



BOUTIQUE DESIGN,  
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IN THEIR WORDS

# Boutique Hotel Companies Tell What's Next

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Rather than hunt for our crystal ball, we've decided to ask the experts what we can expect from the boutique hotel industry in the coming years. We posed the following questions.

They fired back with the following answers.

1. What are you doing to push the envelope in boutique design?
2. What is the biggest 'miss' in hotel

design?

3. What movements will change the industry?
4. What trends are destined to die?
5. What's next?

## Kimpton Hotels & Restaurants David Sussman, sr. VP of hotel design & development

1. Kimpton has always been striving to be creative and fresh, and our track record reflects this. Our company's culture encourages innovative thinking, and looking at new and improved ways of designing and operating hotels. We're nimble and flexible and willing to take risks. This allows us to continue to do new and exciting things.

2. Style without comfort. While it's interesting to see out of the box designs, we feel one really misses the point if they don't keep in mind that our industry is all about making people feel welcome, relaxed and comfortable. Kimpton reinforces this and our biggest focus is to take care of our guests and to make sure that they are comfortable.

3. While there are so many things in our daily life that will affect us all, technology is one area that keeps changing at a really rapid pace. Once we become adjusted to a new technology, (cell phones, wireless, laptops, etc.) there is no going back. We

have to keep pace with ever changing lives and update our services to service our guests.

4. We try to be balanced in our design so that we do not create a look that is only relevant today. The minimalism of the 90's is already feeling very outdated. I believe guests are looking for more luxury and pampering.

5. Time will tell, but we will continue to reach out and look at new ways to create experiences for our guests that create a comfortable environment for them. We will continue to create designs that are timeless, and based on good classic design with a twist that makes them fresh, inviting and comfortable.

## Aspen Hotel Group Denise Corso, designer, corsostaicoff

1. Aspen Hotel Group is crafting experiences that engage the guest. "High Design" is not enough...it's expected. The local community, melded with concepts inspired by art, photography and film, play major roles in the current hotel collection. Collaborating with local artists and organizations to create individual pieces for the hotel is an avenue to expose

talent, educate and create a sense of community. Our properties are backdrops for original experiences and offer much more than a pleasing color palette and a good night's sleep. The hotel becomes a vehicle for unexpectedly presenting art. The art is the forethought never an afterthought or accessory. An example of this is the corridors at the Hotel Max. Each floor is a collection of a local photographer's black and white images presented on the doors—no two doors are alike. The art embraces the guest and informs the design.

2. Believing that good design is enough. Good design is a prerequisite in the current market. There are thousands of well-designed properties. Currently, it's about the unexpected. Hotels can be used as vehicles to awaken interest and

curiosity. They can become the pages of a great novel, an interactive gallery or a screenplay...they have the potential to be much more than a pleasant place to sleep or work.

3. IT and Environmental Conservation are a few of the obvious...they are affecting all industries. This could affect budget, room size, and level of service. Innovative companies are currently responding to these changes. The compact room stocked with high-tech amenities is no longer an anomaly.

4. Isn't a trend a trend because it's destined to die? If a trend survives, then it becomes the norm...such as Starwood's "Heavenly Bed"...or it dies.

5. The "personality" hotel. Hotels are expected to have interests just as individuals are expected to have interests. Giving a hotel a persona is a dynamic design approach in that the core idea and experience is intact. How it's presented has the potential to continually evolve.

