



## International Architecture Awards 2023

### The New Kazan River Quarter wins Mixed Used Buildings Category

Organized by The Chicago Athenaeum Museum of Architecture and Design together with The European Center for Architecture Art Design and Urban Studies and Metropolitan Arts Press.

Borgos Pieper is proud to announce that it has won a prize in the International Architecture Awards. Since 2004, The Chicago Athenaeum together with The European Center for Architecture Art Design and Urban Studies have organized The International Architecture Awards as a way in which to honor the best, significant new buildings, landscape architecture, and planning projects designed and/or built around the world's leading architects, landscape architects, and urban planners practicing nationally and internationally. The International Architecture Awards give an important global overview of the current aesthetic direction of today's commercial, corporate, institutional, and residential work to the real estate, banking, business, and corporate community, as well as to the press and general public worldwide.

For the 2023 Edition of the Awards a distinguished jury of international designers selected the winners from a field of over 850 submissions and 48 Countries in this Year's 18th Edition of the International Architecture Awards.

The challenge of creating a new city quarter on the banks of the Kazanka River overlooking the historic city has provided us with the inspiration to bring a new relationship between the natural environment of the river and the man-made construction. Our concept is to metaphorically and physically merge and raise the riverside park atop new sloped buildings that provide a transition between the river and the city that extends on the North bank of the river. We have given the new development a distinctive arched profile to mark its place in the city from afar.

Futuristic buildings, smoothly rising from the coast towards Sibgata Khakim Street, are filled with landscaped terraces. It somehow resembles either a wave, or a sail with semi-elliptical tops running towards Kazanka. **Chief Architect of Kazan Ilsiyyar Tukhvatullina** notes that the ideas of Spanish designers for Kazan look spectacular, it looks like nothing else. "The project is very strong, and if we implement it, it will set a new benchmark for the entire surrounding development," she said. -





## Design statement

This is an important project for the city of Kazan. We understand what this site means to the people and its regional and international significance. Our proposal recognises this. **The architecture is bold and iconic**, but it is designed to **provide a real, enduring and welcoming place** that offers something unique in the region and demonstrates environmental leadership to the world.

Our design includes:

- Desirable, light-filled homes, all with terraces and river views.
- Flexible, modern office towers that look out onto the city.
- A rich mix of experiences – shops, restaurants, hotels and protected winter-gardens.
- Linked to the new riverside park and beautiful public spaces for all to enjoy.

Our starting point was the Kazanka River and the natural beauty of its waterfront, which is so popular in the city. Our plan was to support and advance the work that has gone into the existing river-wide masterplan. Instead of creating concrete barriers that would cut people off from the water, we explored how we could open up the riverfront.

First, we do this by extending the new public park not only at ground level but also above the buildings. It provides a public park, right on the water, with promenades, a boardwalk, space for culture and events. Second, we break apart the mass of the development into a wave of elongated buildings. Where these buildings meet the park, they are low, with wide terraces. Where they face the city, they rise up to meet it with round office towers. Thirdly we link the main buildings with covered spaces to unify the public realm. There is a progression from urban to open green.

We have considered the buildings and spaces around them together, as an integrated whole. This is vital: if you don't define the external space, it will be wasted. Our design establishes a very clear hierarchy of privacy from the public park to communal gardens and private residences. Inside, garden courtyards and planted terraces draw the greenery of the park up to the roof. Because of the sloping form and stepped profile of the 'fingers', every apartment can have river views, direct sunlight and terraces. As this is reclaimed land, it's also vital to consider drainage and flood mitigation – our design includes swales, which collect water and protect the development and public spaces. Higher up, the terraces collect water to irrigate the plants.

At an individual scale, we designed the experience for a pedestrian: how they can move from the city, past the ground-level shops, stop and get a drink in a cafe, then walk along tree-lined paths down to the river. Equally, we understand the challenges of winter in Tatarstan – this is a place that welcomes people all year round. The buildings are linked by glass enclosures, threaded like a string of beads to provide a continuous, sheltered link: a comfortable space to enjoy the architecture, light and river views, whatever the weather.

Then there's the wider perspective and the presence of these buildings on the skyline. They are vertically staggered; they step up to create a distinctive silhouette – a wave – a distinctive new symbol of Kazan. We have given careful thought to the relationship with the Kremlin: our approach looks to it respectfully but doesn't try to compete or copy its form.

So, how do we build efficiently, and how do we bring this harmony with nature into the construction process? We propose a simple, intelligent building system using cross-laminated timber. This will reduce the carbon footprint and enable a rapid construction programme: an approach that saves both time and costs. Our design solution is also pragmatic – the development of each finger can be phased according to demand. The buildings are also highly flexible and can adapt to different uses.

We are excited by the potential of this location, and this opportunity to create a **'wave of greenery'** on the riverbank: a new city quarter set in a park. We look forward to the opportunity to work with the developer, Kazan's authorities, and local residents to refine a vision that perfectly fulfils their aspirations for this important piece of city.

### Notes to editors:

- Borgos Pieper is a studio for architecture and design studio led by Etienne Borgos and Nadine Pieper, with offices in London and Barcelona. The team works at every scale, from urban to product design, with an approach characterised by sensitivity to context and careful detailing.
- The studio's portfolio includes Valencia Central Park, completed in 2019, the refurbishment of the Mercado de Colon in Valencia and the New Sevilla Radisson Collection and city square completed in 2021. Borgos Pieper is currently developing work in the United Kingdom, Europe, the Middle East and the Americas.
- Prior to founding Borgos Pieper, Etienne Borgos was a Partner at Foster + Partners for 12 years, working on the Bilbao Metro, the Torre de Collserola in Barcelona, Palacio de Congresos in Valencia and the Reichstag in Berlin. Nadine Pieper was also a key member of the team at Foster + Partners as Associate, where she was an architect for the luxury Albion Riverside apartments in London, and the lead architect for the RIBA Stirling Prize-shortlisted Faustino Winery in the Ribera del Duero.