



MEDIA KIT

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Facts and figures

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Opening: January 2014
Developer: Bayerische Hausbau GmbH
Operator: 25hours Hotel Company
General Manager: Michael Wunsch
Member of: Design Hotels™
Architecture: 1955: Paul Schwebes/Hans Schoszberger
2013: Hild und K Architekten
Interior design and story: Studio Aisslinger, Berlin

Location: Centre of Berlin between the Memorial Church and Berlin Zoo, Zoologischer Garten S-Bahn suburban rail station: 200 m, Berlin main station: 5 km, Berlin Tegel Airport: 9 km, Brandenburg Gate: 3 km, Tiergarten park: 10 m

Hotel: 149 rooms
A fun design mix combining and contrasting the urban jungle with the greenery of Berlin's Tiergarten park. Designed by a team headed up by Werner Aisslinger. Conference suite for up to 100 people, rooftop bar and restaurant, sauna on the ninth floor with a view of Berlin Zoo's ape house, free Wi-Fi

Rooms: Cosy oases of calm with urban or jungle-inspired design features. Bathroom with rain shower, air-conditioning, safe, minibar, iHome docking station, LAN port, Schindelhauer bikes in L rooms for guests' personal use

Meetings and events: Three meeting rooms for up to 100 people, various meeting and event facilities at the neighbouring Zoo Palast

Rates for 2014:
Urban M from €115 per room per night
Jungle M from €125 per room per night
Urban L from €145 per room per night
Jungle L from €155 per room per night
Jungle XL from €175 per room per night
15% reduction for MINI drivers, prices include VAT but exclude breakfast.
Breakfast: €18 per person

Food and drink: NENI Berlin. Rooftop restaurant (1,000 m²) serving eclectic East Mediterranean cuisine, Monkey Bar on the tenth floor with a summer terrace, in-house bakery, lobby-cum-lounge with DJ corner, kiosk, fireplace and lots of corners to explore

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25hours Hotel Bikini Berlin

Built in the 1950s by the architects Paul Schwebes and Hans Schoszberger, the so-called Bikini House was the architectural expression of a new attitude to life hallmarked by dynamism, freedom, optimism and consumerism. This architecture – twinned with the building's unique location – also gives Bikini Berlin its identity for the future. With its 149 rooms, the 25hours Hotel Bikini Berlin will form part of the building complex when it moves into the detached Kleines Hochhaus – the smaller of two high-rises – by the so-called Elephant Gate of Berlin Zoo. It is the young hotel group's first property in the German capital. "We always wanted to open a hotel in Berlin," says a delighted Christoph Hoffmann, CEO of 25hours. "Now we've found the best home we could imagine between the Memorial Church and Kurfürstendamm on the one hand and the green oasis of Tiergarten park and Berlin Zoo on the other." The location and the architecture also inspired the interior design by Studio Aisslinger.

The team headed up by designer Werner Aisslinger has developed a holistic design concept straddling nature and culture with the working title "Urban Jungle". Half of the 149 rooms look out over Berlin Zoo's ape house and elephant enclosure. They have a warmer design scheme featuring natural materials and colours. The other half have a stunning view of West Berlin's landmarks. These rooms have a somewhat rougher, more urban feel inspired by Berlin's edgier, creative side. Guests staying in Jungle and Urban L rooms have personal use of a Schindelhauer bike to explore the city at their leisure – a real highlight. Rooms in all six categories boast the standard 25hours features customers love: ultra comfortable beds, air-conditioning, a TV, a minibar, an iPod docking station, sustainable toiletries and free Wi-Fi. The 25hours cooperation partners are also on board once again: MINI for an exhilarating experience behind the wheel, frontlineshop for cool 25hours outfits, and Two Wheels Good for all those who like to cycle in style. As at the other 25hours hotels, local sources of inspiration play a key role in Berlin. The kiosk is being designed in conjunction with the publishing house Gestalten Verlag and the Freunde von Freunden network offers guests individual access to their Berlin as food, cultural and shopping guides.

On the third floor, the loft-like foyer containing the hotel's reception, kiosk, in-house bakery and numerous corners has a relaxed, communicative atmosphere. This storey also houses the three meeting rooms for up to 100 people. The ninth floor contains the Jungle Sauna with a dry sauna and rest area. Perched above everything else, the tenth storey is a lively marketplace. It boasts a breathtaking 360-degree view and plenty of other attractions morning, noon and night: the NENI Berlin restaurant serving eclectic East Mediterranean cuisine and the Monkey Bar with its fireside corner and spectacular rooftop terrace. The various lovingly designed spaces provide a retreat from the urban jungle and offer individuality, flexibility, aesthetic appeal, inspiration and sustainability. 25hours creates an integrated platform where locals and guests can mingle and chat. The hotel's outstanding location is another boon: the famous Kurfürstendamm avenue is just around the corner, the Tiergarten park is less than 100 metres away, the Zoologischer Garten suburban rail station is just under 200 metres away, and the Brandenburg Gate is three kilometres from the hotel.

