

Directions

Making of **Hôtel Les Roches Rouges** / Travel Diary **The Other Ibiza**
Feature **The New Utopias** / Trend Forecast **The Future Laboratory on Travel**
with Mementos from **Alicja Kwade** and **Azuma Makoto**



Letter from Claus Sendlinger

Something major is happening in the travel industry, as various societal shifts impact the way we think about hospitality. Today's travelers take great design and amenities as a given. They are searching instead for originality and meaning, for experiences that broaden their horizons and open their minds.

At the same time, new media technologies and apps are enabling travelers to experience destinations in more meaningful ways. The most exciting hotel brands today are not merely offering accommodation; they are community hubs, delivering cultural, spiritual, and intellectual programming to like-minded locals and tourists alike.

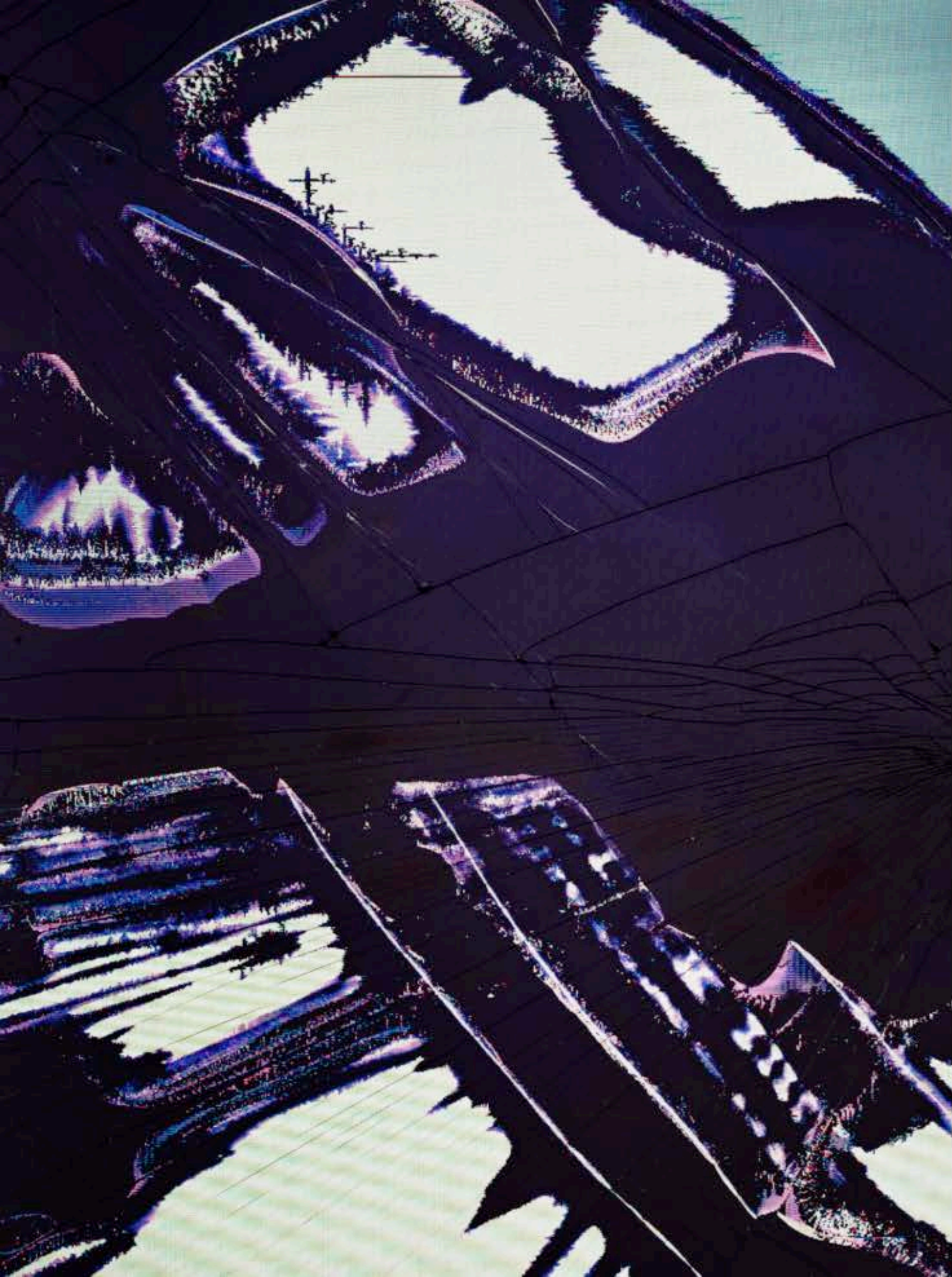
Perhaps some of my own travels over the past year could help illustrate the point. I recently visited Burning Man, the annual festival in Nevada's Black Rock Desert that has helped mainstream the idea of temporary communities built on spiritual and cultural ideals, and Summit at Sea, an annual gathering which took that concept one step further by focusing explicitly on innovation and entrepreneurship. I spent New Years at Habitas, whose temporary tent villages have pioneered the integration of the festival experience into the hospitality industry. And I was in New York to oversee the move of our office into NeueHouse, the workspace collective setting the bar for today's nomadic creative class hungry for community and cultural programming.

