

CLASSIC DRIVER

The 19 Star-Designer Hotel



Now there's an extra question to answer at the check-in desk. In addition to "Smoking or non-smoking?", visitors to the Hotel Puerta América in Madrid will be asked for their preferred designer, such as Norman Foster or Zaha Hadid. Part of the Hoteles Silken group, the company's chairman wanted to do something no-one had ever done before - choose 19 different architects and designers to develop separate parts of the new location in the country's capital city. The result is the 'super-designer' hotel, the Puerta América.



All the designers reacted enthusiastically to the idea. They rarely get the chance to work alongside each other, and the total 'canvas' for this work is a total of 34,000 square metres, spread over twelve floors. Zaha Hadid, the first woman to win a Pritzker Prize (termed 'the Nobel of architecture') has designed the first floor, that's walls ceiling and floor is completely covered in white and transfers the 'floating' ideas she has pioneered already with work such as the Vitra Fire Station in Weil am Rhein, Germany. A strip of LED lights on the doors will indicate if room-service is required, or that the guest should not be disturbed.



The second floor is the work of Sir Norman Foster. As usual there is no visual 'clutter', the walls are lined with leather and the floor is oak. A large expanse of onyx joins bedroom to bathroom and provides an elegant backdrop to the writing desk when gently illuminated by backlit lighting. Two highly creative spirits, Foster teamed up with Basque sculptor Eduardo Chillida, a personal friend, to create a provocative and highly subtle design that blends high-tech materials like glass with the warmth of carpeting and leather.



The other designers are David Chipperfield, Victorio & Lucchino, Mark of Newson, Ron Arad, Kahryn Findlay, Richard Gluckmann, Arata Isozaki, Javier Mariscal and Fernando Salas, John Pawson and OSCAR Niemeyer.

There's not enough space to describe all the rooms, so the best idea is to visit www.hotelpuertamerica.com for further information.

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