

THE G-SPOT

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GALWAY GOES GLAM WITH THE NEW G HOTEL BY PHILLIP TREACY



Until late 2005, the only architectural designs associated with Philip Treacy were those sculptural hats atop Isabella Blow's head in the front row of every hot new designer's fall show. Now Treacy has taken his design prowess to the next level and brought a little glamour back home to Galway, Ireland.

The new G Hotel is steeped in just the sort of experiential (and experimental) design you'd expect from Treacy, but it's not one of those modern design exercises that completely forgets its context. Galway is a quaint but cultured city by the sea – equal parts old world Irish and new world cosmopolitan – and the hotel's design reflects that

mix. In fact, the hotel, like the location, is not unlike Treacy himself – a nice local Irish lad who made good in the fashion world and hobnobs with the biggest names, but still tells his friends that the best place to visit is Galway.

Treacy commissioned artworks from Irving Penn and David Downton, designed a Linda Evangelista suite (because "she insisted on it and because she is the most super of the supermodels"), and has been quoted more than once describing the hotel as something akin to a film set. But he has also taken inspiration from the hotel's lakeside setting and Galway's seafaring past and has wisely chosen to let sweeping views of Lough Atalia

(that's Lake Atalia for the non-Gaelic bunch) stand alone in several areas of the hotel.

Perhaps most important to the success of the hotel's design is Treacy's sharp attention to details. Every item has been hand-picked – a photograph here from a Christie's auction, commissioned illustrations there, avant-garde pieces like Tom Dixon's giant mirror balls in the central foyer, baroque bits from various dealers and auctions – and though much of the choices sound arbitrary and strange, up close they manage to create what few new hotels can: a completely unique experience.

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