

ARCHITECTURE_INTERIORS_DESIGN

PERSPECTIVE

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透視

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+ What's YOUR green resolution for 2011?
星級設計師新一年訂下綠色大計

From the Green School in Bali, parks in Hong Kong and a ski resort in Niseko to the Mandarin Oriental Las Vegas, the concept of 'upcycling' and a hotel on top of the world in Tibet, it's all about eco

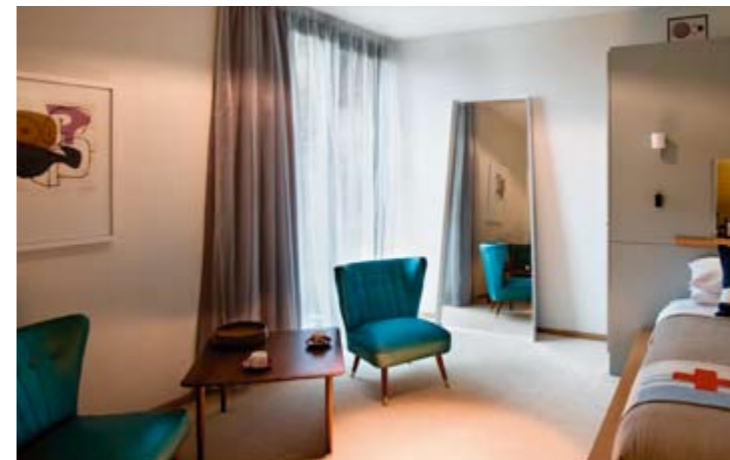
綠在生活：峇里環保學校·遊樂在公園
二世古滑雪渡假村·賭城文華酒店
升級再造設計·攀上拉薩之巔

綠色透視

The Green Issue

"Civilisations leave marks on the Earth by which they are known and judged. In large measure, the nature of their immortality is gauged by how well their builders made peace with the environment"

— Nathaniel Owings



Kiwi quirky

Alan Blundell pays tribute to his design heroes at Ohtel, his cool, strongly eco-driven boutique hotel in Wellington — not a place you'd normally associate with high style

TEXT: SUZANNE MIAO
PHOTOGRAPHY: COURTESY OF OHTEL

Just over a decade ago, New Zealand architect and designer Alan Blundell visited New York City for the first time in his life. There, he saw stylish, design-led hotels by the likes of Ian Schrager and Philippe Starck, which fired up his imagination and sowed the seeds of a dream to one day have his own such hotel. Eight years later, Blundell realised his vision when he opened the doors to Ohtel in Wellington.

The concept of boutique hotels has been around for a while and you must have done a fair bit of overseas travel in your previous profession – what was it about the New York City properties which affected you so deeply?

Actually, I haven't travelled a great deal. I did spend a week in NYC in 2000, where my business partner and I visited a number of fantastic properties by well-known designers, including Ian Schrager and Phillippe Starck. These formed the basis of my inspiration to build my own hotel in Wellington at some stage... Six years later, the project commenced – opening March 2008.

Ohtel is very environmentally-conscious: solar hot water; full recycling; totally natural and biodegradable cleaning products; and local products in preference to imports. Why was 'green/eco' such a powerful driver in the design and concept for Ohtel?

I think travellers now are very conscious of sustainability and factor a hotel's efforts with respect to the environment when they make a decision to book. At a practical level, the build costs are increased to accommodate the key 'green' features such as solar hot water, double-glazing, and the use of sustainable materials – however, there is a recovery over time through reduced operating expenses.

How do you strike a balance between being green/eco and designing a hotel which meets your personal aesthetic demands?

A lot of the 'green technology' incorporated into the property is hidden in the building fabric and services design. The harshness of fluorescent lighting can present some aesthetic issues, depending on bulb colour, so screening these fittings with acrylic backed photographic panels reduces any negative impact.

When you were working as an architect, did you specialise in any specific fields? Did this inform your design choices at all in conceiving Ohtel?

Because I worked on my own, I mainly undertook residential scale projects – principally single houses, as well as a number of apartment buildings. One of the flow-on benefits is that Ohtel has a very homely feel – a lot of attention to tiny details, refined for each of the 10 rooms.

Did any particular designer inspire the design/style of Ohtel, or is it pure 'you'?

As a designer, I am always taking mental snapshots of things I see that I like. The hotel design brings together many of these details, combined with a great deal of thoughtful, project specific responses to ensure the guest experience is richly complete.

Ohtel is located at the city end of Oriental Bay, tucked into a steep coastal cliff face just across the road from Waitangi Park. How did you come across the site?

The site had an old two-storey villa on it that came up for sale. At just 160 sq-m, I don't think many saw the site as a development opportunity. My work in apartment design allowed me to create 10 spacious rooms, back of house and an intimate lobby space for my four-storey hotel concept.

What were some of the biggest structural/ architectural challenges involved, given its setting in a steep coastal cliff-face?

Structurally, we had to retain a 12m-high excavation to maximise the excavated potential of the site, while architecturally, the property has a single 8.5m-wide frontage that would remain visible once adjacent sites are redeveloped – how could I create an elevation with a lasting visual impact?

How would you describe Ohtel's exterior compared with its interior design? I understand there is some counterpoint/ dichotomy between the contemporary structure and its interior furnishings and décor, which includes chairs to ceramics, tables and clocks which you've been collecting for more than two years.

