

SLEEPER

GLOBAL HOTEL DESIGN

MARCH | APRIL 2016



The Laslett

Vintage finds meet modern British style at Notting Hill's new neighbourhood hangout

Adrian Zecha

The celebrated Asian hotelier looks back on the many chapters of a distinguished career

The South Beach

Philippe Starck and Foster + Partners collaborate to design a new landmark for Singapore

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Cover Story

047 **The Laslett** London
Occupying five Victorian mansions in London's Notting Hill, the latest offering from Living Rooms – designed by Waldo Works – pays homage to the area's illustrious past with British creations and curios aplenty.





Atlantis by Giardino

ZURICH

The Gallery HBA completes the design of Giardino Group's new urban retreat, marking the rebirth of a grand dame of Swiss hospitality.

Words: Catherine Martin | Photography: Courtesy of Design Hotels (unless otherwise stated)

First opened in 1970, the former Atlantis was one of Zurich's most prestigious hotels. In its heyday, it attracted politicians, sports stars, actors and recording artists, making for a distinguished guest book and storied past. American actress Shirley MacLaine is said to have flirted with staff during her stay; Freddie Mercury gave a private performance at the bar; and The Who reportedly threw lobby furniture into the pool in an early morning rampage. Elton John, Rod Stewart, Eric Clapton and Steve McQueen also frequented the hotel, enticed by its glamorous reputation and relative privacy away from the prying eyes of the city centre.

Following a period of neglect, Atlantis has experienced a renaissance thanks to Daniela and Philippe Frutiger of Giardino Group. It is the fourth property from the Zurich-based hoteliers, who also operate a breakout retreat in Champfêr near St. Moritz, a soul retreat in Ascona, and a personal retreat on the shores of Lago Maggiore. Furthermore, it is their third Design Hotels member.

The new addition, Atlantis by Giardino, is branded as an urban retreat owing to its resort-like setting and proximity to the city. Located at the foot of the Üetliberg (Üetli mountain), it enjoys dense forest to one side and elevated views of Zurich to the other.



Above & Opposite: In the public spaces, classic furniture from the 1960s and 1970s sits alongside modern pieces from Brabbu, Minotti and Armani Casa, while Molteni custom-produced casegoods for the guestroom. Handmade rugs in the lobby are supplied by ICE

The building itself – a jewel of Zurich’s post-war modernism – was originally designed in the late-sixties by Swiss architects Annemarie and Hans Hubacher and Peter Issler. It features three wings that together resemble a Y-shape, the silhouette of which has been subtly incorporated into the interior design scheme.

The hotel’s architectural renovations, including the reconfiguration of the guestroom floors and addition of a new façade, were carried out by Monoplan, while The Gallery HBA was commissioned to overhaul the interiors.

“We were asked by our client to once again make Atlantis the place to see and be seen,” explains Inge Moore, Principal and Creative Director at The Gallery HBA. “They wanted us to create an elegant destination with subtle inferences to its 1970’s personality but with a new, original design.”

Respecting the history of the building, the London-based studio executed a full renovation of the hotel, almost entirely gutting it to make way for 95 guestrooms, two restaurants, a bar, event spaces and 1,500m² spa.

“Taking their cue from the location, the interiors are about juxtaposition: city and countryside, urban sophistication and rural calm, angular forms and flowing shapes, the old and the new,” states

Moore. “We have recreated a destination with all the essence of the original hotel, reimagining traditional details like timber panelling and upholstered walls in new and contemporary ways.

“Wood and marble fixtures have been replaced with the same materials in an updated style to preserve the hotel’s character,” she adds. “And some elements have been retained and restored, including the original terrazzo circulation staircase, which is a listed item.”

In fact, a number of reminders of the hotel’s glory days have been integrated into the new aesthetic. Acrylic framed photographs of former guests line the corridors, and two leather armchairs from the original hotel have been reupholstered and returned to their rightful place in the lobby. Here, they sit alongside a curated collection of classic furniture from the 1960s and 1970s, interspersed with modern pieces from Brabbu, Budri, Donghia, Minotti and Armani Casa. A glass-encased fireplace completes the look while floor-to-ceiling windows maximise views of the surrounding landscape.

