

## New hotels for design lovers

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By Claus Sendlinger

Published: March 11 2011 22:01 | Last updated: March 11 2011 22:01

**Claus Sendlinger** is founder and chief executive of Design Hotels, a global network of 200 design-led properties. Here he selects his favourites from the latest crop of stylish hotels.

### The Waterhouse at South Bund, Shanghai, China

Hotelier Loh Lik Peng has a knack for finding unusual buildings in off-the-radar neighbourhoods, and whether in London (The Town Hall Hotel), Singapore (New Majestic Hotel and Wanderlust) or in Shanghai, his properties have been catalysts for putting their respective neighbourhoods on the style map. The Waterhouse is housed in a once derelict industrial building that still retains its raw concrete facade. Architects Neri & Hu created 19 rooms, a restaurant, an enormous event space and a rooftop bar. The design concept blurs the distinction between interior and exterior as well as public and private spaces. It is a very avant-garde interpretation of what a luxury hotel can be.

Doubles from Rmb3,450 (£325), including breakfast; [www.waterhouseshanghai.com](http://www.waterhouseshanghai.com)

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### Nobis Hotel, Stockholm, Sweden

This hotel, which opened in December, has a prime location on Norrmalmstorg, Stockholm's central square. The idea was to create a synthesis of contemporary design and historic architecture by transforming two 19th-century buildings into a kind of urban "living room". Owner Alessandro Catenacci has long been known for running some of the city's top restaurants and clubs as well as providing catering to Sweden's royal court. All the hotel's venues, such as the impressive atrium lounge with its soaring cathedral ceiling and the elegant Gold Bar, have a different flair. From the lounges to the guestrooms, design firm Claesson Koivisto Rune has created environments that exude a Swedish sense of understatement, where luxury is more about feel and less about show.

Doubles from SKr1,890 (£184); [www.nobishotel.se](http://www.nobishotel.se)

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### Hotel Sezz, Saint-Tropez, France

This chic resort has a great location close to the town of Saint-Tropez yet is in its own park-like setting just a few minutes' walk to the beach. Hotelier Shahé Kalaidjian has teamed up with designer Christophe Pillet for a second time to create a holiday version of their Paris hotel. There are only 37 guestrooms, which have private outdoor spaces and are grouped around a large central pool area. The aesthetic is clean and refined, which allows the natural beauty of the Côte d'Azur to shine. Guests are spoilt with a restaurant by Pierre Gagnaire.

Doubles from €400; [www.hotelsezz-sainttropez.com](http://www.hotelsezz-sainttropez.com)

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Hotel Sezz in Saint-Tropez

### Gombithotel, Bergamo, Italy

This once austere medieval building in the heart of Bergamo's old town comes complete with a tower, and has been brought to life with modern furnishings and a curated selection of contemporary art by local artists. As a native of Bergamo and a champion of the arts, owner Nadia Galeotti and her team are the perfect hosts and always have a tip for something to discover. With only 13 rooms, the staff have time to give personal attention to each guest.

Doubles from €200 including breakfast; [www.gombithotel.it](http://www.gombithotel.it)

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### Be Tulum, Tulum, Mexico

I love the tranquil atmosphere of this small hotel on a white beach on Mexico's Caribbean coast. Establishing a community of locals and guests is very important to Sebastian and Hernan Sas, the Argentine brothers who designed and own the hotel, and it has become a meeting point for the

region's creative scene. The buildings feature natural materials that are in harmony with the pristine setting and the 20 spacious rooms are idyllic retreats with private outdoor spaces as well as a pool or jacuzzi. Word is out on the Mayan Riviera that this is the place to go for great food, great company and an unbeatable oceanfront location.

*Doubles from \$390 including breakfast;*  
[www.betulum.com](http://www.betulum.com)

*The 2011 edition of 'The Design Hotels Book' (€44) is available to buy at*  
[www.designhotels.com](http://www.designhotels.com)

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Be Tulum in Mexico

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