

A HOTEL LIFE

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CANBERRA: HOTEL HOTEL

by: KATE ATKINSON

WHY: An adventure to Australia's controversial capital city to investigate the NewAction cultural precinct to new fangled melting pot of creative talent and check out some galleries.

WHEN: February 2014

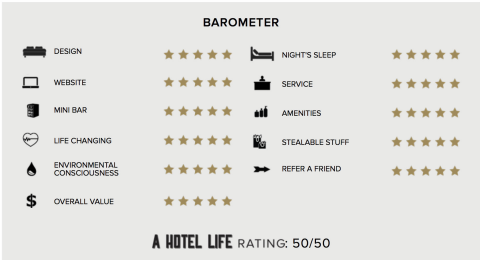
WHO: Just little old me.

The incredible Hotel facade -- geometric to boot.

Hotel from

IMPORTANT BITS

TYPE:	Two words. Design. Hotel. It doesn't get more design nerd than this.	VIBE:	Relaxed design hotel meets melting pot of artisans and creative luminaries.
ROOMS:	99 rooms including 33 apartments, with collaborations by 66 (and counting) artists, designers and makers.	MUSIC:	Of the now, but not annoyingly so. One of the hero tracks from the Trainpotting album was playing while I sipped my glass of local Shiraz (it may or may not have been Underworld, but I was enjoying it so much I forgot to ask). Perfection.
POOL/GYM:	No pool and no gym, but plenty of Lake Burley Griffin to run around + free super duper miles to borrow.	CHILDREN:	I've said it once, I'll say it again. Most of the time when it comes to design hotel protocol, leave them at home.
RESTAURANT:	In and around this hotel, there are lots of different dining spots. The bar and lounge on the hotel's ground floor serves an impressive list of local wines from around Canberra (try the Riesling), paired with a laid lounge room with adapted Danish furniture and a fireplace to boot. Chef Sean McConnell serves up a carefully selected array of dishes in both the hotel restaurant (yet to open) and bar.	LOCATION:	In the heart of Canberra's NewAction cultural precinct, which is a mecca for art and culture enthusiasts. This place boasts a Palace movie cinema, a kiosk shop and regularly plays host to local art exhibitions and collective gatherings. Just a short walk over the bridge is Lake Burley Griffin, which is the focal point for all things Canberra culture. The National Museum, Library, Parliament House, The Gallery of Australian Design, and The National Gallery are all within a short cycle away.
BAR:	Yes -- with a wine and cocktail list to die for. Pair some wine with the oysters topped with lychee. It's a winning combination.	DESIGNED BY:	If only this were a straightforward question. Hotel Hotel is a jigsaw puzzle of perfectly connected creatives. It occupies 3 floors of the newly constructed Nishi residential building. Designed by Australian architectural firm (the masterminds behind Australia's acclaimed Museum of New and Old in Tasmania), in close collaboration with Japan's Sapporo Design Office. The foyer and grand stair lobby are designed by March Studio in collaboration with Oculus, NewAction's landscape. Within that space, new fangled pieces from Broadland Commissions reflect Canberra's design history while complementing the hotel architecture.
YEAR OPENED:	2013		
WIFI:	Yes, free!	BEST WAY TO BOOK:	designhotels.com
		PRICE:	From \$285 -- an absolute bargain for what you can get room-wise.



HIGHS + LOWS

- The eye for detail -- from the Anesop products in the rooms to the ecologically considered linen bags and hotel stamp stationary at reception, there is NOTHING that this hotel hasn't thought of. This place gives the word "considerd" a whole new destination to dance.
- Art and the creative vibe -- from the Lucy McKee mirror in the lobby to the tiles turned into a mosaic in the lobby (an age old collection belonging to Naka Hasekawa of Grandfather's grandfather) to the gasolin books in the lobby library, this place is a mecca for art and culture enthusiasts.
- The design with local artisan touches -- it's rare to find a hotel that manages to marry design genius with a low key and comfortable vibe. It's a mish mash of design genius that is somewhere entirely inorganic and ends in a day-to-day setting. Best of all, it's ecologically sound and sustainable. So much so that the Australian Department of Climate Change is based within the Nishi building, of which Hotel Hotel is a part.
- Everything everywhere here is made by artisans and handmade. Bath salt containers, hotel glasses (one Anna Ender-Mojo created the glassware from recycled bottles locally and exclusively for the hotel).
- The bikes -- my ride around town was smooth as silk. I wanted to fly this baby home and ride it round the streets of Redfern.
- Nothing to fault. Nada. Nothing.

MUST DOS

GOLD AND THE INCAS AT NATIONAL GALLERY
There's no shade about it. One of Australia's best and most prestigious galleries is in the capital.

MOCAN AND GREEN GROUT
A menu to die for, locally sourced and produced food. I have it's underwear, but their bones and egg are true allies.

GET A BIKE
Borrow a bike from the hotel and ride it around the city and Lake Burley Griffin, it's mandatory.

ZERO GEORGE STREET CHARLINGTON

ETRE CECILE FRESH AIR JAMES
It got chilly in the evening.

APC X'NKE AIR MAX 1 TOWERS
To run around town and check out the galleries and bar area within the precinct of a weekend long-term.

NIKE FUEL BAND
Cashmere is hot, so get sweating!

THE STANDARDS MEUR

A HOTEL LIFE

Voted "Best New Travel Blogger / Journalist" at the 2013 LE MIAMI AWARDS

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