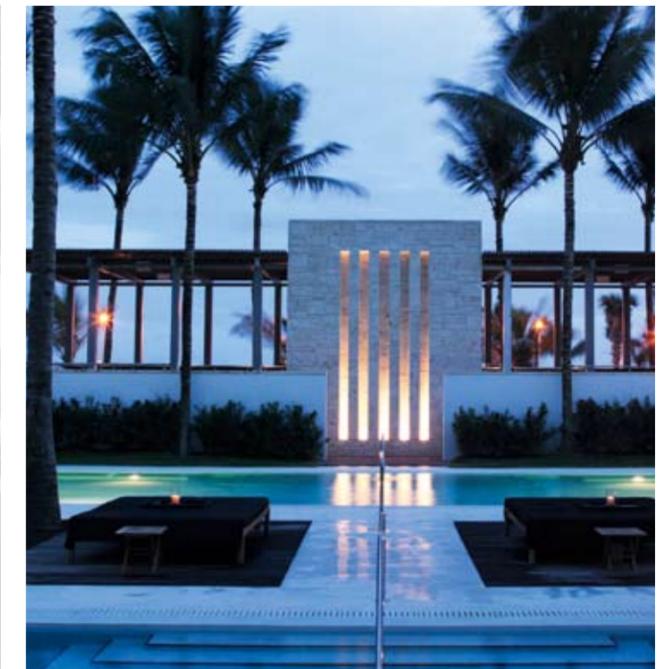
# Divine inspiration

Combining the glamour of the city's iconic Deco style with exotic Asian influences, The Setai is a tranquil retreat in **Miami's bustling South Beach**

**If your taste in interiors is for the sleek and minimal, then chances are you'll already be aware of Art Deco, and no doubt you'll also have a penchant for the simplistic designs of the East. But have you ever considered combining the two?**

Fittingly reflecting the cultural diversity of cosmopolitan South Beach, the concept behind The Setai hotel is rooted in Miami's Deco heritage, fused with Belgian architect Jean Michel Gathy's experience of 25 years living in South East Asia. But this is no random matching of themes. In fact the two styles share something of a common background, since Asian (and particularly Japanese)

pieces inspired the designers of the early 20th century, while Western influences in architecture during this period led to Art Deco buildings springing up in locations such as Shanghai and Bangkok. In both the original 1930s building and the new 40-storey glass tower, the interiors of this exclusive home-from-home reflect the best of each influence. The effortless glamour of Deco is apparent, without the oft-accompanying shallow theatricality, while the more holistic philosophy of the East lends an intimate and tranquil air. Whether guests choose one of the 75 rooms, 50 suites, or the 929 square metre Penthouse, they are assured the same elegance and attention to detail. ●●●





From the guest accommodation to the restaurant and three bars, library and indulgent spa, the carefully-orchestrated combination of exotic surfaces in silk, teak, bronze and leather creates an intimate environment. "The Setai is envisioned to be a second home to many of our guests," explains Jean Michel. "So the design intent was to create a place that was sensitively and tastefully decorated, with creative layers of materials, space and light." Both Art Deco and Oriental styles have been criticised for seeming austere, the antithesis of comfort. But this preconception is shattered by the treatment of both the interior architecture and soft furnishings throughout The Setai. For example, the lobby

retains a warmth which belies its size thanks to the use of natural hardwoods, luxurious jade wall panels, and the mellow tones of reclaimed Shanghai bricks. In this otherwise stark environment, curvy Deco-esque sofas and a tactile Asian hand-woven carpet lend a more comfortable air. The guest rooms feature sumptuous, if simply-dressed beds, made with luxurious Irish linen bedclothes. If you're interested in the more minimalist elements of Oriental style, then this layering is an important technique to note, since while the sleek simplicity of such interiors may be pleasing to the eye, it does not always lead to the most relaxing or hospitable of spaces. ●●●



Another useful decorator's device that is exemplified by The Setai is that of mixing new with old. Antique pottery, jade art and traditionally-crafted elements such as hardwood latticework and bronze fireplaces offset the perfect geometry and flat finishes of the Moderne-inspired architectural and interior style. This combining of antiques with up-to-date features can imbue spaces with a sense of originality and depth. In addition, the fact that Art Deco style shows such prominent Oriental influences ensures that there is a natural synergy between items that might have centuries' difference between them – making uniting them all the more straightforward. ●

**For more information and reservations**  
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