

The Art Collector's SUITE

Laura Brown visits the newly re-opened Pulitzer Amsterdam



It is a sunny afternoon as I pass the last bridge before entering the newly restored Pulitzer Amsterdam, a kooky hotel that places the spotlight on art and design. The brickwork of the cobblestone streets has just been laid. The hollow sound that my footsteps make follows me to the front door.

The reception area is an elegant contrast of calming colours set against the largely gold frames of the sober coloured canvases, a grey concrete wall forms the contemporary backdrop of the reception desks, some decorated with Delft Blue earthenware—an amiable wink to Dutch history. The seating area brightens the space with the incorporation of a conversation sofa in striking yellow, while the soft purple Stay armchair by Sé facing the Piet Hein Eek stools dance around on vintage Persian carpets. The custom-made sofa complements the heavy blue velvety curtains leaving room for an eye-catching still life by Richard Kuiper. The floor is in square-cut wooden parquet, and upon closer inspection you can count the rings of the tree's core. Through the windows behind the reception desks, you see what makes this hotel unique: the outside walls and windows of yet another canal house—a total of 25 former stately residences (some with UNESCO status) make up the Pulitzer Amsterdam and all are re-designed under the watchful eye of Jacu Straus, Creative Director of a London-based property firm. The individual warehouses and former homes in the midst of the Negen Straatjes, an area known for boutique stores, trendy cafes and pop-up brands, are connected through little alleyways and inner gardens.

As I walk through the glass roof maze of connections between canal houses, I am directed to my suite located in front of a canal. The stately entrance to each room offers a slightly less extravagant mirror image of the entrance from the street whereby French doors serve as the private entranceway. The Art Collector's Suite, my *pied-a-terre* for my stay, is part of the Extraordinary Suite

Collection, which houses an Antique Collector's Suite, Music Collector's Suite, Book Collector's Suite and the Pulitzer Suite oozing contemporary art from top to bottom. When I think I have seen it all, another collector's item grabs my attention. I am surrounded by wonderful art. I quickly soak up the beauty of the rest of the room: the vivid silkscreens, pencil drawings, eccentric prints and illustrious paintings.

The *piece de resistance* is the *Hals Brunch* by Thierry de Cromieres. The large painting in the Art Collector's Suite was created specifically for the Pulitzer Amsterdam. At a distance it bears a striking resemblance to Frans Hals' masterpiece *Banquet of the Officers of the St George Civic Guard* (1616), yet upon closer inspection this version features present day oddities such as tin cans, a laptop and juicy hamburgers—a playful nod to the work of the Dutch Golden Age painter known for his loose streaks of paint and jovial scenes. The bedroom, separated from the canal-side living room by a serene white marble floored bathroom, features a small writing desk which charismatically holds a repair kit for bicycle tires—every Amsterdam household has at least one—a kitsch vintage phone and a dim light next to a super-king size bed offering comfort during the midnight hours.

Breakfast, lunch and dinner are served at Janzs, named after its former residence Volkert Janzs—a wealthy coppersmith in his days—where locals and tourists spike up their appetite on old-fashioned, quality dishes. Where lights by Lee Broom flatter the subdued tones of the interior, the bluish-grey 3D wood wall panelling complements the brass and copper elements of the hotel's past owner. And as the Amsterdam canals come alive with their charming array of boats, the shops around the corner close their doors and friends cycle home at dusk. When the weather permits, the windows open up and a gentle breeze enters making you feel always welcome. ■

Double rooms from Dhs1,236 pultizeramsterdam.com

A multitude of art and design objects fill the Art Collector's Suite at the Pulitzer Amsterdam