



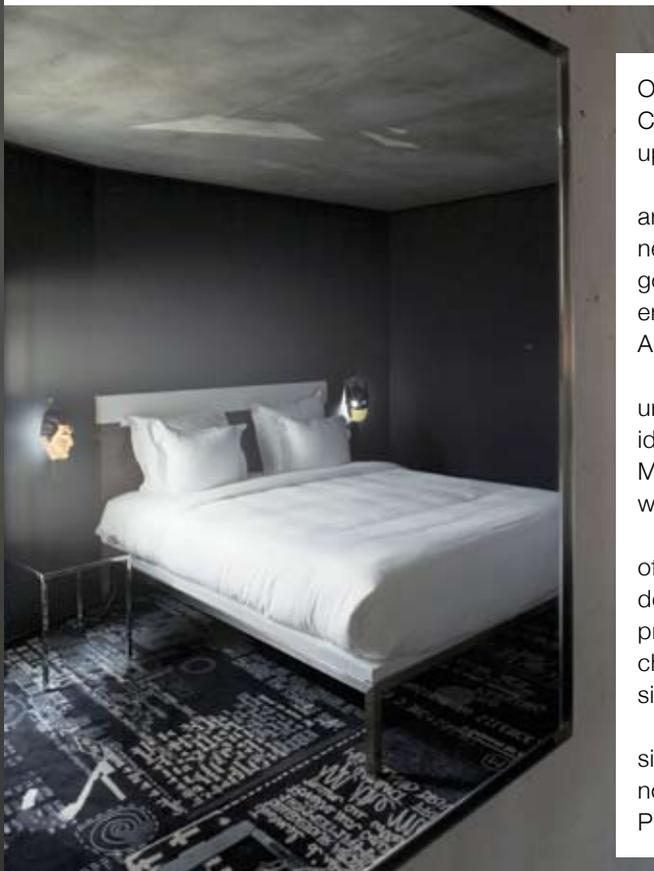
**BELOW** THE RECEPTION LOBBY OF THE HOTEL WITH TREE STUMPS IN VARIOUS COLORS GUISHED AS STOOLS AND GLASS CABINETS FILLED WITH DESIGN OBJECTS EVOKE AN INTERESTING WELCOME **RIGHT** AN IMPOSING BOOK CASE ACTS AS A PARTITION BETWEEN THE LOUNGE AND THE BAR AREAS OF THE MAIN FLOOR **BOTTOM** ONE OF THE 172 ROOMS WITH FUNKY SUPERHERO MASK LAMP SHADES THAT MAY BE CHANGED AT THE RECEPTION TO THE SUPERHERO OF YOUR CHOICE **OPPOSITE** BLACK CARPET WITH GRAFFITI. GRAFFITI IS AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT RUNNING THROUGH THE HOTEL



# the Key to a City

Mama Shelter provides guests with a view of the Paris less traveled

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On the 22nd of November 2001, Serge Trigano, former president of the famed tropical resort Club Med, and Cyril Aouizerate, philosopher and expert on urban development, chanced upon a site in the 20th arrondissement in the heart of the Village Saint-Blaise in Paris.

Only a brief distance away is the sprawling Pere-Lachaise Cemetery, where notable artistic souls like Edith Piaf, Oscar Wilde and Jim Morrison are interred. It is a working-class neighborhood that is considerably off the beaten track, despite the tourists who come and go to pay respects to their departed idols. Yet it was in this area, particularly a graffiti-embellished and dilapidated parking garage next to a derelict train track that Trigano and Aouizerate decided to drop anchor for Mama Shelter to be realized.

Home to immigrants and artists, the 20th arrondissement is an unusual location for an urban hotel, being one of the most neglected quarters of Paris and absolutely bereft of the idiosyncratic charm that endears the City of Lights to residents and tourists alike. However, Mama Shelter aims to take into consideration the person and not the social constraints by which he is bound.

Thinking out of the box and emancipating themselves from social judgment and the binds of skeptics, its founders conceptualized an unconventional idea to build an exceptionally designed yet highly affordable “shelter”—something democratic, yet chic. Mama Shelter provides guests with food for thought, an ambiance that promotes free thinking, and a chance to discover the Paris known to its locals by experiencing the French capital’s urban side from a different perspective.