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Hotel facilities

As soon as you enter the ground floor of the hotel, it becomes clear that the special architecture of the Kleines Hochhaus demands special treatment when it comes to design. The entrance foyer starts with a surprising twist: there is no reception as far as the eye can see. Instead, the space's most striking feature is its incredibly high ceiling. The ground floor, first and second storeys are merged to create a single, light-flooded atrium. New arrivals are greeted by this gallery-like space, with the entrance flanked by two pillars which are still adorned with original graffiti. An oversized tri-vision hoarding with changing images immediately catches your eye. Wire trees filled with plants soar towards the ceiling and foliage winds its way across the walls too in the form of intricate black and white illustrations by the Japanese artist Yoshi Sislai. These form part of the hotel's signage and crop up repeatedly throughout the property. In a nod to the mobility celebrated in days gone by, there is a retro-style MINI van in the middle of the room, which serves as a flexible reception counter if need be. As a counterpoint, stylish Schindelhauer bicycles are suspended from the ceiling. The creative team consciously plays with guests' expectations and builds up a sense of suspense on the ground floor. "Down here, what we are saying is that this hotel often does away with typical features. Instead, we have designed various meta-levels. Sometimes they are obvious, sometimes they are more obscure – but often they are bizarre and surprising," promises Werner Aisslinger. Anyone who uses one of the two lifts on the left will see what the designer means. In the middle of a cleverly abstracted animation, guests are surrounded by greenery as they ascend – a metamorphosis of the urban jungle and a real forest. "I'm going to spend the whole day in the lift," says General Manager Michael Wunsch, laughing.

Take the lift to the third floor and you will find yourself in the reception area spanning a generous thousand square metres. In typical 25hours style, it is more like a buzzing lounge than a traditional hotel lobby. The reception acts as a central hub which deals with requests and queries as well as making guests feel at home. This means it needs to look the part: the desk is covered with original turquoise tiles from the underground station Alexanderplatz and cuts a fine figure. While guests check in and out at the front of the counter, the back serves as a laid-back seating area or the perfect lookout – the full-length windows here command a view of the green park. All around, the loft-like space is hallmarked by smooth transitions and cosy corners. So what can you discover here?

First of all, there is the kiosk, which is curated in conjunction with the Berlin-based publishing company Gestalten Verlag. Hanging modules designed by Aisslinger hold unusual books, magazines and everything else you could possibly want. From functional to frivolous, the kiosk has it all – including toothbrushes, in case you left yours at home. The range is complemented by a concierge service in collaboration with the network Freunde von Freunden. These Berlin insiders are a fount of knowledge, whether it's art, food and drink, or nightlife you're interested in.

Walk a little further and you'll find the perfect place to chillax. Working for Werner Aisslinger, the Berlin duo Bless has created a laid-back corner with photo wallpaper, fur-lined hammocks and hanging chairs. When the tempting smell of fresh bread from the adjacent in-house bakery proves impossible to resist, you know it's time to move on. The wood-burning oven is used to bake a range of delicacies throughout the day – from sourdough rolls to patisserie treats and other bread specialities. Fresh and warm, they are to die for. The adjacent area with its fireplace, comfy seats and magazines on the wall blurs the distinction between inside and out. Here, you can sit right by the window and watch the goings-on out on the Bikini Berlin terrace or become part of them yourself. At this level of the third floor, the 25hours hotel in the Kleines Hochhaus is linked with the Bikini House and the Zoo Palast cinema. Step outside and you will find yourself on a flight of steps leading to the boulevard. This is also home to Burger de Ville, which adds to the culinary concept at 25hours Bikini, serving the city's coolest burgers from its hottest Airstream.

If that's not your thing, you may prefer to go about your business indoors in the Working Lab – with free Wi-Fi, of course. Experimental seats with a difference offer a new perspective on things. "We're not talking about the usual suspects," says Werner Aisslinger with a grin, referring to the common or garden business corners in many hotels. "Have you ever sat with your laptop in a raised hide with a canopy which can be raised and lowered?" the designer asks mischievously, pointing at a colourful steel frame with an adjustable fabric hood. Next to it is a wooden bunk on four feet with a curtain: Shelter is the ideal creative retreat as it keeps out external sights and sounds. Designed for Vitra in 2012, the Swing Sofa is perfect for relaxing. Reminiscent of a garden swing seat, Aisslinger's sofa is specifically designed for an office setting to provide time-out from the daily grind and a setting for productive discussions. The large adjacent Bikini Island area offers plenty of space to kick back and put your feet up. Werner Aisslinger designed Bikini Island – a unique seating concept – specially for 25hours and developed it in conjunction with Moroso. "We're proud to have provided the impetus for this innovative project and to be a part of it," says 25hours CEO Christoph Hoffmann. "There is something revolutionary about the idea of the bikini, and the same is true of this kind of sofa," explains the designer. First presented at the 2013 Milan Furniture Fair, Bikini Island is very now and represents a totally new way to use a sofa. "Until now, most sofas have faced one way – usually towards the television," says Aisslinger and explains his alternative design: "I wanted to develop a multifunctional space geared towards modern family life where all sorts of things can happen at the same time." His sofa provides space for reading, relaxing, meditating, chatting online, talking or finding a quiet spot alone. Anything goes thanks to his modular design featuring components of different heights which can be combined freely – from low chaises longues and raised seating areas to various backrests. Small storage units, shelves and a pipe-like rail with curtains can all be added.

Bikini Island merges into the DJ corner, which makes a clear statement with its towering stack of old stereo speakers. Behind this is the 25hours Bikini Berlin function suite, comprising three conference rooms for up to 100 people. All three rooms offer a blend of transparency and privacy, professional conference equipment and their own distinctive use of shapes. The City Microhouse (approx. 14 m²) looks towards the Memorial

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Church. Werner Aisslinger describes it as “an urban box which flirts with the style of a bus stop”. The Jungle Microhouse (approx. 17 m²) with its slats and wooden detailing presents a more natural face and overlooks the zoo. Both units have space for up to ten people to gather around a conference table. Meetings held in the largest space, the Freiraum (approx. 100 m²), have a distinctly green feel. Thank to various seating options, the space can cater for parties of different sizes. Its main features are a polished stone floor, lots of glass and light, warm soft furnishings in the form of curtains, and a huge wall made of wooden pallets which is bursting with plants.

