

PROJECTS



HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS CAPE TOWN CITY CENTRE

St Georges Mall, Cape Town

Developers

ISO Leisure

Development Managers

Zenprop

Project Managers

Proman Project Management Services

Architects

Louis Karol

Quantity Surveyors

MLC Quantity Surveyors

Consulting Engineers:

Structural

Africon

Electrical

Solution Station

Mechanical

Eshove & Pryce

Plumbing

Gemi Consultants

Fire

Solution Station

Health & Safety

Solid State Safety Consultants

Main Contractor

Stefanutti & Bressan

Photography

Mike Wesson

Courtesy of Corporate Image

Fiona Barclay Smith



Holiday Inn Express

In contrast with the tired image of the traditional old South African mid-range hotels, Holiday Inn Expresses are entirely new or newly-refurbished, with luxury finishes and fully-featured rooms.

Holiday Inn is back in South Africa and Louis Karol Architecture & Interiors are exclusive brand architects for their new, select-service Holiday Inn Express offering, with MacIntosh Latilla Carrier & Laing (MLC) as quantity surveyors.

ARCHITECT'S REPORT

The multi-hotel project - developed by ISO Leisure (the exclusive licensee for Holiday Inn Express in South Africa) - is regarded as unprecedented in terms of scale and speed of development by any hospitality group operating locally, will see the opening of no less than ten hotels countrywide by 2010.

In contrast with the tired image of the traditional old South African mid-range hotels, Holiday Inn Expresses are (almost by definition) entirely-new or newly-refurbished, with luxury finishes and fully-featured rooms. Holiday Inn Express passes on savings to its guests by the omission of full-service restaurants or room service. Although a breakfast buffet is served daily, Expresses are generally situated close to busy restaurants and

service nodes - an acknowledgement that it has become virtually anachronistic to dine in one's own hotel. Unpopular hotel restaurants are now often redundant and are effectively subsidised by guests as part of the room rate in a traditional hotel.

South Africa's first new Holiday Inn Express opened in Cape Town's booming and revitalised city centre in March this year. Holiday Inn Express Cape Town City Centre is to be followed by Holiday Inn Express Sandton Woodmead (due to open in July) and Holiday Inn Express Pretoria Sunnyside opening in mid-2009. ISO Leisure CEO, Gavin Watson, is committed to constructing 2,010 rooms by the year 2010, and to this end further Expresses are on the drawing boards for Cape Town, Johannesburg, Durban and other large and emerging cities.

Architecture

Forging an architectural identity for the global chain that is unique to South Africa, the architects are creating a mix of urban and suburban hotels that involves the recycling of existing downtown office and apartment blocks and the creation of







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entirely new structures. These are being designed to make accommodation more accessible to South African business and leisure travellers, while drawing greater numbers of visitors from the rest of the continent and further afield.

Louis Karol's Architectural and Interiors divisions set about creating a new South African brand identity for Holiday Inn Express. "It's the rarest architectural opportunity, to roll-out every South African hotel for an international chain", said Robert Silke, design partner at Louis Karol Architectural. "Whilst Holiday Inn Express rooms are set to exacting international brand standards, we have had considerable freedom in determining the architectural character of the hotels, their external interface and their public areas", Silke continued.

Owing to land prices and availability, new Expresses inside major city centres tend to be conversions of existing buildings on brownfield sites, whilst new-builds tend to occur on greenfield sites along-side major arterials or in new or suburban areas. "To this end we have created a prototypical brand architecture for all South African new-builds, with the intention of creating an easily-recognisable and uniquely South African identity for the hotels", Silke explained.

"While many three-star hotels are designed as invisible, modest boxes - almost ashamed of themselves - with big signage,

it is our intention is to create buildings so striking and familiar, that you wouldn't even need a sign to tell you that you've arrived at an Express hotel," said Silke.

To this end, the architecture endeavours to interpret the values behind the hotel brand: "Express' speaks of modernity and speed, of the romance of high-speed transport and a kind of smart simplicity," explained Silke.

Holiday Inn Express Sandton Woodmead

The artist's impressions of Holiday Inn Express Sandton Woodmead (the chain's first new-build, due to open in July) illustrate a prominent roadside building that, from some angles, resembles a bullet train, with a dramatic, silver-aluminium-clad signature balcony feature at the 'front' of the hotel, with carefully-articulated room modules trailing behind like slick, modern, luxury train compartments. The futuristic architectural branding will be carried through to other new-builds across the country, with regional variations in respect of materials, colour and climatic control.