All of these organizations are, in some sense, disrupters, signifying various elements of a shift now taking place within the lifestyle sector that's comparable to what happened at the end of the 1980s, when a generation began looking for completely new hospitality experiences. We began Design Hotels™ in 1993 as a response to the first shift, and it's essential we evolve on pace with the second.

The Design Hotels™ portfolio, which today I'm so proud to say comprises 281 handpicked independent hotels in 59 countries throughout the world, represents so many of the properties currently pushing the travel industry into the future, from Les Bains, the hybrid Paris hotel and cultural space that has lived many lives, as bathhouse to Proust and nightclub for the 80s beau monde, to Gramercy Park Hotel, a New York institution and art-world legend, to Rome's G-Rough, where the guest feels more like they're visiting old friends, and Hotel Hotel in Canberra, a sustainable "vertical village" that includes a cinema and numerous cultural venues, local shops, and cafés.

But in order to stay on pace with evolving desires, we realized it's essential for us to research and understand our Community. With this aim, we started creating Design Hotels™ Projects and other temporary hospitality experiences, so that we could directly communicate and interact with our Community. We started in Tulum, with Papaya Playa Project, then went to Mykonos and Rio. But over the past year we took this evolution one step further with La Granja Ibiza. We reactivated one of the oldest farms on the island and called it "La Granja," the simplest Spanish word for a farm.

See, for years I've been telling friends that the farmhouse is the golf course of the 21st century, and I mean this in both a literal and figurative sense. On one hand, urban farming has exploded. Today, there are supermarkets where you can pick a head of lettuce out of the hydroponic unit where it's being grown. The farmhouse is a seedbed for growth, but it's not just about farming vegetables. We're farming ideas, human connections, communities. People are turning away from speed and mass production toward slowness, experience, and connection. ►



THE FUTURE *of* TRAVELING WELL

From geolocation technologies and artificial intelligence to the rising importance of culture, community, and conscientiousness, leading trend forecaster THE : FUTURE : LABORATORY offers a glimpse into the travel of tomorrow.

The world of travel is changing fast. Thanks to 4G, the internet is now something that we carry with us in our pockets wherever we go. Added to this, a more globalized society is normalizing the experience of regular travel to far-flung destinations. However, as we head towards the year 2020 and beyond, the way that we travel will undergo a further set of revolutions, as digital natives—people too young to remember a time before the Internet—use new tech tools to make traveling more convenient and fulfilling. As they instigate a new set of trends, they will dial back to the meaning of traveling well.

“There is a danger with technology that we overestimate its importance,” says Martin Raymond, The Future Laboratory’s co-founder. “Traveling well has always been about face-to-face encounters, serendipity, culture, and acquiring wisdom. In the future, we will become better at using technologies to reach these ends.”

In the future, reconnecting with the simple joy of travel will be more important than ever, as people long to feel wonderment instead of ambivalence, to feel culturally immersed rather than culturally insulated. Crucially, the successful future traveler will feel like the world is once again a place rich with serendipity and prospect. New technologies will be accompanied by a focus on the themes of creativity, community, and conscientiousness.

