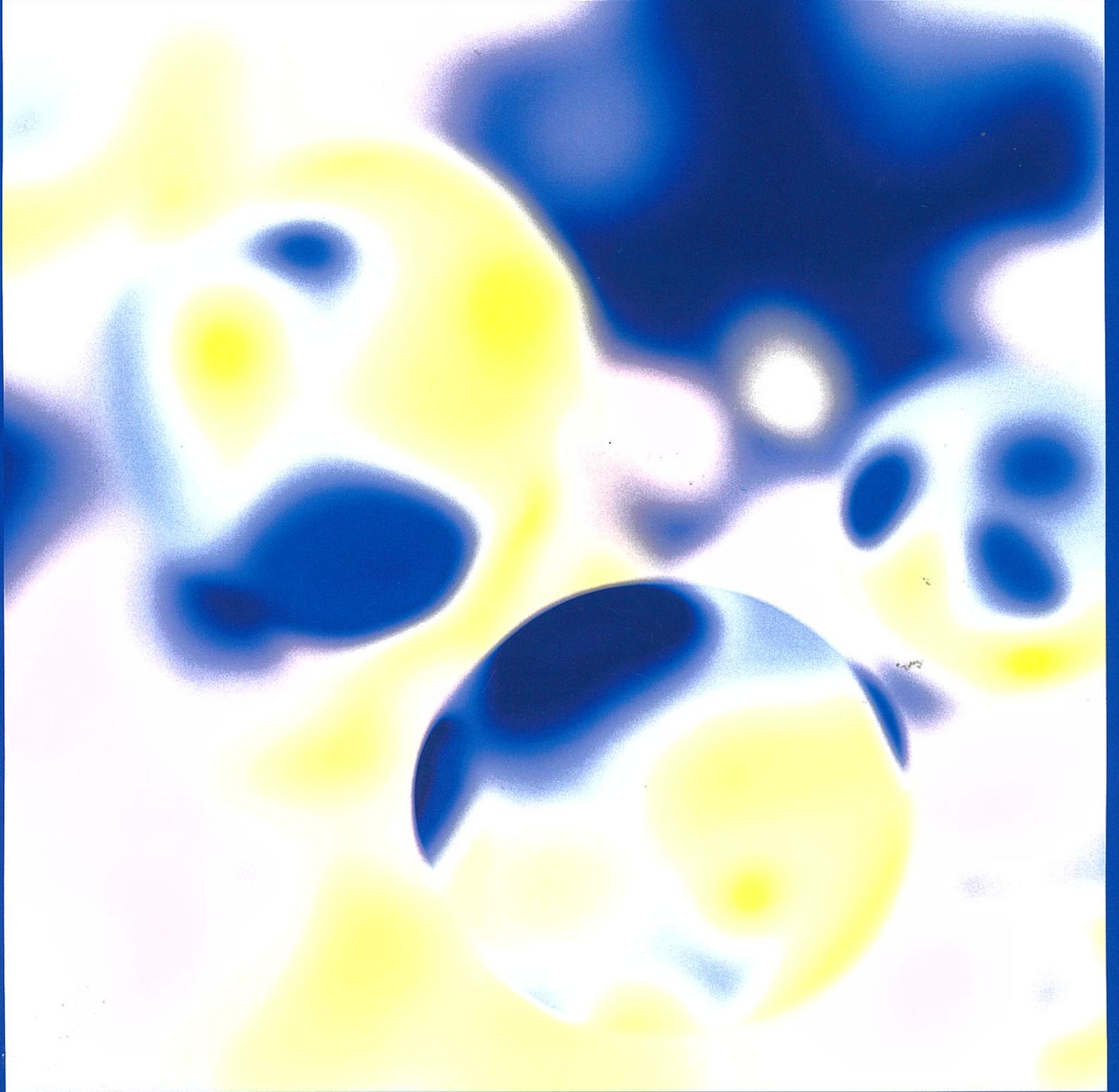


# MYX

interiors



# Oh, Vienna

For the first A by Adina in Europe, BWM Designers & Architects brings a flavour of Australia to Austria.

