

Where Style Comes to Stay

By **Judy Koutsky**

Why These Design Hotels—located in Amsterdam, Sao Paulo and Tel Aviv—are well worth the visit.

Pulitzer Amsterdam

Creative Director: Jacu Strauss

In 2016, this historic hotel—which is made up of 25 interlinking canal houses that date back to the 17th and 18th centuries—underwent an extensive renovation. The result is an eclectic yet elegant look that showcases original and historic features (it has over 400 years of history!), mixed with luxurious modern day elements. “The property has broadened its spectrum of guests with its recent renovation,” says Creative Director Jacu Strauss, who was in charge of the refurbishment. “Now [it’s] not only appealing for those looking for a unique experience in a place which expresses Amsterdam, but also for families, as we have created a spacious Family Suite—family rooms and multiple connecting rooms. The park-like hideaway gardens with unique design aspects include four large chair swings and hand carved wooden rocking horses to get away from the hustle of the city.” Art and design lovers are also in for a treat with secret pockets of furniture and 1,000 paintings covering the walls.

In the hotel, no two rooms are the same—giving you a unique experience in every space. Each room offers the historical heritage and modern comforts of a real Amsterdam apartment, while also exuding homey, residential feel.

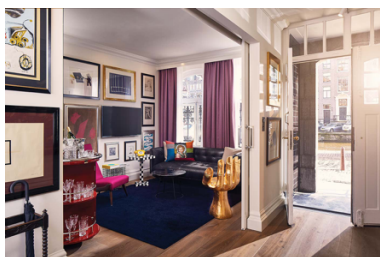
“We have used the character and quirks existing in the buildings and made the journey through the hot and through years of history part of the unique charm of the [Pulitzer](#). Every room and every corner portray hints of the past,” says Strauss.



The Pulitzer Suite

Emphasis on the beauty of the individual 25 canal houses was done highlighting the separations between the buildings. As you walk through the corridors, each house is identified by using a different wall color and a different carpet color. This way, you know where one building ends and another one begins. Focus is on the fun of becoming lost in the labyrinth of houses.

Strauss’s favorite room is the Pulitzer Suite, which is a grand, decade suite with distinct architectural features, original ornate details and a grand view of an inner tranquil garden. The interior consists of an eclectic mix of vintage and contemporary furniture, including custom as well as found pieces.



The Art Collector’s Suite at the Pulitzer Amsterdam

And it’s not just in the rooms that the juxtaposition of modern and historical meld beautifully. “The interior finishes in the Pulitzer lobby for example, reflect the fact that those particular buildings were warehouses—wooden beams, brick, end grain flooring, brass reception desks,” says Strauss. “This is contrasted by decadent, elegant and colorful pockets of furniture and antique art. They reflect Amsterdam’s rich past and contemporary present in an eclectic mix of finishes, designs and elements in a way that embodies Dutch elegance.” After the restoration of the canal houses and renovation of

the entire property, the guest experience has become more authentic to Amsterdam, bringing quintessential Dutch style back to the property—and allows it to fully embrace its labyrinth of corridors and historical quirks.

The Norman, Tel Aviv, Israel

Architect: Yoav Messer

By converting two historic buildings in the heart of bustling Tel Aviv, [The Norman](#) captured the timeless elegance of the 1920s. Opened in December 2014, the architecture was conceived by Yoav Messer who preserved the original building while remaining true to the area’s Bauhaus character. “The hotel design envisions two historic buildings to create an active engagement of the past, present and future,” says Messer.

Known as the “art hotel,” this boutique property (it has 50 rooms) has a resident curator on hand to offer insights into the artwork displayed throughout the building. In addition, the hotel offers bespoke tours of local galleries and artists’ studios, incorporating regular art showings and events taking place around the city. From the stunning rooftop pool you can see the Mediterranean, which is just a 10-minute walk.



The rooftop pool at The Norman

Original Israeli artwork is featured throughout the hotel's public area guest rooms and suites and range from classic oil paintings to unique sculptures to one-of-a-kind prints, bringing the essence of Israel and unique culture to life through multiple mediums. The rooms feature Scandinavian furniture and colors including lilac, beige and periwinkle. The hardwood floors are warmed by intricate Nepali rugs.



The Norman is one of the most luxurious hotels in Israel.

The corner suites, which are located in an eclectic-style building dating back to 1925, face the historical Pagoda House and the King Alber square. The custom handmade design furniture and bespoke pieces—such as the much Instagrammed multiple mirror wall on a bedroom wall—make these

rooms truly unique.

Hotel Unique Sao Paulo Brazil

Architect: Ruy Ohtake

Dramatic tension meets minimalist-chic design at this modernist architectural landmark in Brazil's large city, Sao Paulo. The vision was created by acclaimed architect Ruy Ohtake, with the interior design done by João Armentano. "I seek innovation integrating contemporary thought in all my projects," says Ohtake. "I always consider architecture as a challenge. It can be in the shape, in the structure, in the interior spaces or in some important details."



Hotel Unique has one of the most unique facades in the city.

The outside structure of the hotel is unique—it's often described as resembling a piece of watermelon or a boat. The hotel has an inverted arc facade in shimmering green copper, a soaring cathedral-like lobby with a 60-foot vertical bar, curved hallways, culminating in a 360-degree rooftop with unparalleled city views. The rooftop bar pool at Skye is a deep red, which at night transforms the space into one of the hottest spots in town (and boasts one of the best views of the city skyline). Inside, the open-air fitness center includes a slide-in entrance with treadmills on transparent floors—the epitome of smooth design—and the library, located on the ground floor, features a collection of books about architecture, design, art and fashion and gastronomy.

There are 85 rooms and 10 suites

(5 suites on each curving side) for a total of 95 rooms. The suites on both ends of the hotel have curved walls and all the rooms have curved windows. Ohtake says:

"I always seek innovation and surprise. So, these concepts were adopted for the rooms in the corner, where the wood floor rises in curve following the outer shape." He adds that unlike some hotels, Unique corridors are not straight and monotonous, without natural light. They are curved, with curved windows allowing natural light and great views of the city.



The new chalets at Unique Garden were recently renovated.

The Presidential Palace was recently redone. The 3,550-foot room is divided into a living room, dining room, kitchen, bathroom, bedroom and a private sundeck with Jacuzzi—and overlooks Ibirapuera Park (the Central Park of Sao Paulo). The hotel's sister property, Unique Garden, is located 45 minutes outside Sao Paulo. Here Ohtake refurbished the contemporary chalets, drawing inspiration from nature: the colors from the orange persimmon trees, the pink and purple flowers found throughout the property and the blue and green from the exotic birds that call the area home. The chalets were recently redesigned with wood and stone exteriors and all of them have an outdoor hot tub with great views of the countryside.