The fourth to ninth floors house 149 guest rooms in six different categories. All of the rooms are designed for people who don't just want to get a taste of the capital when they are out and about – they want it to be reflected in their accommodation. The rooms boast all the standard 25hours features urban nomads love: ultra comfortable beds, air-conditioning, sustainable toiletries, a flat-screen TV, a minibar, an iPod docking station and free Wi-Fi. The corridors on the individual floors are conspicuously dark and mysterious with just the white neon room numbers providing guidance. References to Berlin's club scene are no coincidence. After all, the Bikini building was home to the popular Linientreu for 26 years – almost certainly the last original 80s disco in City West. “The darker the hallway, the more surprising the mood when guests walk into their room,” says Werner Aisslinger.

Half of the rooms bear the name Jungle and overlook the ape house and elephant enclosure at Berlin Zoo. Natural materials and warm colours set the tone here, with wood playing a key role, e.g. for the flooring and furniture. The shelving system consisting of open and enclosed components was designed by Studio Aisslinger for 25hours and offers all-purpose storage space. Floor-to-ceiling windows guarantee a direct view of the rock in the ape enclosure. Many of the rooms have a hammock spanned in front of the large windows, creating an exclusive feel-good space reminiscent of a small, private conservatory. Without a doubt, this must be the best spot for undisturbed animal watching in the whole of Berlin.

The other half of the oases of calm are Urban rooms offering a spectacular view of the city. The design has a more unfinished feel, inspired by Berlin's edgier, creative side. Concrete walls exude a rough charm and the ceiling reveals the original 50s structure. “We think it's really cool that we kept the old ribbed ceiling,” says a delighted Janis Nachtigall, the architect in Aisslinger's team responsible for the project. Along with delicate black and white murals by the Japanese artist Yoshi Sislai, cool accents in blue and green add a subtle splash of colour. The interior may be somewhat tougher and more austere, but these rooms still offer plenty of cosiness and warmth. Each one has a raised parapet with a clever window seat integrated beautifully into the recess, which is covered with seat pads and cushions. “A multifunctional, homely box – perfect for working, reading and looking out of the window,” says Janis Nachtigall. After all, the view offers a rare angle for sightseers, bringing them eye to eye with West Berlin's landmarks – Breitscheidplatz, the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church with Egon Eiermann's modern addition, and the world-famous Kurfürstendamm avenue.

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All of the rooms have en suites which are designed to impress. “The en suite is an exciting part of a hotel room,” according to Werner Aisslinger, “because it often offers the kind of experience you can’t find at home. That is why we set aside 40 per cent of each room for the en suite.” The **Urban L** and **Jungle L** categories have additional free-standing baths. None of the rooms make a hard and fast distinction between the en suite and the rest of the accommodation. Flexible curtains act as partitions, a free-standing basin unit is anything but cumbersome and a mirror hung from steel cables adds another light touch.

So what does each category include? **Urban M** rooms measure 23 to 26 m². Six of the rooms have an extra sofa bed. The **Urban M Twin** option has two separate beds – perfect for friends, siblings on a weekend away or business partners travelling together. Its counterpart overlooking the zoo, **Jungle M**, is almost identical in terms of size. M rooms are a great option for families or small groups of friends as they can be combined and enlarged thanks to interconnecting doors.

Urban L and **Jungle L** are somewhat more spacious, spanning 38 to 41 m². They also have a pedestal with a free-standing bath and an alcove bed. This is the perfect category for anyone who loves modern mobility on two wheels because the highlight of these rooms is a bike made by the Berlin-based company Schindelbauer hanging on the wall. The bicycles are the result of a partnership between 25hours and Two Wheels Good. The best thing about them is that they don’t just look great – they are also for the exclusive use of the guests staying in the room. Keen cyclists will find everything they need in the bike bag, from a helmet to a little light reading – such as “Bicycle Diaries”, a plea for bike-friendly towns and cities by former Talking Heads singer David Byrne.

For extended stays or special occasions, **Urban XL** has plenty of room and offers a special taste of Berlin with its view of the city and an area of 43 m².

Up on the ninth floor, the **Jungle Sauna** is perfect for a spot of R & R with its dry sauna and rest areas. Would you prefer to flex your muscles and work out? Either way, the well-being area is divided into smaller units and features a natural look with lots of larch wood. It centres on the sauna which boasts a spectacular view out towards the zoo. Spa features include a wash fountain, hose, cascade and bucket showers.

The tenth storey is home to our restaurant, **NENI Berlin**, and the **Monkey Bar**. There is no doubt that the star of the show up here is the breathtaking view of City West and the leafy canopy of Tiergarten park. Huge glass façades with six-metre-high, full-length windows offer a 360-degree view from throughout this area. The spectacular **rooftop terrace** runs around three sides of the building and speaks for itself. As on the third floor, guests can get up close and personal with Werner Aisslinger’s design objects – such as some of his chairs. The Wing Chair, the Hemp Chair made from renewable materials and the Bikini Wood Chair for Moroso are all here.

NENI Berlin is the place to indulge in a varied breakfast, a light lunch or a sumptuous evening meal. In line

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with the urban jungle theme, the restaurant is in a striking greenhouse made from parts of old hothouses. This is Werner Aisslinger's kind of upcycling: he likes to extend the life of existing objects instead of scrapping them. "The future isn't about inventing new things – it's about optimising old ones," says the designer. To create an exciting sense of space, he has slightly raised the tables in the middle of the greenhouse, laid vintage herringbone parquet flooring and grouped hanging plants together at different heights. Additional seating is clustered around the greenhouse. Guests can watch the cooks at work and see what's bubbling away – transparency is the name of the game with the glass-fronted kitchen.

