

Vida Residence, The Hills



AT THE HEART OF THINGS



The mixed-use model has been fashionable for a few years now, supported by wealthy millennials looking to get away from residential complexes and gain immediate access to amenities, transportation, retail and offices. **Nada Alameddine**, partner at Hodema consulting services, examines the practicalities and effects of this trend

Mixed-use development has become a tool in its own right, teaming hospitality concepts with retail components, from shopping malls to theme parks and even hospitals, all gathered on a few square kilometers, or even inside the same building. Besides reducing travel time, mixed-use projects also boost the economy of local communities and favor social interaction. In countries with emerging economies, for instance, mixed-use hotels/residences pipelines are strong, due to lack of supply of quality housing for business people requiring long stays (from two weeks to six months).

“Investors in the Middle East are on the lookout for the golden goose”

A multi-faceted cash cow

This variety of characteristics enhances the value of these complexes, helping to make them hugely popular among real estate developers: hotel, leisure, retail investors provide obvious benefits to each other, complementing each other's businesses. A residential offer integrated

in the project can also be a strategic financial move to generate instant cash flow by encouraging early buyers. Investors in the Middle East are on the lookout for the golden goose in the shape of a winning mix of shops, offices, residential and leisure spaces, teamed with hotels. Gulf countries are particularly fond of the concept, with international, upscale branded hotels trying to secure the value of the development and benefit from the complex's attractions. Al Mouj Muscat displays a strong hospitality offer with the Kempinski and Shaza hotels. Three and four-star hotel brands have joined mixed-use projects in Cairo, such as the upcoming Element by Marriott at the Gate, or Accor and Novotel at Tahrir mixed-use project, which are complemented by offices and a conference hall. Holiday Inn, InterContinental and Staybridge Suites have also joined the Heliopolis project by Citystars in Cairo.

Some projects enrich their offer with new features, such as a golf course, as seen at Akoya in Dubai, Uptown Cairo, developed by Emaar and Citystars Red Sea Riviera in Hurgada, to attract international visitors. Some even strive to change the urban landscape; with an increasing number

of people turning their backs on cars and promoting the concept of 'walkability', many establishments, such as La Ville Hotel, Autograph collection, are adapting to meet demand. The brand is part of City Walk Dubai, a titanic, mixed-use complex offering amenities 'ad infinitum': a shopping center with dense retail and food and beverage (F&B) spaces, theme parks, an 18-hole golf course, luxury hotels and spas and fitness centers, offices and residential units. Special care is also put into landscaping, facilitated by large surfaces. Some projects are so vast that the same operator can open several hotels from various brands and segments. For example, Mall of the Emirates hosts both Kempinski Luxury hotel and Sheraton. Others are integrated in a master plan, such as Abdali in Amman, which has three branded hotels - W, Le Gray and Rotana – and Waterfront City in Lebanon which has Le Méridien hotel. Lifestyle hotels, such as Vida Hotel in Dubai Marina and Aloft Hotel in Deira City Centre, are also a big hit with both visitors and residents. While the mixed-use formula is definitely a winning one, the vicinity of competitive retail and F&B brands has proved to be a challenge for hotels, many of which have to maintain high standards and food offerings to stay in the game. Some scenarios can even prove to be disruptive, such as when the shopping center puts on a holiday musical that annoys some of the hotel's guests.

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Much anticipated projects

The mixed-use trend is undoubtedly still booming and shows no sign of slowing down, supported by the upcoming Dubai Expo 2020, Qatar FIFA World Cup 2022 and the Abu Dhabi Economic Vision 2030 plan. The latter is developing Saadiyat Island which, on top of its residential and leisure offer, is focusing on culture, with a university quarter and the Guggenheim, Louvre and Sheikh Zayed museums. Saudi Arabia's Jeddah Tower, meanwhile, is set to feature a Four Seasons Hotel, 121 Four Seasons serviced apartments, 61 residential floors, 318 apartments but, most importantly, the world's highest observatory space. For water lovers, Sharjah Waterfront City is building a waterpark, while Dubai's District One, which is scheduled to be completed for Expo 2020, will be home to the world's largest crystal lagoon. The highly-anticipated Dubai Eye (a 210-meter ferris wheel) is also set to be part of the Jumeirah Beach Residence coastline.

