

Spa & Wellness

The Heart of the Red Mountain Resort

John M. Love

The Red Mountain Resort & Spa seen from the river lagoon.



The Transformational Journey

The spa is the heart of the resort and the centre of the transformational journey that guests at Red Mountain are invited on. The design of the spa seeks to invite guests on a journey that exists on multiple levels – psychologically, philosophically and experientially

The journey is inspired by the Icelandic saga of Barðar Snæfellsás, half-man half-troll and one of the first settlers on the peninsula. Him and his family gave name to many of the areas landmarks and to this day he is still believed to be the protector of the peninsula. After a dramatic life with humans, Barðar eventually disappeared into the glacier to live like a troll. The spa journey is created as a poetic interpretation of his life story and takes the guests through five emotional states: contemplation, exposure, confrontation, clarity and enlightenment.

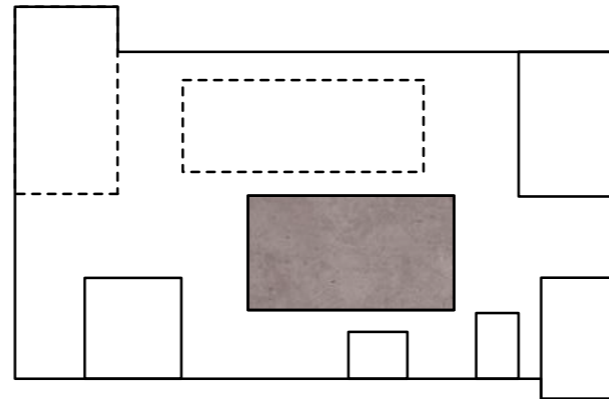
Encompassed in the design and architecture expressions of nature are used to evoke different emotional states in the guests, allowing them to create their own personal inwards. Steam, wind, fire and ice are elements incorporated in the spa experience representing the unpredictable extremes of Icelandic weather.

“Our ambition was to create a spa experience that brings you closer to nature in a slightly exaggerated way. It was to be an experience that simultaneously grounds you and liberates you.”

— Johannes Torpe







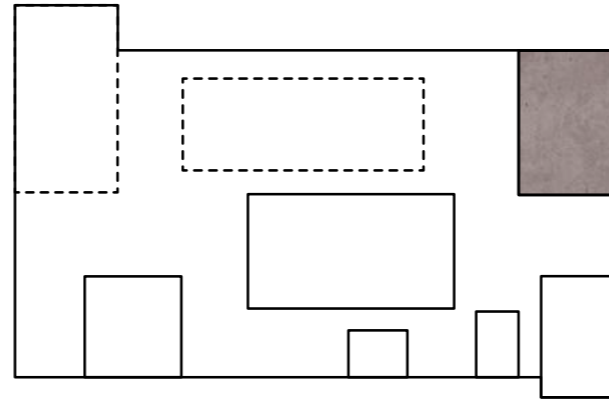
1

Lost

The steam room is the starting point of the journey, as well as a reappearing motif. Every journey of transformation begins with a trigger – the realisation of being lost is used as a metaphor for the need to re-discover oneself. In this zone, this emotional state is represented through the foggy atmosphere of the steam in the baths and an overall hazy atmosphere.

The Bárðar saga has a repetitive mention of fog, which appears as a motif in the transitional phases of Bárður's journey. We hence used fog and the metaphor of being lost as the central element to the spa concept.



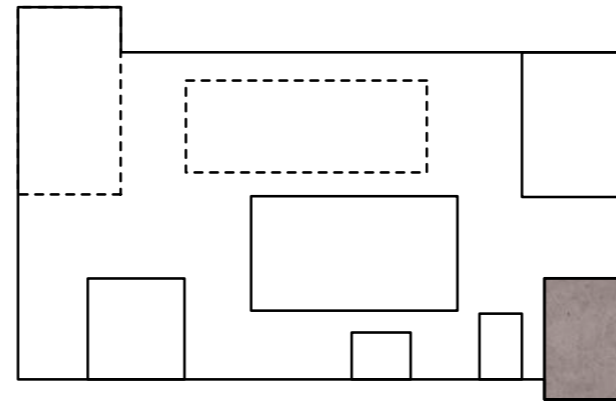


2

Contemplative

This area is intimate and tranquil, allowing for self-reflection and internal stillness. The guests are encompassed by curtains of falling rain, while immersed in smooth clay baths. It is an intimate, peaceful space, allowing them to find solitude and look within themselves.



