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Proper Hospitality

Soon after Proper Hospitality cofounders Alex Samek, Brian De Lowe, and Brad Korzen snatched up the historic Albert Pissis-designed flatiron building in San Francisco, De Lowe, who also serves as the company's president, temporarily left Los Angeles and moved into what would become the first Proper Hotel.

Eager "to fully immerse myself in the neighborhood, meet many locals, and better understand what was missing in the area," De Lowe orchestrated a series of onsite F&B pop-ups, getting to know plenty of folks in the San Francisco culinary, art, and music worlds—including the duo behind BVHospitality, the company that now oversees the hotel's beverage program.

Forging strong partnerships within the community is instrumental to the Proper Hotels mission. San Francisco opened in 2017, and the collection expanded with properties in Santa Monica and Austin, where a multi-restaurant collaboration with McGuire Moorman Hospitality reinforces that all Proper partners have "a connection to the vibrancy of the local culture and a passion for pushing boundaries," says De Lowe. Up next: a Downtown LA property.

The driving creative force behind Proper Hotels is celebrated designer Kelly Wearstler (who is married to Korzen). She considers each location her muse, weaving stories together through distinctive materials, palettes, and artwork. In Santa Monica, for example, Wearstler's layered approach pays homage to the tones and textures of the Pacific coastline with sandy hues and oversized statement headboards. Austin, by contrast, mixes floral wallpaper and a sculptural wood staircase swathed in vintage rugs.



Kelly Wearstler amplifies the city's chic, bohemian aesthetic in the San Francisco Proper Hotel



Studio Collective melds midcentury touches with beachy motifs at the Hotel June



A mosaic of Portuguese tiling wraps the Peacock restaurant at the Austin Proper



A striped motif pervades La Bande café at San Francisco Proper



Rooftop lounge Charmaine's crowns the San Francisco Proper



Abundant marble and geometric forms make Villon restaurant a standout in the lobby at the San Francisco Proper

Photos by MANOLO YLLERA, THE INGALLS, and COURTESY OF PROPER HOSPITALITY

“She has an incredible way of using raw materials and patterns that create an eclectic design but still have a warm, welcoming feel,” explains De Lowe. Wearstler’s residentially informed, modern spaces, including buzzy restaurants, rooftop pools, and “gorgeous lobby lounges for hanging out and working,” he points out, help instill a “looser kind of luxury that bridges the classic notions of service and civility with the boutique hotel experience.”

In the midst of the pandemic, Proper Hospitality unveiled its newest brand, Hotel June (Avalon Hotels, with locations in Beverly Hills and Palm Springs, is the third in the portfolio), the younger, more affordable sibling of Proper Hotels. Designed by Venice, California-based **Studio**

Collective, the inaugural property pays homage to its home—a midcentury Welton Becket building—while infusing a laidback California beach vibe through swaths of oak, woven accents, terrazzo floors, handmade tiles, subtle color (pink, gray, green, and blue), and cheerful murals. “We’ve kept much of the essential aspects of a Proper Hotel and dialed everything else back a bit,” says De Lowe. “It’s easier, lighter, fun. Anything goes.”

While these are uncertain times for the hotel industry, De Lowe is steadfast. “It’s in moments like these that we all grow and improve as we’re forced to innovate. We had something really special before this all started. The best way we can move forward is by staying absolutely true to the defining pillars of our brand.”