## NEW HOMES & CONDOS

## London calling with its dazzling designs



LIFE WELL-DESIGNED

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It's been a bit of a whirlwind summer for me. I've been to London, Paris, Montreal and Scotland!

It has made for an adventurous few months, and many, many hotel suites. As a designer, it's been inspiration overload.

Venturing outside the mainstream hotel chains reveals distinctly different approaches and visions for their own definition of the perfect stay.

By far one of the most unique stays was at the brand new citizenM's flagship hotel in London. Their second property in London marks another milestone in the history of this young and innovative Dutch hotel brand.

Since it was founded in 2008, the company has been a disruptive force, breaking the rules of traditional hospitality with its belief in offering an outstanding experience and advanced thinking, treating all guests equally and seeking to give them what they really want — contemporary design, technology that enables a streamlined experience and friendly, efficient service at a very smart price.

Spending time here admittedly confuses the traveler brain. It's all at once fantastically animated and lively, yet

feels like a home, by design.

I was struck by how similar they've echoed what has become the standard in condo developments.

The idea that your personal space is small and efficient, allowing for more robust common areas. You definitely feel encouraged to hang out in the lobby to work or unwind; use it as you would your own living room.

The rooms themselves are all identical, keeping with the hotel's notion that everyone is treated the same.

I'd liken it to a crash pad. The bed is the full width of the room and intoxicatingly comfortable, the corridor is the washroom.

It's a master class in small space design and definitely makes you pause to consider if this layout isn't the perfect home guest suite.

In the centre of the new hotel are the self check-in terminals, arranged in circles around small sapling trees, which allow a swift and easy check-in and



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out in seconds.

Furniture from Vitra, citizenM's long-term partner, is used throughout the hotel, showcasing classic pieces from designers such as Verner Panton, Charles & Ray Eames, and Jean Prouvé.

Oversized shelves let the guest enter the humorous world of citizenM. Filled with books and unique objects that reflect aspects of traditional British heritage, citizenM's love for quirky details will delight guests from all over the world.

A stuffed boar's head surveys its surroundings while vin-

tage cricket bats, antique riding boots and silver sports trophies adorn the communal spaces.

It is located in the heart of one of London's most historical sites right opposite the world famous Tower of London.

In order to fully appreciate the ancient splendour of this UNESCO World Heritage site, and home to the Queen's Crown Jewels, citizenM has crowned its new 8-storey property with a jewel itself; a dramatic double height space with floor to ceiling windows and a wrap around terrace that offers a stunning 360° view of London

and its famed skyline.

What a fun way to experience a bit of London history, and for once, a British design scheme done well.

Man-o-man, we Canadians have been loving the U.K. look. It's an inspiring spot for a quick stay and keeping with my mantra, it's as affordable as it is stylish!

 Melissa Davis is a celebrity designer well-known for her appearances and creative work on several HGTV programs. Visit her at www.melissadavis.com.



The citizenM's flagship hotel in London shines by being a disruptive force, breaking the rules of traditional hospitality and creating new experiences.



Common areas entice visitors to hang out or unwind, and to use as if they were in their own living rooms.



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