One of those tasked with the project is prominent French architect Ronald Castro, whose signature revolutionary approach to design demonstrates his belief that the landscape and not the buildings should be the focal point of the city’s architecture. Renowned designer Philippe Starck, an authority in design and celebrated over the world for his inventive and



**ABOVE** THE MODERN TABLES AND BENCHES OF THE COMMON DINING AREA SERVING SIMPLE SCRUMPTUOUS CUISINE SUPERVISED BY RENOWNED TWO MICHELLIN-STARRED CHEF ALAIN SANDEREUS **LEFT AND BELOW** CHALKBOARD CEILING WITH GRAFFITI-LOOKING INSCRIPTIONS OF APHORISMS, POETRY, KITSCHY PHRASES AND LUDICROUS MUSINGS ALONG WITH ECLECTIC MIX OF FURNITURE AND FURNISHINGS IN THE 900 M<sup>2</sup> DINING / LOUNGE / BAR AREA GIVE IT A RELAXED AND VIBRANT ATMOSPHERE



daring avant-garde artistry, joined Castro to incarnate Mama Shelter.

In September 2008, seven years after Trigano and Aouizerate discovered the unconventional site for their revolutionary boutique hotel, Mama Shelter opened its doors to the public. With 172 rooms spread across seven floors, the interiors are sleek and modern, bearing Starck's stylish and quirky trademark design stamp. Each room is equipped with a minibar, kitchenette, an iMac integrated with TV, radio and CD/DVD player, free WiFi access and a plush bed with luxurious 100% cotton—satin sheets. Bathrooms are compact and stocked with indulgent Kiehl's toiletries. All these amenities are provided to ensure guests' comfort, giving them the feeling of staying in a sensual urban cocoon, a "home away from home."

With its aspiration to establish a modern commune for discerning guests and the trendsetting "bobo" (a French expression meaning bohemian and bourgeois, two social castes in perfect synergy), the hotel's restaurant-bar has the spirit and vibe of an urban playground. Here, friends can gather around a table and enjoy each other's company while having cocktails, sharing meals and perhaps later, visit the nearby "Le Flèche d' Or," the popular Parisian electro-indie rock club. To linger on as the night falls deeper into the evening is an alternative option, when chairs are pushed aside to make room for a makeshift dance floor and a local DJ turns up the volume. On some occasions, diners are treated to entertainment from a Japanese artist, a French poet or a Latin performer.

