

New Wyndham Hotels guestrooms emphasize wellness

by Jena Tesse Fox |
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LAS VEGAS — The interconnected philosophies of wellness, biophilia/nature and design are helping Wyndham Hotels & Resorts launch two new guestroom looks. The new design schemes were unveiled during Wyndham Hotel Group’s 2018 Global Conference at the Mandalay Bay Resort, with a focus not only on how the rooms would look, but how they would make guests feel.

Visual Identity

The overall color scheme and design for the brand is inspired by water, Noelle Nicolai, senior director, brand marketing upscale & lifestyle brands at Wyndham Hotel Group, told the gathered owners and GMs, adding that the theme would help lower guest stress levels. “The organic shapes don’t show you someone being comfortable or tell you how you have to be comfortable,” she said. “They inspire you to actually feel that way.”

Using the brand colors, the Wyndham team created custom pieces of art that add “personality and a sense of comfort when they’re applied across all of our touchpoints,” Nicolai said. The new visual identity, she added, will create a “holistic brand solution, an impactful experience that drives repeat stays and loyalty for our brand.”

Simply Comfortable Rooms

“Last year, we embarked on a journey to define the new guestroom design for Wyndham Hotels & Resorts,” Nicolai said. The team collaborated with New York-based design firm Jeffrey Beers International to create the spaces, and Beers himself developed the concept, which he called “the feeling of being almost home.”

“How people feel when they enter a space is the most important thing,” Beers told the attendees. To that end, the new King and Queen rooms balance clean, modern lines and softer curves. “This balance creates a feeling of tranquility,” he said. “Space flows naturally toward the window and pools around the chaise lounge, forming a smaller oasis of comfort. Instead of a standard hard edge where the wall meets the ceiling, we’ve created crown moldings. This gives the room a residential feel, but it is also a visual trick. It makes the ceiling look higher. We’ve used architectural principles like proportion and balance to create the feeling of being simply comfortable, such as how the size of the bed relates to the dimensions of the room, how the bathroom and the bedroom work in a practical flow, and how the specially designed chaise lounge brackets the oval table.”

This, he added, echoes the curve of the desk chair. “The precision of architectural planning is really what makes all these elements work in harmony,” he said. Instead of a chaise lounge, Queen rooms have an armchair to make sure the beds don’t become crowded.

A muted palette helps maintain the sense of calm. The desk and nightstand are walnut-stained with a warm gray finish, which in turn is offset by the blue chair. Texture also was added to add visual flair. “The woven panel behind the TV and the marbling of the tables add dimension to areas that are normally blank and bare,” Beers said. “The special sconce lights beside the bed add glimmer in the way sunlight animates glass.”

The most innovative feature of both rooms is what Beers calls the hospitality hutch, a signature Wyndham royal blue cabinet built on a modern metal base. The hutch stores the room’s coffeemaker, bottled water and ice bucket, keeping them tucked away when not in use and minimizing clutter.

The guestroom doors are a dark-grained wood with an inlay of polished chrome and recessed lighting. “The corridor is not a place to hurry through,” Beers said. “The carpet is a relaxing weave of color and texture inspired by waves and light. It is calming. And we’ve used a two-tone wallcovering to enhance the perceived width of the corridor. Instead of the standard do-not-disturb sign hanging from the door handle, we’ve designed a special panel for visual clarity. And we’ve made the typography of the room numbers distinctive. This adds style, and style adds value.

“Details matter because design adds bankable value,” Beers told the attendees. “To you guys, that’s important. It ups the ante above the ordinary.”

Stay Well Rooms

Last year, Wyndham team members met with representatives from Delos, a self-described “pioneer of wellness real estate.” Six years ago, Delos launched its Stay Well guestroom program at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas. Stay Well combines evidence-based health and wellness design features, amenities and programming to help keep travelers healthy. Since its debut in 2012, the program has expanded to branded and independent hotels alike—and now, Wyndham Hotels is making the Stay Well rooms part of its brand standards.

The value of wellness-focused design has already been well established in numerous studies. Danica Boyd, Wyndham’s senior director of operations for full-service brands, said that wellness-focused travelers tend to spend 130 percent more on hotel amenities than other guests. “Wellness tourism is expected to grow 9 percent over last year, and that’s 50 percent faster than regular tourism,” she said. “Guests no longer want the spa, pool, fitness center and healthy food. They want a healthy room with the comforts they’re used to at home.” And for that, she added, guests are willing to pay a premium.

Kate Ashton, SVP of brand operations for Wyndham, Tryp and Dolce, said that the Stay Well guestroom revolves around key pillars for wellness: light, air quality and the sleep experience. Special lighting, which adjusts the color palette for time of day, can help regulate the body’s circadian rhythm and reduce jet lag. Delos created its own circadian lighting technology that will be present in each room, primarily as an alarm clock that creates a “sunrise” effect. To maintain the air quality, the rooms will have wall-mounted air-purification filters to reduce allergens and microbes. The rooms will also have aromatherapy options. And for the sleep experience, Stay Well rooms will have memory foam mattresses made of plant extracts that are completely encased to prevent any allergens or irritants from settling in.

Wyndham is asking that a minimum of 10 percent of each hotel’s room inventory be converted to Stay Well rooms. “We believe in this program so much that it will become a brand standard next year,” Ashton said. The conversion will only require one or two days for each room, estimated Peter Scialla, partner and CEO at Delos.

“Wyndham Hotels & Resorts will be the first hotel brand in the upscale segment to offer the Stay Well experience at every hotel across the portfolio,” Boyd said. “You have the support of the Wyndham brand team to lead you through the implementation and training at your hotel. With this collaboration, we’ll be able to give our guests what they want.”

