

## Doha Tower

Doha, Qatar

Located on a prominent coastline thoroughfare in the Qatari capital, Al Corniche Street, Doha Tower adds a prominent yet subtle addition to the Doha cityscape. Located near the Ministries and Government Departments as well as the future Al Bidda metro station, the location on the waterfront is ideal. The cylindrical form of the tower was decided upon for its efficiency in floor-to-window area and relative distances between offices and elevators. Additionally, the core of the building has been shifted off-center to allow more flexible floor area for the office spaces.

Overlooking the Gulf, the 45 meter diameter tower provides 41 floors of offices, a restaurant with panoramic views on the 42nd floor, and a private residence at the penthouse. The tower is topped by a full-span dome and a spire, and clad entirely in an intricately patterned stainless steel screen.

The cladding system is a reference to the traditional Islamic “mashrabiya,” or artistic screen used for shading or room dividing. The design for the system

involved using a single geometric motif at several scales, overlaid at different densities along the façade. The overlays occur in response to the solar conditions: 25% opacity was placed on the north elevation, 40% on the south, and 60% on the east and west. From afar, the screen appears as a uniform density, but the intricacy of the layering and scaling of the screens becomes apparent at a closer viewpoint, lending the building multiple textural experiences.


Behind the shading layer is a typical curtainwall system that is accessed for maintenance from walkways in the cavity between the two layers. User-operable solar shades are also available behind the glazed curtainwall. The overall façade system is estimated to reduce cooling loads by 20%. At night, an integrated lighting system enhances the delicate screen with programmable light shows.

The base of the tower has a 25 meter wide pergola to provide a shaded entry, as well as a lushly planted garden. A gentle grade slopes down to the lobby entrance, emphasizing the tower’s connection to the earth supporting it. Landscaping covers 40% of the site, adding to the pedestrian experience. Below grade, three levels of parking accommodate a total of 870 cars solely for the office tenants.

A large interior atrium houses eight glass lifts; the atrium reaches a height of 112 meters, up to level 27 which offers a transfer lobby between low- and high-zones. The transparent lifts offer views of the surrounding city. The structure of the tower is a

**Completion Date:** March 2012  
**Height:** 238 m (781 ft)  
**Stories:** 46  
**Area:** 110,000 sq m (1,184,030 sq ft)  
**Primary Use:** Office  
**Other Use:** Residence, Restaurant  
**Owner:** H.E. Sheikh Saoud Bin Mohamed Bin Ali Al-Thani  
**Developer:** HBS  
**Design Architect:** Ateliers Jean Nouvel  
**Structural Engineer:** Terrell International  
**MEP Engineer:** Terrell International  
**Main Contractor:** China State Construction Engineering Co., Ltd.  
**Other Consultants:** ABB; AEB; AIK; Avel; BSC S.A.; CEG; Dar Al Handassa; Europtima; Gleeds; GT; Hardy; HBS; Mole; MTC; Pluriconsult; Socotec Int.

