





Robert Angell

ROBERT ANGELL DESIGN INTERNATIONAL

A protégé of David Collins, Robert Angell is currently leading a number of redesigns at London's Berkeley. His fantasy hotel stay takes him to the Winelands of South Africa.

Where are you?

In the Winelands of South Africa, amongst the lush green mountains of the Western Cape overlooking where the Atlantic meets the Pacific.

How did you get there?

In an ecological low-altitude, autonomous aerial vehicle from which I take in the sights of the stunning landscape.

Who is there to greet you on arrival?

Sharan Pasricha of Ennismore. He, like Alex Calderwood, has redefined what a hotel is. It's these visionaries that make the industry question how we can create more memorable experiences.

And who's at the concierge desk?

The concierge from The Connaught, London, where ones every whim can be catered for with astute knowledge and discretion.

Who are you sharing your room with?

Oscar Wilde. I love being surrounded by artists and creatives and he is quoted as saying: "I have the simplest tastes. I am always satisfied with the best," which rings true with myself.

Is there anything you would like waiting for you in your room?

A refreshing Caribbean fruit punch made with oranges, limes, pineapple, fresh mint and lots of crushed ice. Also a butler.

Describe the hotel, your room and the view...

Set back in the mountains, it's an elegant retreat

that feels like my own private villa. The entrance leads into a courtyard where there is a fountain, and every room can open inwards as well as outwards towards the spectacular views. The rooms are decorative with embellishment, but not fussy – the details perfected. The baths are roman in style, and deep. They offer a place to relax and indulge in ones pleasures, as true luxury is through our own experience and without compromise. The lighting is important for creating the right mood and can be adjusted easily. The suite is luxurious and comfortable with Frette linen sheets and a huge Savoir bed. The large French windows open up onto a terrace filled with trees and flowers in blossom and views to the sea. Every breath I take throws me into a sense of belonging, allowing me to feel relaxed. In the evening, fire torches bring the night alive and the flickering light enhances the stunning limestone bas-relief walls and terracotta roofs.

Who designed it?

Gustave Louis Jaulmes, an eclectic French artist who followed the neo-classical trend in the Art Deco movement. He collaborated with Frank Lloyd Wright on this hotel, and together they have created a villa that is of now, with the utmost attention to detail and sense of place.

What's the restaurant like?

We dine on the natural formed terraces of the mountains. It's open and relaxed, with fire pits, laid back furniture and low tables. It's circular in form and everyone can have their own space but it allows us to interact with others if we wish, to exchange stories and experiences.

Who are you dining with this evening?

Andy Warhol; Queen Elizabeth II; French architect André Arbus; photographer Robert Maplethorpe; and fashion designer Tom Ford.

Who's manning the stoves?

Wolfgang Puck, Marcus Wareing and Alain Ducasse, who have really set the bar to which others aspire. They are legends who have reinvented themselves to take on board changing tastes and have an acute ability to create fabulous dishes over and over.

And what's on the menu?

An exquisite and well-crafted dinner from all five continents and seven seas with different taste sensations and flavours that really set the senses going. It includes cultural dishes that are indigenous and a testament to how communities may be nourished and sustained by locally sourced foods, without the use of processed products.

What's in the mini-bar for a night cap?

1945 Darroze Chateau de Lasserrade Armagnac.

What's on your nightstand at bedtime?

Sparkling water, a bar of mint chocolate from Paul A. Young, and easy-to-reach controls for operating everything in my room, from the blinds to the lights.

What's your ultimate luxury item?

My camera for capturing the experience; this moment in time and the sheer beauty of what is around us.

Name: Robert Angell | Position: Founder, Robert Angell Design International | www.robertangelldesigninternational.com

Notable hotel projects: Berkeley, London; Hilton Vienna Plaza, Vienna; Boulevard Hotel, Baku