



New Openings...
Sleeper’s pick of
new openings

Parilio
Paros

Perched between Paros’ tranquil Kolympithres Beach and the whitewashed fishing village of Naoussa, the 33-suite Parilio guesthouse echoes the aesthetic of the Greek island’s distinctive block-white architecture, layering spaces with natural stone materials and a soothing colour palette of neutral white, grey, ochre, ivory and sienna. Devised by native designer Stamos Hondrodimos, the hotel features a spa, a fully equipped gym and Mr. E. Here – an on-site restaurant headed up by chef Alexandros Tsiotinis.

The Hoxton
Southwark

Occupying a 14-storey newbuild in South London, the 192-key Hoxton Southwark marks the eighth hotel in the brand’s portfolio and its third in the UK capital. With Ennismore Design Studio overseeing industrial chic interiors, the factory-inspired scheme has been elevated by British-made furniture and lush greenery providing an airy counterpoint. The property features the brand’s signature communal spaces, a rooftop seafood restaurant and the second outpost of its new co-working concept, Working From_.

The Dive Motel & Swim Club
Nashville

Having reinterpreted the traditional bed and breakfast as dynamic boutique concepts in Nashville and Brooklyn, Urban Cowboy’s Lyon Porter and Jersey Banks have launched a new creation; The Dive Motel & Swim Club – a 23-key property occupying a renovated 1956 Nashville motor inn. Designed, operated and owned by the duo, the motel features a 60-foot swimming pool, interiors layered with vintage ‘70s wallpaper and, true to name, an on-site dive bar serving as both restaurant and check-in desk.



Dakota

MANCHESTER

Dakota Hotels launches its fifth property in the UK, bringing a touch of Mayfair to Manchester's Northern Quarter.

Words: Ben Thomas
Photography: Courtesy of Dakota Hotels

In 1936, the Douglas DC-3 aircraft made its maiden flight from New York to Chicago and went on to revolutionise the aviation industry. Designated the Dakota in British Royal Air Force service, the aircraft changed the face of air travel by making stylish design and luxury service more accessible to the masses. Established with the aim of applying that same pioneering spirit to hospitality, Dakota Hotels began its journey in Scotland, debuting at Eurocentral just outside of Glasgow in 2006, before taking up residency in the Edinburgh suburb of South Queensferry, close to Edinburgh Airport, a year later. The brainchild of British hotelier Ken McCulloch – founder of the Malmaison brand – Dakota has since expanded throughout the UK, moving into city centre locations in Glasgow and Leeds. Now, marking the most significant venture in its 13-year history, the brand has brought its distinct concept to Manchester, launching a new £30 million property in the city's Northern Quarter.

Situated on Ducie Street close to Piccadilly Station and the Rochdale Canal, Dakota

Manchester has been masterminded by KPP Architects in the hotel group's trademark black brick style, while interiors by Amanda Rosa, McCulloch's wife, bring a touch of old-school Mayfair to the Cottonopolis. On entering the imposing building, guests are greeted by a series of sleek public areas featuring a dark colour palette, rich fabrics and atmospheric lighting, with venetian blinds between the reception area and bar, wooden screened booths in the restaurant and the abundant use of candlelight likening the ground floor spaces to a film noir set. Adding character to the scheme are a collection of movie posters on the corridor walls, together with playful touches such as a textile dog named Chester – who can be seen climbing on a table in the lobby.

"Our first objective is to ensure the guest is comfortable and relaxed. We try to make the interiors look and feel natural," says McCulloch. "For this project, the main influence was to look back rather than forward, taking inspiration from the honesty and integrity of classic hotels."



The hotel's crowning glory is the Grand Deluxe Suite with a wraparound rooftop terrace overlooking the Northern Quarter and nearby Ancoats neighbourhood

The hotel's 137 guestrooms and 20 suites follow a similarly elegant colour palette, with dusky purple mohair throws harking back to Dakota's roots in Scotland. Every guestroom is equipped with rainfall showers, Chelsom lighting and a smart TV with a full Sky package, while the Garden King rooms include private garden terraces, and Signature and Executive Suites provide super king-size beds and two separate en-suites.

The crowning glory however is the Grand Deluxe Suite, a penthouse located on the eighth level of the building. Billed as the largest in the city, the standout suite features its own private entrance, lounge, dining area, two bedrooms, walk-in wardrobe, fireplace, en-suite bathrooms with steam showers and a two-metre sunken tub – not to mention a complimentary mini fridge stocked with local brands like Manchester Gin and Brightside Brewery. In addition, a wraparound rooftop terrace provides panoramic views over the Northern Quarter and nearby Ancoats neighbourhood.

"The most important thing for me is a hotel that makes you feel special," McCulloch continues. "It's the finer details that make all the difference; the simple things done brilliantly. Amanda understands that and is aware of what needs to be created. There is longevity to her design, and it truly has a character of its own."

At the heart of the F&B programme, the 104-cover Dakota Grill serves a classically-inspired menu rich with seasonal ingredients, while a private dining space can also host exclusive parties for 20 guests. The neighbourhood brasserie, with waterside vistas of Piccadilly Basin, plates up signature dishes like grass-fed, 35-day-aged steak cooked over hot coals, as well as seafood dishes ranging from classic poached haddock to a flavoursome monkfish curry.

For those after something a little stronger, a chic cocktail lounge offers an impressive drinks list combining classics with bespoke in-house

creations, as well as a carefully curated wine list. Accompanying the bar is The Champagne Room, a semi-private space decked in dark tones and marble, which can be used for canapé receptions or whisky tasting experiences.

"The Dakota Grill and cocktail bar are the heart and soul of the whole operation," says McCulloch, noting that guests often visit Dakota hotels for their restaurants alone. "Over the years, Dakota has created its own success by the standard of its restaurants and the dining experience we deliver time and time again."

Another unique addition is The Cigar Garden, a purpose-built terrace warmed by gas fires, where guests can pair their favourite Cuban from the hotel's dedicated humidor with a fine collection of premium cognac and whisky. The waterside terrace is available for al fresco drinking and dining when the weather permits, catering to a maximum of 80 covers, while a second heated terrace close by can host open-air events for up to 50 people.

From its heritage as an industrial powerhouse to its musical and artistic pedigree, Manchester has frequently led the way up north, and the launch of Dakota's fifth property only goes to strengthen that. As the new flagship, the hotel has paved the way for further openings, with destinations such as London, Birmingham and Cardiff all under consideration.

For McCulloch however, the focus for now is building on what has already been created: "As I've always said, we should try to make our hotels a little bit better every day, which doesn't sound much, but multiply that by 365, that's quite a lot! There's no place like home, but we're working on it."



EXPRESS CHECKOUT

Owner: Evans Property Group

Operator: Dakota Hotels

Architecture: KPP Architects

Interior Design: Amanda Rosa Interiors

Main Contractor: GMI Construction

www.dakotahotels.co.uk

— CHELSOM —



Mercure Brighton Seafront Hotel. Designer: Helen Hooper Interiors.

chelsom.co.uk