The building itself is Modernist and contemporary in design – uncluttered spaces provide a clean backdrop for the original New Zealand artwork and unique mid-century furnishings and colourful ceramics to feature.

The furnishings are very much inspired by the 1950s and 60s, and heavily influenced by Scandinavian designers like Arne Jacobsen and Hans Wegner. Did you work with any interior designers, or is Ohtel literally all your own work?

Eleanor Steele helped me select soft furnishings and paint colours to complete the project. I thought it was important that the project had some external overview to ensure the concept had a coherence when the many diverse elements were ultimately bought together. She did a great job.

Any plans to expand...?

Not at this stage. I would like to run this property for another year or so, and then review what path we take from there.

出奇製店

威靈頓Ortel酒店是Alan Blundell向偉大設計師致敬之作。這間入型入格的環保精品酒店不但高級，而且概念絕不平凡。

撰文：SUZANNE MIAO
攝影：HOTTEL提供



十多年前，紐西蘭建築設計師Alan Blundell首次到訪紐約，看見由伊恩施拉格及菲利普斯塔克等一眾星級人馬打造的時尚設計酒店，激發起他的想像，亦使他立志有天要親手興建一間這樣的酒店。植根於心深處的夢，八年後終於實現，就在他打開威靈頓Ortel酒店十間客房的大門那一刻。

精品酒店的概念已不新鮮，你以往公幹想必也見過不少這一類酒店。紐約的精品酒店有甚麼過人之處，能對你有如此深遠的影響？

其實，我並沒有到過許多地方。二千年我的確在紐約逗留了一星期。我和工作夥伴參觀了許多知名設計師設計的星級酒店，如伊恩施拉格及菲利普斯塔克設計的酒店。這正是在威靈頓創建酒店的靈感源頭。六年後，酒店大計展開，並在零八年三月開幕。

Ortel相當注重永續環保：太陽能熱水系統、廢物全面回收、可分解的全天然清潔用品，以及採用當地產品而非進口品。為甚麼綠色／環保元素

會如此主導Ortel的概念設計？

我相信現今的旅人決定入住哪家酒店前，都留意酒店是否永續環保，有否致力保護環境。實際來說，酒店要加入太陽能熱水系統、雙層玻璃及環保物料等主要環保元素，都一定增加建築成本；不過較低的營運開支，長遠來說還是會抵銷多出的建造成本。

綠色／環保設計、同時符合你個人審美要求，這樣的設計如何兼顧平衡？

酒店的許多「綠色科技」都隱藏於建築外牆及設計之中。某些顏色的螢光燈會散發出刺眼光線，有礙美感，用膠攝影板過濾光線便能降低對視覺效果的影響。

還是建築師時，你擅長哪類項目？這如何影響你構想Ortel的設計？

我一人打理所有工作，主要承接住宅類項目，而且大多都是獨棟住宅，部份則是公寓大廈。曾經專於住宅項目的好處，在於我能為Ortel帶來「家」的感覺，十個房間都有許多細膩細節。



Ortel的設計或風格有受到哪位設計師影響嗎？又或全然是你的個人風格？

身為設計師，我經常把喜歡的事物記在腦海裡。Ortel的設計便揉合了許多我這類的記憶，再結合專為這項目而設、再經細心處理的元素，確保入住體驗既豐富又完整。

Ortel位於城市邊陲的東方灣，座落海邊陡峭的崖上，只與懷唐伊公園相隔一條馬路。這選址有特別原因嗎？

當時那裡有一棟兩層高的古舊別墅出售，佔地只有一百六十平方米，我想沒有多少人會認為那裡有發展潛力。我根據自己設計公寓的經驗，設計出一棟四層高的酒店，既有十間寬敞的房間，又有後院及感覺親切的大堂。

酒店設在海邊陡峭的崖上，這在結構或建築上最大的考驗是甚麼？

結構上的挑戰是我們要留有十二米高的懸空空間，以善用這片土地的潛力。而建築上的挑戰，則是考慮待隔鄰的土地重建後，酒店可見的正面只有八點五米闊，我要如何在有限視野中創造出讓人一見難忘的外觀？

Ortel酒店內擺放了一些你在過去兩年多搜羅的物品傢俬如椅子、陶製品、桌子及時鐘；室內陳設裝飾、與酒店的當代時尚建築結構有一定的對比差異。你如何比較Ortel內與外的設計？

Ortel的建築設計是奉行現代主義的當代建築風格。空間設計沒有太多修飾，為室內陳設提供簡潔的背景，襯托出紐西蘭原創藝術品、獨特的中世紀傢俬陳設及色彩絢爛的陶瓷。

Ortel的傢俬陳設相當受五、六十年代風格啟發，亦深受到阿諾傑克森及韋勒等北歐設計師所影響。你有與其他室內設計師合作設計Ortel嗎？還是全部你一手包辦？

Eleanor Steele有幫忙挑選窗簾與地毯等陳設、及漆料的顏色。我認為為攸關重要的是找第三者來幫眼，確保保林種種的元素能完美結合，貫徹統一概念。Eleanor在這方面做得相當出色。

有計劃擴充發展嗎？

暫時沒有。我想這樣子經營多一年左右，再好好審視未來的方向。E