MENA PROJECTS IN THE PIPELINE

HOTEL	CITY	MIXED - USE ELEMENT	OPENING
RADISSON BLU RESIDENCE, DUBAI SILICON OASIS	Dubai	Residences	2018
RADISSON BLU RESIDENCE AL SUFOUH	Dubai	Residences	2018
DUSITD2 PALM MALL MUSCAT	Muscat	Mall	2018
VIDA RESIDENCES	Dubai	Residences	2018
SWISSOTEL KATAMEYAH HOTEL & RESIDENCES	Cairo	Residences	2018
FOUR SEASONS HOTEL JEDDAH AT KINGDOM CITY	Jeddah	Landmark-Mall-Residential	2020
HILTON DOHA THE PEARL RESIDENCES	Doha	Residences	2018
HILTON GARDEN INN AL AHSA	Al Ahsa	Cluster Hotel	2018
HILTON DWC	Dubai	Airport	2020
ROSEMONT HOTEL & RESIDENCES DUBAI - CURIO A COLLECTION BY HILTON	Dubai	Residences	2019
DTBH DUBAI DUBIOTECH - HOTEL & RESIDENCES	Dubai	Residences	2020
JUMEIRAH LIVING MARINA GATE	Dubai	Residences	2019
MILLENNIUM GOLF RESORT AL AIN	Al Ain	Golf	2018
MILLENNIUM HOTEL & APARTMENTS	Jeddah	Residences	2018
MILLENNIUM HOTEL MAKKAH (UMM AL QURAH)	Makkah	Mall	2019
COPTHORNE MAKKAH AL NASEEM	Makkah	Cluster Hotel	2018
MILLENNIUM MAKKAH AL NASEEM	Makkah	Cluster Hotel	2018
MILLENNIUM 1 - KEC	Madina	Cluster Hotel	2020
MILLENNIUM 2 - KEC	Madina	Cluster Hotel	2020
STUDIO M - KEC	Madina	Cluster Hotel	2020
MILLENNIUM EXECUTIVE APARTMENTS -KEC	Madina	Cluster Hotel	2020
FOUR POINTS BY SHERATON MAKKAH	Makkah	Mall	2019
W SHARM EL SHEIKH - RESD	Sharm El Sheikh	Residences	2020
MARINA MALL ARJAAN	Abu Dhabi	Mall	2019
VICEROY JUMEIRAH VILLAGE	Dubai	Residences	2018
VICEROY THE PALM	Dubai	Residences	2018
NOVOTEL SHARJAH EXPO CENTER	Sharjah	Exhibition	2018
IBIS KHOBAR KING FAISAL ROAD	Khobar	Cluster Hotel	2018
ADAGIO KHOBAR KING FAISAL ROAD	Khobar	Cluster Hotel	2018
ADAGIO DHABAB STREET	Riyadh	Cluster Hotel	2018
IBIS RIYADH DHABAB STREET	Riyadh	Cluster Hotel	2018
ADAGIO ALESAYI PLAZA	Jeddah	Cluster Hotel	2018
IBIS JEDDAH ALESAYI PLAZA	Jeddah	Cluster Hotel	2018
ADAGIO JEDDAH AL ANDALOUS	Jeddah	Cluster Hotel	2018
IBIS JEDDAH AL ANDALOUS	Jeddah	Cluster Hotel	2018
NOVOTEL JEDDAH AL ANDALOUS	Jeddah	Cluster Hotel	2018
ADAGIO MAKKAH AL NASEEM	Makkah	Cluster Hotel	2019
IBIS STYLES MAKKAH AL NASEEM	Makkah	Cluster Hotel	2019
NOVOTEL MAKKAH AL NASEEM	Makkah	Cluster Hotel	2019
RESIDENCE INN BY MARRIOTT JUBAIL	Jubail	Residences	2020
COURTYARD BY MARRIOTT RIYADH QURTUBAH	Riyadh	Cluster Hotel	2020
RESIDENCE INN BY MARRIOTT RIYADH QURTUBAH	Riyadh	Residences	2020
COURTYARD BY MARRIOTT RIYADH AL AKARIA TOWER	Riyadh	Cluster Hotel	2023
RESIDENCE INN BY MARRIOTT RIYADH AL AKARIA TOWER	Riyadh	Residences	2023
RESIDENCE INN BY MARRIOTT MANAMA	Manama	Residences	2020
RESIDENCE INN BY MARRIOTT DUBAI AL JADDAF	Dubai	Residences	2018