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Hôtel Monte Cristo hotel - Paris, France

TRAVEL / 8 JUL 2018 / BY NICOLA LEIGH STEWART

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INFORMATION
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ADDRESS
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The second opening from the independent group Les Hoteliers Impertinents, the Hotel Monte Cristo in Paris pays tribute to the literary great Alexandre Dumas and his hero, envisaging what would be a modern-day home for the adventurous Count of Monte Cristo.

The Count's travels and Dumas' own Caribbean ancestry provide a unique starting point for the hotel's design, which has once again been

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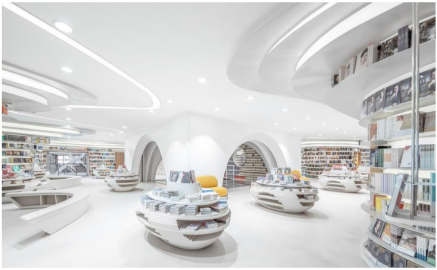
Zhongshu Bookstore

TRAVEL / 9 JUL 2018 / BY DAVEN WU



INFORMATION

Website

ADDRESS

Weiyang District 71
Guangming Road
Xi'an
Shaanxi Province

TELEPHONE

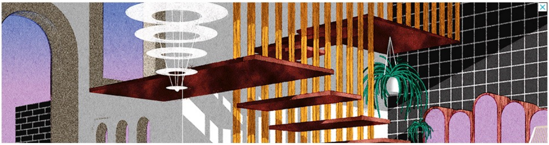
86. 29 8625 6126

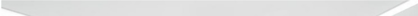
Doomsayers have long predicted the death of the brick and mortar bookstore, but the smart money is on smaller niche boutique boltholes like the Zhongshu Bookstore of Xi'an. Tucked away on the fourth floor of the city's Xuhong Plaza, the two-level all-white cocoon is a veritable stage-set that's straight of central casting for a Utopic sci-fi flick.

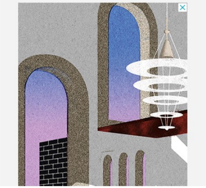
Shanghai-based Wutopia Lab sets the scene with a cuboid, mirror-lined entrance that looks and feels like a cross between a retro dancefloor and Star Trek's teleporter room. Ribbed archways open out in different directions, spilling visitors into a glossy white space that's anchored by a glass floor and capped with swirling ceilings that are meant to evoke the dreamscaped Baiyun Villa, or White Cloud Village, from an ancient Chinese tale.

Elliptical bookshelves follow the contours of the ceiling, as do mini-standalone display pods. There are no sharp angles, just curvilineal surfaces that swoop around the store, all the lines leading eventually to a floating staircase - its half-turned form splitting into ribboned steel that spiral upwards towards a skylight.

With so much visual drama at work, almost passing unnoticed is the bookstore's comprehensive collection of political biographies, bestsellers and vividly coloured volumes for children.







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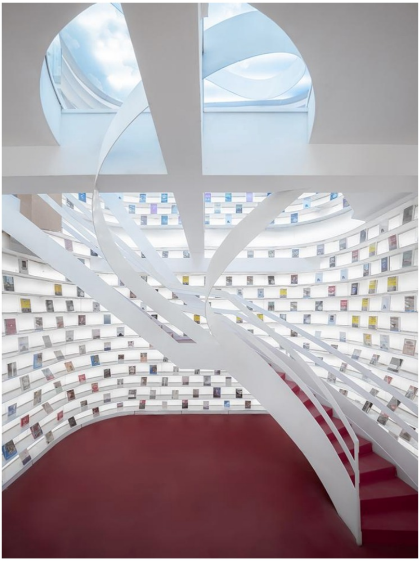
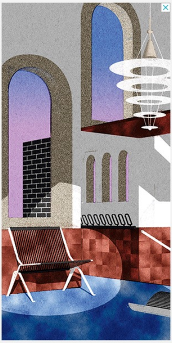
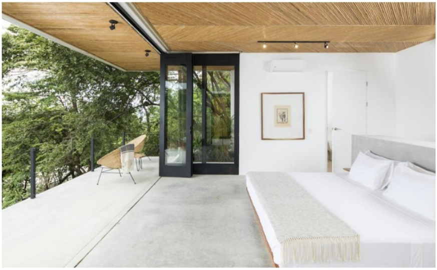
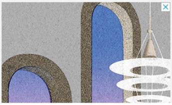




