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The Selldorf-designed Mesa at Amangiri exploits the dramatic landscape of Southern Utah, offering sweeping views of the rugged terrain from the interior, while also carving out intimate and shaded areas for quiet and relaxation.

Hospitality

The Mesa at Amangiri

Canyon Point, Southern Utah
Selldorf Architects



Set within the craggy, serene desert landscape of Utah's canyon country, the Mesa at Amangiri, a villa from Aman Resorts, rises quietly from the earth, a subtle counterpart to the sandstone formations that speckle the surroundings. Designed by New York-based Selldorf Architects, this is the first of 36 private villas planned for the remote Canyon Point location, which will share services and amenities with its neighboring Amangiri Resort.

Intended to maximize views but



The interior palette is warm and neutral, much like the desert landscape, with teak and Douglas fir accents, sandstone floors, copper doors, and stucco walls.



also maintain a restrained footprint, the villas are positioned so “you are really part of the landscape,” explained Sara Lopergolo, partner at Selldorf Architects, and sited to avoid direct views of other villas, creating a sense of privacy. “[While] also being very careful about how the villas are inserted so not to disturb the topography. The desert flora is very fragile. We had to proceed very gingerly,” she added.

The inside, designed to complement not compete with the stunning vistas,

is configured to provide ample opportunity to enjoy the landscape from different perspectives while also offering tucked-away areas for repose. Residents enter through a shaded courtyard, leading to an entry hall, or through the kitchen on the left side of the villa.

There is, as Lopergolo characterized it, “a public bar of living” comprising a living and dining room with sliding glass doors that look out onto the swimming pool and the desert and peaks beyond. Two stucco walls act as an

“organizing device between the public and private,” partitioning the communal spaces from the pavilion housing the bedrooms on the right side of the villa. Upstairs, two additional bedrooms and bathrooms accommodate more guests. Outside, a terrace wraps around the main volume, giving way to more nooks and crannies.

“When you are designing in such an enormous vista, you also want spaces that retreat from the view. The courtyard is meant as a place to sit and get away

from the view sometimes,” said Lopergolo.

Warm, yet neutral materials—consisting of stucco, sandstone floors, teak and wire brush douglas fir accents, and copper doors—gently play off the dynamic tones of the landscape. The firm used a palette of dark metals and pale colors to “evoke a vacation but also to feel like it is a home all year-round.” In the bedroom, a custom-designed concrete and teak bed serves as the central organizing feature in the space. A comfortable

bathroom includes plenty of storage, and an elegant marble vanity. On the opposite side of the villa, a Bulthaup kitchen in soft earth tone and grays provides another inviting place to congregate.

The specific orientation of the villa was not only a means of enhancing views, but also a strategy for mitigating heat gain and providing shade. The implementation of brise-soleils and geothermal heating and cooling were tools to make the building

more energy efficient.

Selldorf has already completed schematic designs for three other villas. While each will contain similar design components, such as the palette, the organization of the houses will differ according to the topography of the specific site. “The floor plans flow very well,” said Lopergolo. “These houses have to be for entertaining many people as well as be intimate enough for a family—it is about striking a nice balance.”

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