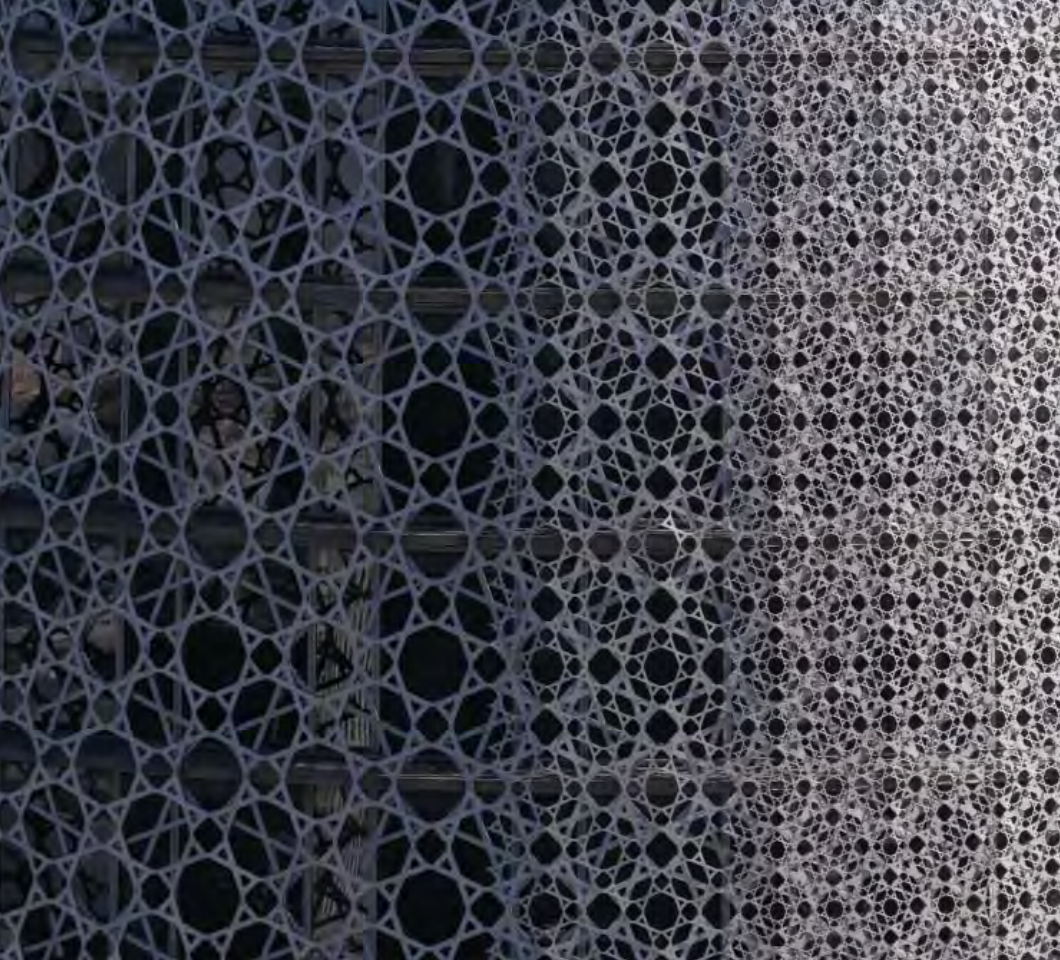
**Opposite:** Overall view from west



“Clearly the sunshade element addresses the intense local sun, while at the same time rooting the building in its Islamic culture and allowing spectacular patterns of light and shadow to fall in the interior.”

*Richard Cook, Awards Chair,  
Cook+Fox Architects*





**Left:** Façade shading screen detail  
**Opposite Top:** Office floor interior  
**Opposite Bottom Left:** Night view from north with LED lights  
**Opposite Bottom Right:** Interior view of dome space

**“Riding the line between Western and Arabic building technologies and expressions, the resulting experience for users is both modern and place-based.”**

