



DESIGN: MAMA SHELTER ISTANBUL

FROM MAMA WITH LOVE

The Mama Shelter brand debuts in Istanbul with a quirky yet comfortable hotel designed to make a personal connection with guests.

by ANN BAGEL STORCK, MANAGING EDITOR

When the Mama Shelter brand decided to expand outside France — the first two Mama Shelter properties opened in Paris and Marseille in 2008 and 2012, respectively — Istanbul stood out as an obvious choice. Mama Shelter Co-Founder and Director General Jeremie Trigano met his wife there, and he ultimately found the city's diverse Beyoglu district to be the ideal site for his hotel brand.

"We love Istanbul, Beyoglu and specifically Istiklal Caddesi (the street where Mama Shelter Istanbul is located) because it is one of the most central, cultural, pedestrian and energetic locations in the city," Trigano says. "It truly reflects Mama's spirit."

"Mama Shelter and Istanbul share the same values," agrees Philippe Starck, who designed the Istanbul property and serves as the artistic director for the brand. "Both are crosses of various areas; both have mixed cultures, mixed creativity, mixed love, mixed politics, mixed everything."

Starck's eclectic design reflects that mix. The new-build hotel's 81

guestrooms include fun surprises such as masks draped over lampshades and rugs with a graffiti-like pattern, while its restaurant and bar sport a wall of musical instruments and colorful flotation devices hanging from the ceiling. "It's always a surprise to see a finished Mama because Starck will add the craziest ideas up to the last minute," Trigano says. "As usual, we loved the result because Mama Istanbul has all of Mama's DNA with a Starck twist."

Starck adds that he designs Mama Shelter properties for a group he calls "the smart tribe," who appreciate similar design elements in all the brand's hotels even as he makes some fun tweaks. "The only differences are some private jokes, small jokes that make me laugh," Starck says. "I might have made a moustache on fabric — small things like that. It's like an inside joke between good friends."

A brand hallmark for Mama Shelter is delivering cutting-edge design at a relatively low price — the average rate at the Istanbul property is around €100 (US\$128) — which Trigano says is

possible thanks to smart spending. "We try to invest in things that matter — a great bed, amazing sheets, a comfortable bathroom and a high-tech in-room entertainment system," he explains. "We avoid spending on superficial elements. For example, Starck kept the concrete walls as much as possible, avoiding us spending on wall covering and painting."

At press time, Mama Shelter Istanbul was still in a soft-opening phase, making only about half its guestrooms available, but Trigano is optimistic about its future performance. "Pre-bookings are going extraordinarily well," he says. "We believe Mama Shelter Istanbul will outperform the market and our goals."

Aspirations for the brand as a whole are lofty as well. Mama Shelter Lyon also debuted this spring, and this fall will see the addition of properties in Bordeaux, France, and Los Angeles. "We don't really follow market studies," Trigano says. "We are in discussions for Mamas in Brussels, Rio de Janeiro, Brooklyn and London. Our goal is to open Mamas in cities we love."





The reception area at Mama Shelter Istanbul is focused on bright colors and bold decorations as well as high-end technology.

MAMA SHELTER ISTANBUL

OPENING DATE: The hotel soft-opened March 5, with about half its guestrooms available.

GUESTROOMS: 81

LOCATION: Istanbul's Beyoglu district, home to an eclectic mix of shopping, entertainment and people

GENERAL MANAGER: Meti Arici

OWNER: Demiroren Holding, Istanbul

ARCHITECT: Demiroren Insaat, Istanbul

INTERIOR DESIGNER: Philippe Starck, Paris

DESIGN AESTHETIC: The focus is on comfortable amenities that matter most to guests, with "inside jokes between friends" thrown in for good measure.

AVERAGE RATE: €100 (US\$128)



DESIGN: MAMA SHELTER ISTANBUL



The Mama Shelter brand delivers hip design without a high price tag partly by focusing on what matters most to guests, such as a comfortable bathroom.



The ceiling in the restaurant-bar area features a mix of drawings as well as phrases in various languages.



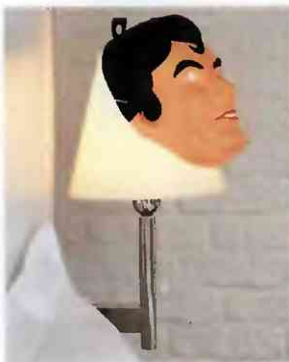
The hotel's 81 guestrooms promise basic yet important amenities such as comfortable beds and a simple-yet-functional work desk, and many offer terraces.



DESIGN: MAMA SHELTER ISTANBUL



The hotel's restaurant serves the best of French and Turkish cuisine by chefs Alain Senderens and Jerome Bancel.



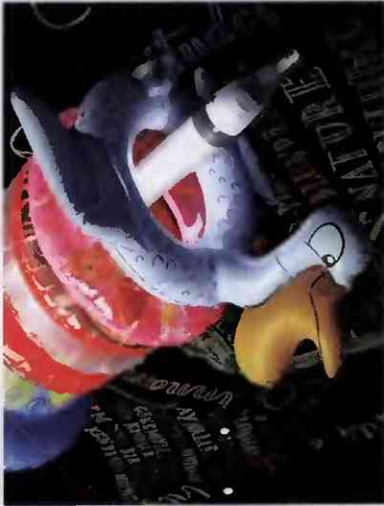
Designer Philippe Starck says he likes to include "inside jokes" throughout Mama Shelter properties.



Guestroom rugs feature "graffiti" by calligrapher Tarek Benaoum.



DESIGN: MAMA SHELTER ISTANBUL



Given the bar's island theme, multi-colored flotation devices hang from its ceiling.



A rooftop terrace aims to take advantage of sunny summer days.



The bar area includes a wall adorned with musical instruments. Mama Shelter Co-Founder Jeremie Trigano says working with Philippe Starck always produces surprising results.