

IHG Checks In On... IHG's Design and Innovation Center

Interviews with (in order of appearance):

- *Jen Gribble, SVP of Global Premium, Essentials and Suites Brands*
 - *Justin Alexander, Vice President, Holiday Inn Express, Staybridge Suites and Candlewood Suites*
 - *Meredith Moore, Vice President, Holiday Inn*
 - *Karen Gilbride, Vice President, avid, Garner and Atwell Suites*
 - *Vicki Poulos, Vice President, Kimpton and Hotel Indigo*
 - *Lauren Krostue, Vice President, EVEN Hotels and Ruby*
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INTRODUCTION TO IHG'S DESIGN AND INNOVATION CENTER

Kate Carpenter, Director Investor Relations (KC)

Hello, I'm Kate Carpenter, Investor Relations Director at IHG Hotels and Resorts. Welcome to 'IHG Checks In On', a series of videos, webinars and fireside chats for investors, analysts and other stakeholders looking to learn more about how IHG operates and drives value for its shareholders.

In today's episode, we're visiting the Design and Innovation Center in Atlanta where IHG lays out the latest room formats of its Premium, Essentials and Suites brands. We will start by seeing the latest prototypes for each of our Essentials brands. This includes: Holiday Inn Express, Holiday Inn, avid and Garner. This will be followed by three of our Suites brands: Candlewood Suites, Atwell Suites and Staybridge Suites. We will finish the tour by visiting the recent Hotel Indigo installation, highlighting the exciting innovation underway at the brand, as well as visiting an installation for IHG's newest Premium brand, Ruby.

In addition to the space in Atlanta, which caters to our Americas region, IHG also recently opened a Design and Innovation Lab in Shanghai, dedicated to the Greater China region. Both centers provide industry-leading spaces that bring brand leaders, developers and owners together in a dedicated space to design, build and test the next generation of IHG's brands.

While we won't discuss it in this episode, our Design & Innovation Center in Atlanta also houses IHG's value engineering lab. This cutting-edge facility enhances IHG's ability to support negotiations on behalf of hotel owners for furniture and fittings that go into a hotel. This includes testing the suitability and durability of these goods to optimize their useful life and the return on investment for owners.

Jen, thanks for being here today with us.

Jen Gribble, SVP of Global Premium, Essentials and Suites Brands (JG)

Thanks for having me.

KC

To kick things off, could you tell us more about the Design and Innovation Center and its purpose?

JG

At IHG, our Design and Innovation Center here in Atlanta is an innovation hub that sits on more than 50,000 square feet. We think of it as a strategic asset where we can build brands that guests love, and ones that deliver strong returns for owners.

It's also a collaborative space for our brand, architecture and design, and procurement teams, who work really closely together to test new room formats and innovations for our Premium, Essentials, and Suites brands.

KC

So how does that collaboration together with the Center's facilities unlock IHG's strategic priorities?

JG

Owners, hotel team members, IHG colleagues and guests regularly tour these innovations to share feedback that ranges from guest resonance to operational efficiency and value engineering opportunities. It's also a showcase for owners to see our brands when they are looking to grow – so it serves a pivotal role for us.

KC

That's fantastic. Are there any other strategic shifts IHG has made in recent years to further unlock our strategic priorities?

JG

There are – as one example in 2013, IHG began offering a prototype and standardized decor in our Holiday Inn Express brand. Today, all the Mainstream brands require this because it provides a high degree of consistency, and a design our guests love because of the processes that we have here to develop at the Design Center.

At the same time this approach works for owners. With building and design plans ready, we can accelerate the process for owners, ensure it's delivered at the right price and that it works operationally.

KC

Thanks very much, Jen. Let's now check out IHG's largest brand, Holiday Inn Express.

JG

Great!

HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS

KC

So, Justin, you oversee the world's largest hotel brand, Holiday Inn Express, in addition to two of our extended stay brands. Focussing first on Holiday Inn Express, which has been a category killer in the upper midscale space. Can you give us a brief overview of the brand's footprint?

Justin Alexander, Vice President, Holiday Inn Express, Staybridge Suites and Candlewood Suites (JA)

Holiday Inn Express now has over 3,200 open hotels around the globe, another 600 in the pipeline. We're especially excited about our growth in Greater China, which makes up more than a third of that pipeline.

KC

With that level of scale, what type of customer and stay occasion does Holiday Inn Express cater to?

JA

We serve what we call 'Smart Travelers.' Guests who are self-sufficient, efficiency-minded, and focused on staying in control of how they achieve the mission in front of them.

