

Henning Larsen Architects to design cave-like hotel in Faroe Islands

Danish architecture firm Henning Larsen Architects has designed a new hotel that features a cave-like foyer situated within the historic town of Tórshavn, the capital city of the Faroe Islands.



All images courtesy of Henning Larsen Architects

The firm won a competition with Hotel Tórshavn with its distinguished form and welcoming space designed on the ground level that will be accessible to the public and can be seen from outside.

Inspired by coastal sea caves for the iconic grand foyer, the hotel will be a new incubator of pedestrian life in central Tórshavn. Henning Larsen Architects' design seeks to balance public function and private amenities, the 4,500m² hotel establishes a new destination for international visitors while connecting channels of activity in the city centre.

"As the Faroe Islands capture global attention as a tourist destination, a question lingers: How do the islands open to new visitors without losing a sense of local identity?" said the firm.



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The hotel introduces a public grand foyer and broad staircase that connect two of the busiest pedestrian streets, making the lobby a new conduit for urban life in Tórshavn. Considering local identity in a different manner, the hotel provides a mesmerising view to the Faroese landscape to create a new landmark grounded in Faroese nature.

"Over thousands of years, distinctive sea caves have formed where the Faroese basalt cliffs meet the North Atlantic," added the firm.

"Long a draw for coastal explorers and curious kayakers, these caves emerge in new form through Hotel Tórshavn's grand foyer, designed as a gesture of public accessibility and a celebration of local roots."

This characteristic foyer will serve Hotel Tórshavn's function as a community asset. The hotel stands in the heart of Tórshavn, a stone's throw away from the city's cultural venues, waterfront and pedestrian shopping district.

Establishing an alluring public foyer in this context circulates and amplifies public life in the city centre; a new commons for locals and a home for future visitors.



All images courtesy of Henning Larsen Architects

"We're going back to the original idea of a grand foyer as a way to create street-level identity, and as a passageway for new connections in the city," explained Ósbjörn Jacobsen, partner and design director at Henning Larsen's Faroese studio.

"In our search for a symbol of an open, active venue for the foyer, we took inspiration from the sea caves along the Faroese coast. In a way, you could say our design represents the bedrock of the Faroe Islands, with the city life carving its way into the lower levels of the hotel."

Following the Faroese tourist board's 2012 commitment to double the country's number of overnight stays and annual

tourism revenue by 2020, the islands' air- and seaports have routinely broken standing records in tourist traffic.

Henning Larsen's vision for Hotel Tórshavn answers a growing trend in national tourism, rising from the Faroese landscape to deliver function both local and global.

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