



Award of
EXCELLENCE

Louvre Abu Dhabi

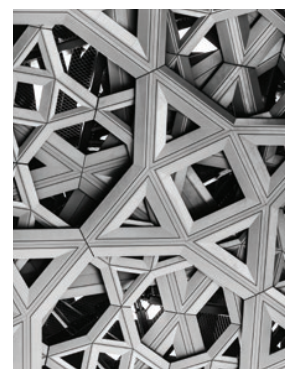
Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

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Throughout historic Middle Eastern communities, covered open-air marketplaces created vital social epicenters. This museum space by French architect Jean Nouvel is sheltered by a market umbrella that creates its own “rain of light.”

Inspired by Arabic architecture, eight layers of abstracted geometric patterning clad the dome, allowing limited sunlight to pass through. Depending on time of day and year, daylight pierces the interiors, dappling light on the people and surfaces within; changing as patrons traverse from daylit gallery to daylit gallery. When it becomes humid or particularly dusty outside, the rays of light become visible – an ethereal experience.

Building a full-scale mock-up early in design, the team tuned the average dome porosity to create high contrast between sunlight and the ambient surround. The team then balanced shade settings and electric lighting to achieve thermal comfort, maximum daylighting of gallery spaces, and conservation requirements. Large skylight apertures within the galleries visually connect visitors to the overarching dome.

Interstitial spaces create moments of pause on the gallery journey. Views to the sea allow visitors to mentally rejuvenate and absorb more in their visit – here at the crossroads of Eastern and Western civilizations.

ARCHITECT

The Ateliers Jean Nouvel

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