'Smart Travelers' come from all walks of life—business travellers, families, sports teams, concert-goers, urban vacationers, the young movers, the more seasoned movers—and they all appreciate the brand's reliability, value and considerate service.

KC

What are some of the brand standards that appeal to Holiday Inn Express' target guest?

JA

It all starts with our complimentary ExpressStart breakfast, which delivers familiar breakfast favorites like eggs, meats, breads, cereals and adds some local flair where appropriate—like cinnamon rolls in the US and noodle bowls in Greater China.

Guests also love our Express Essentials, like coffee and tea in the lobby and guest rooms and multiple charging points throughout the room and in the lobby areas.

And our Express Recharge hallmark ensures a great night's sleep, with smart touches like blackout shades, a choice of soft or firm pillows, and cozy bedding in our rooms.

KC

Holiday Inn Express was first launched in 1990. How have the brand standards and build designs evolved in recent years to adapt to guest needs today?

JA

We're constantly listening to our guests and owners and evolving right along with them. That includes our new approaches to designing our public spaces and F&B experiences. There are so many smart evolutions happening around the world in locally relevant ways.

For instance, our new generation 5.0 designs in China and EMEAA are bringing a fresh, energetic vibe with an updated color palette and redesigned lobbies with enhanced breakfast areas, quiet pods for work or downtime and a better highlighted all day coffee zone.

And in the Americas, we're testing simple, self-pour beer and wine formats to help guests unwind, have a drink and enjoy our lobby spaces more in the evenings.

KC

From an owner's standpoint, how has IHG evolved the design to reduce costs and drive hotel owner returns?

JA

First, our scale helps drive cost efficiency—especially in FF&E, where our procurement teams constantly negotiate competitive pricing around the world. We're also evolving design layouts and methods:

In EMEAA, we've introduced smaller urban room types for city center locations, and suite room types for developers looking to increase their returns by meeting consumer demand for larger rooms.

In the Americas, we've streamlined the exterior materials and optimized the back-of-house layouts in our prototype, delivering cost and space efficiencies.

And in China, we're using modular furniture and lightweight designs to boost functionality and reduce costs. These kinds of efforts ensure Holiday Inn Express remains a market-leading owner proposition around the world.

KC

That's fantastic. Thank you, Justin. We'll speak again shortly when we get to Staybridge Suites and Candlewood Suites. In the meantime, let's check out Holiday Inn Express' sister brand, Holiday Inn.

HOLIDAY INN

KC

Meredith, you lead the most widely recognized lodging brand in the world and one with a long history given the first Holiday Inn hotel opened nearly 75 years ago. What is the brand's position today?

Meredith Moore, Vice President, Holiday Inn (MM)

We have over 1,200 open hotels and another 280 in the global pipeline. And there's a ton of growth momentum. Competitively, we were #1 in net system size growth YoY for the first half of 2025 versus our equivalent peer brands, and we've had really strong growth with the Holiday Inn Resort locations, which are set to grow 35% in 3 years.

KC

As a guest, why would I choose Holiday Inn over Holiday Inn Express? What are some of the key differences between the two brands?

MM

The Holiday Inn brand is all about where comfort meets connection. We go above and beyond to deliver full-service hospitality. And that comes to life in really 3 key areas.

Number one, our on-site restaurants and bars. We have spaces that bring people together and all with the convenience of never having to leave the hotel

We have flexible meeting and event spaces, making Holiday Inn a preferred choice for business travelers, conferences, and social gatherings. From small board meetings to large-scale events, we ensure seamless execution and memorable experiences.

And speaking of memorable, our teams deliver exceptional service so guests can make the most of their travel. We pride ourselves on being the pioneer of great hospitality, knowing it all starts with that warm welcome and a focus on the moments that matter.

KC

The Holiday Inn brand was recently refreshed, evolving to meet the changing needs of the modern traveler. What are some of the changes that have been made that are evident in the room we're seeing today, and how do these changes appeal to Holiday Inn's target customer?

MM

We have broad appeal to families, leisure, and business travelers who really value relationships, connection, and making every moment count. We modernized the decor with a balance of sophistication and inviting warmth.

In the guest room, the welcome nook is the perfect landing zone for everything guests travel with.

The flexible desk allows business travelers a space they can spread out to get work done. And of course, everyone wants to stay connected with home, so we made sure we provided power and charging areas conveniently located around the room.

Perhaps one of my favorite touches is artwork that nods to the iconic Holiday Inn brand, like the star from the original great sign, that we know many of our guests still love today.

And in our public areas, we brought F&B to the forefront of the hotel. The bar and F&B order counter are co-located with the front desk, which gives the lobby liveliness during check-in and lets guests see the amenities the hotel has to offer right away.

