



# The art, and design, of hospitality



A design-conscious hotel brand opening its first premises in Germany called on the best of German art and design, including Flatow & Drews Consulting. **Michael Flatow FCSI** talks to Jacquetta Picton about the project

Each and every hotel of the luxury-lifestyle Andaz hotel brand embraces the local culture and spirit of its surroundings. The name, Andaz, is a Hindi word meaning personal style and the hotel chain is under the umbrella of the Hyatt corporation. Andaz Munich Schwabinger Tor opened in February 2019, it is the only one of the 21 Andaz hotels worldwide located in Germany.

The hotels provide an attentive and fuss-free service that allows guests to fully immerse themselves in their surroundings. At the same time, they create a natural atmosphere where guests can relax in comfort and style. As the hotel's general manager Frank Heckelmann says about his guests: "We greet them as strangers when they arrive, we hope to salute them as friends when they leave."

## Artistic hub

Schwabing, the area of Munich chosen as the site of the first Andaz hotel in Germany, was historically a bohemian area where artists, intellectuals, actors and free spirits felt welcome. In this spirit, art plays a leading role at Andaz Munich Schwabinger Tor. Local artists and influential cultural figures added their own special touch to bring character to the hotel. The result is a hub for cultural activities and a meeting place for creative minds that reflect Munich's role as a melting pot both for new technologies and age-old traditions.

There is artwork designed by Munich artist Mirko Borsche. In the hotel's foyer, the Andaz Lounge, there are video installations by the Munich artistic collective Studio TISH, depicting the sky above Munich, captured on camera over 365 days. There is also a contribution from community art project, BROKE.TODAY, which offers

young offenders the opportunity to explore new horizons and fulfil their creative potential. Andaz Munich Schwabinger Tor gave three young street artists the opportunity to collaborate on the decoration of the walls in four of its suites.

## Unique foodservice concepts

This creative inspiration extends to the foodservice offering. Michael Flatow FCSI of Flatow & Drews Consulting was brought in to design the foodservice areas. He had previously worked for Hyatt, including the Grand Hyatt Berlin, where Heckelmann was hotel manager before moving to Munich. Flatow acknowledges that the design ethos of the hotel and the expected clientele dictated the foodservice concepts.

In pride of place is the hotel's restaurant, The Lonely Broccoli, Munich's first modern meat house, seating up to 120 people. Featuring not one, but two, show kitchens. With the Josper wood-fired ovens and charcoal grills they provide a unique sense of theater and drama for diners. The open kitchen concept presented the foodservice consultant with challenges. "The wood-burning oven and grill in the open kitchen was a major obstacle in terms of the exhaust system," Flatow says. "This challenge could be met by coordinating smoothly with the mechanical, electrical and plumbing [MEP] consultant."

However, not all scents from The Lonely Broccoli have to be eliminated. Heckelmann is very proud of the restaurant's unique atmosphere. "The chefs prepare salmon roasted on a plank of cedar wood," he says. "The >

Clockwise from top left: The hotel's lobby lounge; The Lonely Broccoli kitchen and dishes from the grill

aroma of the wood floating through the air is amazing. The restaurant is like a performance with the head chef directing operations."

The counter seats overlooking the open kitchen are the ideal perch for business travelers who are eating alone. "You might have a business meeting the next day and you don't know the city, but you love food and cooking, you can sit right there and watch what the kitchen team is doing," says Heckelmann. "Maybe the chef comes by and gives you something to try and that is what the concept is all about. The chef is opening oysters, chopping steak tartare. You can see the meat go straight from the grill and onto your plate." Guests are made to feel part of the performance, there is no need to bring a book to the table if eating alone.

#### Space in the sky

Up on the 12th floor of the hotel is M'Uniqo Rooftop Bar. As well as offering a new perspective – a 360-degree vista of the Munich skyline – there is international Italian cuisine on offer. General manager Heckelmann enthuses that when the bar is buzzing with guests and the DJ is playing, "it could be Singapore, it has a real international, cosmopolitan feeling."

As well as an awesome outward view M'Uniqo's mirrored ceiling offers a stunning inward view as it makes the already large space look even more inspiring. Amsterdam-based interior design company Concrete, who created the hotel's unique look, using many local Bavarian elements, were a joy to collaborate with according to Flatow.

One of the most important outlets during the pandemic, Heckelmann admits, was the coffee bar and 'grab-and-go' offering, Bicicletta. This space, just by the

entrance to the hotel, is decorated with another quirky touch from Concrete – a row of bicycles hanging from the ceiling.

#### Part of the community

Another offering unique to Hyatt and Andaz is self-service, deli style outlet Café M. This is a staff canteen, however it is not just for the staff at the hotel, it is designed to be the staff canteen for all the workers and residents of Schwabinger Tor. Sadly, due to the pandemic this lovely concept could not open initially. "Due to space and distance restrictions, it wasn't feasible to open it," explains Hecklemann. "And now, many people from the surrounding office buildings are working from home." Let us hope that, as life gradually returns to normal, Café M will fulfil its function within the community.

Flatow's focus when selecting equipment for all the hotel's F&B outlets was energy saving and sustainability. "Focusing on energy costs and energy saving measures are most important for projects in Germany," he says. "Thus, the equipment chosen has components to save energy by heat recovery systems for example."

However, when it comes to open kitchens energy saving also has to look sensational. Flatow's favorite part of the hotel is the show kitchen with the wood burning stoves despite all the challenges they presented. "I really hope the guests, from the hotel – and the city of Munich – enjoy the show," he says. ■

Clockwise from bottom left: The welcome at Bicicletta; kitchen choppers and knives makes an eye-catching display for a meat house



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