The Woodmead hotel is situated on a major intersection and is bounded by the N1 (Ben Schoeman) highway and Maxwell Drive, opposite the Vodacom driving range, and adjacent to several new major corporate headquarters for Oracle, Group 5 and General Motors. The hotel numbers



157 rooms across three levels, amounting to approximately 4,800m² built area, with naturally-ventilated parking basement measuring approximately 2,200m², and amounting to a construction cost of approximately R60m.

The U-shaped plan arranges its double-banked rooms around a central entrance courtyard with on-grade parking, and access to a semi-basement offering covered parking. The public areas comprise a Great Room (breakfast room) and bar area, with meeting rooms, reception and a large wooden deck - all with spectacular views over the adjacent golf course. Rooms are constructed in conventional clay masonry on a concrete frame structure, two-to-a-bay on a 7.5m parking grid, so as to avoid any structural offsetting, while major wet vertical services are diverted away and insulated over the public areas. An outsourced restaurant on-site will serve the immediate precinct and be open until late. The rooms are designed according to international Holiday Inn Express hallmarks, but you'll be forgiven for thinking that the new South African Express guest rooms and bathrooms are a little more spacious than you've experienced overseas - because they are.

**Holiday Inn Express
Cape Town City Centre**

101 St Georges Mall was an elegant 1970s

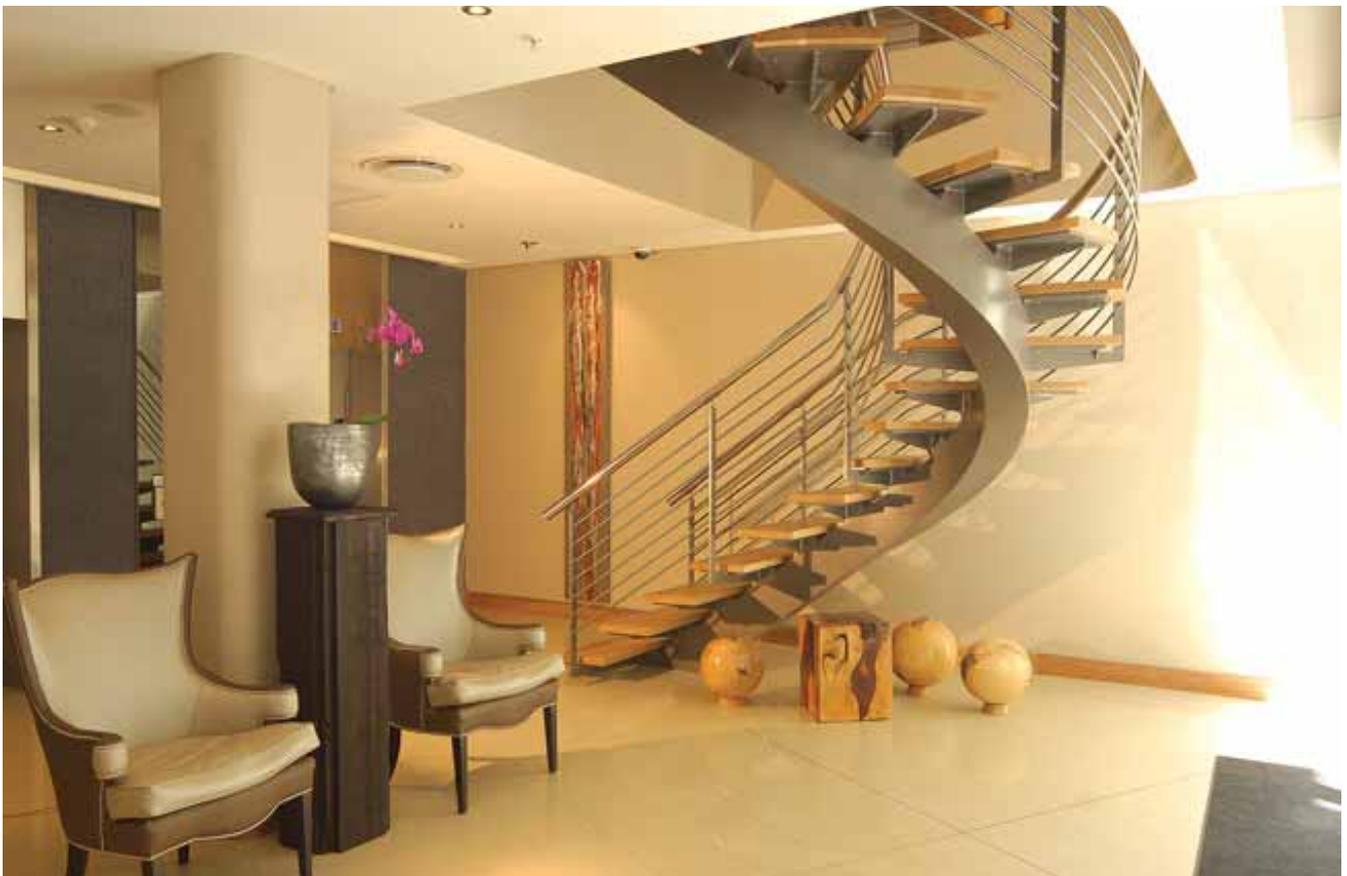
office building with unfeasible, small and shallow floor-plates and insufficient parking for office use. The developer and architects were quick to identify that shallow floor-plates are ideal for conversion into hotel rooms, whilst hotels are far less parking-intensive than offices. The prime location at the top of Cape Town's vibey St Georges Mall, close to five-star restaurants and adjacent to the new Mandela Rhodes development and the new ultra-luxury five-star Taj Hotel, made the decision to convert into an Express, an absolute 'no-brainer'.

