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Avi Brosh, the developer and driving design force behind the new [Palihouse Holloway](#) hotel in West Hollywood, walks through the lobby, a blend of Manhattan bar and Parisian bistro.

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- [Three new hotels loaded with fresh ideas to take home](#)

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**Forget the mini shampoo bottles and mints on the pillow. Three new hotels are loaded with fresh ideas to take home — distinctive looks and money-saving tricks that can work in your living spaces.**

By David A. Keeps, Los Angeles Times Staff Writer  
May 8, 2008

Hotels have long been fantasy fodder for do-it-yourself designers. Just as Kelly Wearstler's Viceroy and Maison 140 hotels goosed the Hollywood Regency trend, the look of three new local lodgings can lend similar inspiration to Southern California homes. "There's an emerging backlash against nightclub-inspired interiors and a move toward a more authentic and comfortable residential feeling," says David Collins, who transformed the Bel Age on Sunset Boulevard into the London West Hollywood. Here's a look at how designers have exuded a strong sense of place in very different ways.

### CUSTOM HOTEL

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Architect Welton Becket, whose firm built the Capitol Records building, designed this 1960s tower near Los Angeles International Airport. Developer Avi Brosh recently reimagined it as a loft-style business hotel whose exposed concrete columns, burnished cinder-block walls and Cementi floor tiles have an industrial feel. The lobby is warmed up with cork stools designed by Jasper Morrison for [Mooodi](#) and woolly sheep sculptures from [Moss](#) with wooden legs and leather ears.



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Photos: Fresh ideas at  
new L.A.-area hotels

"They have been kidnapped and found all over the hotel," an amused desk clerk says. "But they always find their way home in the morning."

One coffee table sports a photo- engraved concrete top with the image of Becket, an effect that can be duplicated by Texas-based Intaglio Composites for a price. (The Custom's cost \$7,760.) An easier look to emulate: artists' flat filing cabinets used as coffee tables, balanced by upholstered sectionals with purple and pink

pillows.

Brosh also deployed elements of what he calls "grandma chic" -- rugs with a crochet appearance and embroidered floral cushions on contemporary Nais wire chairs designed by Alfredo Häberli -- to give a "comforting" feel to the spare space.

Whimsy rules. A conference room floor is covered in a grass print from the ASI Vinyl Imagination Series purchased from [Architectural Systems Inc.](#) To accentuate the faux pasture, Brosh placed a KS Cow cabinet bought for about \$1,000 at [Espacio Home](#) in London (pictured on Page 1). The look can be replicated by creating a large-scale image at a copy shop and cutting it to fit flat drawer fronts.

Largely serving travelers on business or layovers, Brosh wanted surprising rooms that were "uplifting, light, uncluttered and very easy to use." Many of his solutions can work in guest rooms and kids' quarters. What makes the platform beds memorable is a single design move: a [Kravet](#) dog pattern for draperies that Brosh had printed on softer fabric and sewn into coverlets by [SK Textile](#) in L.A.

"Some of the best design evolves when you have restrictions," Brosh says of the rooms, which are devoid of paintings or fussy curtains. "We were restrained in color and art and bold in layout and concept." Indeed, the finishing touch on his "best-in-show" rooms is a blue ribbon clipped onto a plain white lamp shade.

#### PALIHOUSE HOLLOWAY

Created as an alternative to cookie-cutter corporate extended-stay hotels, Palihouse Holloway in West Hollywood makes a design statement starting in the lobby, which designer Avi Brosh says is evocative of New York bars and French bistros.

"It's residential European living rooms meets East Coast prep school student unions," he says, but filtered through a Los Angeles lens of midcentury modernism.

Guest quarters have Saarinen tables and Bertoia bar stools mixed with other classics, including Chesterfield sofas and Union Jack pillows. The lobby is an even more ambitious mash-up of periods, places and styles.

Custom-patterned cement tiles, available from Creative Environments Inc. at the Pacific Design Center, were made in Mexico.

"I like the imperfect quality of these tiles, which gives the space an old existing feeling as opposed to a new polished feel," Brosh says.

