

Hotels for the Next Generation

MARCH 17, 2015

Stephanie Rosenbloom

THE GETAWAY

Longing for alternatives to the conventional, cookie-cutter hotel? Along with crocuses and daffodils, new specialty chains from major hospitality companies including Marriott, Hilton, Hyatt and Carlson Rezidor will be springing up across the globe in the coming weeks and months.

The hotels are what's known in the industry as "lifestyle" brands: They strive to appeal to the predilections of next-generation travelers. Some are trying to lure millennials (who are defined as between 18 and 34 in 2015, according to the Pew Research Center) with high-tech lounges, reasonable rates, locally inspired amenities, and grab-and-go meals.

Others are aiming to attract cosmopolitan travelers who simply want affordable, modern spaces that feel luxurious without being fussy or sterile.



Here's a primer on what to expect if you step inside.

Moxy Hotels

"It's just like home, but with a bartender," explains the brand's website to the uninitiated. To the right, there's a slide show with a photograph of a blond woman in diminutive jean shorts and a cropped jacket, head cocked and eyes closed, suggesting she's rocking out to music streaming through her headphones. This is Marriott for Millennials, a demographic Marriott International felt was being underserved by its competitors with staid hotels that lacked personality. Much of what one will find inside Moxy, which is being rolled out in the United States after being introduced in Milan in September, is based on Marriott's research into millennial behavior, according to Tina Edmundson, the global officer for luxury and lifestyle brands for Marriott International. For instance, the company's research suggested that millennials shy away from hotels that feel corporate; they're immersed in social media; and they enjoy shared spaces for both work and fun. So Moxy hotels have playful "living rooms" with free Wi-Fi, plenty of electrical outlets and classic games sized for giants, such as Jenga and Connect Four.

Photos that guests post on Instagram with the hashtag #atthemoxy instantly appear on Moxyhotels.com and on a digital guest book: an oversize screen in the hotel "living room." Naturally there's a full-service bar. And since millennials want what they want when they want it, according to Marriott, there's a 24-hour self-service cafe.

Moxy is designed to compete with more traditional economy hotels — after all, millennials aren't necessarily flush — by offering affordable prices along with sleek, industrial-inspired design (polished concrete floors, exposed columns), comfort and a lively scene (ergo the bar).

Marriott plans to open more than 100 Moxy hotels around the world over the next decade in cities that include Munich, Frankfurt, Berlin, Copenhagen and London. In the United States, coming locations include Manhattan (Chelsea, Midtown and Lower Manhattan), San Francisco, Seattle, New Orleans and Chicago. Information: Moxy-hotels.marriott.com.

In addition to Moxy, Marriott is also in the midst of introducing its AC brand to the United States (it is already in Europe). Like Moxy, AC Hotels by Marriott cater to millennials, particularly young entrepreneur types, but AC is even more focused on design, with an emphasis on clean, European style. This month, an AC hotel will open in Washington, D.C. Next month is Miami Beach, and in May, Chicago. More than 50 additional AC hotels are scheduled to open over the next three years throughout the United States and Latin America. Information: Achotels.marriott.com.



A Canopy by Hilton lobby in Portland, Ore.

Canopy by Hilton

Each hotel in this chain, which will begin operating late this year, will aim to convey the feeling of the neighborhood it's in through locally inspired design, art, music, drinks (like evening tastings of local brews) and food. Guests may be shown neighborhood fitness options such as jogging routes and bikes, and they'll receive a small welcome gift from local businesses. Guests in Denver, for example, might be given a treat from the Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory, while those in Chicago might receive a snack from Garrett Popcorn.

At check-in (which can be done through a mobile app) guests will have the option of selecting a themed "foodie bag" for their minibar — "one of the most underused amenities in hotel rooms," according to Gary Steffen, the global head of Canopy by Hilton. The foodie bag details are still being finalized, but Mr. Steffen said in an email that the options could include a "health driven" bag, a "chocolate lovers" bag and a "jet-lag" bag.

It's all part of Canopy's effort to cut through the clutter of so-called lifestyle hotels and offer a simple yet modern take on comfort and value. Speaking of the latter, breakfast will be free, and so will the Wi-Fi.

The hotels will be in cities and secondary markets around the world, including London; Portland, Ore.; Miami; Washington, D.C.; San Diego; Nashville; Savannah, Ga.; Indianapolis; Charlotte, N.C.; Oklahoma City; and Ithaca, N.Y. Information: Canopybyhilton.com.



A Hyatt Centric guest room in South Beach, Fla. [Continue reading the main story](#)

Hyatt Centric

This new brand is designed for what Hyatt calls “modern explorers”: multigenerational, sophisticated travelers who want to be in the heart of their destinations and who want their hotel to be connected to the local culture.

To that end there will be locally made amenities and bath wear; a common lounge for work or play called the Corner will have local books and magazines. As with some of the new hotels designed for millennials, there’s free Wi-Fi, and dining is a more casual affair. For example, room service will be offered as a “knock ‘n’ drop” service; gone is the formal in-room, on-the-bed presentation.

Hyatt Centric hotels will be popping up in popular destinations including Miami, Atlanta, Chicago, New York and Paris. Information: Hyattcentric.com.

Radisson Red

Another brand geared to millennials, this upscale line from Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group — the owners of chains including Radisson, Radisson Blu, and Country Inns & Suites by Carlson — is making its debut this year. As with other properties that are courting the next generation, the emphasis is on technology, modern design and quick food service (expect a bar and deli instead of a full-service restaurant).

A mobile app will allow you to do everything from skipping the check-in desk to ordering a drink from the bar to requesting flowers through an online concierge and summoning a taxi to whisk you to the airport. When you arrive you enter a “gallery” art space, which flows into a bar and deli area open from morning coffee to evening cocktails.

Radisson Red hotels will soon be introduced in the Americas, Europe, the Middle East, Africa and the Asia Pacific region. Information: Radissonred.com.