

by Alia Soraya



MAMA SHELTER, PARIS
+ www.mamashelter.com

Created by the Trigano family (co-founders of Club Med) and French philosopher, Cyril Aouizerate, Mama Shelter was designed by Philippe Starck to offer an eclectic and electric ambience thanks to its friendly, warm and casual common areas. Offering a total of 172 rooms decked out in quirky details, Halloween masks and phrase-threaded carpets, this former parking garage is host to live music shows and late-night suppers in the heart of the Pere LaChaise neighbourhood.



ARMANI HOTEL, DUBAI AND MILAN + www.armanihotels.com

Along with 175 guest rooms and suites, Armani's first hotel will include 160 luxury condominiums, a private member's club, five restaurants and a spa. The rooms are furnished with a specially-designed line of Armani Casa products including bespoke furnishings made out of zebrawood, Venetian plaster, fabric and leather wall coverings – all depicting Armani's credo of understated luxury. The opening was scheduled for 2009 but now, it's set to open early 2010. The Milan hotel will feature 95 guestrooms, a gourmet restaurant, a luxurious Armani/SPA and a fully-equipped business centre. Future destinations include Marassi and Marrakech.

HOUSE *of* STYLE

As if bedding, toiletries, perfume and makeup weren't enough, today's top designers are branching out into the world of couture hotels. Style: seeks out the best.

Since the beginning of the new millennia, many designers have partnered with hospitality companies to co-brand new properties or redesign the interiors of existing hotels. We're talking whole buildings branded by designers. This includes a whole range of bedding, furniture, interior concepts, design philosophy, the works. It's as if they've taken their concept stores and placed them in an environment in which you can actually stay and play (for a price).

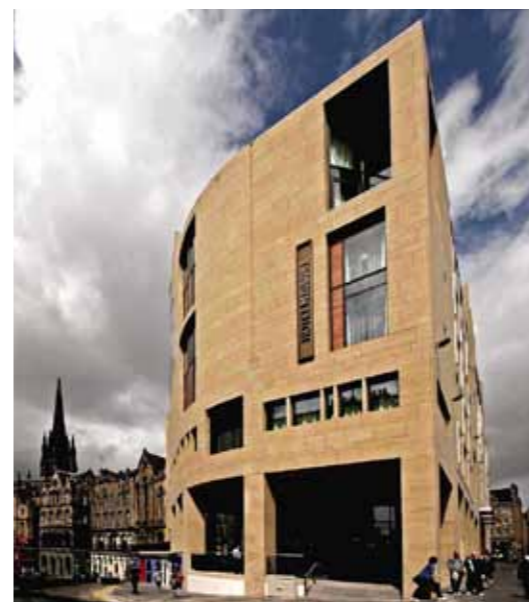
It's difficult to say who really started the trend although American designer Todd Oldham's restoration of the Art Deco The Hotel in South Beach, Miami may have been the pioneer way back in 1998. But it was truly Versace that exploited the trend for all it was worth when he splashed out on the over-the-top Palazzo Versace in Gold Coast, Australia in 2000.

Ten years on, the luxury world has taken the hotel world by storm with designer hotels cropping up all over the globe.

Whether it be bohemian, minimalist, resort-like, or just plain flat-out luxurious, we have to agree; what a lifestyle it is!



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HOTEL MISSONI IN EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND AND KUWAIT CITY + www.hotelmissoni.com

The Missoni fashion house opened at the Edinburgh hotel in early 2009, featuring a unique blend of Missoni-branded products and services, from signature zigzag-print bed sheets to Italian restaurant Cucina Missoni. The Edinburgh location boasts 136 rooms, while Kuwait City's hotel opening in early 2010 will host 200 rooms. Both hotels house furnishings inspired by founder Rosita Missoni's own home, including Hans Wegner's signature Wish Bone chair, a mid-century favorite with a y-shaped backbone. Other future destinations are Cape Town, South Africa in Fall 2010, Oman in 2011 and Brazil in 2012.



HOTEL PETIT MOULIN, PARIS/ CHRISTIAN LACROIX
+ www.paris-hotel-petitmoulin.com

Each of Hotel Petit Moulin's 17 rooms packs a seriously-designed punch, all thanks to haute couture master Christian Lacroix. You won't find understated elegance here: it's all about red walls, murals sketched in a rainbow of colours and extravagant details such as heart-shaped mirrors and polka-dotted floors, all in the heart of the trendy Marais district. The site, which was an ancient bakery, captured Christian Lacroix with its "slightly twisted perspectives, the maze-like passageways on the different floors and the new functional areas which have been added in full respect of the 'old Paris' style of the classified parts of the building".



5 LUNGARNO HOTELS, FLORENCE, ITALY + www.lungarnohotels.com

Each of the Ferragamo family's four separate properties – all located in Florence – has its own unique style, from the old world feel of 60-room, 13-suite Hotel Lungarno to the contemporary art-centric

65-room, nine-suite Gallery Hotel Art. The common thread is the fashion house's collection of Lungarno-specific home goods and furnishings, including Plexiglass ceramics and horn bathroom fixtures. The Hotel Lungarno is embellished with a vast collection of 450 original works by 20th century painters that adorn the walls of rooms, halls and corridors.