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Photography:  
Courtesy of BWM  
Designers & Architects

A certain mythos surrounds Vienna. It's a city famously swathed in shadow in the 1949 film noir, *The Third Man*, and the title of Ultravox's enduring 80s lament – Midge Ure's cry of 'oh Vienna' set to a haunting musical base, the video all smoke-cloaked streets and buttoned-up trenches. Then, of course, there's its long association with classical music and art, a rarefied cultural aura manifest in its stately architecture and courtly demeanour. By contrast, it isn't a place one thinks of in relation to towering, glassy skyscrapers; the dusty, sun-worn colours of Australia; or of sipping cocktails in swish infinity pools. And so, in this respect, the recently unveiled A by Adina Vienna is a dash of the unexpected.

A 120-key aparthotel, A by Adina Vienna is an assembly of novelties: the first of the A by Adina brand (from the Australia-born TFE Hotels) in Europe, occupying five floors of the tallest residential tower in Austria, in a location removed from the traditional tourist core overlooking the Danube. In Donau City, one of Vienna's newest urban quarters, one won't find gaudy souvenir shops or queues of coaches, instead contemporary high rises, sprawling green space and, on the adjacent Danube Island, riverside bars and restaurants. On a clement summer's day, locals languish in swimwear by the water, cycle along tree-lined paths and while away the hours on park benches. It's all a dramatically different vision of Vienna than the more familiar imperial grandeur, but equally enticing and – for visitors – largely untapped.



BWM Designers & Architects led on the interiors of A by Adina, which also sidesteps the usual Viennese tropes. Instead, Australia provides the primary inspiration.

"They [A by Adina] have more of a brand spirit than a brand standard," explains Erich Bernard, BWM's founder and managing partner, on the brief established at the outset. "It wasn't that people should feel like they had arrived in Australia, but that it should establish a connection to the brand's homeland."

By virtue of its height (the building stretches to 180m), and the raft of floor-to-ceiling glass, the property innately befitted from bewilderingly panoramic views. And so, as Bernard explains, Vienna was already a constant and inescapable presence; the city's increasingly eclectic skyline not something he wanted, or needed, to compete with. "Those astonishing views were really [a gift]," he continues, "as it meant we didn't have to lean too heavily on the Viennese idea; we have Vienna outside, so we don't have to do Vienna inside. I didn't want to do another 'fake' take on the city – there was scope to do something different."

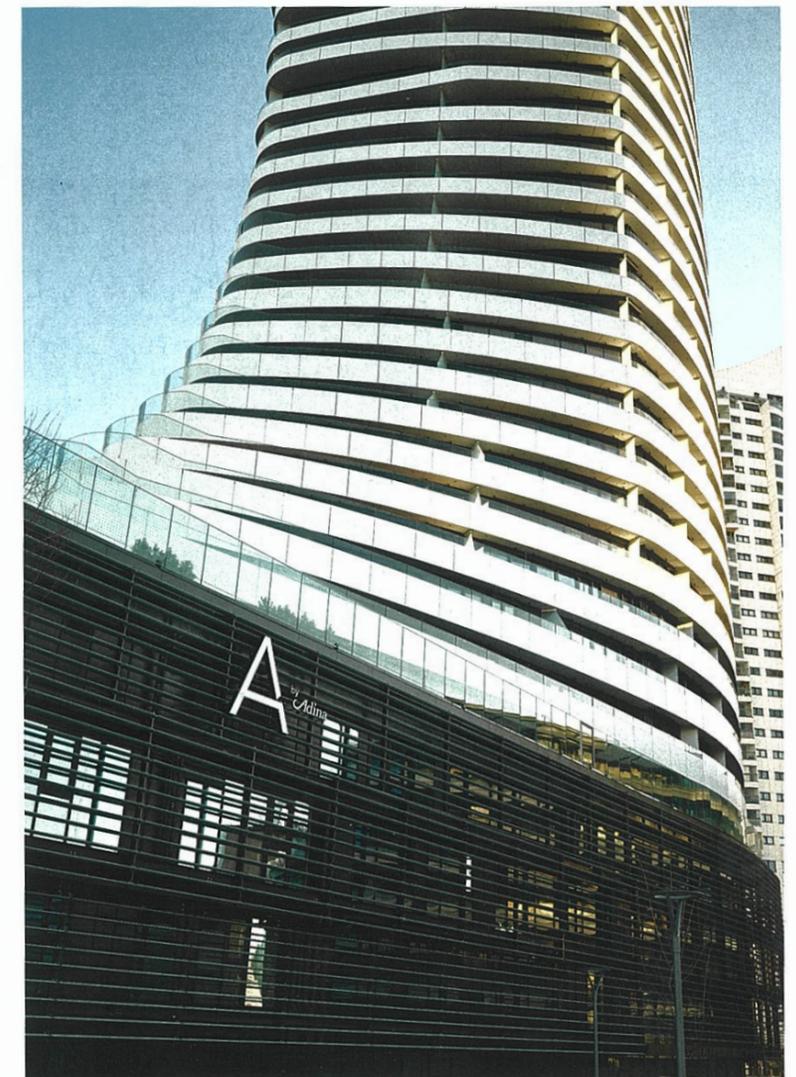
Image on previous page: Inside Lottie's main dining room at A by Adina