The future of travel will be revolutionized by new media technologies and apps that allow us to experience destinations in a more meaningful way. Serendipity, poignance, and culture will still be the qualities that lie at the heart of traveling well, however, our routes to them will shorten if we use technologies to the best advantage. Meanwhile, a more socially engaged traveler will look for more from trips when it comes to learning and forming opinions. ▶

Geo-audibles and virtual reality

It's no surprise that smartphones are the prevalent tools of communication today, however, innovative apps show a glimpse of how the real world will be overlaid with media technologies in the future. Detour is one such app which shows how audible content and geo-location technologies can combine to give travelers an intimate experience of a destination. After turning on the app, the user simply walks and listens. The immersive city guide is triggered by GPS and provides witty accounts of the areas that the user walks in, and features audio accounts from locals. The app, which has just gone global, is an early example of how geolocation media will one day revolutionize how we experience the world around us, bringing us to new areas and re-introducing serendipity and chance into travel.

We are at the base of colossal growth in new media technologies according to industry statistics. Worldwide, revenues for augmented and virtual reality are expected to reach \$162 billion in 2020 according to International Data Corp. Virtual reality is already showing how it will become pivotal to how we gather inspiration and plan trips in the future.

Evidence for how this will become the new normal can be seen from innovative projects such as Google Expeditions. The initiative by the tech giant has launched in schools across the globe and enables teachers to take children on virtual tours, to inaccessible destinations like Machu Picchu or Antarctica, to even further flung places like the International Space Station. Using a simple cardboard viewer and app, smartphones are turned into ad hoc virtual reality headsets. As technologies like this become more commonplace, we will become more used to try-before-you-fly travel that shows us immersive scenes of destinations before we commit to getting on a plane. The current generation of tweens and teens will come to expect this kind of tech-enabled stimulus as they grow into their 20s and 30s.

"This generation doesn't recognize technology as technology," Sugata Mitra, Professor of Educational Technology at the School of Education, Communication and Language Sciences at Newcastle University, England, tells The Future Laboratory. ▶

I asked an eight year old how he does multiplications and he replied: 'with my phone.'

Sugata Mitra, Professor of Educational Technology at the School of Education, Communication and Language Sciences at Newcastle University, England

opposite page The view through Google Cardboard viewer.

bottom Using a simple cardboard viewer and app, smartphones are turned into ad hoc virtual reality headsets.





top Loof by The Lo & Behold Group is home to Singapore's creative scene.

bottom middle The reading room and tea salon at Looksee Looksee.

bottom left A receptionist at Hotel Magdas, Vienna.

bottom right Hotel Magdas, Vienna.

The AI concierge

While virtual reality has the ability to immerse people in the experiences of others, meaningful travel will always come from getting out there and having your own. In the next decade, we will see a new raft of artificial intelligence concierges draw on data from our online behavior to introduce us to the travel experiences that we crave the most and direct us to them quickly.

Journey is a holiday concierge app that provides people with a local's view of a specific area. Before their trip, users of Journey complete a quick travel questionnaire, which provides a framework for the concierge service to plan around. Holidaymakers then subsequently receive a personalized itinerary for their trip, which ranges from food recommendations to activity bookings.

One of the key battle lines being drawn is how AI can start to speak to humans in their own language. Rather than trawling websites, checking prices, and looking at reviews online, services like Mezi enable people to converse with a semi-virtual assistant using a messaging app. Previously a shopping concierge, the company recently branched out from fashion e-commerce into travel. Mezi now allows people to book flights and restaurants simply by having a one-on-one conversation over its messaging app. Crucially, the app can field complicated requests like, "I need a vegan restaurant near the conference center," which makes it a very human and seamless journey for the traveler.

Currently, Mezi works by combining what it refers to as shopping and travel "experts" with an AI called Smart Assist. Over time, the AI will learn from how the experts interact with users and be able to field more and more requests on its own, making it a virtual assistant in the truest sense.

