



The 22 Best Hotel Openings of 2020



Pater Noster

For centuries, Sweden's most iconic lighthouse has served as a beacon for sailors in the isolated locale of Hamneskär Island. It is now also home to the singular Pater Noster hotel. Named for the Latin title of the Lord's Prayer, the property reflects its sacred namesake beyond just its setting thanks to a design by Gothenburg, Sweden's Stylt Trampoli that pays homage to the rough waters surrounding it. Crafted as the abode of a lighthouse keeper, the 19th-century structure now accommodates nine guestrooms, a restaurant, bar, and an outdoor café. Locally sourced vintage furniture complements dark woodwork and bespoke focal points like wallpaper detailed with native seaweed and maritime imagery that ensconces guests in an authentic retreat both rustic and warm.



Thompson Dallas

Housed within the transformed First National Bank Tower, the [Thompson Dallas](#) draws upon the city's rich legacy with a design by local firms Merriman Anderson Architects, Interiors Limited, and Todd Interiors. A narrative of modern luxury is expressed via restored wood paneling, brass, and more than 17,000 handcut marble façade panels sourced from the same quarry as the Parthenon. Averaging more than 700 square feet, each of the 219 accommodations honor that materiality alongside blue lacquered walls and rich leather upholstery. Opulence is evoked across public spaces, from the ornate, 14,000-square-foot National Ballroom to the buzzy rooftop lounge Catbird, while unconventional enticements like Botanical Mix, a floral design studio-coworking hybrid, further establish the Dallas outpost as a vibrant standout in the Hyatt brand's distinctive portfolio, which also welcomed its first Washington, DC outpost in January of 2020, the handiwork of Studios Architecture and Parts and Labor Design.

Photo by Gus Schmiede



[21c Museum Hotel Chicago](#)

During Chicago's vaudeville heyday, actors would flock to the Croydon Hotel. Decades and several iterations later, that River North hangout is now home to the 21c Museum Hotel Chicago – Mgallery, attracting visitors to ever-changing art exhibitions rather than campy theater. Like the other eight hybrid hotel-museum properties in the brand's portfolio, this one was designed by [Deborah Berke Partners](#), the New York firm that coincidentally worked on the James, which previously occupied the site. Floor-to-ceiling windows in the lobby invite passersby to gaze at both the sculptural balustrade staircase and often-provocative contemporary art selections. Bright white public spaces morph into darker corridors that pave the way to the guestrooms, sanctuaries with a soft blue palette mimicking the hue of Lake Michigan, marble baths, and cushy, large-scale leather and velvet headboards.

Photo courtesy of 21c Museum Hotels



The Rockaway Hotel

The Rockaways are located in Queens, but the relaxed atmosphere of this bungalow beach enclave feels worlds apart from its fast-paced Manhattan neighbor. For [the Rockaway Hotel](#), New York firms Morris Adjmi Architects and Curious Yellow Design created a getaway that honors the local community and its pervasive surf culture through the likes of zinc paneling and abundant greenery. In the guestrooms, custom beds are fashioned out of teak and rattan, the latter a material that also appears on the pool deck's sea urchin light fixtures. Designed as a comfortable sitting room, the lobby is a quirky union of vintage Indonesian textiles, terrazzo, black metal, linen, and bubblegum-colored pink resin. Here, the artwork is part of the hotel's thought-provoking collection that includes pieces by Rockaway Beach denizens.

Photo by Kyle Knodell



1 Hotel Haitang Bay Sanya

China's tropical Hainan Island inspired the [1 Hotel Haitang Bay Sanya](#), the sustainable luxury brand's first foray into Asia. Designed by Oval Partnership and Singapore studio FARM, the property, perched on a hill and surrounded by gardens, features staggered roof terraces alive with vegetation. The celebration of nature is echoed inside through raw, textured materials like pigmented concrete and salvaged roof tiles that mimic the rock escarpments of nearby mountains. The lobby's installation of towering steel and timber "tree trunks" climb toward a screened skylight, while the narrative also extends to the restaurants, like the plant-bedecked Green House and 1 Kitchen, where a rammed-earth wall nods to the rugged coastline. Guestrooms are adorned with live-edged wood, unpolished stone, and rattan.