The hotel’s location between city and countryside is ever-present, not only in the panoramic views, but in design features too. Explains Moore: “In the lobby for example, the ‘natural’ reception desk custom-designed with an irregularly textured timber façade contrasts with the elegance of the crystal screen hugging the wall behind it.”





Above: With cream leather banquettes, gold detailing and striking glass pendant chandeliers, Ecco exudes the glamour associated with the hotel in times gone-by

Nature is also woven into the design of the Dipiù Spa, named after Daniela Frutiger's preservatives-free cosmetics line. "With undulating curved plaster corridors, exquisite marble floors and stacked natural stones, the whole spa zone is layered with sensuous forms and surfaces that look like they have developed naturally over thousands of years," she continues. "The pool area is a calm and relaxing escape that appears as if it has been carved out of the mountain, blending in with the craggy landscape that surrounds the hotel."

Elsewhere, a dramatic chandelier glides across the ballroom like a flock of wintering birds, and the colour scheme of the fabrics and wallcoverings also reflect the natural world.

There are elements that tie in with the other properties in the portfolio too. The arrival experience – in which guests are presented with a refreshing towel and thirst-quenching glass of homemade lemonade – follows the Giardino philosophy. As does the fine-dining restaurant, Ecco. Headed up by internationally acclaimed chef Rolf Fliegau, the concept is the same as that in St. Moritz and Ascona, where Fliegau gained his Michelin stars.

With cream leather banquettes, gold detailing and striking glass pendant chandeliers, Ecco exudes the glamour associated with the hotel in times gone-by. Meanwhile, the all-day dining restaurant,

Hide & Seek, is a more casual affair featuring a curated library that encourages guests to browse over dinner. White-on-white faux bookcases cleverly divide the space into smaller volumes making for a more intimate dining experience during quieter times. Underfoot, the white marble floor is decorated with black inlays in the shape of a Y – the architectural footprint of the building – while the colour palette is defined by the greens of the surrounding landscape. In another nod to the locale, the adjacent bar is notable for its feature wall that resembles a vault, a reference to Zurich's importance as a financial hub.

On the upper levels, the 95 guestrooms – each with private balcony – are positioned along the three curved façades. "The guestrooms afford exactly the same captivating view of the city and countryside as they did back in 1970," explains Moore, adding that the era provided much of the inspiration for the scheme. Dark parquet flooring, padded walls and embossed leather pay homage to the past, while burnt orange, mustard and turquoise accents nod to the colour palettes popular in the Seventies. The casegoods, and a number of pieces throughout the public spaces, are designed by The Gallery HBA and produced by Italian manufacturer Molteni.

Partnerships with Swiss companies have also played an important



Left: In the all-day dining restaurant, white-on-white faux bookcases cleverly divide the space into smaller volumes making for a more intimate dining experience during quieter times

role. Giardino teamed up with Zurich Tourism to provide content for its in-room tablets, while a collaboration with Hublot has resulted in the Swiss watchmaker's first hotel suite. Designed by Studioforma, the 68m² suite is a bold interpretation of the luxury brand, featuring Pop Art-style artwork of a wristwatch, and a central chandelier resembling its inner mechanics.

With both leisure and business facilities, Atlantis by Giardino is positioning itself as a year-round retreat. Completing the offer are two meeting rooms and a ballroom, as well as a 25m outdoor pool with wooden terraces furnished by Dedon. The foundations have also been laid for an outdoor wedding pavilion surrounded by landscaped gardens that will be in full bloom come summer.

And there's more to come from the group. Giardino Grindelwald, described as alpine modernist, is planned to open in 2017 with two restaurants, a bar, a panoramic terrace, and the largest Dipiù Spa in Switzerland.

EXPRESS CHECKOUT: 95 guestrooms | 2 restaurants | 1 bar | 3 event spaces | Spa, outdoor swimming pool | www.atlantisbygiardino.ch

Owner: Neue Hotel Atlantis AG | **Operator:** Giardino Group | **Architecture:** Annemarie and Hans Hubacher and Peter Issler (original); Monoplan (refurbishment)

Interior Design: The Gallery HBA; Studioforma (Hublot Suite) | **Main Contractor:** Priora AG | **Interior Fit-Out:** Molteni