Day merges seamlessly into night: the music is turned up and the lights are turned down while the atmosphere becomes cosy or even party-like. Guests can come and go as they please at the Monkey Bar with its fireside corner and the rooftop terrace nearby. The Monkey Bar's name says it all. Overlooking the zoo, drinkers really can watch the apes – as long as they aren't already asleep. "The name is an ironic but affectionate nod to our simian neighbours," reveals Bruno Marti, Head of Brand & Communications at 25hours Hotels. Anyone who stops by for a drink can either sit on traditional bar stools or perch on the casual tiered pedestal. Lights with glass bottles for shades are suspended from a steel mesh frame hanging above the bar. All in all, the bar has something of a Moroccan feel with its dark wood and Arabian-style patterned cushions. This is fitting given that herbs – and mint in particular – play a major role, which in turn ties in with the fine bar food on offer from NENI as an alternative to dinner in the restaurant next door.

Food and drink

Berlin is a big, lively city with a big, diverse range of places to eat. There is nothing you won't find here, from Asian tapas to New York-style steaks, German sausages to fusion cuisine, gourmet restaurants to fast food. So does the hotel intend to reinvent the wheel? "No," says 25hours CEO Christoph Hoffmann, "we aren't slaves to the latest trends and we don't want to overshadow the many creative restaurant concepts in this city either. We want to bring our own interpretation of soul food to Berlin." F&B Manager Jürgen Klümpen agrees: "You probably could find the sort of thing we serve somewhere else, but not in our special 25hours style, in City West and in this unique location."

Haya Molcho is the driving force behind NENI Berlin. She has made NENI in Vienna's Naschmarkt into a gourmet's Mecca and is a passionate hostess, chef, caterer, owner of a hip bar, cookery book author, wife to the famous mime artist Samy Molcho, and mother of four. Together with her sons, she has already established NENI at the 25hours hotel in Zurich and now she is conquering Berlin.

During the concept phase, the team headed up by 25hours CEO Christoph Hoffmann travelled to Tel Aviv in preparation for the new restaurant. There, in Haya Molcho's home city, they collected a whole host of taste sensations and filtered them for Berlin. Hoffmann recalls intense encounters in markets and authentic

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eateries. “The simple street food sabih – a kind of pitta bread with a vegetarian filling – is a memorable point of reference for me,” he enthuses. Meanwhile, Jürgen Klümpen remembers the unusual method of serving food in the restaurant North Abraxas: “Plates were the exception there. An entire baked cauliflower was placed in the middle of the table on greaseproof paper and everyone plucked off florets by hand.” Henning Weiss, Head of Operations at 25hours, and Michael End, Head of Business at the hotel group, both agree: “The fish with burning herbs was impressive.” Their colleague Bruno Marti is responsible for brand and communications. His highlight was HaBasta in Carmel Market: “I thought the Palestinian tartar was great – a simple, honest market restaurant.” Now, their culinary discoveries are being transformed into eclectic East Mediterranean cuisine and served up in Berlin under the watchful eye of Haya Molcho. The menu is a culinary mosaic with a whole host of influences: Persian, Russian, Arabic, Moroccan, Turkish, Spanish, German and Austrian. Haya Molcho takes an international approach and herbs play a major role in her dishes. As a consequence, they also make an appearance in the Monkey Bar.

Food from NENI always goes hand in hand with a moment of sharing and passion. With its easy-going ambience, 25hours Bikini Berlin is the perfect place to put this philosophy into practice. The idea is for everyone to try a bit of everything, and pans go straight from the hob to the table in truly unpretentious style. For this reason, the restaurant will have special tables from Studio Aisslinger with an inset steel panel which can withstand even the hottest casseroles. From light lunches and fortifying snacks to a leisurely dinner with dessert, the menu expresses what matters to Haya Molcho: curiosity. “I like experimenting and I do it a lot, combining flavours and improvising,” she says. The flames leaping from the robata grill are bound to prompt diners to peer curiously into the glass-fronted kitchen too. 25hours F&B Manager Jürgen Klümpen promises something for all the senses: “It hisses, smokes, sizzles and smells.” He explains: “The robata grill originally comes from Japan. It is unique in that you can cook food at different heights using a range of temperatures.” Delicacies are produced in small tabun ovens as well as on the grill.

Eating out at NENI is a down-to-earth, relaxed experience. In typical 25hours style, authentic interpersonal relations are all part of it. The service is informal, sincere and personal – dining at NENI means feeling welcome as a member of the family. “NENI combines the familiar with the new. NENI is multicultural but never clichéd,” says Bruno Marti, Head of Brand & Communications at 25hours, adding: “That’s why NENI and 25hours go together like proverbial peas in a pod.”

However, the culinary concept at the 25hours Hotel Bikini Berlin does not stop there. Right next to the restaurant on the tenth floor, the Monkey Bar is open in the evening and at night serving the best drinks and fine bar food – created by NENI. On the third floor, the in-house bakery with its wood-burning oven provides simple lobby snacks throughout the day. The scent of warm bread and pastries fills the hotel and the specialities are served with tantalising coffee blends from small local roasting companies, fluffy brioche, hand-churned butter, organic cream cheese and home-made jams.

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What more could you possibly want? Burger de Ville, of course! The cult burger van set up shop in front of the Bikini House on Hardenbergplatz in October 2012, heralding the hotel's arrival. Now that the 25hours Hotel Bikini Berlin has opened, the retro US-style silver Airstream has moved, becoming a prominent feature on the Bikini Berlin terraces instead. With Burger de Ville, 25hours Hotels is introducing the German capital to the American trend of mobile gourmet food trucks. Burger expert and van operator Jürgen Klümpen knows exactly what goes in to his patties: "They are made from 100% Black Angus beef sourced from the organic farm Bio Hof Zempow, where cattle are kept in line with high animal welfare standards." Single and double patties are available with burger buns produced specially by one of Berlin's master bakers. They are served with fine burger sauces and dips with no additives or preservatives. There are five different burgers to satisfy rumbling stomachs.

