



Prints charming

The one word on Edinburgh's lips at the moment is Missoni, says Tim Small



You could say it's not surprising that Hotel Missoni is causing quite a buzz around Edinburgh city centre in the wake of its opening in June of this year. It's bold, it's brash and it's just not very, well, *Edinburgh*. Yet, delivering a design that could be seen as aesthetically opposed to everything the city stands for – and, believe us, the building of such a modern structure in the midst of the Old Town did cause quite a stir – the finished hotel is a beacon of international glamour in a city famous for its classical leanings and historical architecture.

Created in partnership between the Italian fashion and interiors house, Missoni, and the Rezidor Hotel Group, and with a perfect position on the Royal Mile, Hotel Missoni Edinburgh is the first of what is planned to be a global hotel chain and, with another to open in Kuwait later this year, the operators are not wasting a second moving forward.

The hotel is designed sympathetically with a tanned sandstone exterior blending suitably into the surroundings of one of the most historical parts of the capital. While the designers were keen to create a bold and perhaps controversial image they have also respected the boundaries of the city style and have done everything necessary to ensure that the structure will not look out of place.

While the exterior may blend into the landscape, this all changes upon entering the iconic design house's hotel. Rosita Missoni's burgeoning prints pack a punch behind the impressively vibrant interior design. Polka dots, stripy wallpaper, tinted lighting and bold background colours invade your vision, letting you know that these designers have held nothing back. The dramatic prints and sleek furniture combine to create an immediate transformation from the world outside, enticing modern art lovers to enter and appreciate the genius that has taken place.





Rosita Missoni and her team have used Italian style and inspiration to inject passion and flavour into the hotel, giving each of the 136 bedrooms individual and signature decor which complement the design of the equally forthright main areas. Rosita has cleverly combined the unmistakable Missoni prints with the work of designers that she personally admires, such as Marcel Wanders, Eero Saarinen and Arne Jacobson and, arranged over the six floors of the property, guests will discover iconic pieces of design, some of which Rosita has in her own home. Importantly, Missoni has also managed to hold on to the comfort that we all expect from top class hotel rooms, providing small touches such as fluffy dressing gowns and plump cushions throughout.

But who wants to hide out in hotel rooms here? Bar Missoni is quickly becoming somewhere to see and be seen in Edinburgh, with an extensive cocktail menu and a layout perfect for people watching. Appealing to the coffee-loving Italian way of life, this space has been put together so that customers can spend hours relaxing in its calm ambience. At the weekends this bar attracts the capital's glitterati – the Missoni prints then bustling for attention against the myriad of coloured cocktails and cutting edge fashions.

Perhaps unsurprisingly for a collective already packing such a punch in the city, the Rezidor/Missoni team is not afraid of a bit of fighting talk. Their VP of brands, Gordon McKinnon puts it succinctly: "I firmly believe that Hotel Missoni will raise the bar compared with existing fashion boutique hotels."

And you can't help but agree. With its eye-catching detail and expensive finish, this hotel is one which is creating a name within the global circuit already. Opening an entirely modern and luxurious hotel in a part of the city which embraces its culture and history could be seen as controversial, but what is entirely undeniable is that this brave move has created something intriguing which must be experienced to be believed.

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www.hotelmissoni.com

