

**EXCLUSIVE! 50 HOTEL DEALS JUST FOR YOU**

# TRAVEL + LEISURE

JUNE 2007

**SPECIAL**

## HOTELS ISSUE

### The It List

Our Favorite New Places to Stay from  
Mexico to the Mediterranean

**PLUS**

Bermuda Classics  
Italian Shopping Secrets  
and more...

Insider Tips from  
Top Concierges

World's Best  
Hotels for Service

U.S. \$4.50 CANADA \$5.50  
DISPLAY UNTIL JUNE 26, 2007



36076  
0 391595 0 06>  
travelandleisure.com





GLOBAL WARMING AND THE TRAVELER'S WORLD

# The Greenhouse Effect

Across the country, hotels that once saw green building as either a limitation or a liability are now embracing sustainability in the most fundamental ways. *By ALLISON ARIEFF. Illustrated by JULIETTE BORDA*

**D**ENNIS QUAINANCE HAS BEEN waiting more than 30 years to build a sustainable hotel. “I’ve been interested in what we can proactively but practically do for the environment ever since the first Earth Day in 1970,” explains Quainance, the codesigner and CEO of the new Proximity Hotel, scheduled to open later this summer in Greensboro, North Carolina. “But until recently, the market wasn’t there.” Today, however, integrating things like solar panels and recycled materials into a hotel is advantageous from both an environmental perspective and a business perspective.

The 147-room Proximity is striving for Gold LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification, the national standard for green design, construction, and operations from the U.S. Green Building Council. Among the hotel’s planned features are 100 solar panels to heat water, a green roof, and North America’s first installation of an Otis Gen2 elevator, which generates electricity as the car descends. Ultimately, the hotel will use 50 percent less energy than conventional properties do. Should Proximity meet LEED’s stringent requirements and succeed in its quest for Gold, the second-highest rating a building can achieve, it will »



be one of the first hotels in America to do so (see “LEEDing the Way,” page 152). “I know for sure that you can now build a hotel with 100 percent of the quality of a five-star property that will use 30 to 50 percent less energy,” Quaintance says. “That’s not hyperbole.”

Quaintance’s environmental boosterism signals a significant paradigm shift in the hospitality industry. A few years ago, one would have found scant evidence of anything green in hotels, apart from incandescent bulbs swapped out for compact fluorescents and those little cards allowing guests to opt out of daily linen and towel replacements. In recent years, as the word “chic” began being paired with “eco,” a number of boutique hotels and resorts have been touting questionably sustainable features—such as bamboo trash cans or non-animal-tested scented body wash. Chic, yes. But green?

Probably not. As environmentalism becomes *de rigeur* (see the greening of this year’s Academy Awards for the apotheosis of this trend), every industry—not just hospitality—has been experimenting with green marketing or its more extreme cousin, greenwashing, whereby environmental benefits are marketed but not necessarily delivered. But recently, these superficial eco-flourishes have been giving way to more significant efforts as hotel companies set out to prove that sustainability can have both style and substance.

This shift has been particularly notable in the United States, which had been left in the dust by such environmentally advanced countries as Sweden and the United Kingdom. Driven by rising energy costs and a heightened awareness of global warming and its impact, U.S. hotels are finally picking up the slack. Most significantly, many of their efforts are happening behind the scenes—and away from the marketing materials. Hotel companies are



## Driven by rising energy costs and global warming, U.S. hotels are finally picking up the slack

embarking on major new initiatives. In addition to constructing LEED-certified buildings, they are making extensive green retrofits to existing properties. Hotels large and small are conserving water and electricity; purchasing bulk supplies of everything from food to amenities; installing energy-efficient fixtures, lighting, and appliances; and using low-VOC paints (which reduce the risks of off-gassing) and non-toxic cleaning supplies.

One major player willing to make the change is the Hilton Hotels Corporation, which has been quietly transforming its California properties. In 2005, Hilton began working with the California Green Lodging Program (CGLP) to certify many of its hotels throughout the state—from Doubletrees to Hiltons—adopting recycling programs, refillable amenity dispensers, and non-toxic cleaning supplies and paints, among other things. These properties are also being fitted with low-flow water fixtures, timed outdoor sprinklers, programmable thermostats, sensor-equipped and energy-efficient lighting, and tinted windows to reduce air-conditioning requirements. Michelle Pike, Hilton’s corporate director of housekeeping, says initially there was reluctance to make changes that some thought might be costly or unwieldy, but explains, “We realized how quickly our properties could adapt.” Now, Hilton, is thinking about sustainability literally from the ground up: The first LEED-certified Hilton, in Vancouver, Washington, opened in 2005; the company hopes to break ground on the second, the Waldorf-Astoria Beverly Hills, later this year.

