



Architect and design team Corinna Kretschmar-Joehnk and Peter Joehnk – the creative force behind JOI-Designs – celebrate 30 years in the industry with the launch of their new book ...

101 Hotel Rooms

101 Hotel Rooms covers contracts of the last five years – and demonstrates how the concept of the hotel room can be reinvented, time and time again. With designs for luxury five star, boutique, and budget hotels, each turn of the page presents a different solution for stylish accommodation, whatever the budget. In an interview with Hospitality Interiors, authors Corinna and Peter share their views on hotel design with Sarah Albone.

How did you compile the shortlist for 101 Hotel Rooms?

It was quite simple, actually, because the book contains the majority of our projects from the last five years!

Can you outline the brief?

The intention was to compile a book with many solutions for space-planning and design issues. We wanted to show a very broad scale of possibilities – from Alpine to Arabian to Art Deco. It was also a good way of showing how JOI-Design's office works.

How has budget impacted upon design?

Of course the budget always has an impact on a hotel's design – however, this doesn't mean its ability to be stylish is limited. What it does affect though is the quality of the furniture, fittings and equipment, which in turn influences the guests' perception about the value of the hotel.

Have your experiences in the industry affected your approach to design?

When we started out, we were young, ambitious designers who wanted to change the world – but then don't all designers feel that way at first? Over time though, our opinion changed when we realised that as professional designers, it's not our personal taste which matters – it's the comfort and experience that are expected by guests.

One story stands out as an illustration of this lesson. Many years ago, we were designing a large, themed hotel complex in Stuttgart. At the end of the project we told the investor that we had tried not to make the project feel too much like Disney World. His reply was that, actually, he did want the design to be reminiscent of Disney World since the theme park was such a success.

This developer's comment made us think about the importance of listening to other people and the experiences they desire in a hotel because, in truth, hospitality design is not about bringing to life the visions of the

building's architects or designers. A successful design is one which interprets other people's wishes in an attractive yet functionally viable way.

Have you seen a shift in expectations from consumers when it comes to hotel design?

Of course, as time goes by people's expectations develop. Not only have the technological possibilities increased, but also the degree to which design is valued. Expectations today are different than they were 30 years ago – in fact, they've changed quite a bit even in the last 10 years.

How have guest expectations changed?

Technical developments like LED lighting and flat-screen TVs are now the norm and have impacted the way a hotel is designed. However the major change is that guests expect a hotel to have flair – its style must have vibrancy and an attitude. Before, the aim was to be everyone's darling and recreate the luxury found in the last century's grand hotels. Today, hotels are the source of cutting-edge design and even the inspiration that guests use for their own homes.

Is there more pressure on hotels to use design and style as a way of differentiating themselves from other brands?

Yes – but the major brands all have similar ideas! Developers and operators have a mainstream perception of design. They think they are creating new styles that are different from others, but in reality they're all on the same wavelength and are just approaching the design from different angles. They are trying to follow what is already 'in the air'.

Truly new thinking only comes from the independent or start-up hotel companies such as Malmaison, Kemp hotels and CitizenM. They are the innovators and the major brands are the followers.

What do you see as being key developments in the hotel industry?

Public areas are becoming increasingly multifunctional. Large spaces are used for several activities at the same time – the lobby, lounge, dining and bistro spaces often flow together and are also used for private functions, meetings, business centres etc ...

They have also become less formal and have more individual touches like guests would have in their own homes. Travellers also see the star rating system as having less credibility. For example, hotels are promoted as having four-star comfort at a two-star price, or a property might feel like a four or five-star hotel but not have a restaurant as would be prescribed by traditional brand standards.

JOI-Design's projects reflect these developments, and we no longer need to follow guide manuals quite so precisely in order to incorporate brand standards into the scheme.

What do you see as your key achievements?

For us, our key achievement is simply that we are working in an industry for which we are passionate, doing what we love to do – designing hotels!

Do you plan to release any more books?

Yes! The title 101 Hotel Rooms immediately leads one to think of the other possibilities – 101 Restaurants, 101 Bars, 101 Lobbies, etc ... In fact, we've already begun gathering our restaurant and bar projects to create the next books!

101 Hotel Rooms, by Corinna Kretschmar-Joehnk and Peter Joehnk is published by Verlagshaus Braun and can be ordered from bookstores or directly from JOI-Design. ISBN 978-3-03768-071-1

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W taschen.com**

101 Hotel Rooms reflects how the economics of the hospitality industry have changed. Design is more competitive than ever before. Therefore it suits the industry for the discipline's cultural clout to be raised towards that of art – something which is reflected in the increasing number of hotels using design and style as a way to differentiate themselves from other brands.

Part of Corinna and Peter's success lies in their ability to realise a striking design for any scenario. 101 of these rooms are immortalised in JOI-Designs' new book, creating a helpful style guide for use by students, architects and interior designers alike.