Mint

TRAVEL / 7 JUL 2018 / BY DAVEN WU





INFORMATION

Website

ADDRESS

100 metres east of Fercosta,
Santa Teresa

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506. 8835 4243

RATES

From $180

Beach-lovers and surf hounds have long favoured the wild beauty of Costa Rica for their annual dose of sun and sea. The arrival of the bijou, adults-only Mint Santa Teresa hotel is just the excuse we need to block out some dates for our summer retreat.

Terraced into the side of a steep hill with sparkling views of the Pacific Ocean, the four-bedroom property is the work of Benjamin Garcia Saxe, his Costa Rica office ably creating a series of interlocking all-white pavilions that seamlessly blend Greek architectural influences and Scandi-minimalism with locally-sourced materials such as caña brava grass and carved timber furniture.

Each room features a rooftop terrace – the sun held at bay by a sail-shade – which is furnished with rattan furniture made in Sarchí, a Costa Rican town noted for its craftsmanship. From every vantage point, the eye is drawn towards the distant horizon though the architects have thoughtfully framed the whole against both manicured landscaping and the wilder hillside tropical foliage.

The communal lounge area and infinity pool make for great social mixers, though the diversions are equally tempting, including nature trails on horseback, exploring Montezuma, and kayaking to nearby Cabo Blanco for the sunrise.

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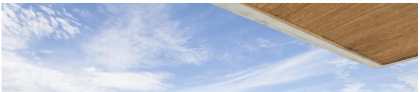
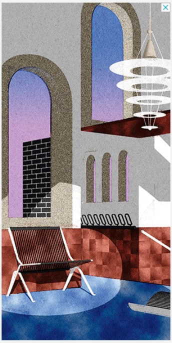


The Rose

TRAVEL / 6 JUL 2018 / BY EMMA MOORE



INFORMATION
Website

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91 High St

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44 1304 389127

RATES
From £90

The British seaside resort revival is creeping round the shoreline of Southern England extending lately to Deal, a former fishing port where the North Sea and English Channel meet. Already equipped with charm in its winding lanes, colourful façades, and antique shop offerings, its hospitality game has been upped recently with the re-working of the former high-street boozer, The Rose, as a boutique hotel.

The dream project of Wallpaper*'s former design editor Alex Bagner, and her husband Christopher Hicks – who as the great grandson of a former Thomson & Son Brewery owner, which owned The Rose until it was sold in the 1950s, is a landlord with a passionate connection to the pub's past – the new-look Rose is on a mission to lure in locals and out-of-towners alike.

Setting out to restore the establishment to its Victorian glory days, while rooting it in present-day Deal, Bagner's brief was to overhaul the interiors and make it a home: eclectic and uncluttered in style, with a mix of Victorian, modern and mid-century aesthetics, lots of bold colour and print, and artwork which feels like a lifetime's collection.

To carry this off, the couple called upon a string of close creative contacts including London-based interior designers Harding and Read – who are the duo behind The Garden House at Surrey's Beaverbrook hotel – stylist Michelle Kelly, and architects MAD Atelier. The artwork meanwhile, has been curated by Carl Freedman Gallery's Counter Editions in Margate.

A true test to drawing in the locals is the quality of the food and drink offering. The Rose has nailed this with Hicks' beverage expertise and the help of executive chef Rachel O'Sullivan, once at Polpo and London's cult café The Towpath. Dishes are built around local ingredients, such as hand-harvested samphire, but are not a slave to the tyranny of the tag 'local'. Chicken Schnitzel is served with fennel slaw for example, violet artichokes with white beans and aioli.

House pickles and cauliflower cheese croquette bar snacks, an inventive brunch menu, and coffee from Climpson & Sons should keep the hungry happy, while the king-sized beds, organic mattresses, light as a feather duvets, daring colour and print combinations and clever vintage/modern/custom-made mix of furnishings will please sleepy sybarites.✱

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