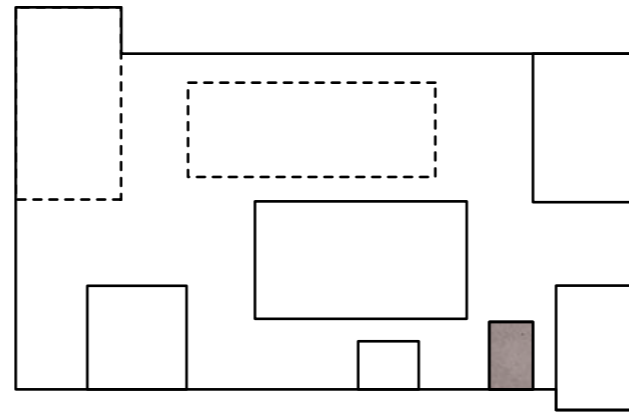


3

Exposed

In the volcano fire bath everything is more exaggerated. Nature itself is captured and contained within a single space. You are exposed to the more violent, intense and dramatic forces of nature in order to access an inner state of vulnerability and acceptance. It is about coming to understand one's own limits and experiencing a sense of discomfort that takes the guests outside of their comfort zones.

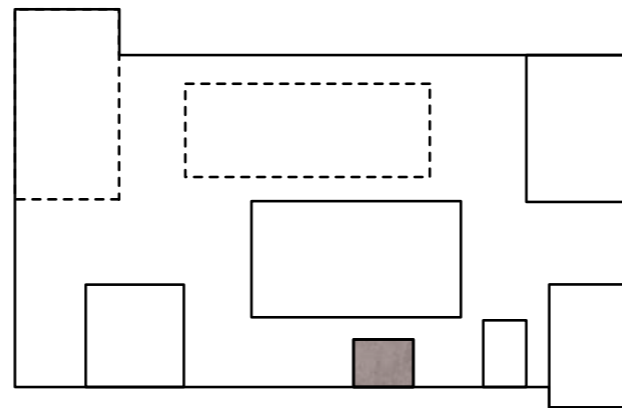




4 Clarity

In the open roofed ice bath, a state of calmness and clearness is achieved. This is emphasised in the spa area through the use of natural light, calm and clear waters and an open roof with a view of the sky. The mood is crisp, cool and invigorating, where the guests attain a sense of rejuvenated energy from the contrast of going from the heat to the cold.



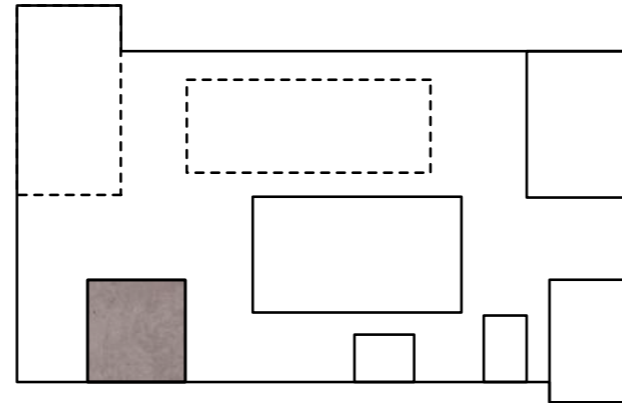


5

Confronted

Here you leave the light and enter the darkness of a cave. The contrasting effect encourages the guests to confront their own darkness. It is about overcoming fear, where secret passageways and a slide create a sense of intrigue and mystery, taking the guest on a literal journey through the space. The darkness becomes a place of refuge, where you realise that there is actually nothing to be afraid of.





6

Enlightened

This stage of the journey is a highly sensory experience. Here you lose touch with the physicality of your body and become immersed in a feeling of transcendence. The water supports your entire body and your mind is free to float away and so you enter a state of absolute relaxation and liberation.



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