Photo courtesy of 1 Hotel Haitang Bay Sanya



AKA Patagonia

Nature is what brings visitors to South America's mountainous Patagonia region, and it abounds at [AKA Patagonia](#), in Puerto Natales, Chile. The rural site comprises six prefabricated cabins and one devoted to communal dining and social gatherings. Architect Pablo Larroulet, founder of Santiago-based Larrou, intentionally kept the interiors sparse to illuminate the environs through floor-to-ceiling windows and doors that open onto rear decks. Placed atop pile foundations to disturb the land as little as possible, the units, linked by a winding platform, are arranged in a staggered fashion to maximize privacy. All are clad in local lenga wood (a hardy material that can withstand the area's harsh weather conditions), which extends indoors to the walls and ceilings. By leaving the timber untreated, Larroulet ensures an organically evolving patina befitting the surroundings.

Photo by Adrian Aleson



Canopy by Hilton Philadelphia Center City

Despite the challenges of 2020, Canopy by Hilton rolled out several new properties in such cities as Memphis; Baltimore; Scottsdale, Arizona; Grand Rapids, Michigan; and Jersey City, New Jersey. One of these newcomers is the [Canopy by Hilton Philadelphia Center City](#), housed inside the late 19th-century Beaux-Arts Stephen Girard Building overhauled by local firm BLT Architects. For the interiors, AvroKO's New York office kept the East Market shopping district locale top of mind, telegraphing a golden-age department store through intricate millwork, display cases, and a geometric stone floor. At the Wayward brasserie, a relief-based knotty pine installation by local graphic artist Nate Harris holds court above a banquette. The hotel is also an ode to Philadelphia's hip-hop heritage, particularly the "big fashion" movement, which is especially amplified in this room, where chandeliers reminiscent of gold teeth grills hang above an array of vibrant blue and teal tiles.



[The Standard London](#)

The Standard planted its maiden flag across the pond in 2020, with a London opening heralding the beginning of its expansion outside the U.S. (the Standard Maldives also debuted last year). Housed within a Brutalist volume, once the Camden Town Hall Annex, the chic and spirited hotel features a broadly European eclecticism, punctuated with furnishings sourced from Italy, Germany, Scandinavia, and the UK. Longtime Standard collaborator, San Francisco-based Shawn Hausman Design, further animates the interior with retro motifs like sinuous lines and vibrant color. More than 40 configurations across the hotel's 266 guestrooms also pose an enticing draw, as do rooftop restaurant and bar Decimo, and the wood-paneled library lounge.

Photo courtesy of The Standard London



Life House, Lower Highlands

Following locations in Miami and Nantucket, Life House, Lower Highlands debuted in one of Denver's most animated neighborhoods, with a design done in-house by [Jenny Bukovec](#) and Henry Morris (Rockwell Group and Sydell Group alums, respectively) that channels both Victorian-era industrialism and the American frontier. A Wild West color palette of bluebell, dusty coralroot, and sage backdrops floral motifs, materials like cowhide and textured amber glass, and vintage furnishings, such as a three-panel leather screen from the late 1890s and a duo of Louis XVI Bergère chairs in the lobby. At the restaurant, Wildflower, the custom arched backbar with sliding tambour panels is a standout, as is the enveloping wallcovering based on a Colorado landscape that project designer Lei Xing overlaid with hidden Victorian figures. Colombian oak and raffia details in the guestrooms are enlivened by more artwork, including contemporary riffs on late 19th-century botanical paintings.

Photo by Matt Kisiday

Outlet: Hospitality Design (online)

Link: <https://www.hospitalitydesign.com/galleries/projects-hotels-resorts-wellness/best-hotel-openings-2020/#7>

UVM: 14,336

Barcelona Score: A (88)