

SLEEPER

HOSPITALITY EXPERIENCE & DESIGN



IZZA – MARRAKECH • ARASH AZARBARZIN • REGINA EXPERIMENTAL – BIARRITZ



Stay CAMDEN

Stay taps into the science of sleep with its chic long-stay apartments in the heart of Camden.

Words: Cara Rogers
Photography: © Beth Davis (unless otherwise stated)

When Sleeper arrives at Stay Camden, there's a palpable buzz in the air. It's Friday afternoon and people are scuttling about the lobby, some hunting for a spot to set up their laptop for the day, others unloading TV cameras. "We get a lot of production crews staying here, and actors too," explains our tour guide, as we hitch a lift up to the apartments.

Superstar cameos aside, it's no surprise that aparthotels like this one have become increasingly popular, particularly amongst travellers looking for long-stay lodgings that offer more freedom than a typical hotel. Chic and stylish yet fully-equipped and practical, Stay Camden is a convenient setting for work, rest and play. Most residents are corporate, though families moving house also find their way here, thanks to a partnership with relocation agents that makes transitions as smooth as possible.

Stay Camden's 169 apartments are spread across three blocks located along the banks of the lock. Ranging from 55-130m², they

comprise a living area and fully-fitted kitchen as well as a dedicated workspace and private balcony. Once inside, the bustle of the lobby and nearby hubbub of Camden Market becomes a distant memory. It's a tranquil, minimalist space that guests can make their own, whether on video calls or enjoying a leisurely glass of wine come nightfall.

Interiors have been brought to life by Yaara Gooner, Head of Architecture & Design at Stay, with the aesthetic built on Scandinavian design principles that facilitate a sense of calm. Natural colours and textures – all considered conducive to relaxation – make up the foundations of the palette, while exposed brickwork, Crittall-style windows and brushed steel fixtures reference Camden's industrial past.

With most guests staying a minimum of seven nights, facilitating a good night's sleep is of utmost importance – the health benefits of which include improved focus and productivity. As such, Gooner has enlisted independent sleep expert Dr Neil Stanley to ensure the design of



© Andrew Twort

A feature wall in the bedroom is lined with blonde timber that sets the Scandinavian tone

the property is conducive to shut-eye. “33% of your life is spent in the bedroom, so investing in making it a sleep-optimised environment is key. With so many things to busy our brains – from social media scrolling, to the cost of living crisis, to climate change – creating an environment that is calm and conducive to dropping off is crucial,” explains Dr Stanley. “In a hotel room, one might experience curtains that don’t meet in the middle, the whir of the mini-bar fridge or noisy air conditioning set at a higher than optimal temperature for sleep.”

According to the expert, consideration of the science of sleep through the design process can also have a clear commercial benefit: “You might not like the restaurant, the gym or the swimming pool in your hotel, but if you go somewhere and cannot sleep, I guarantee you will never go back to that property.”

To craft interiors that would send even the most restless guest to sleep, Gooner adopted a “human-centric” design philosophy. “Sleeping is something that is very subjective; everyone

needs a different environment to be able to fall asleep,” she explains. “What we can do is provide a platform for guests to customise their environment so they feel safe, can relax, and which reminds them of home.”

Gooner points out that every detail is important when creating a space that is both relaxing and customisable, from navigable light switches to easily-adjustable temperature – Stay Camden’s apartments offer underfloor heating, a luxury for those who prefer their living quarters on the warmer side.

The textures featured across the space have also been carefully considered, since natural materials like timber and stone are foster a calmness. With this in mind, a feature wall in the bedroom is lined with blonde timber that sets the Scandinavian tone, while a sumptuous velvet bucket chair, woollen bed throw and circular mirrors add a softness.

“In many hotels, the design is so busy that you don’t feel relaxed enough to sleep,” says Gooner. “Our bedrooms are simple, minimal



and clean in terms of aesthetic. To get a good night's sleep, you need to be able to relax, so I picked out calming, earthy tones for the interiors at Stay.”

A similar soft aesthetic is woven through the open-plan living space – complete with cosy living room, a dining area and kitchen – accented with darker notes like an olive-toned sofa and the occasional burst of greenery. With lighting another key consideration, the designer has ensured that natural daylight floods in through expansive windows, while spherical light fixtures emit a warm glow after dark.

Naturally, given Stay's corporate guest demographic, the apartments are also suitably tech-savvy, equipped with a virtual concierge service that allows for a number of services and customisation options to be reached at the touch of a button.

Many of the materials and surfaces across the property have eco-friendly credentials too; rugs in living rooms are made from recycled bottles, while offcuts of marble have been used to create

a six-foot-long desk in the property's reception – a striking piece whose diverse origins reflects the melting pot that is Camden.

The same philosophy extends to the welcome hamper offered in the apartments on arrival, with sweet and savoury treats selected for their biodegradable packaging, and in place of plastic bottles, glass carafes that can be refilled at water stations.

Back downstairs, Stay Camden offers a stellar selection of additional amenities. There's a gym, as well as a laidback café next door to satisfy any cravings for baked goods. Continuing to cater to the mobile workforce, Stay's sister brand, Labs, holds court across multiple floors, providing an expansive co-working space – also designed by Gooner – with meeting rooms, an auditorium and individual phone booths.

For those who frequent properties like these, Stay Camden is a handy spot for a long-term city stint away from home – designed to facilitate hard work, hibernation and the occasional Hollywood film crew.



EXPRESS CHECK-OUT

Owner: Ground Gilbey
 Investors: LabTech London,
 Stanley Sidings
 Operator: Stay
 Interior Design: Yaara Gooner
 Main Contractor: Mace
www.stay.com



View the full gallery on
SLEEPFIER