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THOROUGHLY CUSTOM a new era in budget chic

By Melinda Sheckells



With the Bold Statement, “A good layover” emblazoned across the Custom Hotel facade, unveiled in October, it has made a splash in the world airport-adjacent accommodations.

After discovering a lack of a truly boutique hotel options in the lodging located near Los Angeles International Airport, Avi Brosh of Palisades Development Group began to conceptualize plans for a hotel unlike any other — one that would blend affordability with high design, while offering guests and locals a singular experience.

“LA X is one of the largest airport-hotel room inventories in the nation and there isn’t really a single property with personality,” says Brosh. “I decided to design a hotel that would fill a niche for business travelers.”

Brosh also identified that there was lack of food and beverage options in the area for locals, so he decided to include a hip restaurant and bar to bring in the masses. The result: business travelers mingling with area residents — an experience not provided at any other nearby hotels.

With the psychology and branding of the property firmly in place Brosh set out to wow with its look. The building he chose was designed by famed mid-century architect Welton Beckett — and had been home to several different hotels since it was constructed in the late 1960s. Beckett is best known as the designer of Los Angeles’ Capitol Records Building and the Cinerama Dome.

The 12-story, 250-room Custom Hotel is fun, whimsical, uplifting, and off-beat according to Brosh, whose company designs everything in-house. “We were able to do some very independent thinking in terms of the design. We wanted to make it super-friendly and convenient for the business traveler, yet also fun — in an interesting way,” says Brosh. “We have all sorts of animal imagery — dogs, horses, birds — it makes people smile.”

The standard rooms feature bedspreads with a dog portrait pattern. The sheep grazing in the lobby are actually stools. The two-bedroom suite is decorated in an equestrian theme complete with a mechanical pony. And the hotel’s gyms are dog and horseracing themed, based on whether they house cardio or resistance training machines. Other stand-out amenities include panoramic views of the ocean, Malibu, Hollywood Hills, and Downtown Los Angeles. There is a lobby lounge, layover rooms and live DJs, as well as classic custom-designed furnishings including a signature bed, flat-screen LCD TV’s, stereos with iPod docking and mini bars. Other creature comforts include complimentary Wi-Fi access, Percale Italian linens and Egyptian cotton bath towels.

“Everywhere you look there is something unexpected,” says Brosh. As for his favorite spot at the Custom, he says it’s the restaurant, Bistrotek, hands down. “It feels like you are dining at a New York City–style restaurant — warm and inviting, yet casual. Every time I go in there it surprises me.”

Room rates begin at \$129 per night; reservations can be made by calling 877/287-8601 or visiting customhotel.com.