

## Zentis Osaka

Rebecca Lo • Photography by Stirling Elmendorf, courtesy Zentis Osaka • September 9, 2020



The first property from Palace Hotel Co.'s new select-service brand Zentis is located in Osaka, Japan

Palace Hotel Tokyo is synonymous with Japanese luxury accommodations. In order to address the evolving needs of a design savvy clientele, Palace Hotel Co. launched the select-service brand Zentis in the port city of Osaka in June. To give the 16-story hotel a distinctive aesthetic, London-based [Tara Bernerd & Partners](#) was entrusted with its interior design.

“Craftsmanship and industrial heritage are key to the local culture, and we sought to encapsulate both with a modern, forward-looking attitude through a mixture of materials from local brick to beautiful woods and encaustic tiles,” Bernerd explains.



The sculptural staircase features a built-in bench and shelving

The lobby sets the tone for [Zentis Osaka](#), functioning as a convivial great room, with intriguing details such as floating shelves set against full-height glazing, rivets on ceiling beams, and a leafy L-shaped terrace. Bernerd added a mix of seating areas—boasting midcentury, contemporary, and bespoke styles—to bring a welcome and intimate feel to the space.

Near the entry, a sculptural staircase made from blue limestone and featuring cantilevered elements, including a bench seat on one side and shelves on the other, leads to restaurant and bar UPSTAIRZ. “As it winds its way upstairs, its open treads vanish into the beams of the ceiling with the handrails themselves reaching back down underneath the tread,” she says. The focal point of the 116-seat restaurant is the outdoor terrace bar, while the private dining room is a “modern take on the traditional Japanese screens with linen-inlaid glass privacy screens,” Bernerd notes.





The UPSTAIRZ bar and restaurant comprises an outdoor terrace and private dining room

In keeping with petit Japanese standards, the hotel's 212 guestrooms take cues from the modular design of bento boxes to enhance flow and efficiency and create an inviting sanctuary for guests. Nodding to the vibrant location, a dramatic whoosh on the wall above the bed by artist Masami Ehara was inspired by traditional Washi art typical of the region. Further, peek-a-boo glazing into bathrooms help the rooms feel generous, with light wood, weathered bronze, and muted yellow hues adding warmth and depth.

"I have long wished to work in Japan, so I was particularly proud to realize this dream," Bernerd says. "Zentis Osaka brings a freshness and new approach to the local hotel market and was designed in a holistic way to be a home-from-home, set in a garden oasis in a dense part of Osaka."

