

Hospitality Interiors

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Clarion Hotel Draken, Gothenburg, Sweden

With a vibrant and complex design completed by acclaimed Swedish design agency, Stylt, hotel group Strawberry's flagship property Clarion Hotel Draken makes itself seen and heard across the Gothenburg skyline. Vicky Lewis explores the fire being breathed into the district's cultural hub.

The cinematic setting of this truly sensational creation takes centre stage within the Gothenburg skyline. Placed within the classic cultural quarter near the city's harbour, the all-encompassing concept of the design of the imposing property draws inspiration from its natural ties to culture. This is most evident through the hotel's connection to the historical world of film through the iconic Draken (The Dragon) cinema, an integral part of the building. For decades, Draken was a centre for festivals, now it lives on in a new guise as a house of experiences. Right in the heart of the 34-storey building, the historic and culturally significant Draken cinema has been revived as a popular attraction that has been serving locals and visitors to the city since 1956. The historical link also pays tribute to the Gothenburg Film Festival and the city's status as the cinematic capital of the Nordic region.

The hotel's positioning, near Folkteatern – a thriving theatre in the city, and Folkets Hus which has housed many cultural events

as a central location within the district, offers further expansion of the concept.

The rich performing arts and music scene across the district has fed the design inspiration and is incorporated within the life of the hotel.

The design has been



The rich performing arts and music scene across the district has fed the design inspiration





developed and brought to life by Swedish agency, Stylt. Founder, Erik Nissen Johansen, said: "The hotel's ambition to become one of the country's most dynamic cultural and entertainment hubs aligns perfectly with the cultural vibrancy of the area."

And through the vibrancy of its design, this aim is cleverly achieved. As a multi-award-winning design agency renowned for its innovative style, Stylt utilised its creative approach to concept development and storytelling throughout the interior design. With an illustrious track record of successful projects, both locally and globally, the brand continues to redefine the standards of hospitality design, pushing boundaries and crafting unforgettable experiences. All of which is evident throughout this project.

Anneli Suomalainen, lead interior architect at Stylt, said: "The blend of local culture and extensive hospitality makes Draken a truly unique project. Additionally, our design studio is the hotel's

closest neighbour, so this also becomes our new living room."

The interior presents a vibrant collision of worlds between that of the classic cinema and theatre, the high-rise architecture, and the blasts of artistic creativity within. Erik explained that his inspiration began with the location itself: "We consistently seek a narrative angle that adds intrigue and inspiration to the hotel. In the case of Hotel Draken, our inspiration was right outside the door! Situated at Järntorget, the 'Iron Square,' the hotel thrives at the epicentre of Gothenburg's grassroots culture. With theatres, intimate music stages, craft beer bars, and Scandinavia's largest film festival, the hotel's narrative essentially revolves around being an amplifier for Gothenburg's vibrant culture."

Each space across the sprawling 34-floor property boasts its own personality, with the icing on top of this colossal cake being the spectacular restaurant and rooftop bar on floors 33 and 34.

The views of the city and harbour from 104 metres above sea



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level are unmatched and almost indescribable – the windows stretch from floor to ceiling, with panoramic views even available in the bathrooms. The gem of interior décor here is the spectacular 24-metre-long illuminated dragon, an astounding creation suspended from the ceiling of the 33rd floor – a winged crowing jewel of the hotel's namesake.

The dragon's legacy is echoed throughout the hotel, even as far as the spa, which features the overall concept of Japanese bathing culture. The power of the dragon seeps in through art,

sculptures, and lighting installations.

The heritage of this spectacular place that was once a hub for culture, dance and entertainment, is reflected in the hotel's beautiful ground floor restaurant. Here, guests can experience a unique dining concept at Heurlins, combining the best of both worlds in one place – sweet and savory with great live music – a concept sure to awaken guests' senses.

Stylt's conceptual design shines throughout each of the public areas of the hotel with multiple bars and restaurants and a library serving as the communal hub of the hotel. Acting as an extension of the lobby area, the library abolishes thoughts of traditional design, with all manner of analogue and digital media available. With walls adorned with graffiti by local artists, the space is a true part of the urban environment, and the culture and ethos of the district is the pulsating heart of it all. The cinematic link is evident throughout the design, with rigged lighting giving the effect of a

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film set, and studio umbrella-effect lighting elsewhere adds to the glamour.

The aim is for Clarion Hotel Draken is to become a unique global venue for a range of events, whilst also offering breathtaking views of the city and harbour. A sizeable banquet hall, state-of-the-art meeting rooms and a conference centre offer multiple hosting options. Performances, shows and concert opportunities all add to the creativity and culture.

Looking at the final product, what was Erik most proud of? "I

take immense pride in the fact that the Gothenburg Film Festival considers the hotel their home turf," he said. "Suddenly, the hotel has gained sexiness from the film industry, attracting movie directors and film stars to frequent its premises. It has truly worked!"

www.strawberryhotels.com
www.stylt.se