

Constructora AE

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC'S BUILT ENVIRONMENT IN THE BEST HANDS





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Dominican Republic is the tenth largest economy in Latin America and the largest in the Caribbean and Central region, making it a very attractive destination for foreign investment

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Bávaro, R.D.

Dominican Republic is the tenth largest economy in Latin America and the largest in the Caribbean and Central region, making it a very attractive destination for foreign investment in infrastructure, energy, real estate, tourism, agriculture, services and new sectors like film, technology and new media. The continued success of its national economy lies in the ability of Dominicans to leapfrog outdated development models, adopt new technologies, create a strong human capital base and remain a flexible host to incoming industries. This is the responsibility undertaken by construction firms like Constructora AE, SRL based in Santo Domingo and one of the country's most recognized design and construction firms.

The team at Constructora AE is especially interested in transforming the country's coasts,

Christopher Columbus, these same waters will incentivize new urban growth, provide alternate systems of transportation and transform it into the Caribbean regional hub of the 21st century.

We recently spoke with Constructora AE owners, the Espailat Bonnelly family about the company and the positive impact it has made - and continues to make - on Dominican Republic's built environment, since it was founded in 1990. They are Alberto J. Espailat, President-Founder, and his wife Lourdes Bonnelly-Espailat, vice-President. We were also able to chat with the second generation on the firm: Carlos Espailat, the chief project manager; Vanessa Espailat-Lovett, associate architect, urban designer and planner; Enrique Espailat, associate computer science engineer.

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which are the Dominican Republic's most valuable territory from both an environmental, socio-political and economic lens. Fifty percent of the world's population lives in coastal regions most of which were initially developed due to their advantageous connection to water-borne transportation systems and rich coastal ecologies. Increased urbanization, climate change, coastal erosion and sea level rise requires architects, planners and engineers to re-envision coastal cities and towns through the lens of green infrastructures and sustainability. These warm and crystalline waters served as key infrastructure during the development of the Taino indigenous people and the colonial urban economy. After more than 500 years after the foundation of the first permanent European settlement in the Americas by

Three decades of outstanding quality
Since Alberto J. Espailat founded his firm at the beginning of the 1990s, GDP in the country has grown 10-fold. This growth was driven in large part by significant foreign investment and the arrival of many international firms to the DR. It's a level of growth, which has also been reflected within the firm: many of those same international firms turned to Constructora AE when they needed to develop hospitality, residential, corporate and industrial facilities.

As Alberto Espailat explains: “In its early years, the company developed a robust portfolio of high-profile projects in the country, which included an expansion project for Colgate Palmolive's production headquarters, the Executive Tower Manuel

Arsenio Ureña CxA, the administrative offices and industrial warehouses for the newspaper Listin Diario, the headquarters offices for Grupo Ros and the executive tower for Grupo Metro, supervision for Banco Mercantil offices in the whole country and the warehouse and headquarters offices for ESPALSA in Santiago de Los Caballeros city.”

The firm’s early successes brought it wide recognition, allowing it to expand into the Dominican Republic’s burgeoning hospitality industry. It was able to begin lasting relationships

with some of the largest international hotel groups, who were all keen to develop signature buildings in the country. As Mr. Alberto Espailat explains: “we’ve been able to build long-lasting relationships with these clients based on trust, hard work and transparency.”

Lourdes Bonnelly-Espailat shares the competitive advantage the firm offers clients with a multi-generational integrated professional team: “Our team’s professional experience in DR, in both private and public sectors, plus our new highly qualified team of

“we’ve been able to build long-lasting relationships with these clients based on trust, hard work and transparency”



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young professionals, have given us a unique set of skills and relationships that can prove helpful for our client’s projects. No matter if they are small or complex large-scale projects, at Constructora AE, we know that time is money. Our integrated team can save our clients plenty of both.”

