



The Hoxton

AMSTERDAM

Now owned by Ennismore, The Hoxton brand is on its way to global stardom, beginning with its Amsterdam launch designed by local interior outfit, Nicemakers.

Words: Lauren Ho | Photography: Courtesy of The Hoxton

In a way, there was an element of ‘build and they will come,’ says Sharan Pasricha, founder and CEO of hospitality group, Ennismore. He is of course, talking about the bold move of introducing his hip Hoxton hotel brand to Amsterdam, a city still relatively new to the concept of lobby socialising. He could though, just as easily be describing the group’s inaugural launch in London’s Shoreditch a decade ago. Then under the ownership of entrepreneur Sinclair Beecham, the hotel was an early adopter of the movement that was already a hit in New York. After acquiring the property from Beecham in 2012, the ever-enterprising Pasricha built on the

brand’s DNA with a second London opening in the flourishing Holborn area. And judging by the constant buzz in each of the three properties, it seems all of the risks have paid off.

With a picture-perfect location between Herengracht and Singel, two of the city’s most historic canals, The Hoxton Amsterdam eschews the brand’s propensity for up-and-coming locations. “The essence of our business is finding difficult buildings in sleepy neighbourhoods,” says Pasricha. “Amsterdam was very different for us.” Indeed, the series of five handsome canal houses – once home to the mayor in the 17th century – in which the hotel resides, can’t



Above & Opposite: Public spaces, designed and operated by Soho House & Co, look like the private members' clubs the group is best known for; rough hewn wood-paneled walls cocoon a homely, shabby chic space filled with an assortment of mid-century vintage furnishings and lived-in sofas

appear more traditional, but the conservative exterior belies the coolness within. Here, the customary reception desk is intentionally tucked around the corner, foregoing a conventional hotel lobby and instead making way for a thrumming restaurant and mezzanine bar area, where guests and locals sit ensconced in deep leather armchairs, tapping away on their prerequisite laptops. “The space is designed to be the city’s living room,” explains Pasricha.

Run in partnership with ubiquitous hospitality outfit Soho House & Co, these public spaces – deigned by the Soho House team – look like the private members’ clubs the group is best known for; rough hewn wood-paneled walls cocoon a homely, shabby chic space filled with an assortment of mid-century vintage furnishings, lived-in sofas in worn leathers and smooth velvets, and rich Persian rugs – the perfect set-up for nursing a glass of red wine on a chilly winter’s evening. “It’s modern and timeless, mixed with classic British,” explains Emma Montier, architectural and interior designer at Ennismore. “Everything is local, bought at vintage shops and reupholstered. It’s pretty eclectic.”

The guestrooms are defined by the natural ebb and flow of the five houses, which have been skilfully stitched together to form 111 rooms including a handful with grand monumental ceilings. “When you work with an old building, it’s a lot more work and dedication from your design team,” says Charlie North, Design Director at

Ennismore. “All the rooms are different shapes and sizes.” Montier adds: “Because some ceilings have monumental status, we had to stick to certain colour schemes and work with the authorities and specialists to get everything right.”

Determined to maintain authenticity, the group sought the input of Joyce Urbanus and Dax Rolls of local interior design outfit, Nicemakers. As newcomers to the hotel industry, Pasricha’s logic was that the duo would impart a fresh outlook to the room designs. “We took a big leap engaging a very small team on what would be their largest project,” says Pasricha. “The leaf we’ve taken is of the Google philosophy: if they are smart and creative enough, they will figure it out.”

Brief in-hand, the pair set off for London to immerse themselves in the Hoxton brand. “We were invited to stay at Shoreditch to get the Hoxton experience,” explains Rolls. “The brief was to create the Amsterdam version of the London properties. It was very open without limitations.” Keeping with the hotel group’s trait for providing a home away from home, the resulting mood is personal and tactile; inspired by the colours of the original decorated ceilings, hues of moss green, burnt orange, blues and brass, unify plush materials from butter-soft leather headboards to handsome black oak parquet flooring – a nod to the building’s canal house past. Quirky knick-knacks such as vintage alarm clocks







Left & Previous Page: To maintain authenticity, Ennismore sought the input of interior design outfit Nicemakers, who selected pieces from local vintage stores. In the bathrooms, fixtures and fittings are supplied by Kohler and Dornbrach

adorn the shelves of bespoke clothing rack and desk units, while standout hand-painted hexagon mirrors add a dash of pizzazz. “We only create interiors we would like to work or live in ourselves,” explains Rolls. “It’s the full experience that has to feel right. This starts with colours, materials, fabrics and furniture, but ends with accessories and art.”

A self-confessed ‘anti-hotel’, the Hoxton group has always done things a little differently. Their straightforward approach to usual hotel foibles means no mini-bar charges, free telephone calls, and snacks available to purchase at supermarket prices. But the real draw is their commitment to instigating a sense of community within each neighbourhood, in particular with their ongoing series of Hoxtown events. “Success for us is in our public spaces,” confirms Pasricha. “Doing all of our events in our public spaces and showcasing the good and the great of the neighbourhood is an integral part of our brand.”

With the Amsterdam property now settling in nicely, it seems there’s no stopping Pasricha. “We’re having fun in some great cities,” he says. “We’ve got three in various stages of construction – Williamsburg, Paris and London – and then we’re hanging out in locations like Copenhagen, Barcelona, LA and Chicago. The reality is we selfishly choose cities we really like hanging out in. What’s not to love?”

EXPRESS CHECKOUT: 111 guestrooms | 1 restaurant | 1 bar | 175m² events space | www.thehoxton.com

Owner / Operator: Ennismore | Architecture: Kentie en Partners Architekten | Interior Design: Ennismore; Nicemakers; Soho House Group