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The High Line Hotel  
New York

The brick façade of The High Line Hotel might fool unsuspecting passers-by: a former seminary, it has a naturally modest appearance. The hotel itself is a slice of old-school New York in the Chelsea neighbourhood that has become increasingly peppered with samey-looking glass-and-steel towers. The front courtyard is dotted with bistro tables and planters and is a great spot to sit and have a cortado from the vintage Citroën truck turned Intelligentsia coffee bar.

In the summer the patio sheds its daytime caffeine crowd and becomes a restaurant with a seasonal menu – allowing a full display of the city’s culinary talents. The seminary’s former refectory has also been turned into a great hall, kitted out for an array of artsy events.

The property has become a de facto retreat from the glitzy establishments in the nearby Meatpacking District. The hotel’s 60 rooms are understated yet well-kept and offer a smart mix of accents from classic to mid-century. This place reminds you that a stay in New York doesn’t have to be all pomp; it can be about quirk and charm too.

180 10th Avenue  
+1 212 929 3888  
thehighlinehotel.com

In numbers

- 1895 originally built
- 60 bedrooms
- 225 seats in the refectory
- 2013 The High Line opened



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Grand Ferdinand Hotel  
Vienna

The stately Grand Ferdinand is a tasteful gear change from the team behind Hotel Daniel, who specialise in design-minded accommodation where the frills are optional. This hotel opened in 2015 after a careful year-and-a-half refit of the 1950s building.

As you enter, you’re greeted by a Viennese 18-candle crystal chandelier from glass specialist J & L Lobmeyr. But this is where the stuffy ceremony ends. The reception and lobby are spare but homely – and patrolled by attentive staff. Hang a left for a 150-seat restaurant dotted with wooden Thonet chairs and ruby-red leather booths. Upstairs there are 188 well-appointed rooms and up top there’s a bright eighth-floor terrace (guests only, mind).

It’s perched on the Ringstrasse so expect views towards the city’s twinkling Donaukanal (Danube Canal). An attractive cocktail crowd forms come nightfall. The Viennese tend not to frequent hotels as they do restaurants or bars but the tall windows that showcase the hotel’s inviting restaurant to the street outside may yet change this.

10-12 Schuberttring  
+43 (0)1 91 880  
grandferdinand.com

In numbers

- 2015 opened
- 188 bedrooms
- 8th-floor rooftop
- 6-minute walk to Vienna State Opera