As luxury travelers develop a taste for trips that are more intrepid, AI will combine with big data analytics to serve as a real-time safety guide. GeoSure Global is a new info tech startup that pulls information from a huge variety of data streams such as Interpol, UN, WHO, plus city crime stats, human rights organizations, and crowd-sourced reports. Using this, it scores cities on six categories: overall safety, physical harm, theft, basic freedoms, disease & medical, and a dedicated, data-rich women's safety measure. The company plans to provide an even more granular snapshot of safety conditions in the

future, giving individual neighborhoods a safety rating. In the future, traveling well will also mean learning, adventure, and testing yourself in new environments. A new raft of luxury tours are springing up as travelers become more eager to understand world issues. New York Times Journeys is one such initiative, which enables guests to accompany award-winning journalists to learn about topics such as the Israel-Palestine conflict, or women and society in India. The tourists travel by private jet in small groups, and the journalists call on the expertise of previous interviewees and local experts to give real insight on issues facing communities. This form of high-end highbrow tourism will chime with consumers of the future as they become more active in social issues.

Conscientious travel

InGalera in Milan is a restaurant inside a prison. Other than the chef and head waiter, the restaurant is run entirely by inmates. The restaurant is a creative corporate social responsibility venture that blends commerce and social healing. It's a trend that many hoteliers are already tapping into, as environmental sustainability and positive local integration become qualities ever more important to the discerning lifestyle traveler. In the face of too many air miles, climate change, and inequality rife in many countries, the modern traveler is yearning for a new kind of experience, which marries conscientiousness with hospitality. Crucially, these experiences must have a concrete, measurable impact on the world.

Magdas Hotel in Vienna, designed by architects AllesWirdGut, is a high-end hotel which, aside from catering to 78 paid guestrooms, also has two residential suites reserved for up to 25 non-paying refugees. The rehabilitation of the former asylum-seekers begins in the hotel staff, as a majority of the present staff are former refugees. "Magdas would not work if it was a run-of-the-mill hotel," says Gabriela Sonnleitner, head of Magdas. ▶

**We're all
about real talk
— not robots.**

Leiti Hsu, Co-Founder of Journey



left GeoSure Safety Ratings cover six critical safety categories: overall security, physical harm, theft, basic freedoms, disease, and specific threats to women's safety.

All about culture

Contemporary travelers are also broadening their expectations of what a hotel should offer, and the traveler of the future wants a stay that is about lifestyle as much as lodging. Flower shops, art galleries, bike shops, and record stores are becoming standard fare for locales that want to imbibe a local culture.

Going forward, we will see more hospitality experiences that up the cultural ante to appeal to the modern, discerning traveler. Early examples of this include Canberra's Hotel Hotel, a holistic concept from the Australia-based Molonglo Group, founded on the fertile principles of sustainability, community, diversity, and lifestyle. The hotel is located on three levels of the Nishi residential building, a sustainable "vertical village" that contains within it facilities delivering the best of global cinema, independent book and pop-up stores, music, and local cafés and bars.

Another reference point is Looksee Looksee in the lively Kampong Glam neighborhood of Singapore. Set in an 1820s shophouse in a district steeped in arts and culture, the communal space by leading hospitality business The Lo & Behold Group aims to bring the city's burgeoning creative scene a step closer to the public. Its evolving library is curated by thought-leaders across various lifestyle sectors as a show-and-tell of titles that have inspired their work and life.

The age of the creative community

Since The Future Laboratory coined the term "bleisure" (business + leisure) in 2009, the lines between our work and free time have blurred even further. The digital world has exacerbated this—by 2017, global average media consumption is set to reach 506 minutes daily, according to ZenithOptimedia. This means we will spend more than half of our waking life occupied by some kind of media.

