

## Abstract

The phrase '21st-century hotel design' inevitably has a touch of the futuristic about it, almost as though hotel design strides ahead and those of us who actually stay in hotels must somehow try to keep up with the trends. In fact the exact opposite is true. Hotels have never been so earnestly responsive to the zeitgeist. How else can we explain the latest trends in hotel design which at one extreme increasingly blur the border between lodging, lifestyle and living theatre, and at the other seek to reinvent the more discreet manners, and style of the grand hotels of the late 19th century?

As with any period, certain fashions dominate. The growth of the spa complex sometimes challenges the very definition of the word 'hotel'. Similarly there is emerging another subtler strand of hotels which might be described as 'themed'. Meanwhile, as in the last century, a certain type of 'luxury' hotel is still primarily determined by how much it costs to stay there. The alternative arbiter to that of cost is, of course, lifestyle. Sophisticated lifestyle hotel design now addresses us holistically, engaging our senses of sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch as it precisely calculates lighting, acoustics, aromas, refreshments and interior surfaces in order to create a pervasively harmonious environment. Once this approach would have been the exclusive province of the small one-off hotel, but now even the big chains are emulating the distinctive character of individually designed establishments.

21st Century Hotel highlights the latest examples of these trends and more as the international hotel sector finds newer and more imaginative ways to invent and reinvent itself in order to match the mood of the moment. A brief introduction gives an outline of the latest developments in types of hotel design. This is followed by five themed chapters showcasing 37 of the most striking recent projects from around the world.

## Author Info

Graham Vickers is a freelance writer specializing in design, architecture and advertising. His previous books include *Key Moments In Architecture* (1998) and *Rewind: 40 Years of Design and Advertising* (2002; with Jeremy Myerson). He contributes to numerous magazines and publications including *Shots* and *Creative Review*.