Opening times

NENI Berlin (tenth floor):

Breakfast: Mon.–Fri.: 6.30–10.30 a.m./Sat. and Sun.: 7.00–11.30 a.m.

Hot food: Sun.–Thurs.: 12.00 noon–11.00 p.m./Fri. and Sat.: 12.00 noon–12.00 midnight

Monkey Bar (tenth floor):

Sun.–Thurs.: 3.00 p.m.–1.00 a.m.

Fri. and Sat.: 3.00 p.m.–2.00 a.m.

Bakery (third floor):

Mon.–Fri.: 6.30 a.m.–10.00 p.m.

Sat. and Sun.: 7.00 a.m.–10.00 p.m.

Burger de Ville (Bikini Berlin terrace):

Mon.–Sat.: 10.00 a.m.–11.00 p.m.

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Design and stories

Werner Aisslinger and the 25hours team have developed a multifaceted design concept with the working title “Urban Jungle” for the group’s first hotel in Berlin. Aisslinger focuses primarily on product design. Born in Nördlingen (Germany) in 1964, the designer likes to experiment with new materials and technologies. His work can be found in several museums’ collections. Over the last three decades, Studio Aisslinger has developed designs, products and concepts for brands such as Adidas, DeSede, Cappellini, Foscari, FSB, Moroso, Vitra and Zanotta. 25hours still has plenty of work lined up for him: he is also involved in designing the second 25hours hotel in Zurich, which will open in 2016.

“If you’ve seen one, you’ve seen them all” may be true of many hotels, but not 25hours. In line with this ethos, the new hotel in Berlin really engages with its location. Werner Aisslinger underlines this approach: “Our project isn’t a UFO – it is interwoven with the city.” To breathe life into this link, the team started by looking at the bigger picture. São Paulo and the architecture of Oscar Niemeyer first drew the creative team’s attention to the presence of an urban jungle. A reference like Niemeyer’s famous Copan Building represents a microcosm in the heart of the Brazilian megacity. “The idea of creating a city within a city was important to us,” says 25hours CEO Christoph Hoffmann, summarising as follows: “We drew our inspiration from São Paulo so that we could tell our own story here in Berlin.” Henning Weiss, Head of Operations at 25hours, explains the thinking: “Nature meets culture. The zoo and Tiergarten park on one side; the city with all its hubbub on the other. We translated this duality in 25hours’ special style.”

For Werner Aisslinger, it is clear that: “an idea like ‘Urban Jungle’ must not be implemented too simplistically or overtly. But it mustn’t be done too pompously and intellectually either.” After all, its discordance makes Berlin what it is – its improvised, unpredictable side, and sometimes its tired, turbulent side. He draws on his own personal experience of hotels too. “I like hotels,” he comments before going on to elaborate: “But I prefer the old places because they reflect their surroundings. A bit laissez-faire and a bit vintage, but never too tarted up.” He has little interest in overdesigned hotels. “I look at them out of interest, but I can’t enjoy it,” he admits and says quite clearly: “Anyone who is still designing hotels with the richness factor is out of touch. These days, guests look behind the scenes too and like to know where things come from and why they are the way they are.”

That is precisely why it was important to the team from 25hours and the designer to incorporate Berlin influences and the site’s heritage during the hotel’s concept phase as well as drawing on inspiration from São Paulo. Local colour included the club culture in City West with the popular nightspot Linientreu on Budapester Straße. The club – almost certainly the last original 80s disco – lasted for 26 years until the lease ran out because the Bikini House was being renovated. The legendary Dschungel on Nürnberger Straße was another source of inspiration. Opened in 1978, it was a meeting place for artists, those seeking to promote themselves, and party animals from the divided city and the rest of the world. Prince and Boy



George spent their nights in Berlin here. High-profile regulars included the musicians Nick Cave, Iggy Pop and David Bowie. The British rock star even immortalised the Dschungel in his 2013 song “Where Are We Now?” with the lyrics: “Sitting in the Dschungel on Nürnberger Straße.” When the Dschungel closed in 1993, Berlin did not just lose a legendary disco – a very special take on life disappeared with it.

25hours and Werner Aisslinger see themselves as collecting different attitudes to life which relate to the location’s heritage. “That is both a pledge and a challenge,” says Aisslinger and admits: “I’m interested in the notion of thinking ahead and evolving. That’s why the project with 25hours is such a good fit: we are both creatively driven.” Aisslinger, who has made Berlin his home, also appreciates the opportunity that the hotel gives him to showcase his work in his own city by means of such a high-profile project. Nevertheless, he is keen to ensure that his studio does not steal the show. “I work on the principle of creating a collage, and if we want to let Berlin live in the hotel, it goes without saying that we need to get other people from Berlin involved.” This attitude tallies with the 25hours philosophy: local influences play a major role at all of the group’s hotels. However, while each area’s heritage has primarily been alluded to in the past, the idea is to intensify local links now by bringing partners and other players on board. 25hours CEO Christoph Hoffmann is a big fan of Aisslinger’s open approach. “Although he is a famous designer, Werner Aisslinger is the kind of person who values other people’s input,” he says. “The final work of art as a whole and his team always take centre stage.”

