

# **BOUTIQUE HOTELS: THE HISTORY OF BECOMING POPULAR**

**O. S. Hidzhelitska**

*National University of Food Technology*

Today, a traveler needs a place to work comfortably and get a good night's sleep. As a result, hotels are becoming domestic, and the more historic a property is, the better suited it is to become intimate and cozy. Besides, travelers nowadays expect more than simply comfort and convenience. An increasing number of travelers prefer to be positively "surprised". When planning trips, they seek properties that are noticeably different in look and feel like branded hotels. That's why boutique hotels are becoming more and more popular all over the world.

The "boutique" style was created in New York in 1984, when the entrepreneur Ian Schrager and Steve Rubell opened Morgans on Madison Avenue. It was quirky and individual, unlike the big brand-name hotels that were dominant at the time. The term "boutique hotel" was coined by Rubell, who described their new venture as being like a boutique as opposed to a department store [1].

In order to define the concept of boutique hotel, we need to define these two separate terms. Thus, boutique is the name given to the small and luxurious stores that sell goods on small series and the hotel is the building with furnished rooms that offer the possibility of hiring on short-term, especially to travelers.

The concept of boutique hotel is strongly opposed to big chain hotels as it describes hotels reduced in size, located in prestigious areas, furnished with unusual furniture, and designed to offer an intimate and/or family atmosphere. Unlike big chain hotels, boutique hotels offer a unique experience. Certainly their small size can offer privacy and discretion to customers. Boutique hotels are able to know customers very well and offer services tailored to their needs and preferences that large hotels cannot [2].

The idea of the boutique hotels was soon taken up in Europe and, ever since, the growth of boutique hotels has continued unhampered.

Two of the first boutique hotels in the world opened their doors to the public in 1981: The Blakes Hotel in South Kensington, London (designed by celebrity stylist Anouska Hempel) and the Bedford Hotel in San Francisco. In 1983 the hotel with a theme – „Hotel Vintage Court” in San Francisco establishes wine-related focus.

The first boutique hotel in England, was '42 The Calls', which was situated in Leeds, London. It was made from the building that was an old corn mill previously, but still retained the machines which were used, and still has some features of its history, such as the handmade beds.

However, strangeness and uniqueness aren't always the main features of boutique hotels nowadays. All around the world, the term 'boutique hotels' is used for hotels which come in various sizes and looks: small luxury hotels which have a more modern style and really good service; accommodation with unique looks; and hotels which call themselves 'lifestyle' hotels, which mainly emphasize on a type of elegance which doesn't seem to be too obvious.

All of these are common in the sense that they are all small, generally with a capacity from 20 to 150 rooms. Most of these don't have the feel of a boxy hotel, and all the rooms are individually crafted, which adds to the sense of uniqueness [3].

#### Top 3 Boutique Hotels Worldwide published by Gayot.com (2012)

Nr	Name	Country	Rooms	Features
1	Maison 140	United States, California	44	Four-poster beds, vintage furniture with vibrant colors, unique decorative touches. Deluxe Italian linen. Redesigned by Kelly Wearstler.
2	Amandari	Bali Indonesia	30	With the artist community of Ubud so close by, it's no wonder this hotel feels like a living gallery. The property has been designed to reflect nearby villages, while at the same time offering such resort pleasures as a luxurious spa, pool and tennis court.
3	Royce Hotel	Australia, Melbourne	100	Italian marble, SPA, sophisticated upholstery. The hotel offers a surprising wealth of amenities, including a business center, grand ballroom, banquet and meeting facilities, gym, library and massage.

Guest of boutique hotels are those who are seeking for unique experience instead of standard hotel room. Nevertheless, smart boutique hotels must continue to adapt to the incessantly changing needs, tastes, preferences, and fashions in order to remain competitive in the flourishing boutique hotel market.

### **References**

1. Hotel History 101: Boutique Hotels. – Official site of HotelChatter. Available at: <http://www.hotelchatter.com/story/2006/3/13/115839/107/hotels>.
2. Migle Polikeviciute. Boutique hotels evolution. Available at: <https://ojs.kauko.lt>.
3. The History of Boutique Hotels. – Official site of Bizymoms. Available at: <http://www.bizymoms.com/besthotels/boutique-hotel.html>