

New Zentis Osaka Hotel Offers A Modern Take On The City's Urban Edginess

OSAKA (Nov. 10, 2020) - As the debut property of a new hotel brand by Palace Hotel Group and the first project in Japan for one of the world's foremost interior architectural designers, Zentis Osaka strums a rather singular chord in a city well-known for both its industrious charm and distinctive hospitality.

Subtly edgy, wonderfully Japanese and naturally resplendent, Osaka's first addition to the bespoke collection of Design Hotels opened this July with interiors fashioned by UK-based Tara Bernerd & Partners.

"Craftsmanship and industrial heritage are key elements of the local culture, so we sought to encapsulate both through the mixture of materials chosen and the contemporary approach with which we applied them to this project," explained Bernerd.

The materials: exposed bricks, timber beams, ceppo stone, structural ironmongery and a sculptural, blue-limestone staircase situated at the heart of the arrival experience – complemented by an earthy palette of taupes and ivory and accentuated by warm pops of honey, ochre, sage and steel-blue. Light fixtures harkening back to mid-century designs complete Bernerd's vision for a boutique look that encapsulates industrial chic and approachable luxury.

In the guestrooms, Japanese sensibilities for space utilization are evident in the angular shapes that separate each space much like the interlocking compartments of a *bento* box, allowing for optimum functionality and a seamless flow throughout. The slender, cool-gray tiles found on the bathroom walls are reminiscent of the fluted Japanese *izumo* tiles that adorn the hotel's stylish bar while *Shigaraki-yaki* tables crafted in the kilns of Shiga, a Japanese prefecture renowned for its pottery, add a sleek touch bedside. Charcoal art in the form of a dramatic, *shodo*-inspired sweep above each bed – done by local artist Masami Ehara for reproduction as wallpaper – adds an artful flair.

On the main floor, built-in bookshelves frame the elevator doors and hover over the reception desk, showcasing a selection of locally made pottery and other decorative items as well as art books that exemplify local aesthetics. Other titles include coffee-table books celebrating famous foreign artists.

For the inaugural property of the Zentis brand, project developer Mickey Nakane of Media For Space facilitated the collaboration between Palace Hotel Group, Japanese architectural firm Kajima Design and Tara Bernerd & Partners to ensure the development of a distinctive urban oasis.

"For the exterior, we opted for a grid design to reflect the structured nature of business, as the hotel borders the business district of Dojimahama," said Kouichiro Shiomi, group leader for Kajima Design's Osaka division. "And then we chose brick, with a predominantly glass façade for the first two levels, to complement the abundance of greenery that surrounds and to soften the building's overall look. This also gives it a more relaxed vibe, which is more in tune with the entertainment district of Kita-shinchi that the hotel also borders."

As rare as an entirely new build in a dense part of the city is the fact that the 16-storey sanctuary comes replete with an arrival experience that includes entry via a verdant garden setting comprising of indigenous flora such as a Japanese maple as well as a cherry blossom tree.

“The interplay between indoors and outdoors was of particular importance in the street-level lobby and garden space as well as in the dining areas one floor above,” explained Bernerd, who integrated floor-to-ceiling Crittal windows into the design of those spaces to enhance the relationship between them.

On the main floor, a stone and garden terrace interlinked with the Guest Lounge by a double-sided fireplace presents a tranquil outlook while a covered outdoor space on the second floor offers a verdant retreat of its own for those dining at UPSTAIRZ, the hotel’s atmospheric lounge, bar and restaurant in-one.

The connection between inside and out extends to the choice of artwork in the hotel’s reception area, where three prominent pieces are on display. All were inspired by *Midosuji*, one of the city’s most popular thoroughfares, and each reflects an abstract interpretation of the boulevard as the seasons change – with the largest of them representing autumn, with its blazing *gingko* leaves.

Rates at Zentis Osaka start at JPY 18,300 for a Studio room.

Website: www.zentishotels.com/en/osaka/

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ABOUT ZENTIS OSAKA

Zentis Osaka is the debut property of Palace Hotel Group's new Zentis label, a brand with designs on raising the bar on select-service hospitality. Sixteen stories tall, the entirely new build features interiors by internationally renowned UK design firm Tara Bernerd & Partners and a pedigree that stems from the award-winning Palace Hotel Tokyo – the independent, homegrown brand that has redefined luxury Japanese hospitality.

Subtly edgy, wonderfully Japanese and naturally resplendent, the 212-room hotel pays homage to a city known for its industrious charm with an industrial chic look and laid-back feel. Osaka's first edition to the bespoke collection of Design Hotels features local design touches, including *shigaraki-yaki* bedside tables crafted in the kilns of Shiga, *shodo*-inspired wallpaper installations and contemporary works by a local artist.

The dining concept at UPSTAIRZ, the hotel's lounge, bar and restaurant, was conceived by a team with a Michelin-star track record and features a menu with Japanese and French influences.

Located where the riverside business area of Dojimahama and the high-end entertainment district of Kita-shinchi meet and set amid lush greenery, Zentis Osaka presents a distinctive urban oasis ideal for savvy, design-conscious travelers.

About Tara Bernerd & Partners

Internationally renowned designer Tara Bernerd is the founder of the interior architectural practice, [Tara Bernerd & Partners](#). Based in London's Belgravia, the practice works on a global platform and prides itself on its intelligent approach to interior space-planning and design.

Though each project is unique, Tara Bernerd & Partners' handsome signature style is one of approachable luxury with an industrial edge and each space possesses a masculine, and ultimately timeless, elegance.

Bernerd and her team strive to create a feeling of authenticity within each property by establishing a distinct design DNA that is true to both the location and the people who will make it their home. Whether in a hotel lobby, a restaurant, or a private residence, the team seeks to create meaning and connection through a distinct sense of place.

About Design Hotels™

Since 1993, [Design Hotels](#)™ has been crafting a portfolio which today includes 300+ privately owned and operated hotels that reflect the vision of independent hoteliers – or “Originals” – with a passion for culturally-rooted hospitality and cutting-edge design and architecture. From the pioneering boutique hotels of New York, Paris and London to the rising stars of Shanghai, Mexico City and Nairobi, to remote mountaintops, hidden beaches and off-the-beaten-path escapes, each independent hotel in the Design Hotels hand-picked portfolio is a wholly unique creative expression, steeped in the history, culture, and the nature of its environment.

Across the world, Design Hotels member properties anchor a community of travelers united in the pursuit of inspired environments, genuine local culture and transformative, boundary-pushing adventures. An ever-evolving movement forged on purpose, connectedness and curiosity.

ZENTIS OSAKA MEDIA CONTACTS

USA | Southeast Asia | Australia & New Zealand

Balcony Media Group
Karryn Miller
kmiller@balconymediagroup.com

Hong Kong & Taiwan

Petrie PR
Linda Petrie
linda@petriep.com

Japan & All Other Regions

Zentis Osaka
PR Department
press@zentishotels.com