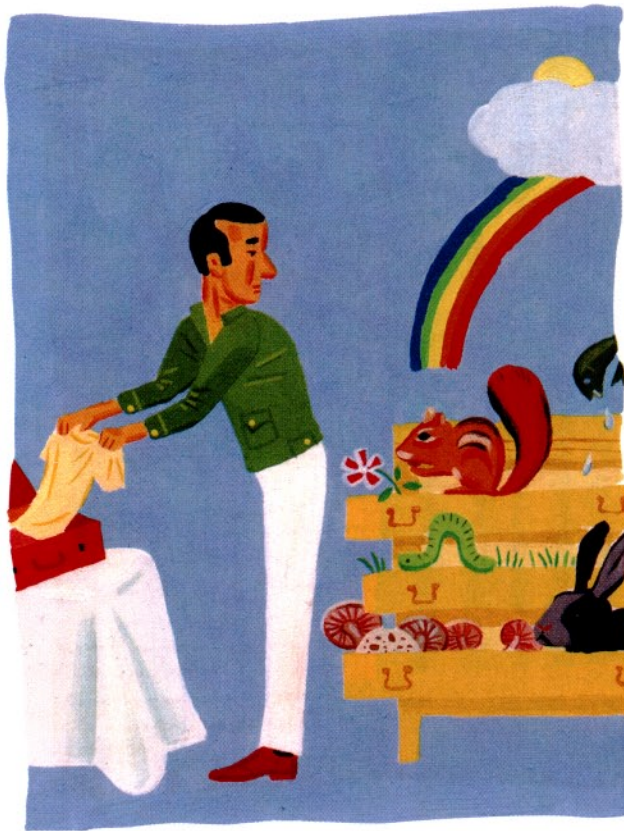
Other chains have been following suit: in 2005, Kimpton Hotels developed an eco-program that incorporates, among other things, low-VOC paints, non-toxic cleaning products, energy-efficient washers and driers, »



and guest-room recycling programs. Hyatt, meanwhile, is taking steps toward sustainability, one region at a time: two of its Texas properties, for example, have started purchasing renewable energy to run their operations. Marriott recently announced an ambitious goal to cut its year 2000 greenhouse-gas emission levels by nearly one-fifth by the end of the decade. And next year, Starwood will introduce the Aloft hotels brand, the cornerstone of which will be a See Green program designed to introduce ecologically friendly products and services to their guests.

Although some of the See Green initiatives may seem a little gimmicky (special parking spaces for hybrid cars), others go further: replacing individual amenity packages with shampoo dispenser units, eliminating toxic cleaning products, and using carpets made from recycled tires.

There is little doubt that for most hotel companies, economics is driving these changes. After years of seeing green as either a liability or another marketing opportunity, hotels now recognize its benefits, especially in the financial realm. Andrew Popp, the director of engineering standards and operations at Hilton, estimates that by adopting sustainable practices, the company's hotels can reduce their energy use by roughly five percent. According to Patricia Griffin, founder and president of the Green Hotels Association, even setting up a simple linen and towel reuse program can save a hotel over \$6.50 per day. That may seem like a small figure, but it adds up quickly. And building an entire property according to the U.S. Green Building Council's standards means significantly more savings. The Hilton Vancouver Washington, which received LEED certification in 2006, has reduced its



Solar panels and recycled materials are advantageous from both an environmental and business perspective

annual energy expenditures by roughly \$80,000 (the hotel has already seen a return on its green-building investment in a little over two years). A profit motive may not sit well with all environmentalists, but Griffin believes action trumps motivation. "We don't care about the reason you get on the train," she explains. "Just get on it."

Money, however, is not the only incentive. More and more properties are taking into account the triple bottom line of People,

Planet, Profit. That is to say, financial performance is no longer the only measure of a company's success; environmental and social performance are a significant part of the equation as well. As Michelle Pike explains, Hilton's push to meet CGLP standards was as much about economics as it was about the "moral imperative" that compelled the company to act.

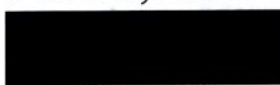
This moral imperative is especially evident in small hotels, where an individual owner's ethics can impact design from the ground up. Architect Hadrian Predock, whose firm, Predock Frane, considers sustainability to be intrinsic to its work, says that he has been fortunate to work with environmentally engaged clients for two small and sustainable inns he currently has on the boards: the Inn at the French Laundry in Napa (which he is building in collaboration with his father, Antoine Predock) and the Vines of Mendoza Resort & Winery in Argentinian wine country. Both owners, Thomas Keller in Napa and the Argentinian development group of David Garrett, Michael Evans, and Pablo Gimenez, have been instrumental in their inns' designs. Predock sees these projects as part of a broader zeitgeist: "It is becoming clear that good ethics and good design mean good business. If »



hotels do not adapt to society's changing ethical demands they will not survive."