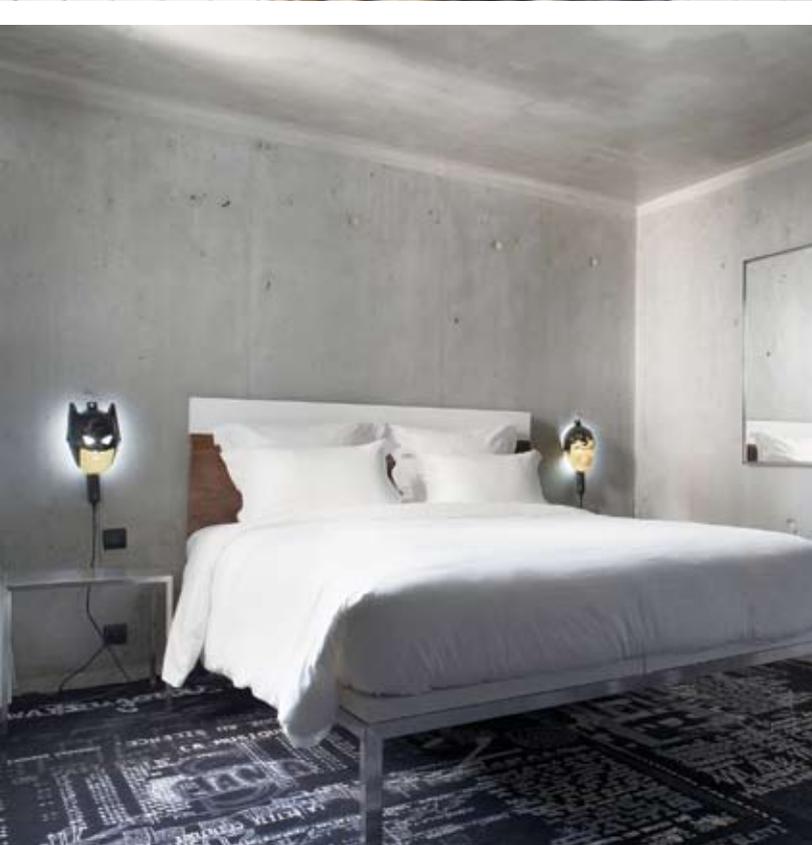
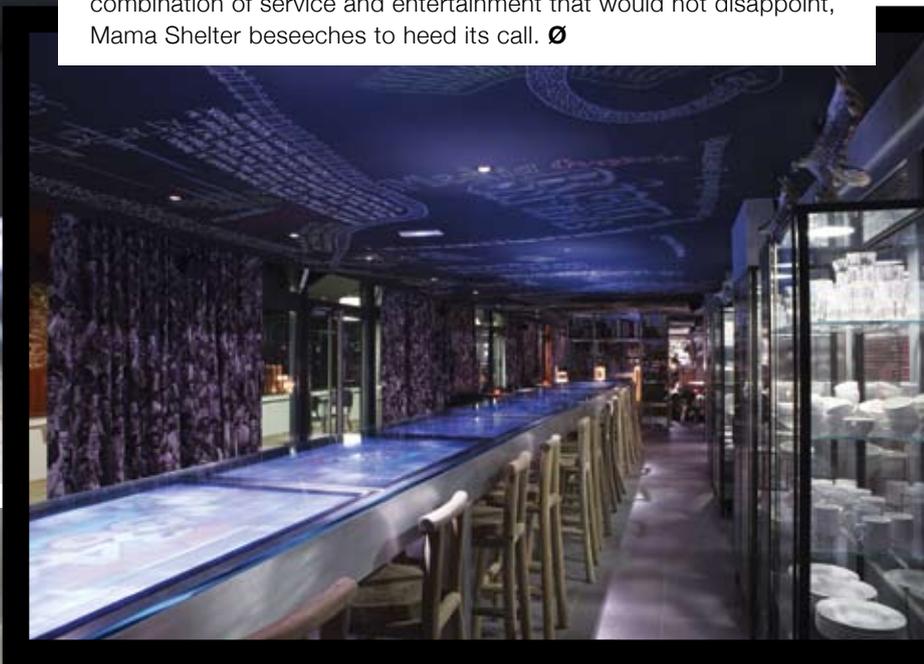




Playing the gracious host to hotel guests, Mama Shelter's staff trained under the tutelage of former chief concierge to the Plaza Athénée Jean Claude Elgaire and is outfitted by top couturier Anne Gelbard.

On the main floor of Mama Shelter, guests are welcomed from across an enormous table with built-in screens. Because room service is not offered, cold cabinets hold meals available to guests 24/7, complete with a nook of sweets to satiate the sweet tooth of the younger hotel residents. Guests can enjoy the comforts of the settee and the relaxed atmosphere from lit candles before they are escorted to their rooms. Monitors are not only built into the large table near the entrance, but also on the hotel's columns, allowing guests to be constantly informed and entertained. Those up for reconnecting with their inner child can take a shot at the eight-person foosball table, while a pool table is also at one's disposal. The terrace is accessible for those who fancy a cigarette break and remains comfortable even on a chilly winter evening. Health buffs may meditate in the Yoga Room, while sightseers can ride around town in electric scooters, motorbikes or compact vehicles like the Smart Car and Fiat Uno.

Situated in the reinvented vicinity of the eastern edge of Paris, Mama Shelter's area may not be on the tourist map, yet it offers its guests a chance to discover a unique and more diverse facet of La Ville-Lumière. For the true urban experience with the perfect combination of service and entertainment that would not disappoint, Mama Shelter beseeches to heed its call. Ø



**ABOVE** HORIZONTAL VIDEO SCREENS ARE EMBEDDED ON THE LONG, COMMUNAL DINING TABLE **LEFT** THE RAW CONCRETE WALLS MAGNIFY THE GREY AND WHITE MOTIF OF THE HOTEL ROOMS. ON THE TABLE, MISS K LAMP FOR FLOS AND LA MARIE CHAIR FOR KARTELL BOTH DESIGNED BY STARCK **TOP LEFT** THE TERRACE HAS OUTDOOR SEATING WITH THE VIEW OF THE RAILWAY TRACK