

hospitalitydesign

A person is walking on a reflective surface, possibly a pool or a wet plaza, in front of a large, curved, metallic wall. The wall has a warm, golden-brown hue and is composed of vertical panels. The person's reflection is clearly visible in the water. The overall atmosphere is serene and modern.

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path forward

the development issue

hd Presenter of
expo+
conference

around the world **melbourne**

By Stephanie Chen

RISING STAR

With tourism numbers soaring, Melbourne takes flight

According to the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions in Victoria (Melbourne is the Australian state's coastal capital), Melbourne saw 90.3 million visitors for the year ending September 2023, a 20 percent year-over-year increase, with total visitors returning to 93 percent of pre-pandemic numbers from 2019. Part of this is because the Australian Grand Prix—held at Melbourne's Albert Park Circuit—reported a record-breaking attendance of 444,631 across the four-day event in 2023, exceeding the previous year's record by more than 25,000 people. At the



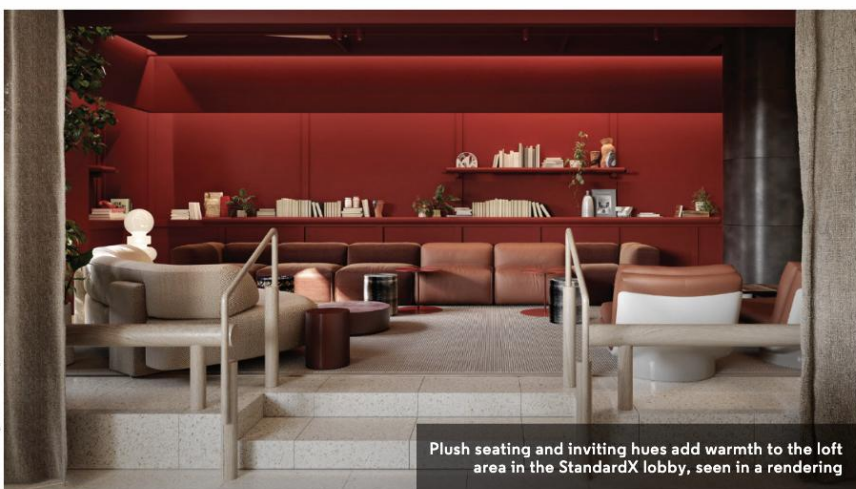
Set on the banks of the Yarra River, the 1 Hotel Melbourne will be part of the multipurpose Seafarers project when it opens in 2025



A rendering of the lobby at the upcoming StandardX, Melbourne, the brand's first location



The StandardX's Thai dining concept Bang, shown in a rendering, stars an inviting red-toned palette



Plush seating and inviting hues add warmth to the loft area in the StandardX lobby, seen in a rendering

Standard Hotels. The design—by Standard's in-house team in collaboration with locally based Hecker Guthrie and global firm Woods Bagot—pays homage to the city's experimental post-punk scene with a modern approach.

The StandardX is "designed for you to check in and check out the city. It's a low-key, less layered space to discover and socialize," Haller explains. Columns adorned in macramé by local artist Sarah Smalltown anchor the lobby, which opens to an elevated, red-toned loft with plush seating. Paintings by Australian artist Dane Lovett complement custom furniture and antique pieces. Meanwhile, the 125 guestrooms are awash in a simple blue and white palette.

The StandardX, ultimately, is a "back-to-the-roots kind of brand," Haller adds. "Simple but fun, basic but edgy, all you need and nothing more."

1 Hotel & Homes Melbourne

On the horizon, the 1 Hotel & Homes Melbourne will make its debut in early 2025 as part of multipurpose Northbank project Seafarers, marking the brand's first outpost in Australia. Set on the banks of the Yarra River, the hotel, with its 277 guestrooms and 114 branded residences, will feature a biophilic design by local architecture firm Fender Katsalidis and design studios ODO and New York-based Ward + Gray, in collaboration with SH Hotels & Resorts' in-house team. The property—which will boast a handful of F&B options, a lobby bar with waterfront views, an indoor pool, and a spa—will also offer access to a sprawling public park.

In line with the brand's sustainable ethos, the design vision is rooted in a reverence for the site's surrounding land, water, and traditions. Timber used throughout the construction, for instance, is reclaimed from local wharfs and rail bridges, with "[nearly four miles] of recycled timber featured in the project," says ODO director Samson Tiew. "If you look close enough, [it] may even feature historical markings that suggest a prior use."

"Melbourne is a city renowned for its cultural vibrancy, sophisticated ambiance, and timeless appeal to tourists," says Rebecca King, vice president of design at SH Hotels & Resorts. "The absence of lifestyle-focused brands in the current market makes it an ideal place for 1 Hotels to establish its inaugural Australian presence." **hd**