And throughout, we curated mixed seating and zoned spaces for guests to mingle, meet up, or chill solo.

KC

How have these design changes also reduced costs for owners?

MM

Well, the co-located bar and front desk also has the benefit of streamlining labor, allowing team members to flow through the work. Plus pulling F&B forward can help activate F&B revenue streams.

And in the guest room, we were really thoughtful in our approach to the case goods. The welcome nook I talked about, for example, is modular, so owners can mix and match the right pieces to fit their space. This also allows the furniture to easily work in a range of conversion solutions.

Not to mention we give owners choice – carpet versus vinyl flooring, paint versus wallcovering, so they can include what's right for their hotel.

KC

Lastly, can you share how this design refresh is being rolled out to new and existing hotels?

MM

We've made some amazing progress over the last few years elevating the quality of the Holiday Inn estate. Today, nearly 60% of hotels are new or recently renovated, and we expect to hit 50 H5 hotels open by end of year with more to come in 2026.

KC

Thank you very much, Meredith. Let's now visit IHG's midscale brand, avid.

AVID HOTELS

KC

IHG launched avid in 2017, becoming our second midscale brand in addition to Candlewood Suites. Karen, could you give us a brief overview of the brand, including its characteristics and footprint today?

Karen Gilbride, Vice President, avid, Garner and Atwell Suites (KG)

avid hotels, now with over 80 properties open across the US, Canada and Mexico. And Kate, we have a further 130 in our global pipeline. This brand was designed to deliver the basics done exceptionally well at a fair price.

We call our target guest the 'Principled Everyday Traveler' and they are looking for a hotel for that 1-2 night stay where they don't need the hotel to provide lots of services or amenities that, honestly, they don't have the time to enjoy and don't want to pay more than they need for that 1-2 night stay.

What they need is a great night's sleep in a clean, well-designed room, complimentary hot breakfast in the morning and a great cup of coffee.

KC

avid was launched as a new build brand. Why is it important for avid hotels to be new construction and how does the new build design enhance the guest experience?

KG

Great question. Guests told us that most hotel brands that were available to them in the midscale space were highly inconsistent from property to property, and this led guests to not being able to trust a brand. With all avid hotels being new construction, and highly standardised, our guests know what to expect from every avid hotel.

And as guests did tell us that they wanted a great night's sleep, this is one of their most important needs, we wanted to ensure we really delivered that hallmark with the brand. So we deliver a premium mattress, high quality bedding and pillows, black out curtains to ensure a great night's sleep, and being all new construction we can also ensure the right sound dampening construction practices and design best practices are all followed.

As an example, even our guestroom, all the furniture has been designed to ensure minimal sound transfer from room to room. There are no drawers that are going to bang as somebody closes them in the adjacent room. No hangers that are on exterior walls, All of this so that you're not disturbed. And these small, but meaningful design choices help to deliver this critical aspect of the guest experience.

KC

As a midscale brand, that means avid is positioned below Holiday Inn and Holiday Inn Express. How is this reflected in the room and public space design, and are owners still able to generate attractive returns even at a lower price point?

KG

We designed avid hotels to deliver a best-in-class brand in the midscale segment with Holiday Inn Express delivering that for the upper midscale segment. This meant that we also needed to deliver a construction price to owners that fell below Holiday Inn Express, roughly about 15% lower. In order to achieve that, we had to be very thoughtful with every design choice – construction materials, the size of the guest rooms, our public spaces, the amount of furniture placed within all of our spaces had to be considered.

And all of these decisions help to ensure that we achieve our targeted cost per key, but we don't stop there. We are always listening to owners and guests to understand where any additional value engineering or design choices can help to deliver lowest cost to build or operate, and that's what drives owner returns.

KC

Have there been any evolutions since the brand was launched to further enhance the guest experience and strengthen hotel owner returns?

KG

Our guestroom and public space design, which was done with deep input from our Owner Advisory Board, has had very minimal changes since our first hotel opening in 2018. This demonstrates our ability to refine the design before installing in our first live hotels, using spaces like the Design Center.

Less change in our prototype design helps ensure owners are happy with being an early adopter to our new brands, and it also helps us to not have costly design changes to hotels over time. All of that is great news for owners from an investment point-of-view.

But one change we did make with feedback from guests and owners was to evolve our breakfast menu and offer more hot items, and to deliver that in a bulk format. Using the Design Center and our open hotels, we could test new breakfast layouts and ensure that it was just right prior to launch. This new menu and layout actually reduces the cost per occupied room for hotels while delivering a better guest satisfaction. So a real win-win.