*Vishaan Chakrabarti, Juror, SHoP Architects*

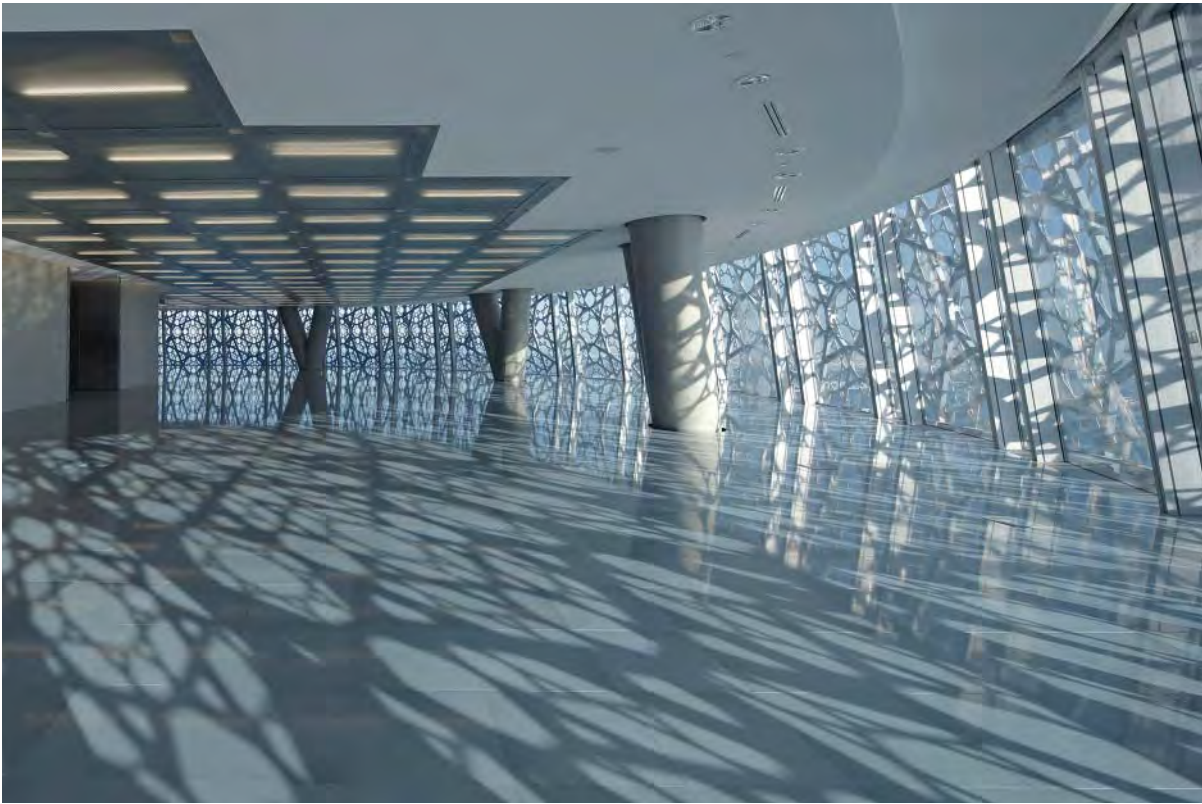
non-traditional concrete diagrid with canted columns forming an “X” shaped framing system. This system creates a unique effect in the office spaces in conjunction with the façade screen. In contrast to more typical office towers, the spatial quality of the interior is one of ever-changing patterns of light and texture, breaking the standard of monotony.

The office floors are flexible and allow a variety of configurations. In addition, the latest technology has been provided for office tenants, including fiber optic telephone cables and satellite TV. Though the effi-

ciency of the plan was the highest priority, the overall form of the building gives each floor a unique size and a slightly different effect.

In an unexpected twist from most office towers, a grand private residence is located within the dome of the tower at 182 meters above ground level. The luxury residence has its own private entrance into the building and elevator service, along with private access to the adjacent restaurant below. The breathtaking effect of the culmination of the dome structure and screen creates a truly singular space. Included in the residence









## Jury Statement

Doha Tower stands out for its deft and subtle sensitivity to culture, context and climate. The design hints at post-modernism, but avoids this pitfall through the interpretive re-use of indigenous elements such as the mashrabiya, which varies in its density across the façade in response to solar orientation. The strength of the proposal is in its unapologetic connection to culture and place, and stands as a successful precedent of cultural iconography.

In addition, the celebration of the dome and lightning rod at the top of the building has created one of the most spectacular penthouse spaces in the history of high-rise construction. The tower is a continuation of the architect's lifelong interest in both cultural interpretation and technology, and is laudatory for the pursuit of local meaning in the face of globalization.

are a sauna and pool along with typical residential amenities. Offering 360° views of the surrounding city, the residence is truly like no other.

Building upon previous projects, the design team utilized knowledge gained in other contexts to bring the building full-circle. The tower makes a distinct and direct connection to the local culture and practice through the use of the façade screen while responding to the climate appropriately. The design provides a flexible, efficient and interesting work place for office occupants and considers the needs of the owner. Lastly, the building makes an iconic statement and stands as a trademark of the Doha skyline in both daytime and nighttime through its textural façade and integrated architectural lighting.

**Left:** Overall view from west

**Opposite Left:** Detail section through façade

**Opposite Right:** Floor plans (top to bottom):  
44th floor private residence, typical high level  
office, typical low level office