To create the atmosphere of a dining room, Brosh surrounded a refectory-style table with bentwood fan-back chairs reminiscent of Thonet's -- pieces he found for \$200 each at London-based [Andy Thornton](#).

Elsewhere, Brosh created smaller bistro tables with 24-inch-diameter marble tops, purchased for \$56 each from restaurant and bar supplier [Beaufurn](#) in North Carolina.

The marble was set on metal bases ordered from [Central Restaurant Products .com/](#) in Indiana and paired with vintage wooden chairs found at the Venice store [Obsolete](#).

On one lobby wall, Brosh created a montage of magazine clippings and other found objects pinned to bulletin board cork, available by the roll and applied with contact cement. A scenic artist for films gave the wall treatment a brocade pattern hand-stamped in metallic colors.

"There are several specialized paints and stencils at [Mann Brothers](#) on La Brea that anyone could use," Brosh says.

The random placement of images on the cork wall is echoed in the asymmetrical placement of candles within a fireplace as well as in the arrangement of framed deer and tree drawings hung in a staggered salon fashion, a boho-chic reminder that

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## Some movies are entitled to do well



The right title, like "American Gangster," draws 'em in. A clunker, like "Cinderella Man," can hurt a good movie.

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everything need not be orderly to look beautiful.

Other ideas that can easily be adapted for home: A thick slab of marble became a substantial coffee table when set on simple legs made from 4-by-4-inch reclaimed lumber.

Vintage wooden crates serve as end tables, stacked with old books held in place with a jute upholstery webbing (\$1.25 a yard from [International Silks & Woolens](#) in Los Angeles) and an industrial safety pin.

"We like the use of raw, simple design elements mixed with fancy, refined ones," Brosh concludes.

## LONDON WEST HOLLYWOOD

"It was important to make the rooms feel residential and to have subliminal touches of Hollywood glamour," designer [David Collins](#) says, "but it's quite difficult to make a contemporary interior look cozy without appearing fussy."

One solution: incorporating a [Maya Romanoff](#) wall covering made from wood veneer. "The presence of wood and the reflective sheen of the grain gives a nod to Neutra and L.A. modernism," he says, "and equally brings a warmth into the room."

Though Collins changed the exterior of the hotel from pink to a more tasteful gray and white, the designer didn't shy away from color inside.

"Los Angeles is a colorful town, and the fact that it has such beautiful light makes it easier to use subtle colors," Collins says. "I didn't want to do gray-beige-greige. I wanted to bring the green I see from the windows indoors with marble and velvet and silk."

He also uses mirrors artfully. On one wall, he achieves the effect of oversized necklace links by hanging three oval mirrors so close that their frames meet, a technique that can be easily managed at home.

A more difficult look to emulate is the mini-bar backsplash, in which Collins covered a mirror with linen mesh and plate glass for a subtler reflection.

If the rooms represent a luxurious take on California casual, the lobby has a distinctly British polish. Tiled in marble mosaic, the floor is a glistening white, with areas defined by circular black borders. Doorway moldings are trimmed in crocodile-embossed leather. At the far end of the lobby, Collins installed one of several 19th century-style English settees upholstered in metallic gold hides from [Edelman Leather](#) in the Pacific Design Center.

"I'd be arrogant to think that people might want to copy that," he says. "But they certainly could. I do think it takes a sizable room to get away with gold leather."

Another form of gilding that Collins uses throughout the lobby: The shades of satin black floor lamps have been gold-leafed on the inside. Ditto the iron chandeliers coated in plaster and gesso and inspired by Alberto Giacometti's designs for the Picasso museum in Paris.

"They look matte and organic from the outside and glow from the inside, casting a golden reflection on everything and everyone in the room," Collins says. "And at the end of the day, as everyone in Los Angeles knows, you're only as good as your lighting."



### Attack of the momagers, dadagers, and sistagers

**PHOTOS:** So many celebs let family members manage their careers and in most cases, things get sloppy.



### Kira Plastinina: From Russia with style

The 15-year-old wunderkind designer throws in her lot on Robertson Boulevard with a new shop. **Photos**



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