PALAZZO VERSACE, AUSTRALIA AND DUBAI
+ www.palazzoversace.com

This 205-room, 72-condominium hotel opened in 2000, featuring the opulent Italian designs of Donatella Versace, including a pebble mosaic driveway and blue marble floors. There's also a 1,650-pound chandelier in the foyer that was purchased by Donatella's late brother, founding designer Gianni. Rooms are furnished in Versace home goods, including gold-foiled china, satin sheets and brocade sofas. Bathroom treats include mini bottles of men's and women's Versace fragrances and slippers. It also features three award-winning restaurants and a private marina for the jet-set.



ROUND HILL HOTEL, JAMAICA BY RALPH LAUREN
+ www.roundhilljamaica.com

Originally the private haven of style icons such as Noel Coward, Babe Paley, Cole Porter, Grace Kelly and Jacqueline Kennedy, this fabled gem still feels like a charming private club, sought after by some of today's most discerning travelers. Ralph Lauren transformed this former pineapple and coconut plantation into an elegant yet laid-back resort just west of Montego Bay. The 36 ocean-front rooms in the Pineapple House have been recently renovated and most of the 27 private villas have their own pool. The atmosphere is relaxed, with white stone floors, mahogany and bamboo four-poster beds and understated Ralph Lauren Home collect furniture complimenting the bay views.



BULGARI HOTELS AND RESORTS, MILAN AND BALI + www.bulgarihotels.com

Fine hotels have stocked Bulgari bath products in suites for years, but it wasn't until 2004 that the fine jewellery brand – in partnership with the Ritz-Carlton Hotel Company – opened its very own 58-room hotel in Milan, with a focus on spa and beauty. While the suites and rooms are furnished in contemporary, monochromatic tones of grey, tan and black, the spa features a gold mosaic swimming pool and a green glass hammam, similar in colouring to the Bulgari perfume bottle. Now, you don't have to travel halfway around the world to experience Bulgari luxury. The Bulgari Resort in Bali is located in Uluwatu, high on a cliff offering unrivalled views of the Indian Ocean. The 59-villa resort uses hand-cut volcanic stones, rich exotic woods and refined fabrics to furnish and decorate the Antonio Citterio and Partners design.



BYBLOS ART HOTEL, VERONA, ITALY
+ www.byblosarthotel.com

Creator of fashion label Byblos, Dino Facchini showcases his personal pop and contemporary art collection in this 49-room, 11-suite restored 16th century Venetian-style villa, complete with fountains, a swimming pool and health spa. The originality of the interior's design is the work of architect and designer Alessandro Mendini. Here, bright colours and plastic shapes are combined with paintings and marble elements to create a permanent exhibition of some of the world's best artists and designers. Signature looks that echo the label's ethos include colours, glamour prints and fabric patchworks.

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3 ROOMS, PARIS, FRANCE BY AZZEDINE ALAIA
+ www.3rooms-10corsocomo.com

This micro-boutique hotel comprises three apartments (one 1-bedroom and two 2-bedrooms), attached to designer Azzedine Alaïa's atelier, in partnership with shoemaker/hotelier Carla Sozzani. Much like his fashion, Alaïa's interiors are sleek and minimalistic, with the occasional pop of red. Alaïa uses both new and vintage objects to furnish the space. He also has another hotel in Milan with the same 3-room concept.



THE G HOTEL, GALWAY BY PHILIP TREACY
+ www.theghotel.ie

One of the top 5-star hotels in Ireland, the G Hotel combines modern designs with a relaxed atmosphere. Design Director and milliner Philip Treacy created a dramatic interior with an emphasis on glamour and luxury. Treacy's signature is prominent in The Pink Salon, a lounge with camouflage-print chairs, black-and-white vortex carpet and – what else? – shocking pink walls.



THE MORRISON IN DUBLIN BY JOHN ROCHA
+ www.morrisonhotel.ie

John Rocha is known as the Calvin Klein of the UK, and his sleek, east-meets-west aesthetic has drawn celebrities like Christina Aguilera, Beyoncé and Kate Moss, among others. The furnishings are quiet, varying more in texture than colour. Smooth stone floors are punctuated with gray handmade carpets, while furnishings add splashes of orange and gold. The building incorporates the 18th-century façade of a Georgian townhouse with a contemporary, south-facing front onto the River Liffey.



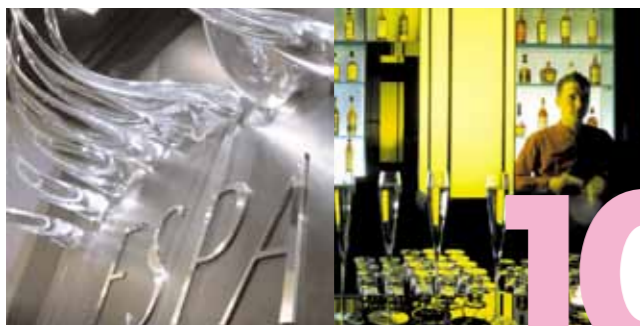
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THE HOTEL, SOUTH BEACH, MIAMI BY TODD OLDHAM
+ www.thehotelofsouthbeach.com

Todd Oldham's custom touches abound: satin-ribbed pillows, hand-airbrushed tiles and tie-dyed robes, all in a soft riot of colors. A transformed landmark building in the heart of South Beach's Art Deco district, the lifestyle is indoor/outdoor. With its original 1939-terrazo floors, lush tropical foliage and bold mirrored mosaics, The Hotel is undoubtedly retro chic and hip. •

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