Berlin influences

Aisslinger’s expanded project team is nothing if not progressive. He has worked with some of his current partners before, like Sybille Oellerich. The Berlin-based stylist is responsible for details in the 25hours Bikini Berlin project. Her main focus is the restaurant area on the tenth floor. As the creative finisher, she is like a hunter-gatherer, collecting countless objets d’art and supplementing Werner Aisslinger’s design with quirky details. On the third floor, the Berlin duo Bless is creating a chill-out corner with hammocks. Bless is the brainchild of the two designers Ines Kaag and Désirée Heiss. Bless is not just about one aspect of design. The pair’s orbit is real life and their motivation is everyday usability. Gestalten Verlag is also represented on the third floor, where it curates the 25hours Bikini Berlin kiosk. The international publisher of design books is known for inspirational titles in the fields of design, photography, illustration, typography and contemporary art.

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Architecture

History. The Zentrum am Zoo complex is an icon of Germany's reconstruction and part of the face of City West. It is one of the few remaining buildings which still bear testimony to Berlin's turbulent post-war history. With this ensemble, which was finished in 1957, architects Paul Schwebes and Hans Schoszberger made the most of a unique opportunity to create a statement complex between the green oasis of Tiergarten park and the urban comings and goings on Kurfürstendamm avenue.

Revitalisation. Bayerische Hausbau – one of the largest integrated property companies in Germany – acquired the historic group of buildings in 2002. They started revitalising it in 2010 under the name Bikini Berlin. With a usable floor space of 51,100 m², it is one of the largest collections of buildings in western Berlin. Designated as being of historic interest, the complex on Budapester Straße includes the Großes Hochhaus (the large high-rise on Hardenbergplatz), the Zoo Palast, the Bikini House opposite the Memorial Church, the smaller Kleines Hochhaus and a multi-storey car park.

The concept for Bikini Berlin's revitalisation was developed by Arne Quinze and his firm of architects, SAQ. It combines workspace, leisure facilities and entertainment in an urban setting. The Munich-based architects Hild und K were chosen to execute the plans, fusing the Belgian artist Quinze's innovative design with the structural status quo. As well as the interior work, Hild und K are overseeing the design of the façades for both the Bikini House and the Kleines Hochhaus along with the new structural elements.

Bikini House. As part of the Bikini Berlin complex, the Bikini House is the little sister of the Großes Hochhaus by Zoologischer Garten station. Schwebes and Schoszberger gave both buildings interesting façades. "They are striking for their reinforced concrete projections and recesses and their varied rows of slender windows and glass balustrades. All of this creates a light, fabric-like impression which calls to mind the West Berlin textile centre which used to be housed in the building on Breitscheidplatz," says Dionys Ottl, Managing Director of the firm of architects Hild und K. Originally, an open-sided second storey framed by pillars divided the building into upper and lower sections. Back in the 50s, this two-part effect reminded Berlin residents of the risqué swimwear which had recently come into fashion. The original nickname has stuck to this day and is now being reincarnated as Bikini Berlin.

25hours Hotel Bikini Berlin. The first 25hours hotel in Berlin is housed in the Kleines Hochhaus on Budapester Straße, which forms part of Bikini Berlin and has a total area of 8,800 m². The square outside the building will be open to the public as a green space. This is where the famous Blaue Kugel – a ball-shaped structure built by the architects Joachim Glässel and Andreas Reidemeister in 1989 as a 360-degree cinema – once stood. The Kleines Hochhaus is topped by a penthouse level made from steel girders with a rooftop bar and a summer terrace. It was important for Bikini Berlin as a whole and the Kleines Hochhaus in particular to preserve or restore the original architecture wherever possible. The southern façades overlooking

Breitscheidplatz – designated as being of historic interest – have been reconstructed using the original design in 50s style. They had been concealed by plastic facing since the 80s and are unfamiliar to almost all current Berlin residents. “In the light of today’s energy-saving legislation, retaining the characteristic delicate elegance of the profiles and the original colour in the new structure posed a particular challenge,” explains architect Ottil. The team also put a great deal of effort into finding suitable plastering systems for the exposed concrete surfaces on the narrow sides of the Kleines Hochhaus. “We didn’t want to lose the dynamic, hand-finished character,” comments Ottil before adding: “There was no question of us sacrificing the historic colouring either, which Schwebes and Schoszberger originally intended as a reference to the then new architecture of Le Corbusier and Gropius.” It inspired the colour concept, which ties the northern façade with its full-length all-glass windows in with the existing structure. “Thanks to the French windows, you almost feel like you’re at the zoo,” says a delighted Dionys Ottil, summarising: “All in all, our aim was to make the sense of lightness which the Bikini House exuded in the 50s tangible again today.”

City West

Berlin’s City West has developed immensely in recent years. With its pulsating energy and innovative concepts, it is proving all those who predicted its decline in the 90s wrong. It is a historic place with an intriguing symbiosis of past and future. No other part of Berlin generates as much turnover and nowhere are there more passers-by than in the area between the Memorial Church and Berlin Zoo. Within Berlin’s polycentric structure, this is the most important hub in both economic and cultural terms and a key area for retailers. Countless tourist favourites which have made Berlin a top European destination in the last 20 years are nearby, such as Tauentzienstraße, the Golden Globe Fountain, the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church, Zoo Palast, the Zoologischer Garten station and Ludwig Erhard Haus. Zoologischer Garten station alone is served by two underground lines, three S-Bahn suburban rail lines, regional trains and numerous buses. It is an area which is constantly in motion in many ways, with all sorts going on around the famous Kurfürstendamm – or Ku’damm – boulevard. Architectural highlights include the restored Haus Cumberland and the so-called Zoofenster (or window on the zoo), which is currently the tallest building in City West and houses the Waldorf Astoria hotel. Its high-rise counterpart is going up on the site of the old Schimmelpfeng building on Kantstraße: the Upper West Tower has somewhat loftier ambitions with a planned height of 120 metres.