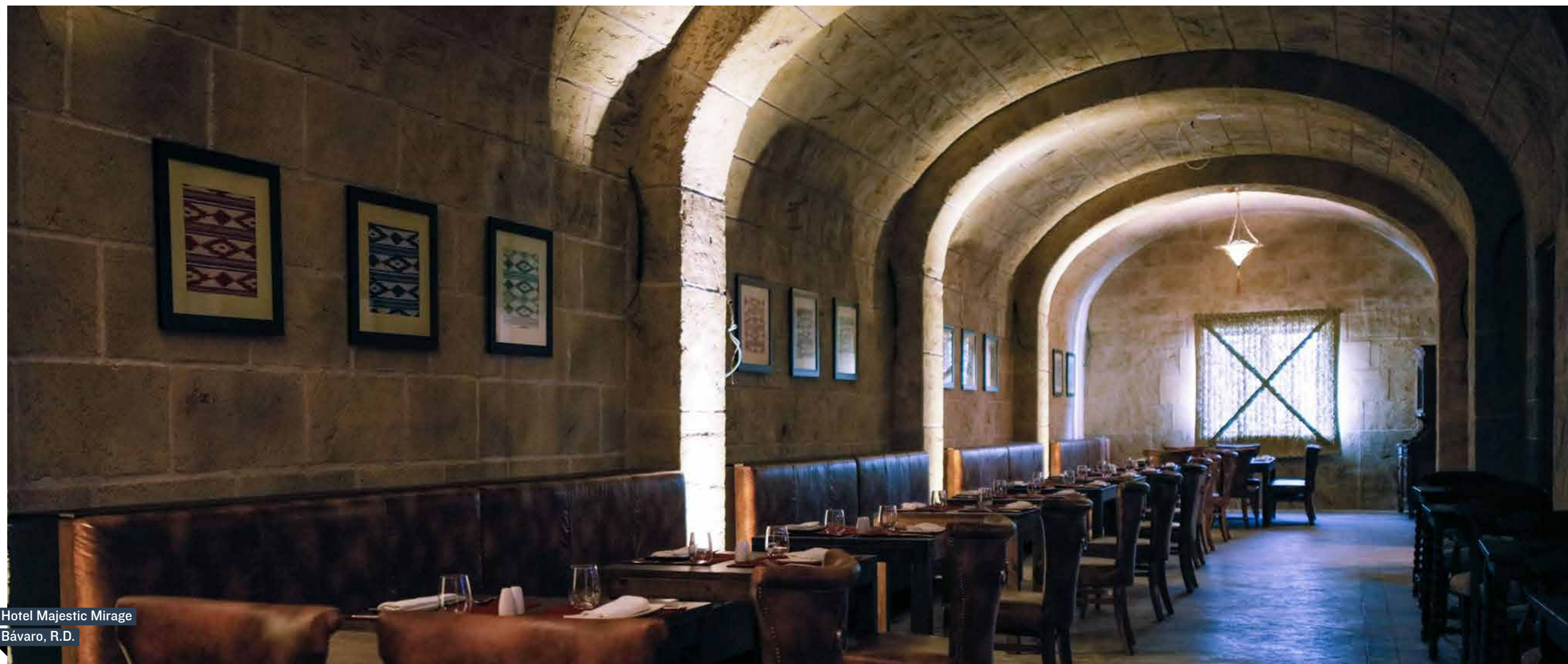
The international flavor also gives Constructora AE a level of flexibility that other firms in the market are generally unable to match, she says: “We are a flexible and lean team that expands and contracts in capacity according to the needs of our clients. We expand from an agile team of 25 to an efficient staff of 2,500 during the life of a single project. This personalized approach allows us to stay competitive and in-demand for our local and foreign clients.”

A family firm with modern corporate standards

The new generation of Espailat Bonnelly family have all taken on roles within the

company, allowing the company to offer a new and diverse set of skills through a shared a set of common values. Vanessa, as Architect, Planner and Urban Designer living in New York is our strategic arm in approaching and attracting international clients from US and Europe. Carlos Espailat, the firm’s Chief Project Manager and Structural Design Engineer, was recently responsible for delivering over 88,000sqm of hospitality infrastructure, as well as incorporating new construction technologies that help make projects more efficient and innovative. Enrique Espailat, a computer science engineer living and working in NYC, is the firm’s technology advisor.

Carlos Espailat comments about the leadership style that prevails at the firm: “The company’s leadership style is an inclusive, open-minded and visionary approach that is balanced with a realistic understanding of the local capacities and constraints. Constructora AE is a diverse team and has made it its mission to actively promote diversity and



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hire more women engineers and designers, as well as continue to promote women in leadership positions. At Constructora AE, we treat everyone with the utmost respect, which has guaranteed the company’s ability to retain and grow a highly-qualified group of professionals.”

Partners and Suppliers

The scale of the projects undertaken by Constructora AE require coordination with, and commitment from, a wide range of

suppliers and partner companies. As Carlos Espailat says: “Our suppliers are our allies in guaranteeing our competitiveness in terms of cost, quality and time.” Constructora AE has therefore already established strategic alliances with several firms in the Dominican Republic.

Primary among these partner firms is Grupo Atlántico RD, a construction materials conglomerate in the Dominican Republic, and two of its subsidiaries, Hormigones del Atlántico and Depositos Ferreteros, which has

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developed a genuinely symbiotic relationship with Constructora AE. For interior finishes, it calls on firms like Marmotech, S.A. and Carabela S.A.

Other important suppliers and partners include Implementos y Maquinarias, S. A., which give it access to state of the art Caterpillar and John Deere construction technology, Ingenieria y Pavimentos Industriales, SRL for concrete solutions, Importadora Dominicana de Madera, CxA, IMDOMACA for timber, JJ Electric, S.A., its preferred electrical



Alberto J. Espailat Torres,
President



Lourdes Bonnelly de Espailat,
Vice President



Vanessa Espailat Lovett, Associate Architect,
Urban Designer and Planner



Carlos A. Espailat Bonnelly,
Chief Project Manager

“In the next 5 years, we aim to become a one-stop shop for our clients, one that strategically partners with the best in the field to deliver quality, sustainable projects”



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supplier, Tejar del Rey for roofing, and finally, CERARTEC for the windows and glass which adorn many of the projects constructed by Constructora AE.

A second generation building on strong foundations

Constructora AE is increasingly an international firm. When Vanessa Espailat Lovett founded Ella, a Global Design and Consultancy firm in New York in 2017, it was the latest step on this journey. Its presence in the US is likely to bring it projects there, opening a whole new horizon for the company. As she says: “We are looking forward to a broader diversification of our portfolio of services. In the next 5 years, we aim to become a one-stop shop for our clients, one that strategically partners with the best in the field to deliver quality, sustainable projects.”

“We are a local firm with global perspective.

We expertly advise our local and foreign clients on the best way forward for each individual project, helping them navigate our complex local politics, construction practices, legal framework and so on. We also pride ourselves in an ethical practice, which has allowed us to build strong relationships of trust with our clients.”

Home to the Americas’ oldest built settlements, Dominican Republic now has a firm in Constructora AE, which will be responsible for building much of its future. **BE**

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