Louis Karol implemented lessons learned and technology developed during their landmark conversion of Old Mutual's former headquarters in Darling Street. Dry-wall construction was employed for all new walls, including room demising walls - using the double-skin, double-stud dry-wall technology developed by the architects for the Mutual Heights project in 2003.

The 17-storey high-rise hotel comprises 174 rooms, with most commanding dramatic views over the city, St Georges Mall or Table Mountain. The Great Room, bar and meeting rooms are located up on the first floor, with atmospheric views over St Georges Mall's plain trees and into carved-stone, historic façades. Existing concrete rain-canopies that project from the building were converted into breakfast and sunset terraces leading from the bar and breakfast areas. Another major



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architectural intervention was a dramatic, geometrically-complex glass and steel entrance canopy over-sailing St Georges Mall - the design of which could not have been possible before the advent of 3D architectural design software.

At night, the refurbished and restored hotel tower is washed in dramatic blue floodlights, the light from which is strikingly caught by the 'diamond-cut' forms of the original 1970's precast panels on the façade.

Holiday Inn Express Pretoria Sunnyside

Work commenced in March to convert Pretoria's iconic, 20-storey, Sunny Park residential tower into the largest new Holiday Inn Express to date in South Africa, comprising 308 rooms, adjacent to major new state administrative assets, such as the Department of Trade and Industry's large-scale Trade Campus. The existing apartments are being replaced with new hotel bedrooms conforming with international Holiday Inn Express standards.





The Great Room, bar and meeting rooms are located up on the first floor

The hotel offers en suite access to the in-house Sunny Park shopping mall, currently being refurbished by Zenprop. The Great Room, four meeting rooms and bar are raised five storeys above ground level (above the shopping mall) and opens out onto an expansive, fully-landscaped roof-garden with water-features and panoramic vistas over the Pretoria skyline.

By far the tallest building in the area, the tower is visible for miles around, but has for years been regarded as an eye-sore. To this

end, the architects have turned their design attention to the façades, which will benefit from wholesale replacement of the deteriorating steel windows with sophisticated new curtain-walling. As a further facelift, the branded feature balconies developed for Holiday Inn Express Sandton Woodmead are being applied as a clip-on to the entire length of the tower façade most visible from Pretoria's administrative centre - providing brand recognition and extending the aesthetic lifespan of the old tower.





The rooms are finished with luxurious, although durable, finishes and fabrics



Other architectural interventions include the new porte-cochere at ground floor level, converted from an old petrol station, and clad in futuristic, floodlit silver-aluminium panels.

Interior Design & Décor

Fixed interiors items were designed by Louis Karol Interiors, with décor, furniture and softs by Marlize Watson Interiors. According to Jessica White, interiors partner at Louis Karol, the notion of guest comfort is reinforced the moment one steps into the reception area, "The design approach does not take its cue from the limited service that the hotel provides - and has ended up more 'boutique' than 'budget'."

A luxurious, contemporary interior, with a slight retro edge, has been created to ensure that a sophisticated air of comfort is conveyed. Whereas White asserts that many three-star hotels in South Africa are deliberately decorated with cheap fabrics, garish colours (as if for a kindergarten) and bad wood-stain, she has rather opted for muted hues, natural stones, light timbers and large scale, abstracted, sepia photography (usually reserved for four and five-star hotels) "to ensure the space does not slip into the typical budget hotel genre".

Marlize Watson has jettisoned the coarse primary colours usually associated with 3-star hotels in favour of muted stone colours, duck egg blues, golds and silvers. Similarly the rooms, although designed to specific international standards, are finished with luxurious, although durable, finishes and fabrics. Paint colours and lighting levels to the corridors have been specifically chosen to ensure that the circulation space creates the same luxurious atmosphere as the balance of the hotel.

According to White, this design thread will remain common to all the hotels, with

accent colours and the artwork subject matter changing to suit the specific hotel location. "Exceptional service and stylish design ensures an amazing hotel environment in which one can meet, greet, conduct business or simply relax", White concluded.