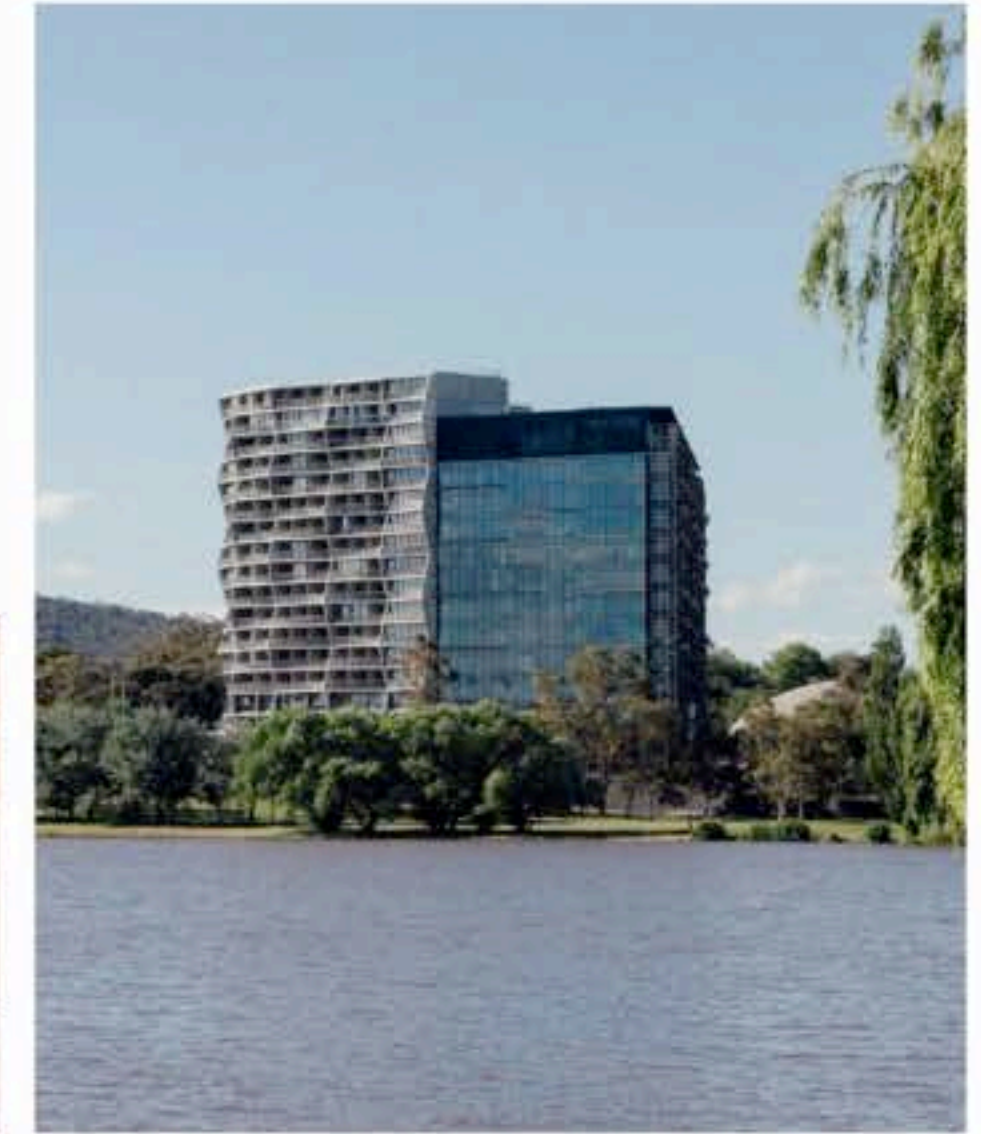
In this era, the modern bleisureite will look for experiences and places that allow them to break away from the incessant updates from their smartphones, and stimulate creativity through community. Crucially, traveling well will mean serendipitously meeting with potential business collaborators in settings that nourish and inspire creativity. Hospitality projects like Ace Hotels, Soho House, and the growing portfolio of Design Hotels™ Projects, are already harnessing this growing desire to foster creative communities that blend work and play with a collective cultural identity.

Even as our world becomes more networked and we become inured to the novelty of departing from the places we call home, the three cornerstones of community, culture, and conscientiousness will form the basis of all meaningful travel experiences. ■

top left Swarm Trap, a project by MANY MANY and Honey Fingers in collaboration with Nishi Gallery and Hotel Hotel.

top right Hotel Hotel in Canberra by Australia-based Molonglo Group.

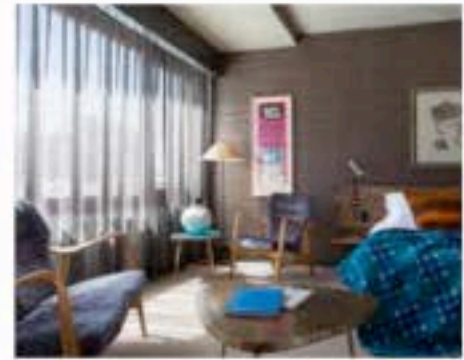
bottom For the Swarm Trap exhibition, shown at Nishi Gallery, curator Nicholas Dowse asked designers from various fields to create temporary bee shelters, which will then be placed in the bush between Melbourne and Canberra.



