

sleep

HOTEL DESIGN, DEVELOPMENT & ARCHITECTURE

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ANDAZ
MARCEL WANDERS'
BOOKISH BOUTIQUE

QT - SYDNEY
A DEPARTMENT STORE
DOWN UNDER CONVERTED

DAS STUE
BERLIN'S DANISH
EMBASSY REINVENTED

BALI LOCATION REPORT • TOKYO STATION HOTEL • THE ORCHARD • VANDER - LJUBLJANA

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Guestbook



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GULLA JONSDOTTIR

Icelandic-born Jonsdottir worked for Dodd Mitchell Design and Richard Meier and Partners, prior to establishing her own practice G+ Design. The firm has since completed numerous hospitality projects including La Jolla Hotel, San Diego; the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel; and Cabo Azul Resort, Mexico.



© Erwin Olaf

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MARCEL WANDERS

Marcel Wanders has completed several hotel projects in recent years, building on his international reputation as a product designer. He is the co-owner, as well as the designer, of Andaz Amsterdam, the city's former public library now converted in a hotel packed with references to local culture and heritage.



© Ruy Teixeira

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PATRICIA URQUIOLA

Another figure to have successfully made the transition from product design to hotel interiors, Urquiola has followed up projects such as the Mandarin Oriental Barcelona and W Vieques Retreat & Spa in Puerto Rico with her latest hotel design for Das Stue – a conversion of Berlin's former Danish Embassy.



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NIC GRAHAM

Having worked on QT Gold Coast and QT Port Douglas, Nic Graham was appointed to design the public areas and spa of QT Sydney, the first five-star hotel to be built in the city in over a decade. Graham's interiors are littered with playful touches and quirky curios found on eBay, in vintage and second-hand stores.



The Orchard *Nottingham*

Words: Shanna McGoldrick Photography: Martine Hamilton Knight

A £20 million campus hotel project by The University of Nottingham provided RHWL Architects and Graven Images with the opportunity to collaborate on a truly sustainable design concept.

Sustainable development has long been one of the most pressing issues within the hotel industry, yet although the debate as to the best way to create environmentally friendly projects rumbles on, genuine eco hotels remain something of a rarity. Deterred by the high upfront development costs presented by such projects, many hoteliers prefer to save their sustainable credentials for the interior design of their property, rather than the building itself.

However, such compromise was not an option for The University of Nottingham when developing its debut hotel The Orchard, operated by De Vere Venues. From the outset, the £20million project, which began in July 2011 and was completed in November 2012, was designed to achieve a Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) rating of 'Excellent'.

Set into the campus hillside – there is a 10m drop



ABOVE LEFT: A dramatically curved timber canopy covers the glass atrium of the hotel **ABOVE RIGHT:** The public areas feature bespoke Ulster carpets displaying a leaf pattern designed by Graven Images, floor and table lighting by PS Interiors and furniture by Morgan **OPPOSITE PAGE:** The concrete exterior of the building features horizontal stratified layering in muted tones



from one side of the hotel to the other – The Orchard was built to serve the University’s adjacent East Midlands Conference Centre. Featuring two guest wings and a central double-height glass lobby, the property has been sculpted to the surrounding landscape, from which architect Corrie Jones of RHWL Architects drew his inspiration. “When we first came to the site, it was stunning,” says Jones. “We wanted to create a building which retained that feeling. That was the idea of the two guest wings and the staggered positioning of the build; to let the natural landscape flow.”

Perhaps the most striking structural feature of the hotel is the dramatically curved timber canopy covering the 155m² glass-roofed atrium, which encapsulates the naturalistic tone of the building’s design. Fitted with horizontal brise soleils to mitigate heat gain, the canopy features three large curved glulam beams connected by angled fins which mirror the sloping landscape. The sense of location

is also reflected in the exterior of the concrete building, which features horizontal stratified layering in muted tones and natural materials such as stone and wood, representative of the caves of Nottingham.

The hotel’s interior has been equally influenced by its natural setting. Design firm Graven Images has created a light, airy and quintessentially English lobby furnished with contemporary Morgan furniture and a large reception desk made of English Oak. The effect is offset by a soothing neutral palette of glass, plaster, wood and Derbyshire stone.

The lobby space opens up seamlessly into a library and networking area offering workstations with Apple Macs for guest use. Freestanding bookshelves and cabinets displaying ceramics by local artists add a loose structure to the space, while a light green bespoke Ulster carpet bearing a repeated contemporary leaf motif designed by Graven runs throughout. Floor-to-ceiling windows ►

HOTEL REVIEW



ABOVE LEFT: Guestrooms feature enlarged images of the orchard behind the hotel, Tektura wallpaper, headboards upholstered by Vescom UK and chairs by Morgan Furniture RIGHT: The bathrooms feature either showers with shower pebbles installed for water conservation, or Kaldewei baths

► – something of a recurring theme within the building – provide a constant sense of contact with the outdoors.

Ground floor dining area Bramleys brasserie is a similarly flexible space, thanks to timber partition walls that can be used to separate the bar from the atrium. “The important thing was connecting with the architecture and creating different sub spaces,” says Graven Images founding partner Ross Hunter. “There is a real hierarchy of space within the building and it was all about playing with that and exaggerating it.”

This simplistic and playful approach to the design is also evident in The Orchard’s 202 guestrooms, which feature a palette of oak, accented by felted wool, simple textures and a clean colour scheme. An enlarged photo of a tree canopy taken in the orchard behind the hotel acts as a feature wall, while coat stands resembling tree branches are a quirky reminder of the property’s woodland setting.

“The baseline for the project was built around a three-star model, but the ambition was to do something which felt much more like a four-star product,” says Hunter. “We had a clear vision of the style we wanted to achieve.”

In terms of making the hotel as sustainable

as possible, Jones and his team focused firstly on incorporating ‘passive’ environmental measures into the building’s design. This included positioning the building on the plot to maximise the natural daylight, installing structural insulated panels (SIPs) in the exterior walls for high thermal performance, allocating expansive window space and constructing 1,600m² of biodiverse green roof space spread across both wings and the main atrium.

Additional renewable energy features include ground source heat pumps bored 75-100m deep into the earth, photovoltaic panels installed on the roof and combined heat and power (CHP) technology used throughout the building to generate electricity that can be either used within the hotel or sent to the University’s high voltage ring main to serve the other buildings on campus. The photovoltaic panels provide around 4-5% of the building’s energy.

The Orchard is still undoubtedly a commercial adventure – rooms are equipped with air conditioning, for example, yet it automatically switches off if a window is opened. “It is as green as possible but for 21st century users,” says Jones. “We hope the building’s envelope does most of the work.” ■

EXPRESS CHECKOUT

The Orchard Hotel
University Park
The University of Nottingham
Nottingham NG7 2RJ
UK
Tel: +44 (0)844 980 8054
www.deverevenues.co.uk

➡ 202 guestrooms
🍷 Bramleys Brasserie
🍸 Lobby Bar
🏊 Gym
+ Four meeting rooms, mezzanine level for private hire

Developer / Owner: The University of Nottingham
Operator: De Vere Group
Architect: RHWL Architects
Designers: Graven Images