

Envisioning the Future

INTERVIEW WITH DEWI PINATIH OF STYLUS

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Boutique Design

Dewi Pinatih, senior editor for product design at Stylus, a global innovation research and advisory company, guides Stylus' Design Directions—an inspirational tool for concept creation across furniture, packaging, transport and consumer electronics. She recently presented Design Directions A/W 19/20 at Decoded Future, in London at Stylus' innovation summit for changemakers and imaginative thinkers. Here, Pinatih gives Boutique Design an exclusive peek into how these trends will shape the future of hospitality design.



(Lumishell photos by C. Benichou)

At Stylus' Decoded Future event, you identified three cultural shifts emerging over the next 18 months: Burst, Essence and Captivate. What are these, and how do you anticipate they will influence hospitality design concepts?

Grounded in consumer sentiment, these creative directions will guide the future's most innovative product and spatial designs:

Burst is inspired by young consumers who've grown up using the internet. Pragmatic and proactive, they have an optimistic outlook yet also hold brands accountable. In the context of hospitality, it's all about sustainable design and supporting people's desire to live more consciously.

Essence is influenced by millennials' urban lifestyles and desire to counterbalance the effects of an increasingly turbulent world. Their interest in off-grid living and spaces designed to converge indoor and outdoor environments is driving new opportunities for luxury hospitality. The Sanctuary by The Assemblage, located in upstate New York, offers members wood cabins and over 143 acres of diverse landscapes to tune out and reconnect with nature. And LumiShell is a modular dwelling that can be placed anywhere outside.



(Contemplation Spaces photo by Nick Bookelaar)

Captivate stems from the universal concern we're spending too much time interacting with flat screens and technology. Consumers are looking for analogue experiences that trigger multiple senses. For hospitality brands, this means creating more emotive spaces, leveraging tactility and offering surprise. Dutch curator Justine Kontou's spatial concept, Contemplation Spaces, is a great example of how visitors can enter an atmosphere for introspection and respite.



(Zero Waste Bistro photo Nicholas Calcott)

You mentioned plastics would become a luxury product. How so, and what are some examples of how “luxury plastics” could be included in hotel and restaurant design? Can it complement the desire for sustainable materials?

As petroleum resources become scarcer, virgin plastic will become a rarity elevated to luxury status. Brands will be forced to turn to recycled plastics, which will fundamentally change how we think about the material. When virgin clear plastic is no longer available, how can recycled resources become beautiful?



(Seating at El Celler de Can Roca photo courtesy of Andreu Carulla)

A really interesting example is pop-up restaurant Zero Waste Bistro from the Finnish Cultural Institute, which was constructed using a material made from recycled food packaging including milk cartons. Another is the collaboration between designer Andreu Carulla and the Michelin-starred restaurant El Celler de Can Roca in Girona (Catalonia, Spain), which saw seating made from EPS boxes, the notoriously difficult-to-recycle containers suppliers use for delivering ingredients.



(Aquaponic Eel Bar photo by Dylan Perrenoud)

How do you see biophilic design being further adapted for hospitality destinations?

Biophilic design is moving away from simply installing plants to much less “polished” aspects of nature that create more authentic experiences. Diners at the Leopold Banchini-designed Aquaponic Eel Bar in Brussels’ Recyclart Gallery eat the regional Flemish dish of European eels while live ones swim overhead. The meal is served with a green herbal sauce fertilized with eel excrement. The trend is to offer people creative ways to connect with nature while they’re indoors.

Why are contemplative spaces growing in popularity, and how can hotels implement this idea to improve the guest experience?

Google forecasts that over the next five years, U.S. consumers spending on experiences will outpace overall spending on physical things by 33%. This is hugely positive for the hospitality industry.

As society seeks time away from constant tech interaction, they’re opting for experiences that stimulate different senses through art, design, sound, smell and tactility. The desire is only set to grow, so hospitality brands should be creating spaces that alleviate low-level anxiety by enabling contemplation and reflection away from the outside world.

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