Hotel Hotel

Canberra, Australia

An integral cornerstone in Canberra's NewActon precinct, Hotel Hotel harnesses the community, art, culture, and unique charm of the Australian capital through thoughtful, sustainable architecture and design. On three floors of the Japanese-inspired Nishi building, artists and designers created a brand new hotel typology where guests are seamlessly integrated into a new urban hub. The 68 hotel rooms range from cozy hideouts to sprawling suites, furnished sparingly but thoughtfully with new, recycled, and vintage pieces. No two rooms are alike, providing an individualized hotel experience for each and every guest.



68 Rooms / AUD 285 – 915

34 Rooms / AUD 275 – 1,000



Adelphi Hotel

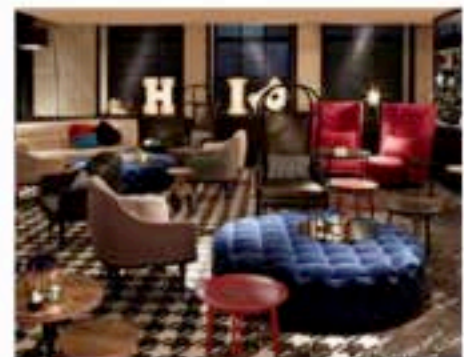
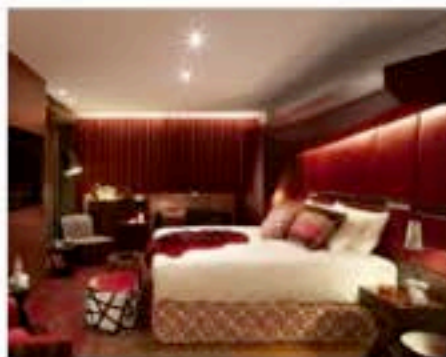
Melbourne, Australia

Set in the heartland of Melbourne's top food, gallery, fashion, coffee, and street culture, Adelphi Hotel is a boutique property that's captured the affections of international and local travelers alike. Reinvented three years ago with a dessert-inspired design, Adelphi's aesthetic is playful yet elegant. With 34 beautiful rooms, an open-air rooftop pool and deck, the famous Om Nom Kitchen & Dessert Bar, a 12-seater Boardroom, and all that Melbourne has to offer at your door, Adelphi awaits you.

QT Sydney

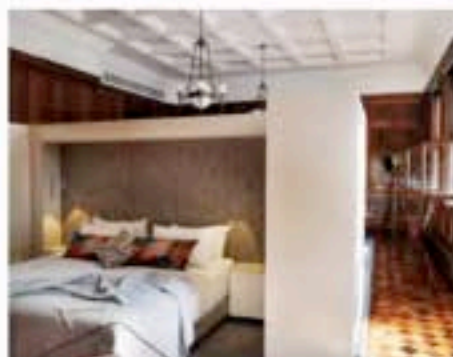
Sydney, Australia

Set within two of the city's most iconic buildings—the heritage-listed Gowings department store and the State Theatre—QT Sydney revives the rich and colorful history of theater and retail. In the heart of Sydney's central business district, this 200-room hotel is surrounded by culture, art, fashion, cuisine, and design. Stone cladding, gargoyles, and façade detail have been carefully restored, while interior elements reference the building's past. The lobby, linked to the bustling Market Street, invites guests in with a lively buzz, while the luxurious day spa, as well as the restaurant, lounge, and bar, attract stylish locals.



200 Rooms / AUD 380 – 2,200

62 Rooms / AUD 300 – 1,500



The Old Clare Hotel

Sydney, Australia

In Sydney's up-and-coming neighborhood of Chippendale, the iconic Old Clare Hotel opened in September 2015. The rooms and suites, divided into heritage and contemporary loft styles, play up the soaring ceilings, timber paneling, and a mix of vintage furniture and bespoke designer joinery. The food is a big highlight at The Old Clare, where choices include contemporary Australian cuisine with an ever-changing menu at Automata, helmed by Executive Chef Clayton Wells, and Michelin-starred Chef Jason Atherton's first restaurant in Australia, Kensington Street Social, which is the perfect everyday eatery with its relaxed Mediterranean menu.