Left: A guest suite lounge area with soft seating

Centre: Cyclical panoramas from the guest suite kitchenette

Right: The external elevation and branding

"It's the best view of the best city in the world."



## Case Study

## A by Adina Vienna

**Left:**  
The reception area at the restaurant, Lottie's

**Above right:**  
Dining area and artwork inside a guestroom

**Below right:**  
Green tiles characterise guest suite bathrooms

Avoiding pastiche across the board, the antipodean influence isn't heavy handed but – across the studios and one- and two-bedroom apartments – reflected in materiality, colour and silhouette. An earthy palette nods to dry grass, with muted, chalky green; to the open sea, with deep blues; and to the wide, rolling mountains, with a weathered, sensitive red. “And then there's the curves,” suggests Barnard, “in the free forms of the carpets, in lamps, in the softness of some of the details. This is really a representation of the Australian landscape, but expressed subtly.”

The apartments vary in scale from a neat 30 sq m to a roomy 96 sq m, but remarkably no two are the same. One of the challenges for BWM – and quirks of the build – was the sheer diversity of the floorplates, necessitating design that could be thematically, if not exactly,

replicated throughout. The studio developed an initial set of 20 broad-stroke room variations and, from those, adapted individually – esoteric corners becoming banquette-lined spaces for morning coffees, narrow through-spaces imaged as reading nooks and expansive outdoor terraces furnished for entertaining. But, still, those common threads: Cipollino marble splashbacks in the compact kitchenettes, robust parquet flooring and artwork by Indigenous Australian artist, Doreen Chapman; in the larger quarters, a few extra amenities, including deep, freestanding Laufen bathtubs.

“They aren't ‘supermarket hotel rooms;’ details Barnard, “every one is special. And what A by Adina wanted us to deliver is a very particular kind of luxury – not cliché luxury, loud or gold and shiny, but instead understatement as luxury, cosiness as luxury.”



Whether on a shorter city jaunt or a longer stay, saunas, a state-of-the-art gym and that infinity pool, provide opportunity for both activity and respite without leaving the building, while Lottie's segues from breakfast room and lounge to bar and small plates restaurant by evening.

“What became Lottie's was only intended to be a kind of living room at first,” notes Barnard, on what is now one of the aparthotel's defining and most impressive spaces. “Because it was something of an architectural leftover; a difficult room with a shaft in the middle. But it has this incredible view and as the concept for the property kept developing, the opportunity for it to be something more than a living room also grew. So we removed the shaft, which made room for a bar, and the idea of Lottie's as a proper place to eat and drink was born out of that.”

It's an undeniably slick spot, unfurling from an unobtrusive reception desk into a comfortable hangout and further onto a planted terrace overlooking the river and into Vienna – landmarks such as the ferris wheel and St. Francis of Assisi Church punctuating the skyline. “For me,” says Barnard, “it's the best view of the best city in the world.”

