

A MAGAZINE BY CITY A.M.

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# LIVING

INSIDE THE LATEST INTERIOR  
AND DESIGN TRENDS  
**BOATS, VANS AND CAVES:**  
**LIVE HOUSE-FREE IN STYLE**  
IS THE AIRSPACE ABOVE YOUR  
HOUSE WORTH A FORTUNE?  
**BUILDING IN THE DUBAI SEA**

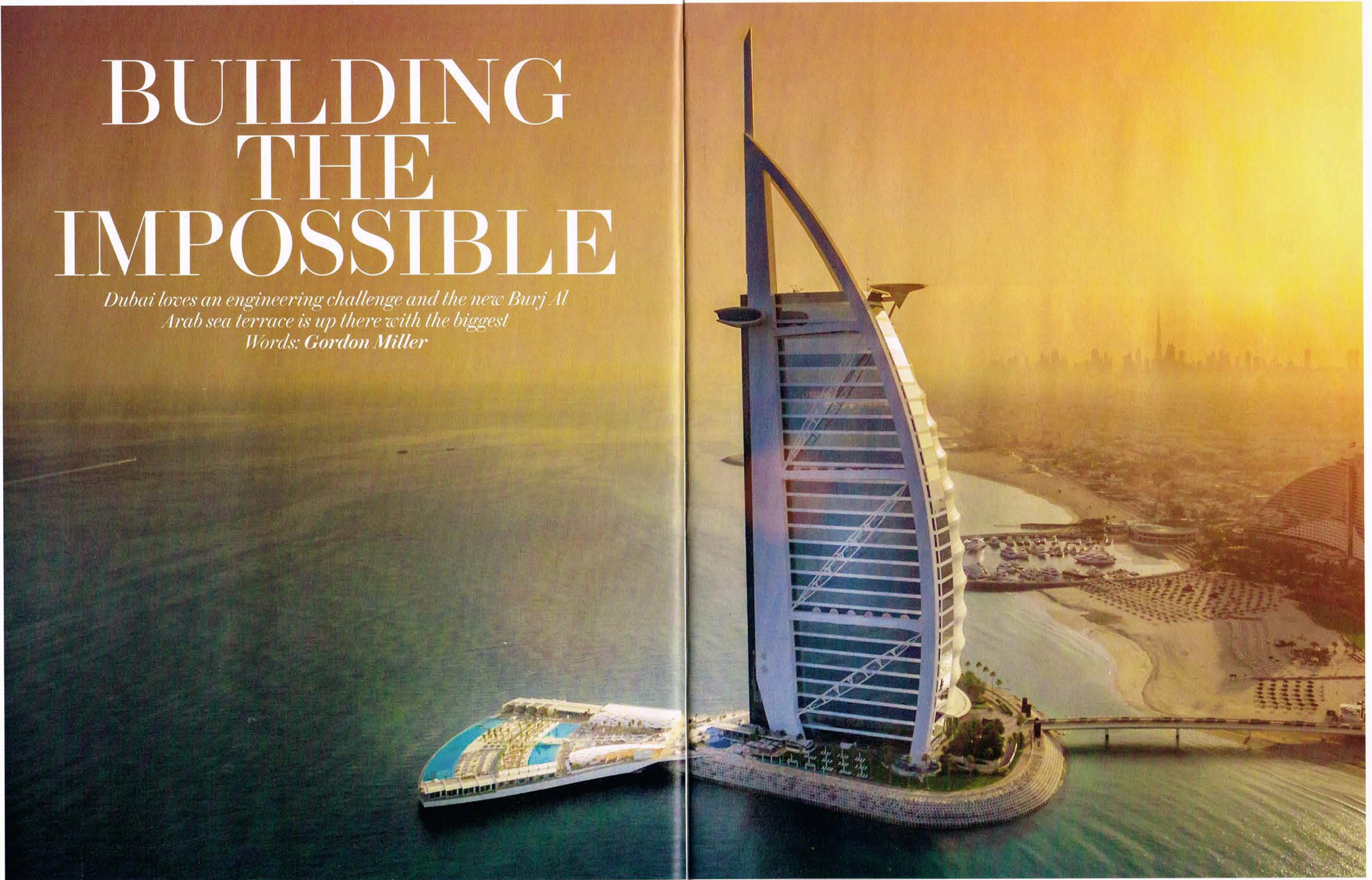


## Modern man

Julius Shulman:  
the photographer  
who defined LA

# BUILDING THE IMPOSSIBLE

*Dubai loves an engineering challenge and the new Burj Al  
Arab sea terrace is up there with the biggest  
Words: Gordon Miller*





**A**s engineering feats go, one that is half the weight of the Eiffel Tower and slightly larger than the size of a football pitch is pretty significant. Add the fact that the brief was to create an ultra-luxe, environmentally sensitive terrace extension to the 7-star hotel Burj Al Arab, whilst it remained open, and you start to realise the gargantuan size of the project.

