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MEXICAN MAGIC

The Condesa DF isn't just another boutique hotel, it's Mexico City's hottest property.

Scouting around the Mexican landscape, Paris-based interiors expert India Mahdavi (who designed Miami's TownHouse hotel and club APT in New York's trendy Meatpacking District, as well as shops for Givenchy) harvested fragrant woods, smooth stones and hand-forged metals to transform a crumbling colonial-style landmark into this lush oasis of contemporary chic. Elements of the natural world loom large throughout the 40-room Condesa; the grainy textures of the shimmering white walls mimic the crystalline sands of Mexico's Caribbean coastline, while the hotel's signature turquoise accents are true to the desert gemstone after which the colour was named. Nature comes indoors in the patio restaurant's tropical garden, too, where a vast swathe of sunlight is channelled into the Condesa's inner core, giving the hotel a real sense of the traditional hacienda.

Tucked away on a tree-lined avenue, the Condesa oozes sleek modernity and offers striking aerial views of the nearby park. By day, guests can slip into the secluded mosaic pool and splash languorously under its stunning waterfall. In the evening, the hotel is a candlelit dreamscape, where star-gazers can marvel at the night sky from the rooftop cocktail lounge and adjacent sushi bar (whose chef was headhunted from Manhattan's award-winning Bond Street restaurant). For those who wish to boogie the night away, subterranean splendours can be found in the dance bar downstairs, where majestically moody decor keeps step with design-savvy groovers.

DECO

Condesa DF, Avenida Veracruz 102, Mexico City, DF 06700. From approx. £95 for a double room (exc. tax). To book call Design Hotels (00 49 30 62 90 11 11; www.designhotels.com).



The shimmering ceramic bar is surrounded by India Mahdavi's 'Bishop' stools, while above hang delicate 'Random' lights by the Monkey Boys for Moooi.



Traditional Mexican materials, such as white ceramic, oiled wood and cowhide combine with turquoise walls to give the restaurant its unique look.



High above the street is the luxurious Top Suite, where glass doors retract behind fabric scrims so that Mexico City's sunshine floods in.

3 CURIOUS FACTS ABOUT THE CONDESA

1. The hotel is notorious for its fetish box, which contains a whip, blindfold, marshmallows and a policeman's cap (only available via room service!).
2. The suffix 'DF' means 'Distrito Federal', taken from the Mexican capital's official name Mexico City DF (like Washington DC).
3. Paris Hilton held the Mexican launch of her eponymous perfume at Condesa DF with a suitably star-studded guest list.