



OUTDOOR LIVING REDEFINED

The celebrity Italian designer Monica Armani speaks about the future of seamless indoor-outdoor design and her collaboration with a family-run outdoor design brand Tribù

► **Muzaffar Rizvi**

OUTDOOR SPACES are evolving into essential extensions of modern homes, moving beyond leisure zones to become fully integrated environments that blend effortlessly with interiors. From 2026 onward, the focus will shift toward durable, high-performing, and sustainable materials that maintain beauty over time, setting a new standard for functional and aesthetic outdoor living, says an industry veteran.

Monica Armani, an internationally renowned architect and designer, said technological advancements and innovation will simplify processes, making outdoor living more natural and human-centric.

"I believe outdoor spaces will become an increasingly integral part of contemporary living. Exterior areas will no longer be merely transitional or leisure spaces, but environments designed



WHO IS MONICA ARMANI

Architect and designer Monica Armani was born into Italian rationalism, apprenticing at her father's studio where her own style took its roots in the tenets of this important movement: form follows function, scale and structure in balance, and low ornamentation.

Today, the DNA of Monica's own approach to her disciplined design process is expressed as Design in Molecules, and reflects the foundation of her learnings, her experience and her commitment to excellence.

Industrial design is a natural evolution of those learnings, and Monica's influence has been felt and recognised across Italy and internally in her multi-award winning indoor and outdoor furniture designs, objects and accessories.

to live daily life, in continuity with the interior," Monica told BTR during an exclusive interview.

The multi-award-winner Italian designer said the focus will be on increasingly high-performing and sustainable materials, capable of lasting over time without losing their beauty. Technological innovation will serve to make everything simpler, more natural, and more human.

"For me, the true trend will be this: design that combines comfort, authenticity, and harmony with nature, bringing outdoor living into a state of deep balance and well-being.

Monica Armani is a celebrated Italian designer whose influence extends across the global design landscape. Her multi-award-winning portfolio includes sophisticated indoor and outdoor furniture, objects, and accessories for prestigious brands including Tribù, a Belgian, family-run outdoor design brand creating exclusive outdoor furniture for private residences, refined resorts, and high-end projects worldwide. In Dubai, Tribù is exclusively represented by OBEGI, a regional leader in luxury furniture and interiors.

Monica spoke about luxury outdoor design, trends and innovations and said: "I love designing special outdoor spaces, and having extensive outdoor furniture collections allows me to do so elegantly and functionally. A broad collection makes it possible to resolve a variety of settings with style. For me, it's essential to create

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For example, she said a dining area complete with a table, chairs, and enhanced with a beautiful rug and thoughtfully placed lighting, becomes an intimate, refined setting. Similarly, a living area under a porch, furnished with sofas and armchairs, side and coffee tables, complemented with a rug and other details, is a true luxury that nourishes the soul.

"My goal is always the same: to imagine spaces that evoke genuine emotions, where comfort and beauty coexist naturally in a balance that makes you feel good".

In recent years, material development has advanced tremendously. Today, we can use fabrics and upholstery that are highly durable and weather-resistant, yet soft and refined to the touch — just like indoor materials. Added to this are new weaving techniques and finishes that guarantee impeccable aesthetics and durability. Everything is designed to offer absolute comfort, without sacrificing the lightness and elegance that define contemporary design.

Monica described Italian design unique and balanced and said it the ability to continually renew itself while remaining timeless and contemporary.

"For me, Italian design is truly unique. It's a natural balance between functionality and beauty, born from a rich culture of art, architecture, and exceptional craftsmanship. Its roots run deep, reaching back to the Renaissance, but its modern voice emerged in the post-war period with figures like Gio Ponti and Achille Castiglioni — masters who transformed everyday life into acts of beauty and intelligence.

"I was fortunate to grow up alongside my father, a rationalist architect shaped by that era, from whom I inherited a



love for proportion, clean lines, and essentiality. This legacy guides me every day in my work: in seeking lasting beauty and fostering a dialogue between form, space, and time. I believe this is the secret of Italian design—the ability to continually renew itself while remaining timeless and contemporary."

DESIGN PHILOSOPHY AND QUALITY

Monica shared her views about product design philosophy and creative process without compromising over the quality.

"Over the years, I've developed my own design method, a personal philosophy I call "Design in Molecules." It represents the DNA of my creative approach: a balance between magic and logic, intuition and rigor," she said.

"To me, quality arises precisely from this synthesis. It is the outcome of a process where every choice — from proportions to technology, from materials to details — is made with coherence and precision.

"Logic builds function, structure, and durability. Magic brings emotion, form, and beauty. When these forces meet in harmony, a product is born that not only performs well but continues to inspire over time. This, to me, is true quality."

Monica also shed light on importance of sustainable materials in high-end furniture and said today design carries the responsibility to address global challenges with an integrated vision.

"A responsible project is inherently sustainable because it is made to

last: pure in form, functional in use, and capable of standing the test of generations without losing value or meaning."

She opine that well-designed objects can endure for decades. The Arco lamp by the Castiglioni brothers is a perfect example: designed in 1962, it still illuminates not only spaces but also the minds of those who love design.

"For me, sustainability is not only about materials but about the culture of design. It's about weaving connections between technology, aesthetics, and everyday life, creating objects that enhance the quality of living. It's not about chasing trends — it's about designing with intelligence and respect, placing excellence and beauty at the centre as universal values.

TRIBÙ COLLABORATION

About her decade-old collaboration with Tribù, Monica said it is built on trust and pave the way for the brand's remarkable growth.

"My collaboration with Tribù began more than ten years ago, when I met Koen De Cock, the founder's son and the driving force behind the brand's remarkable growth. From the very beginning, we shared the same vision: essential, refined design made to last. Over time, we've learned to work together with great ease, in continuous dialogue of ideas, observations, and evolutions that enrich every project," she said.

— muzaffarrizvi@khaleejtimes.com