



international trends

## CREATING WANDERS

The cultural hub of Amsterdam has a new hotel on its doorstep. And Amsterdam Prinsengracht reflects its energetic and distinctive surroundings. This hotel claims to be devoted to providing highly personalized, uncomplicated service in an atmosphere that authentically embraces the best of Amsterdam. Based on the premise that the hotel should beat with the same heart as the city, the unique flavors of Amsterdam are embedded in the property's adventurous design concept brought to life through the vision of local and legendary interior and product designer Marcel Wanders. Throughout the hotel, Wanders played with various sources of inspiration, integrating the heritage of the hotel surroundings (including the Golden Age, Dutch Delft blue, tulips and the crane motif), the knowledge of the books now housed at the former Public Library and connecting priorities. The latter refers to the city of Amsterdam as a cultural "treating pot" representing ten individual, non-related elements that are stitched together to form a new logical whole. Part of the hotel's overall design concept incorporates a unique vision art collection that represents a diversion from "regular" art.

[www.amsterdam.prinsengracht.ands.com](http://www.amsterdam.prinsengracht.ands.com)



## ARTISTICALLY RUSKI

The Garage Center for Contemporary Culture recently unveiled its new temporary pavilion designed by Shigeru Ban in Moscow's Gorky Park. The structure, located near the park's Pioneers' Field, used locally produced paper tubes to create an oval wall that will be 7.5 meters high. The total area of the pavilion is 2,400 square meters and includes an 800 square meter rectangular exhibition space, a kitchen and a cafe, all within an oval exterior constructed from cardboard tubes. The pavilion will host exhibitions and educational activities until late 2012, after which time it will be dedicated to experimental projects. The first of these exhibitions, Temporary Structures in Gorky Park, from Mikhailo Trifunov, inaugurated the space. Showing rare archival drawings—many of which have never been seen before—the exhibition will begin by revealing the profound history of structures created in the park since the site was first developed in 1922, before moving through the Russian avant-garde period to finish with some of the most arresting contemporary reinvented designs created by Russian architects today.

## COMFORTABLY SPENDING

London-based Walsh Willis redefines the landscape of luxury retail by creating a new world of Personal Shopping at London's Selfridges, one of privacy and intimacy yet cleverly layered with rich character. Walsh Willis, an architectural and interior design studio, are widely known for their modern British design combined with a modern sense of wit. The studio explored the idea of the Selfridges Whitman, glamorous, headstrong, and individual. Walsh Willis were drawn to the loose spirit of the Twentieth century to express the essence of the store. From Tamara de Lempicka, the 1920s, to Grace Jones – women who epitomize the spirit of the brand. Like an apartment, the area has a series of private rooms – 7 dressing rooms and two VIP suites – that feed off the central salon, inspired by the all white drawing room avant-garde 1920's design legend Syrie Maugham's Chelsea House. Maugham, a pioneer of the future, rejected the shackles of the time and stood for freedom, filling spaces with light, mirrors and laughter, they were places to have fun. Referencing her layered approach to creating an all-white environment, Walsh Willis introduces the connection to the dressing rooms by bleeding colour to the edges of the space.

[www.selfridges.com](http://www.selfridges.com) (photo credit: Kay Terenzi)





## AUSSIE GLAMOUR

The curtain part... the stage is set, QT Sydney opens. Dramatic LED art walls are framed by restored art glass and bronze details, next to show-stopping sconights and bronze gill display cases. You've just stepped into the QT Sydney Design Hotel, a new member in Australia. Opening Friday, the hotel is set within two of the city's most iconic buildings – the historic Gowings department store and heritage-listed State Theatre. While the facades have been restored to their former glory, inside is a stunning mix of original features, curated digital art installations, eclectic artefacts and quirky design pieces inspired by the retail and theatre history of the buildings. The service concept is equally fresh. A first in the city, the hotel's Concierge Phone and iPad app helps guests create their bespoke travel experiences of Sydney. Acclaimed designer Nic Graham's bold design of the hotel is set off by an imposing LED wall of digital art by Daniel Cronin. The space serves not just as a lounge, but as a playground after dark. In conjunction with the city's well-known designers, architects and art connoisseurs, the public spaces bring the magic of the old and new alive. An audiovisual piece playing between levels creates a sensory adventure adjusting to the mood of the lift and its occupants. All the art work was exclusively selected by curator Amanda Love.

[www.designhotels.com/au\\_sydney](http://www.designhotels.com/au_sydney)

## CLAOBANCA

Mayfair has bid benevolence to Banca, the latest fine dining venue. Bini Arjun and Peter Wainry (co-founders of Zuma and Pika) and entrepreneur Gianni Lotti. Banca takes the affluence and luxury of classic interiors with Northern Cucina Italiana, bringing timeless style. The restaurant features separate hot and cold bars with a traditional bread oven on display. The long bar opposite serves fine wines and classic cocktails such as Negroni, Aperol spritzes, Amaretto and a range of special Italian spirits. The bar area also offers diners the opportunity to eat 'Milan style' – meaning the enticing Aperitivo alla Milanese – standing at the bar and nibbling on delicious small plates. Located in a former NatWest bank, the elegant venue features a palette of dark tones in a range of elegant textures, accented with hints of gold and bronze, set against a striking black and white marble floor illuminated by statement pendant lighting that casts a flattering glow. Designers TP Bennett have capitalised on the building's heritage by retaining functioning safety deposit boxes situated next to the bar area and the original vault door in the all-important private dining room, which sits adjacent to the large open plan kitchen so that diners can enjoy the theatre without feeling the heat.

[www.bancaparis.com](http://www.bancaparis.com)



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