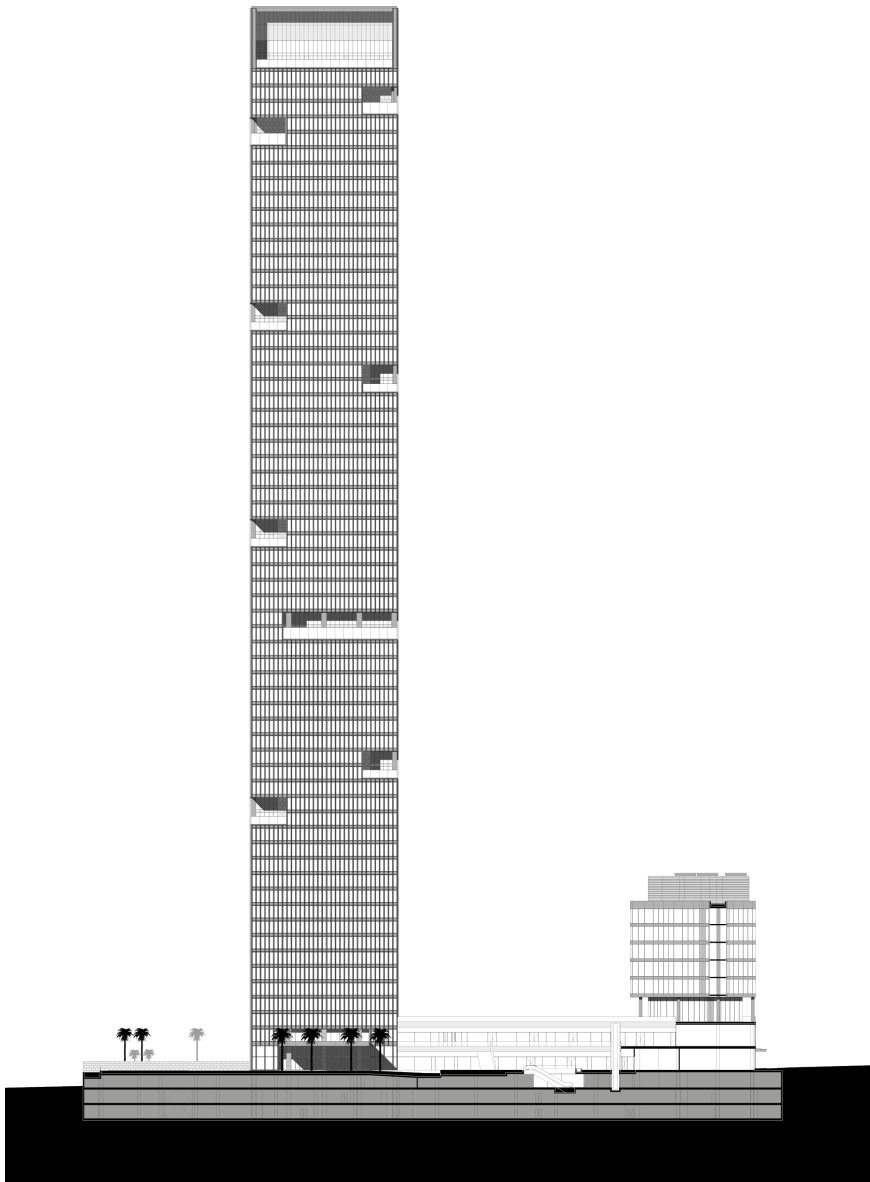


## Rafal Sky Gardens

Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 2022 - 2014



**Location** King Fahd Road, Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

**Developer** Rafal Real Estate Development Co. (Muhaidib/ Aramco/ Abunayyan)

**Programme** Mixed-use 66-storey residential tower, 9-storey office building, 2- storey retail podium

**Plot Size** 10,300 sq.m

**Gross Floor Area** 69,100 sq.m (plus parking below grade 30,300 sq.m)

**Construction Cost** SAR 400M

**Project Status** 2014 (competition, 1<sup>st</sup>-prize) – 2022 (built)

**Model** Norigem

PLANNING  
ARCHITECTURE  
**PROMONTORIO**  
LANDSCAPE  
INTERIOR DESIGN  
GRAPHICS

[www.promontorio.net](http://www.promontorio.net)

## **Rafal Sky Gardens**

Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 2022 - 2014

The ensemble comprises a 66-storey residential tower, in addition to a retail plaza and a small office building. It is located on the East side of the hectic King Fahd Road, Riyadh's central axis, and next to a major junction with King Abdullah Road.

The concept of the tower takes on the premises of the prototypical 1960s glass skyscraper, with its slim and classical silhouette, reminiscent of buildings like the Seagram Tower by Mies van der Rohe or the Lever House by SOM/Gordon Bunshaft, from which slots are randomly subtracted thereby creating a series of iconic sky patios which intensifying its sculptural form while retaining a highly efficient floor plate. Given the development of curtain wall technology which made popular flush glassing bond by structural silicone systems, the introduction of a vertical mullion caps is paradoxically today an anachronism that can only be justified by the romantic allusion to the skyscraper of the modern era.

The retail plaza on the podium is an open-court galleria that aims to capture the relaxed spirit of Tahlia Street —Riyadh's busy dining hub—, and it comprises a 2-storey shaded galleria conveniently accessible from street level. Devised as a cascading amphitheatre open to Riyadh's main axis, it is shaded by a system of tree-like free standing pergolas. Design-wise, and contrasting with the severe monumentality of the tower, the plaza echoes the organic curves of the Brazilian landscapes of Burle-Marx bringing a tropical lightness to the podium. The small office building occupying the far North corner of the plot is conceived almost as if it were a vertical extrusion of the swaying curves of the plaza, creating an undulating facade towards King Fahd Road.