Mikael Hedberg, the CEO of Admares, the Finnish company commissioned to deliver the extension that opened earlier this year, blows out his cheeks when asked what the biggest challenge was: "I'd say the 11-month turn-around, but also the logistics of shipping the 10,000m<sup>2</sup> terrace in six pieces and assembling it onsite in only several weeks; it was both challenging and exciting."

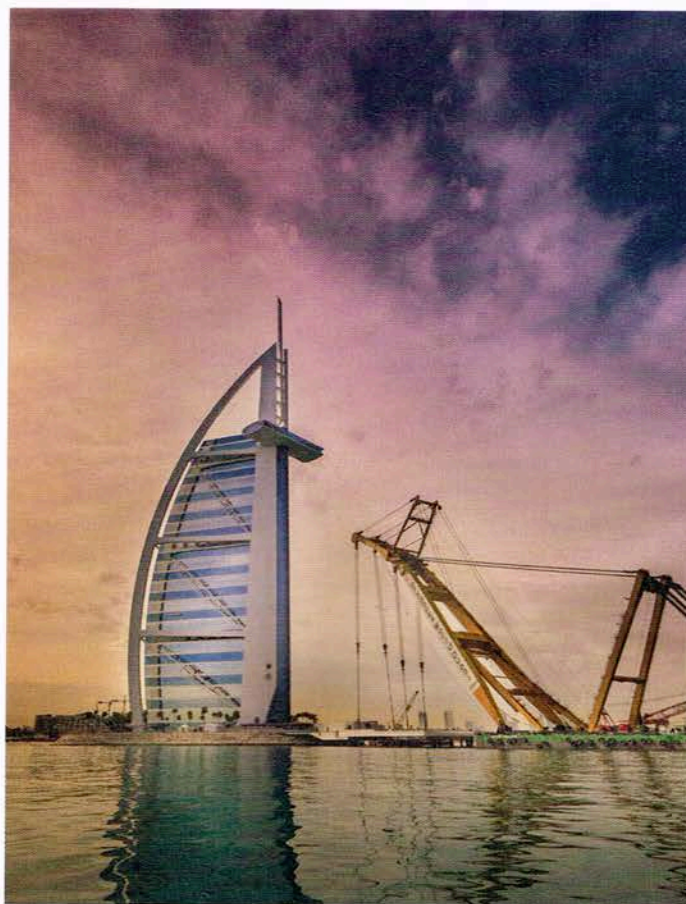
The result of Admares' labour is an elegant and seamless 'floating' addition to the iconic hotel. The groundbreaking, fan shaped design with central walkway incorporates a 612m<sup>2</sup> freshwater pool and an 828m<sup>2</sup> saltwater infinity pool. 32 private cabanas, a beach with 400 sun loungers, and a contemporary indoor and outdoor restaurant and bar. Scape.

The architectural form reflects the shape of the sail-shaped Burj Al Arab with the overarching inspiration being a stylised canopy. Glass is used extensively and creatively; tropical-inspired panels, counters and light installations feature in the tranquil interior, while the curved glass-sided bridge leads to the infinity pool with uninterrupted Arabian Sea views.

Below 'decks', the lower levels incorporate 5,000m<sup>2</sup> of retail space, VIP areas, locker rooms, showers and other facilities, as well as technical spaces. Hedberg notes that because the terrace was fabricated offsite (in Finland) the technical areas and equipment are not on view as they would be in a typical build.

"It's one of the benefits of offsite fabrication," he says. "Others are lack of disruption during construction and very little labour onsite. The environmental impact is lessened too, with 90 piles creating the 'floating' terrace, which provides shade to the marine life. The alternative is to reclaim land, which can be detrimental to the ecosystem."

Developing engineering innovations and environmental solutions drive Admares. Hedberg's enthusiasm is palpable when discussing the potential of 'floating' hotels and villas. "I like working in the UAE where the first question is 'what if we tried this?' What we've achieved at the Burj Al Arab - which has been likened to extending the Eiffel Tower - is just the beginning."



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Pricing for Burj Al Arab Jumeirah ([jumeirah.com/en/hotels-resorts/dubai/burj-al-arab/](http://jumeirah.com/en/hotels-resorts/dubai/burj-al-arab/)) starts from AED 4,490 in summer and goes up to AED 12,000 in winter (including breakfast) The annual Terrace membership fee for visitors is AED 100,000 per person. 