

7 Hotels With Remarkably Influential Interior Design

You can still book a room at most of them

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There are plenty of [hotels](#) around the world with beautiful, eye-catching designs, but far fewer with interiors so thought-out that they actually changed the design conversation. We wanted to go beyond surface-level looks and dig deeper into the legacies of the hotels that represent bold thinking and visionary design. Many of them have been refreshed over the years, and a couple have closed for good, but most are still bookable. Here are seven hotels with interiors that broke the mold.

The Beverly Hills Hotel by Paul R. Williams

The Pink Lady may have originally opened in 1912, but it was in the 1940s that it gained the iconic California look it's famous for today. Pioneering Black architect [Paul R. Williams](#)—who had a profound impact on the architectural aesthetic of Los Angeles—was hired in 1941 to update the lobby, which he covered in CW Stockwell's Martinique [banana leaf wallpaper](#) by Don Loper. Williams completed many updates and refreshes at the hotel over the years, including its beloved script sign.



The Beverly Hills Hotel, captured in a 1995 photo, Photo: Getty Images

The Greenbrier by Dorothy Draper

Interior designer [Dorothy Draper](#) had an outsize influence that can be seen in hotels around the U.S., but nowhere more so than at the Greenbrier in Sulphur Springs, West Virginia. The sprawling resort opened in 1778, but became a beacon of good design when Draper renovated it in 1947 in her signature modern baroque style characterized by wide stripes, floral chintz, splashy colors, and black-and-white checkerboard floors. Since Draper's death, all updates to the hotel have been carried out by her protégé [Carleton Varney](#), who is currently the president and owner of Dorothy Draper & Co., Inc.



The Greenbrier Hotel is a Dorothy Draper signature. Photo: Michel Arnaud

The Terrace Plaza Hotel by SOM

In 1948, the emerging firm of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill was commissioned to create the Terrace Plaza Hotel in Cincinnati—America's first new hotel to be built after World War II. Natalie DeBlois was the lead designer and used the hotel as a way to introduce modernism to the U.S., creating a landmark in the International Style and decorating the interiors with modern art by Joan Miró, Alexander Calder, Saul Steinberg, and Jim Davis. It was the first hotel in the U.S. to have elevators without operators, rooms with individual heating and cooling controls, and sofas that could convert to a bed at the push of a button. Despite setting the standard for modern amenities, the hotel fell into disrepair and was all but abandoned. It's on the National Trust for Historic Preservation's list of the 11 Most Endangered Places for 2020.



The dining room of the Terrace Plaza Hotel in Cincinnati, decorated with a mural by Saul Steinberg. Photo: Ezra Stoller/ESTO

The Royal Copenhagen Hotel by Arne Jacobsen

When Arne Jacobsen—considered one of the fathers of Danish modernism—was hired by Scandinavian Airline Systems (SAS) to design a hotel in central Copenhagen, no detail went unnoticed. Opened in 1960, the [hotel](#) is Jacobsen's Gesamtkunstwerk—total work of art—for which he designed everything right down to the silverware in the restaurant. Indeed, his famous Swan, Egg, and Drop chairs were created specifically for the hotel. It's now operated by Radisson as the Radisson Collection Royal Hotel, and was refreshed by Space Copenhagen in 2018.



The newly renovated Radisson Collection Royal Hotel was originally designed by Arne Jacobsen. Photo: Rickard L. Eriksson

Parco dei Principi Hotel by Gio Ponti

Like Arne Jacobsen, [Gio Ponti](#) designed every detail of the Parco dei Principi Hotel, which opened in 1962 in Sorrento, the gateway to Italy's glamorous Amalfi Coast. Inspired by the endless blue of the Mediterranean, Ponti adhered to a strictly blue-and-white color scheme, designing geometric tiles, fittings, and furnishings, and the pool's linear diving platform. His drawings and explanations can be seen in a permanent display in the lobby along with key design pieces he created for the hotel.

Morgans Hotel by Andrée Putman

Boutique hotels are ubiquitous now, but Morgans Hotel in New York City ushered in the craze for small, design-forward hotels in trendy urban neighborhoods when it opened in 1984. Dreamed up by Ian Schrager and Steve Rubell, who tapped French designer Andrée Putman for the interiors, Morgans epitomized pared-down elegance with a touch of the unconventional (consider the black-and-white checkerboard bathrooms). The hotel closed in 2017 and was converted into micro-apartments.



Andrée Putman, who designed the Morgans Hotel in 1984, refreshed the space in 2008.
Photo: Billy Cunningham

Delano South Beach by Philippe Starck

Also conceived by [Ian Schrager](#), the Delano in South Beach opened in 1995 with an *Alice in Wonderland-*inspired design by Philippe Starck. In contrast to the rather sober Morgans, the Delano's design is all about playful style that borders on the surreal. Take the oversized Starck couch and crystal piano in the lobby, the gold Leda chair sculpted with high-heeled feet by Salvador Dalí, and the wooden Calvet

armchair by Antoni Gaudí as proof. In contrast, the rooms bear a monochromatic white-on-white scheme.



The rooftop terrace at the Agua Bathhouse Spa at the Delano. The hotel made a splash when it opened in the mid-1990s. Photo: Jonathan Dann