

KENSINGTON & CHELSEA

REVIEW

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Interview: WI International CEO Paul Wise & Founder of International Furniture Design Firm Hospitality Projects

WI International CEO Paul Wise & Founder of International Furniture Design Firm Hospitality Projects talks on the New Mandarin Oriental London.

The second Mandarin Oriental hotel in London stands on Mayfair's Hanover Square, in a building that's unmistakably modern. Designed by the internationally renowned Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners (RSHP), the acclaimed architects behind some of the world's most iconic buildings and highly prized residences.

The building is inspired by the past and looking to the future, with its facade's strips of red brick, paying architectural tribute to its setting. As expected, it's both stylish and ultra-luxe, its aesthetics showing a distinct East Asian influence and its comforts elevated to match one of London's wealthiest quarters. The building contains more residences than rooms and suites.

Thomas Juul-Hansen's interiors were drafted in to work on the residential interior concepts. Their design complements the architectural identity of the building, drawing in from the natural light that floods in from the floor-to-ceiling windows and the Juliet balconies. The fittings are bespoke, designed to maximise the potential of the apartments, and include folding panelled doors that conceal the kitchen cabinets, and a custom-made centerpiece of a stone kitchen island that drapes into a dining banquette.

Studio Indigo were commissioned to work alongside Hospitality Projects on the interiors of the hotel which included 50 hotel suites, luxury penthouses and over 30 apartments. The brief was to keep its atmosphere luxuriously sedate; with hotel rooms that included hand-painted wallpaper and bespoke furniture and joinery throughout manufactured and designed by the Hospitality Projects team based out of London.

Gold and creams are prominent colours inside the hotel as a sense of exuberance flows throughout. Materials have been used to mirror this luxurious feel and expensive marbles are paired with ornate woods and fabrics to elevate the guest's experience.

Hospitality Projects then worked collaboratively with Tokyo based design agency Curiosity on all of the public spaces.

The Spa is a work of art with natural timber finishes and soft warm curves in every space. Every piece of furniture was custom made and hand crafted using the finest materials.

The front of house corridors have bespoke luxury carpets inset into timber floors that are complemented by large reception counters made from marble, exotic woods, and leather panelling.

Even a custom company emblem fan, has been designed by Vivienne Westwood which hangs in the entrance.

The final part was to design furniture for the restaurants and bars. As you make your way down the ming green marble staircase to a glass top conservatory you discover a modern Japanese kitchen by chef Akira Back which includes a Korean chef's table, elegant lounge bar with various pops of colour and warm lighting working harmoniously to create an atmosphere that makes you just want to relax with an old fashion.

Hospitality Projects is part of the WI International Group of companies, founded in 2017. Since that time, we have worked on several global hotel projects providing bespoke furniture for some of the world's most prestigious brands including Mandarin Oriental, The Dorchester, Soho House, Nobu and the Arts Club.

In 2019 we took on our first luxury private residential project in New York for one of our HNW hotel clients. The team were asked to design and manufacture bespoke furniture and joinery working alongside leading interior designer Robert Couturier at the prestigious 432 Park

Avenue. This was quite a seminal moment in terms of company growth. It was our first step into the luxury residences sector bridging real estate and hospitality. Fast forward to today and we have been part of some of the most prestigious private residential projects including the most expensive penthouse on London's Park Lane, five-story townhouse on Grosvenor Square, Chateaux in the South of France and villas in the Bahamas and Antigua.

The next Chapter is the introduction of our own product range, BANC-CI. Working alongside Creative Director Steven Blaess, the collection is about simplified luxury. Natural materials and textures shape the designs that transition and flow through indoor and outdoor spaces to create a harmony and purpose.

The collection already features within spaces of the Mandarin Oriental Mayfair, with chairs and tables showcased in the residential suites and private penthouses.

I'm looking forward to seeing the next collection being designed in collaboration with some of the world's best designers.