Perhaps the most interesting—if not profound—recent development in green hospitality is its migration from hotel room to bedroom (and kitchen and bath), thanks to the proliferation of hybrid hotel and residence properties. Opening in Seattle in 2008 will be the first of Starwood Capital's new sustainable hotel and residence collection, known simply as 1. Designed by Sienna Architecture, the building will incorporate renewable and recyclable materials, rainwater collection (which seems more than practical in Seattle), a heat-reflective roof, and key card-activated lighting systems. As architect Lee Winn explains, the hotel, which is aiming for LEED certification, will demonstrate the compatibility of luxury and sustainable living. Meanwhile, the well-known Tucson destination spa Miraval is transplanting its Life in Balance experience to condominiums on Manhattan's Upper East Side this summer. The new Miraval Living will, like the Arizona spa, have a distinct emphasis on health and wellness. The property promises cleaner air and water (via an eco-friendly design that incorporates

## More and more properties are taking into account the triple bottom line: People, Planet, Profit



HEPA air filters), will serve organic food in its café, and provide a chlorine-free swimming pool and 20,000-square-foot garden (no easy feat in the city).

Such commingling means that green hotels can have an impact well beyond the hospitality industry. Los Angeles-based architect Jennifer Siegal, who is currently developing a mobile green hotel, designed to accommodate visitors at large-scale events like Nascar races and the Super Bowl, explains that a night or two in a hotel room can educate people about green materials and technologies—and inspire them to seek out such things in their own houses. "Guests may get their first intimate exposure to 'on-demand' water heaters or coconut-palm floors without having to commit to the purchase beforehand," Siegal says. Architect Henry Smith-Miller, who is currently in the construction phase for 27 Wooster, a factory-fabricated, green-living condo project in New York's SoHo, puts it a little more bluntly, calling the contemporary hotel "a one-night stand for environmental experimentation." And, given the virtuous cause, you're sure to wake up without a trace of morning-after guilt. +

### LEEDing THE WAY HOTELS THAT ARE GOING GREEN

The most widely recognized standard for green building in the country (and perhaps the world), the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED certification accredits projects that embrace energy efficiency and conservation in everything from construction materials to layout and design. Certified projects can achieve an even higher rating of Silver, Gold, or Platinum if they receive enough additional credits. The rating system, which launched in 2000, had a slow start. But today, buildings across the country, from office high-rises to schools, are breaking ground and aiming for LEED. Here, a look at some hotels that are making the environment a priority. —JENNIFER WELBEL

#### MARCH 2007

##### **GAIA NAPA VALLEY HOTEL & SPA** American Canyon, Calif.

A 132-room hotel seeking Gold certification, the property has a solar-paneled roof, skylights to bring in natural light, and carpeting throughout that is made of recycled materials. The hotel also has on-site kiosks to provide guests with information about Gaia's green efforts.

#### JULY 2007

##### **SOLAGE CALISTOGA** Calistoga, Calif.

The first hotel in Auberge Resorts' new Solage brand will tap the hot springs beneath the property to heat the spa building and soaking pools at the 14,000-square-foot Spa Solage. Room service will be delivered by bicycle, and bathrooms will feature bulk toiletries.

#### DECEMBER 2007

##### **HOPE LAKE LODGE** Cortland, N.Y. A geothermal system to heat and cool

the entire property is among the planned features for this family resort in upstate New York, which is anticipating a Silver rating.

#### WINTER 2008-2009

##### **1 HOTEL & RESIDENCES** Seattle Starwood Capital Group will launch its new line of LEED-certified hotels with the opening of 1 Hotel & Residences in Seattle. The hotel's interiors will be made from natural materials, including recycled wood.

#### WINTER 2008-2009

##### **CROSBY STREET HOTEL** New York City London's haute hotelier, Firmdale, is striving for Silver with this property in SoHo. The hotel will have a vegetated roof and will be built with locally sourced materials.

#### SUMMER 2009

##### **FAIRMONT HOTEL** Pittsburgh A collaboration between the Toronto-based Fairmont and the PNC Financial

Services Group in Pittsburgh, the entire hotel will be built using recycled and recyclable materials, from the carpeting to the fabric on the couches.

#### 2010

##### **WALDORF-ASTORIA** Beverly Hills

Hilton expects to begin construction on this anticipated LEED-certified property later this year. The centerpiece of the hotel's environmental plan is the creation of a 4½-acre green oasis (gardens and rainwater catchment sites) in the center of the city.



**T+L ONLINE** For more on our global warming series and articles on green hotels, go to [travelandleisure.com](http://travelandleisure.com).