Conclusion

Whilst Holiday Inn Express is no doubt a brand that competes on price, Robert Silke is quick to point out that "good design and good taste needn't cost any more to build than bad design - and ISO Leisure have pulled out all stops in order to put their best foot forward - by simply giving more."

ISO Leisure, Louis Karol and MLC have set out to challenge the prevailing cynicism in the South African hotel industry that perpetuates the practice of deliberately dumbing-down the design and finish of mid-range hotels - sometimes in order to protect the interests of four and five star properties owned by the same operator. Indeed the development team have taken the rather unprecedented leap of simply offering the best possible product available - regardless of market segmentation - and endeavouring to create a new kind of hotel that defies rating in terms of the old star system, offering discounted, limited service - but with the high-end design and comfort - more 'boutique' than 'budget'.

HOTEL DEVELOPER'S COMMENT

The return to South Africa of leading international hotel brand, Holiday Inn Express, received impetus with the announcement by ISO Leisure that it had four new hotels in or about to commence development, at a cost of R622m, in Cape Town, Pretoria, Sandton and Umhlanga.

ISO Leisure has an exclusive agreement with the InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) to develop Holiday Inn Express hotels in South Africa.

"Developed at a cost of R130m, the 175-room Holiday Inn Express in St George's Mall, in the heart of Cape Town's revived and vibrant CBD, is the first to open. This will be followed by the R112-million Sandton Woodmead in mid-June, Pretoria Sunnypark (R180m) in March 2009, and the R200m Umhlanga property in 2010.

"These projects total R622m in new investment, and are indicative of our confidence going forward in the country's economy, especially its leisure and tourism sector".

Watson said that the group planned to develop 25 new hotels in South Africa over the next ten years, and was assessing opportunities elsewhere in Africa.



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Main Contractors
- Zenprop Property Holdings**
Property Development Managers

“Our four new properties will add 900 keys to the country’s stock of quality hotel rooms. We have three further projects in the immediate pipeline with a probable cost of R595-million, adding a further 680 rooms to our inventory. We expect to be able to make an announcement soon regarding these hotels.

“Holiday Inn is the world’s leading hospitality industry brand, and just four years ago, was voted South Africa’s top performing hotel brand. We have every reason to believe that our new properties, ideally located as they are in South Africa’s leading commercial and tourist centres, will be every bit as successful”.

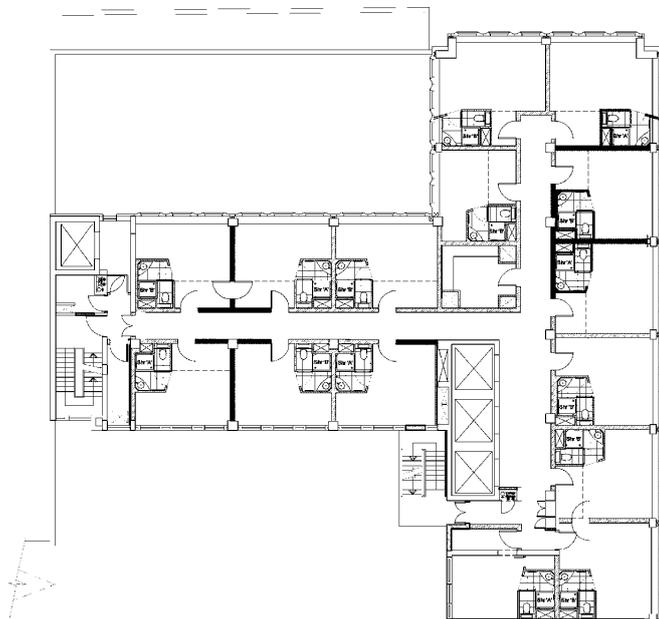
Watson said that ISO Leisure’s partnership with IHG yielded both technical and operating assistance, as well as marketing support. This included invaluable access to IHG’s global network of reservation systems and the world’s

leading hotel loyalty programme: Priority Club Rewards. Over 31 million people have been members of Priority Club Rewards today to date and, as Holiday Inn Express grows in South Africa, many more South Africans will be able to enjoy the rewards and benefits thereof. Additionally IHG’s reservation systems would empower ISO Leisure to market its hotels and the destinations both domestically and around the world.

“The limited service sector will be increasingly important across the country over the next few years as the market matures and diversifies to accommodate a burgeoning new tier of traveller looking for a smart, fresh, welcoming place to stay, and of course, value for money,” he said.

The fastest growing limited-service brand in the world, Holiday Inn Express now has 1,770 hotels globally, with a further 663 properties in the pipeline.

TYPICAL FLOOR PLAN



GREAT ROOM PLAN

