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BOUTIQUE 18 · INNOVATIVE BRANDS · UP-AND-COMING HOTELIERS

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MOVERS + MAKERS

WHAT'S ON THE HORIZON FOR
TWO OF THE INDUSTRY'S MOST
INTRIGUING PLAYERS

Christopher Norton, CEO, Equinox Hotels



HILTON TEMPO

Ambiente demanded re-educating some project team members who had held tight to the conventions of hotel construction. But throwing out the hotel development playbook is not a requirement for helping travelers feel more deeply connected to their destination. Industry giant Hilton is launching its 18th brand, Tempo, which champions placemaking with only a few significant tweaks to its development guidelines—not to mention an attractive mid-range price point.

The concept brand was primarily born from customer data proving that the wellness phenomenon had gone mainstream. Whereas travel used to interrupt healthy diets and sleep patterns, says Phil Cordell, Hilton's global head of new brand development, Tempo intends to support these newfound regimens. Las Vegas-based consultant Blau + Associates is devising a cleaner and greener F&B offering, and Hilton will broadcast "Power-Up" and "Power-Down" content from Arianna Huffington's Thrive Global on in-room TVs.

Hilton reunited with longtime design partner Nelson Worldwide to gestate Tempo for 14 months. The design studio's Cincinnati-based vice president and managing creative director Adrienne Korczynski explains that the wellness focus is best embodied by the guestroom design. Although the module maintains the standard 12-foot width, Nelson rotated the bathroom to the room's long axis and opened the adjacent closets. Those moves transform the entry into a spa-like zone that takes up 40 percent of the room footprint.

If the majority of the Tempo design effort focused on conventional, replicable elements, another 30 percent was devoted to wellness. The third and smallest tier comprises "wow moments where the brand speaks most emotively to you," Korczynski says. "That could be a detail that supports your deep sleep experience, or it can be a custom wallcovering that ties to the locale." Cordell adds that site-specific artwork will be mounted on common-area ceilings to underscore *genius loci*, not to mention inspire people to take their eyes off their smartphones.

"There is a growing opportunity for a customer who wants to feel a little bit local, a little bit unique, but still wants to know there's an owner [taking responsibility for her experience]," Cordell explains. "Tempo is not the same from location to location, but it has a brand's seal of approval behind it." So far, Hilton has logged 40 committed Tempo projects, with a first groundbreaking taking place in Louisville and more than 30 deals in the works.

