

THE STARCK REALITY

A Particular Form of Night Vision



Whimsical designer Philippe Starck first blew us away more than 30 years ago with the Delano in Miami, by not only creating an iconic hotel, but also by completely reinventing the boutique hotel industry.

His ingenuity has since gained him a loyal following and beyond-incredible project opportunities. In the past few years, in collaboration with SBE Entertainment, Starck has brought to the LA nightlife scene three of the most popular hotspots: SLS hotel with The Bazaar by Jose Andres; XIV on Sunset with Chef Michael Mina and the new patio; and the sexy Katsuya sushi restaurants and lounges — the latest just opened downtown at L.A. LIVE.

Starck speaks with 944 about the future of design and what he likes to refer to as his “tribe.”

944: You have certainly put your stamp on the LA nightlife scene in the last year. What do you like about working in LA?

PHILIPPE STARCK: I never travel for my pleasure, so Los Angeles, for me, is first Sam Nazarian, the founder of SBE. He is young, quick-witted, rigorous. He is a visionary, full of energy. He is courageous, and Sam’s qualities are the reflection of the energy of the citizen of Los Angeles. That is why the projects I am working on, they are 100

percent linked to Sam Nazarian and linked to Los Angeles.

944: What do you think will be the next big design direction in the hospitality industry?

PS: The future is de-materialization. I cannot foresee the future, but it is obvious that hospitality service shall be more dedicated to giving experiences and real service to people. For example, with the Bazaar at SLS, people know that there is always something to find, to discover, someone to meet, as it is a giant boiling bucket of energy. I wanted to reproduce the same energy as the one of a center of a village — the energy of the fire. People relate to this. They do not care about how beautiful or not the furniture is. Also, I created Mama Shelter, in Paris, in a very popular and unexpected area of the city, providing the Parisians and visitors a real center of energy where they can blossom.

944: What’s the next country for you to conquer?

PS: I am currently working on a huge cultural and life center in Bilbao, Spain, that shall open next March 2010. Also in Spain, I am creating from scratch a port with Port Adriano in Palma. My first hotel in Italy shall open in Venice next September. And these are only to name a few. There are no more frontiers nowadays; I prefer to see the world as the dispersion of tribes. We cannot please everybody. I create for my tribe, the one we call the “smart tribe,” and this tribe is settled all over the world. So I do not choose projects according to the country, but [based] more [on whether] I get to realize that my tribe shall be happy to welcome a project of mine, wherever it is.

944: Where do you like to vacation when you’re not working?

PS: I have this mental sickness called creativity. I never take vacation. I never travel for my own pleasure. All year long, I travel the world with my wife, Jasmine; we take one to three planes per day to meet with partners, to see prototypes for launching and opening. And then, two months per year, we go to remote places where there is no water, no electricity, in the southwest of France and then in Formentera to work. Eight hours per day, with my pencil and my paper — the same for 30 years — in front of the sea.

944: You have designed some of the world’s favorite places to dine. What are some of your own favorite places to have a meal?

PS: I love to cook, so if we have the chance to be at home — [which is] very seldom — I cook with whatever there is in the fridge. Then, we when travel, I am king of room service. Of course, if I am in Los Angeles, I love to go and eat at the Bazaar by Jose Andres, also Katsuya Glendale. I enjoy the garden of the Chateau Marmont, and on Saturdays, for a lunch at Cholada, the tiny Thai restaurant.

944: What is your idea of a perfect night out?

PS: I do not care about the place as long as I am with the person I love.

For more information on Philippe Starck visit www.starck.com

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