

Charismatic & Bespoke
KITCHENS & BATHROOMS

belle

URBAN CHIC *Smart Spaces for contemporary living*



GLAMOUR MISSION

TAMSIN JOHNSON'S TIMELESS ELEGANCE

ENJOY YOUR STAY

Forget the journey, for the Lancemore Hotel Group, it's all about the destination — and showcasing high-end Australian design.

Words **ALEXANDRA ENGLISH**
Photography **RHIANNON TAYLOR**

This page The crescent-moon fireplace in the lounge at Lancemore Milawa "adds magic appeal for all", says interior designer Hana Hakim of The Stella Collective.



This page, clockwise from top left The reception desk at Lancemore Milawa is one of CEO Julian Clark's favourite design elements: "I just love the sensuality of the desk," he says. Lancemore Milawa's lounge looks out to a working vineyard. The rooftop is another of Julian's favourite spots: "When you're sitting up there with tunes on, having a drink, life feels perfect. Everything is irrelevant outside of that space." The "crashed" chandelier at Lancemore Crossley St "sets a stage-like moment for guests to interact with", says designer Susan Carr. The Mediterranean-inspired pool at Lancemore Milawa.

THERE'S SOMETHING TO BE SAID for having a favourite hotel group that's identical across its locations – after all, relaxation can be found in familiarity. But the appeal of Lancemore is that each of its properties would appear completely out of place anywhere other than where they are. Here, the journey is irrelevant: it's all about the destination.

To ensure each property is a world unto itself, CEO Julian Clark and his team commission different designers for every one. The through-line is a commitment to Australian design. "We've got absolutely superb design here, and there's a real confidence to it," says Julian. "Our ethos has always been to work with the best designers possible who fit with the vision we have." Take The Stella Collective, who were invited to reimagine Lancemore Milawa in Victoria's rugged King Valley. The new design pays homage to the original owner's Moroccan travels, the region's Italian immigrant heritage and the landscape. It's Mediterranean barefoot "loose luxury" fit for the high country.

"The seasons are incredibly visible in this part of the world," says The Stella Collective founder Hana Hakim. "We focused on weaving these weather elements into the design." In winter, the lounge is a major draw for guests who can enjoy it as a comfortable daytime space or a venue for "giddy cocktail nights", says Hana. "With the starlit Moroccan courtyard coupled with pool sojourns, rooftop aperitifs and nightly firepits, you can really anchor yourself into the landscape."

Three hours away, tucked into a laneway in Melbourne's CBD, is Lancemore Crossley St, a property that offers the opposite experience. Susan Carr from Carr, the eponymous architecture and design firm, took the vibrancy of the city's arts and theatre scene and injected it into the Graeme Gunn-designed building. Carr's concept became "on-stage, off-stage". It's for guests who have spent all day or evening "experiencing the intensity and charm of Melbourne on-stage, and want to withdraw to the calm of their hotel suite off-stage", she says.

The Broadway-style theatre lights and blue velvet curtains provide a theatrical welcome for guests, while a dazzling chandelier ("relic of a bygone era") that appears to have crashed from the ceiling brings the drama. Video installations, sculpture, painting and graffiti are curated throughout. "The interiors celebrate and extend the experiences of the area with theatrical elements and a sense of drama not seen in other hotels," says Susan. And that right there is the Lancemore difference.

lancemore.com.au; thestellacollective.co

