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W Amsterdam → Amsterdam-based architects and urban designers Office Winhov and Tel Aviv's Baranowitz Kronenberg (BK) Architecture are reimagining the 1925-built red brick telephone exchange on Amsterdam's historical Dam Square—a classified landmark, constructed in the expressionist Amsterdam School style of architecture—into the 169-room W Amsterdam set to open in the fall of 2015.

Rubbing shoulders with the Royal Palace and animated canal district, the Joseph Crowl-designed building was influenced by Frank Lloyd Wright's modern Larkin building in Buffalo, New York. The architects are restoring the historical elements of the five-floor structure inside and out with plans to merge them with a new contemporary design. Something of an inverted hotel, check-in and the Living Room lobby will be found on the top level, along with a restaurant and bar. "The restoration of this unique monument has been challenging," says Office Winhov partner Uri Gilad. "It has a robust concrete construction with a monumental brick façade." The project involves restoring the exterior and replacing the façade of the inner court, while adding a new refined glass construction that flows into a panoramic roof structure. "These additions form a complementing yet contrasting intervention in the existing building," Gilad adds.

Dylan Amsterdam → Since opening in 1999, the Dylan Amsterdam has gained acclaim for both its design and its Michelin-starred restaurant, Vinkeles. It might be tempted to rest on its laurels, but the independently owned property has in recent years begun charging different designers with redoing its guestrooms, originally created by boutique guru Anouska Hempel.

6. A low-hanging 1920s chandelier adorns the lobby of the family-run Hotel V Nesplein.

7. Part of the Serendipity collection for the Dylan Amsterdam, a double room features subtle shades of gray and light brown to mimic the city's elements.

8. W Amsterdam's red brick façade, the existing structure of which was built in the expressionist Amsterdam School style of architecture.

behind us. We just do it ourselves, which makes it hard at times," says owner Mirjam Espinosa, who left her day job as an accountant to pursue a career as a hotelier, opening the hotel last year. Espinosa, who explains that she is not a designer but is passionate about hotels and interiors, selected vintage furniture pieces when creating Nesplein's industrial-meets-elegant look, including a stunning 1920s chandelier that hangs low—more sculpture than light fixture—in the lobby.

Ness Street is lined with theaters, and the restaurant's behind-bar heavy velvet curtains and stage lights are a nod to this heritage, as is the stairwell and hallway wallpaper made from old playhouse posters. The curtains are featured again in the lobby's reading area, which is complete with an open wood fireplace. Rooms are clad in yellow and brown shades, and feature comfortable cushioned chairs and custom headboards made from dyed leather and vintage belts.

Its latest effort was unveiled this spring as 16 rooms—including two new suites—located in their own wing. Their look was given over to minimalist Dutch interior designer Remy Meijers, whose recent monograph "Shades of Grey" is prominently placed in each of the redesigned rooms and aptly sums up his affection for subtle colorations and textures.

His Serendipity collection offers, yes, a muted gray—and light brown—palette that takes inspiration from the "location and a desire to celebrate its authenticity," Meijers says. Guestroom interiors seamlessly reflect the city's distinctive gabled roofs and muddy canals, while inventive touches like nooks built into the walls facing that exterior encourage contemplation of all that lies beyond.

Nubby wool rugs, leather accents, and concrete surrounds for the room's entertainment features add sturdy modernity, with the simple lines and contemporary materials enriched by the building's good bones, including rich wood floors and large windows. Still, Meijers isn't afraid to tinker with classicism. "I love historic architecture," he says, "but I am not the guy interested in recreating it." **hd**