Bikini Berlin and the 25hours hotel are in the most spectacular spot in City West, sandwiched between the urban Breitscheidplatz and the green oasis made up of Tiergarten park and the zoo. A lively combination of art, culture, fashion, food and academia is just around the corner. The internationally renowned photography forum C/O Berlin is moving from Berlin Mitte to the historic Amerika Haus on Hardenbergstraße, opposite Zoologischer Garten station. The Museum of Photography, Helmut Newton Foundation and galleries such as Camera Work are all based nearby. The Charlottenburg campus – one of the largest city-centre university campuses in Europe – is another local magnet. It is associated with a large number of galleries, theatres and other cultural institutions, above all the Deutsche Oper Berlin.

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As a dynamic hotel product, 25hours feels right at home in this environment. “We are totally immersed in Berlin’s unique culture and creativity here,” says 25hours CEO Christoph Hoffmann, adding: “Berlin Mitte and West are growing closer together again, with Bikini Berlin at their heart. Berlin deserves to be seen in the same way as New York with its independent neighbourhoods.” General Manager Michael Wunsch is delighted that his guests will benefit from such a convenient location: “Tiergarten park is practically on the doorstep and both the Brandenburg Gate and Potsdamer Platz are just a stone’s throw away.” Wunsch sees City West as “a slice of progressive Berlin which holds a national and international attraction”.

The Bikini Berlin complex has had this kind of magnetism – for example in relation to fashion – since the fabulous fifties. Around the time the Bikini House opened, fashion designers like Uli Richter and Heinz Oestergaard established themselves as ambassadors for Berlin and the free West. The Bikini House was a centre for tailors, designers and creative types. It remained an important economic hub for this industry until the 70s. At this time, a parallel culture consisting of new, wild designers such as Claudia Skoda developed in Berlin. They designed the outfits for the new wave and punk era. The Bikini House remained a stylistic force at this time as the home of the legendary club Linientreu. This blend of culture and creativity on the one hand with commerce and development on the other makes it a unique, successful site.

Bikini Berlin

Bikini Berlin aims to anticipate the spirit of the 21st century by combining opposites to make something new and breaking down barriers. The revitalisation of this historic collection of buildings is about creating a visionary urban habitat which goes beyond conventional architecture, town planning and shopping centres.

Back in the 50s, the ensemble was hallmarked by manufacturing workshops and showrooms for the fashion industry, the cinema used for premières at Berlin International Film Festival, and a shopping arcade in the new style. In the future, it will be shaped by leading lights such as Berlin’s most visionary retailer, Andreas Murkudis, and Germany’s most successful cinema operator, Hans-Joachim Flebbe. Countless young fashion designers, fine dining, unusual concept stores, carefully curated boutiques, offices and the 25hours Hotel Bikini Berlin will also make their mark on the complex. 25hours CEO Christoph Hoffmann says: “It’s fantastic to have a big city with so much space for new development right at its heart. We are motivated by the Bikini Berlin project near Ku’damm because not everything is finished and oversaturated. Things are in motion here, which leaves space for new ideas.”

Bikini Berlin caters for the way people’s needs have changed. It is designed for people who want public spaces to offer a better-quality experience, inspiring stimuli, an open atmosphere and community involvement. People for whom the unusual is a visible trend culture: young designers rubbing shoulders with international brands, the new alongside the established. Werner Aisslinger promises: “Bikini Berlin will

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become a place where sophisticated, cultured travellers can experience Berlin in a condensed form.”

The creative team

Studio Aisslinger. The idea and concept for the interior design of the 25hours Hotel Bikini Berlin were developed by Werner Aisslinger and his team from Berlin. Werner Aisslinger has also had an office in Singapore since 2008. He focuses primarily on product design and gained international fame for his LoftCube living units. Born in Nördlingen (Germany) in 1964, the designer likes to experiment with new materials and technologies. His work can be found in several museums’ collections. Aisslinger’s Juli chair has been part of the permanent exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York since 1998. Over the last three decades, he has developed designs, products and concepts for brands such as Adidas, DeSede, Cappellini, Foscarini, FSB, Moroso, Vitra and Zanotta. Werner Aisslinger and his team have already dabbled in hotel design too. He was responsible for designing the Hotel Daniel in Graz (Austria) – which was named “Hotel Property of the Year” – and the Michelberger Hotel in Berlin. 25hours still has plenty of work lined up for him: he is also involved in designing the second 25hours hotel in Zurich, which will open in 2016.

Aisslinger’s project team. Werner Aisslinger’s team for the 25hours Hotel Bikini Berlin project is made up of architect Janis Nachtigall, product designer Tina Bunyaprasit and interior designer Dirk Borchering. These three creative minds are developing spaces and products with character and an identity. They are highly motivated and familiar with every last detail of the hotel project. Janis Nachtigall is responsible for supervising the construction work during the implementation phase and joined Aisslinger’s team eighteen months ago.

Sybille Oellerich. Sybille Oellerich is responsible for details in the 25hours Bikini Berlin project. Her main focus is the restaurant area on the tenth floor. As the creative finisher, she is like a hunter-gatherer, collecting countless objets d’art. She has supplemented Werner Aisslinger’s design with quirky details. Oellerich and Aisslinger also worked together on the Michelberger Hotel in Berlin.

Hild und K Architekten. Established in 1992 as Hild und Kaltwasser, the Munich firm of architects Hild und K has been managed by Andreas Hild and Dionys Ottl since 1999. Matthias Haber joined the management team in 2011 as a third partner. Hild und K’s professional success is partly thanks to a highly dedicated team with wide-ranging qualifications. Architecture is not an off-the-peg commodity with Hild und K. Concepts are developed using an in-depth, no-holds-barred process of dialogue with the client. The resulting original solutions fulfil the specific brief sensitively and intelligently.

