



The Mies van der Rohe pavilion in Montjuïc is highlighted in the guide and is a replica of the 1929 original / CARLOS IGLESIAS

Guidebook showcases city's best architectural design's

Experts select their favourite designs in a bid to show the city's diversity

NEIL STOKES

With 100 experts picking out the best in design that Barcelona has to offer, the guidebook *Ruta del Disseny de Barcelona*, is now to be published in English. Originally brought out last year to commemorate the centenary of the Foment de les Arts Decoratives (FAD), the *Ruta* brings together 400 recommendations by top designers, architects, businessmen, and even chefs on where to see the best examples of architectural design in the city, including churches, bars and supermarkets. Categorized in to 4 main topics: Drink, Food, Shopping and Architecture, the book attempts to reflect the diversity in design which, according to the mayor, Joan Clos on the website (www.rutadissey.com), has given Barcelona, "a well-deserved reputation all over the world in fields of design and architecture."

The presentation of the book coincided with the granting of the Calisay sign to the FAD by the Municipi-

pal Institute of the Urban Landscape (IMPUQV) at the Vinçon store on Passeig de Gràcia. Between 1990 and 2003 the metre and half high letters of the sign advertising Calisay stood atop building number 310 on Diagonal. When regulations changed in 1999, over 40 large adverts were withdrawn from buildings around the city. In the case of Calisay, the sign ended up in the hands of the IMPUQV. For the whole of this month the giant letters can be seen exhibited in Vinçon's shop window.

The enormous, neon-lit letters are considered a perfect example of Catalan graphic design in the 70s. Along with other famous signs such as Anis de Mono, Cerebrino Mandri and Netol, the Calisay letters are, according to Claret Serrahima, vice-president of the FAD, particularly representative of not only graphic design but also industrial design thanks to the integrated neon lights.

After the July showing in Vinçon, the Calisay advert will be placed in the National Archive of Catalonia

until the design museum planned for Barcelona is built, when it will then go towards forming part of any future exhibitions.

The deputy mayor of Barcelona, Jordi Portabella i Calvete, highlighted the city's excellence for design. "Barcelona is known worldwide for design. Design emerging from the Catalan tradition of industrial design, still has a social, cultural phenomenon of great significance. In this sense, it could be said that as much as economy and culture, our design reflects the creative spirit of our people. Beyond its economic and cultural values, design is essential for our standard of living," he said.

"Design plays a crucial role in contemporary cityscapes. Buildings, urban furniture, signposting, lighting are all aspects of urban landscape that are permanent and have a practical function that must be carefully designed, balancing these two sides: usefulness and beauty," he added.

City to invest millions in Poblenou to boost high tech industry

Barcelona is to invest 40 million euros by 2007 to relaunch 22@ high-tech district of Poblenou. "The success of the project is necessary for Catalonia and it will attract more companies," says Xavier Casas, Barcelona deputy mayor. The money will be drawn from city funds and from several companies that will take part in the project. Casas said on Monday that 22@ project is traveling at "cruise speed" at least as far as infrastructure construction is concerned. However, Casas implied

that companies' contribution should be higher. Casas was participating in the opening of the new T-Systems office, an important event for the future of 22@.

Casas affirmed that Barcelona Council strongly believes in the future of 22@ district. "The success of the project is necessary for Catalonia," said Casas and he added that such success will be possible. To avoid any skepticism regarding this idea, Casas stated that during the 2004-2007 period 40 million euros

will be invested in the special infrastructure plan, totaling a 162 million euro investment.

This plan is extremely important as it will provide the 22@ district with the highest technology, such as optical fiber cable. The plan is also receiving funding from various companies developing specific areas. Casas added that the participation from the universities will bind the business and education fields together in the project to regenerate the area.

SARS

Hong Kong's health minister resigns over SARS

Health minister Yeoh Eng-kiong has quit his job in the territory after a public outcry over the poor handling of last year's SARS outbreak, a move that is likely to help ease pressure on the unpopular administration. A report published by Hong Kong's Legislative Council, criticised Yeoh and other health officials. "Dr Yeoh, in order to give expression to the spirit of accountability, has tendered his resignation," Hong Kong leader Tung Chee-hwa told a news conference. It comes within a week of a huge anti-government rally to demand more democracy in Hong Kong. Yeoh was the third minister to quit under public pressure in just under a year. Last July, Hong Kong's security and financial secretaries quit after a protest. Hong Kong was one of the areas worst-hit by Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome. The virus emerged in southern China in late 2002 and soon spread to Hong Kong where it killed almost 300 people and infected nearly 1,800. The outbreak cost the city billions of dollars in lost sales and pushed the economy into its third recession in six years. People travelling out of the city unknowingly took the disease to other parts of the world. It eventually spread to 30 countries, infected more than 8,000 people and killed 800. The report into Yeoh's handling of the crisis says it was "not satisfactory" in some aspects and that he "did not show sufficient alertness" to the danger.

GIBRALTAR

Fury over nuclear submarine

The Spanish government has expressed their "profound discomfort" over the planned visit of the British nuclear submarine "Tireless" (pictured left) to Gibraltar. The British ambassador to Spain, Stephen Wright, was told that the refusal by the British government to cancel the visit signalled a "negative point" in the relations between the two countries. The Spanish foreign minister, Bernardino León expressed "the disgust and profound discomfort" against the refusal by the British to stop the visit and their "lack of sensitivity towards Spanish public opinion."



ISRAEL

Extremist Jews threaten to kill Sharon over Gaza

Extremist Jews opposed to prime minister Ariel Sharon's plan to withdraw from Gaza may be plotting to assassinate him, prompting increased security around Sharon, senior officials have said. Outbursts by prominent rightist rabbis and an atmosphere of extremism fanned by foes of "disengagement" from Gaza next year has intensified concern about an attempt to kill Sharon, the erstwhile champion of settlers on captured territory. Internal security service minister Tsahi Hanegbi said the main threat would be posed by an assassin.



AUSTRIA

Austrian president dies on eve of retiring from his post

A mourner is pictured signing a book of condolences for the late Austrian president Thomas Klestil who died on the eve of his retirement this week aged 71. He helped restore the presidency's image after a Nazi-era controversy that dogged his predecessor. Klestil was hospitalised twice in 1996 with breathing difficulties, was due to step down after serving two six-year terms and hand over his largely ceremonial post to Social Democrat Heinz Fischer. He helped to restore Austria's image after the damage by former president Kurt Waldheim's links with the Hitler regime.