

## Project Fact Sheet

# Checking In and Checking Out. The Hotel Experience

**STATUS:** Ongoing

**PROJECT TYPE:** A series of design and user experience case studies of North American and European boutique design hotels.

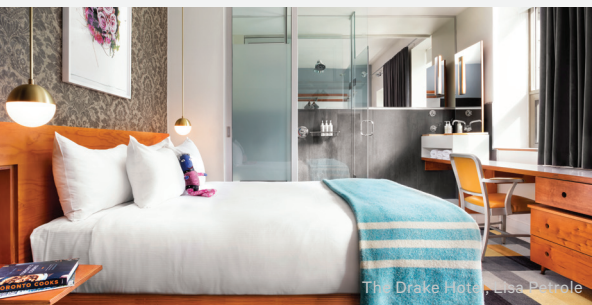
**LOCATION:** Multiple locations across various North American and European cities, including but not limited to Toronto, Chicago, Los Angeles, Miami, Vancouver, Victoria, Barcelona, Brussels, London and Lisbon.

**ARCHITECTS:** Various

**TIMELINE:** 2013 - 2017

**ABOUT THE HOTELS:** The hotels included in the multiple case study represent a mix of boutique independent design hotel operators. A select few established hotel chains with traditional loyalty programs were included for comparison purposes. The smallest hotel included in this study consisted of only eight rooms, whereas the largest hotel had over a thousand.

Whether you are travelling on business, set out on a weekend escape, or seek an enriched travel experience for leisure there are a number of factors that affect the choice of hotel. When it comes to boutique hotels, a set of core features of the hotel design drive the experience: the check in experience, the interaction and flow from the spaces in the hotel to external locations in the neighbourhood or surrounding area, the character and layout of the entertainment amenities such as cocktail bars, lounges and restaurants, and the blurring of boundaries between hotel, visitor and local spaces. Large hotel chains also offer comfort by way of design, albeit in an altogether different way.



The Drake Hotel, Lisa Petrole



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Opus Hotel

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**RESEARCH ACTIVITIES:** A comparative analysis of the impact of hotel design on impressions, experience and guest behaviour across select North American and European boutique design hotels.

**RESEARCH DESIGN:** Multiple case studies to assess how the hotel design shapes impressions, experience and guest behaviour. The research sought to observe patterns of behaviour and how key aspects of hotel design can be optimized to enhance the user experience. The study also sought to uncover the commonalities in design, user observed behaviour across hotels and how these patterns might be shaped by urban and cultural context.

**RESEARCH METHODS:** Naturalistic observation, participant observation, ethnography, interviews and content analysis of hotel surveys

**KEY SPACES AND PRIORITY AREAS FOR STUDY:** The entire guest experience beginning with the selection of the hotel, arrival either on foot, on transit, via taxi or parking, ease of wayfinding, check in experience, and flow from the entrance to the lobby and circulation corridors, navigation and journey to the guest room, layout and functionality of the guest room, use, impressions and experience of amenities, concierge services, turn down service (where applicable), connection to the community and sense of belonging to the neighbourhood or surrounding areas and concluding with check out and any courtesy follow up from the hotel, which usually includes questions related to impressions of the hotel, the staff, the neighbourhood and the city, and the likelihood for repeat visits or to recommend others to stay.



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