



When the Danish jewellery and silverware company Georg Jensen decided to open up shop on Rodeo Drive, it wanted something aesthetically pure. So the manufacturer turned to Japanese architect Tadao Ando for the proper look. The minimalist result – an antidote to Hollywood’s flashiest retail destination – emits a sensual aura, thanks to LEDs placed behind the walls.

TADAO ANDO COMES TO BEVERLY HILLS

As far as opposites attracting, this one’s a doozy. Along the glitzy three-block shopping mecca known as Rodeo Drive, there’s a new boutique designed by none other than minimalist czar Tadao Ando.

The Japanese architect created the interior for the Danish jewellery and silverware company Georg Jensen. “We are admirers of Ando’s work,” says Mette Fisker Jørgensen, project co-ordinator for the store. “So we asked him to create a space that was incredibly pure yet still quite sensual.” Ando, in turn, took on the project because of his admiration for the company’s stellar reputation for giving equal importance to form and function. “I’ve been practising architecture with the same aim from the very beginning,” he says.

As with his famed Church of the Light in Osaka, the boutique’s most distinguishing feature is its light source. The shop is one long and narrow nave, measuring 26 by six metres, with two aisles of plinths – 46 in total – running down the centre. The plinths display exclusive lines of jewellery, watches and select hollowware. When a client wishes to inspect the merchandise, a salesperson opens the glass lid using a special key. But it’s the walls illuminating the room that give the space its sensual aura. Some 132,000 LEDs, placed behind 1,200 acrylic tubes mounted horizontally from floor to ceiling, emit a diffused aqua glow. Entering the store is like being submerged in a swimming pool.

CATHERINE OSBORNE