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Yoshi Sislay. The Japanese artist was born in Osaka in 1974. After years of travelling, he now lives in Barcelona. Werner Aisslinger discovered Sislay at an exhibition there and was taken by his illustrations and the way they evolve organically. His delicate black and white illustrations can be found throughout the 25hours Hotel Bikini Berlin.

Bless. Bless is the brainchild of the two designers Ines Kaag and Désirée Heiss. Bless is not just about one aspect of design. The pair's orbit is real life and their motivation is everyday usability. They established their label in 1995 and have been working in Berlin and Paris ever since.

Gestalten Verlag. Established in Berlin in 1995, Gestalten specialises in developing content for fans of innovative, visual culture. The international publisher of design books is known for inspirational titles in the fields of design, photography, illustration, typography and contemporary art. Gestalten products are available in almost 100 different countries from selected bookshops, museum shops and concept stores. The company has offices in Berlin, London, New York and Tokyo.

Freunde von Freunden. An international interview magazine and a network of interesting people with good connections in Berlin. Freunde von Freunden shape guests' stays by managing the 25hours concierge service and providing input for the kiosk.

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25hours Hotels

25hours is a young hotel concept which seeks contemporary answers to the requirements of an urban, cosmopolitan clientele based on the example set by traditional hotels. The 25hours brand currently focuses on Germany, Austria and Switzerland. 25hours has two boutique hotels in Hamburg and another two in Frankfurt. It is represented in Austria by the 25hours Hotel at MuseumsQuartier in Vienna, and travellers in Switzerland can stay at the 25hours Hotel Zurich West. 25hours Hotel Bikini Berlin is the brand's seventh hotel. The dynamic group has ambitious plans to expand to cities such as Cologne and Munich and would ultimately love to open hotels elsewhere in Europe: its wish-list includes Copenhagen, Rome, Florence and Istanbul.

25hours created a stir in 2003 when it emerged as one of the first young and affordable design hotels. It now positions itself as a creative alternative to samey hotel chains. All 25hours hotels are members of Design Hotels™, a hand-picked collection of over 200 hotels with personality in destinations around the world. The operating company 25hours Hotel Company was established in 2005. Following on from three years of successfully operating the 25hours Hotel Hamburg No. 1 (which opened in 2003), the firm was founded to further expand the popular lifestyle and design hotel concept. The 25hours Hotel Company develops and operates the design and boutique hotels under lease, hybrid or management agreements. Its parent company is headquartered in Hamburg and it has subsidiaries to operate each of the hotel units in Hamburg, Frankfurt, Vienna and Zurich.

People

The 25hours Hotel Company is owned by four partners – Stephan Gerhard, Ardi Goldman, Kai Hollmann and Christoph Hoffmann – who shape the firm with their diverse backgrounds. The 25hours Hotel Bikini Berlin is managed by a passionate local team headed up by Michael Wunsch.

Stephan Gerhard was born in Stuttgart and operates his businesses based on the values traditionally associated with that part of Germany. His knowledge of the international hotel industry is virtually unparalleled. He established Treugast Solutions Group in 1985, which is one of Europe's leading consultancies for the hotel, food-service, tourism and leisure industries. Stephan Gerhard holds a stake in 25hours Hotel Company via his holding company, Solutions Holding. He is both a partner and consultant to 25hours, advising the company on operating in a forward-looking and highly promising niche of the hotel industry.

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Ardi Goldman is well known in Frankfurt for regenerating the city's Ostend district. With his wide-ranging projects, he repeatedly succeeds in translating cosmopolitan diversity into architecture which people love and want to live in, while still taking end-users seriously. Goldman is not just interested in property development: he is also dedicated to reviving clubs, bars and restaurants. Ardi Goldman is a key figure at 25hours in Frankfurt, having lent his name to the 25hours Hotel The Goldman and developed both hotels in the city. Goldman seeks his inspiration from urban spaces and is involved in the execution of his ideas right down to the very last detail. His concepts blur the boundaries between pleasure, construction, design and art.

Kai Hollmann manages Fortune Hotels in Hamburg (Gastwerk Hotel, The George Hotel, Superbude, 25hours Hotel): four lifestyle hotels in different segments which are among those that have achieved the highest international profile and the most success. Kai Hollmann was named Hotelier of the Year in 2003 for his visionary and successful implementation of this hotel concept.

With 25hours, Hollmann created a hotel which caters for the needs of creative cosmopolitans who are uncompromising in their dedication to aesthetic trends but also look for affordable rates.

Christoph Hoffmann is responsible for developing and expanding the 25hours group of lifestyle hotels and the associated brand. He assesses potential sites with enthusiasm, courage and the necessary sense of humour and works with local partners to develop bespoke hotel products for urban nomads, daydreamers and night owls who are looking for something different in the grey urban jungle. A sales and marketing expert, Christoph Hoffmann has held leading positions at Kempinski Hotels and Bürgenstock Hotels & Resorts (Leading Hotels of the World) in Switzerland and at the small but very prestigious Louis C. Jacob Hotel in Hamburg (Leading Small Hotels of the World). Hoffmann also has experience of the innovative lifestyle hotel sector, including designing the concept for the Volkswagen Fox Hotel in Copenhagen.

Michael Wunsch is responsible for the 25hours Hotel Bikini Berlin as General Manager. Wunsch previously held this position at the two hotels in Frankfurt – 25hours Hotel The Goldman and 25hours Hotel by Levi's – from 2010 onwards. Born in Stuttgart, he has a degree in business management and initially earned his stripes in the food-service industry, primarily working in Munich but also abroad. Wunsch joined the 25hours team back in 2008 as a project manager before switching to pentahotels to become an assistant operations manager. He returned to 25hours in 2010.

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