KC

Thanks very much, Karen. Let's now head over to Garner, IHG's newest midscale brand.

GARNER

KC

IHG launched Garner in late 2023, and the brand has grown rapidly since then. Today, there are over 50 open hotels and around 90 in the pipeline across 10 countries. Can you tell us more about the brand and its key characteristics?

KG

Garner provides guests and owners a conversion-friendly midscale, transient focused brand from IHG.

With our promise to deliver ‘easy going stays that get you on your way’, Garner was designed for value-driven business and leisure travelers of all ages who want a reliable and a relaxed experience. We call these guests our ‘Spirited Flexible Travelers.’

For these guests, the brand offers an affordable price point alongside the things that guests value and expect – a great night’s sleep in a safe, clean space, with a breakfast worth getting up for. But the way we deliver those basics is purposely different, from the warm and welcoming team to the lobby and the room décor.

For owners, we design Garner to provide a flexible approach to conversions. We evaluate each property to understand the extent of the renovation. That’s what we call a Property Improvement Plan or a PIP.

We allow useful life of case goods and soft goods, if they are in good, high quality condition. This allows for the scope of that Property Improvement Plan to vary as needed, while still providing the Garner hotels brand defining hallmarks and experience.

KC

You’ve spoken to some of the elements that make Garner a conversion-friendly brand. Can you provide additional examples of the ways in which this has been considered in both the room and public space design?

KG

The conversion-friendly focus of Garner has driven all of our design choices and solutions across the guest room, public space, the entire hotel.

Knowing each asset is unique, the team designed with a ‘kit of parts’ mentality across the lobby, breakfast areas, rooms, allowing owners to easily select the components needed for their Property Improvement Plan.

If a hotel requires a full renovation of their guest rooms, they can choose from our warm or our cool scheme, which you see here at the Design Center, but even within those schemes, there are varied choices such as flooring, lighting, furniture pieces that can flex based on the hotel.

As I mentioned, not all hotels will require a full renovation, for those hotels, they may be simply implementing brand hallmarks, such as our signature welcome with our front desk back wall featuring our sketches of humanity art design, showcasing the diversity of guests, team members and owners, coming together at a Garner hotel. And we also have our flavored water and cookie happy hour in the afternoon. Small touches that make a difference.

Those hotels would also be implementing our Make it Yours hot breakfast with flexible design for all different spaces. They would also put in our key signage, collateral, bedding packages. This flexibility of the scopes of our renovations allows for consistency in key moments that matter but also enables speed of conversion and for owners to fully realize the investments they have made in their properties.

KC

So, avid and Garner are both midscale, transient focused brands. One of the clear differences between the two as an owner is that Garner is conversion friendly while avid is positioned for new builds. What are some of the other notable differences in brand standards designed to attract different types of guests and owners?

KG

We know the mainstream traveler at IHG and at the midscale price point. We know what they want – high quality, consistency, basics done brilliantly and the rewards and trust of IHG.

The great news is with both avid hotels and Garner, guests get these needs met. Core differences in the experience based on the design and build of each, is that with avid hotels, our guests know they will have a highly prototypical experience and just what they need for that trip, and they are willing to trade off a bit on space in room and some amenities.

With Garner, the room size is more traditionally sized for the market and there's some design flexibility. Ultimately each guest is value driven and location minded, so ensuring that we have avid hotels and Garners where these guests are traveling is key and our focus as we grow these brands and our midscale dominance.

KC

Thank you very much, Karen. Sticking with midscale but shifting to longer stay occasions, let's head over to Candlewood Suites.

CANDLEWOOD SUITES

KC

Thanks for joining us again, Justin. We just visited each of IHG's Essentials brands and we'll now go through three of IHG's Suites brands. While 'Suites' is a classification that's unique to IHG, the brands within this category are often referred to in the industry as 'extended stay.' As the name suggests, these hotels cater to longer stay occasions, ranging from several nights to several weeks or even months.

So, to kick things off, Justin, could you give us a brief overview of the Candlewood Suites brand?

JA

Candlewood Suites is our midscale extended stay brand, first launched in 1995 and now with over 400 open hotels and more than 190 in the global pipeline.

It's built for the 'Self-Sufficient Traveler'—guests who are proudly independent, value-driven, and efficiency-minded, and who appreciate self-service amenities and a relaxed environment with support from staff when they need it.

This brand delivers strong owner returns through a proven commercial engine that targets extended stay customers, an efficient labour model, and a unique, quirky service culture powered by our fantastic operations and commercial teams.

And we've just gone global, opening our first Candlewood Suites properties in Germany with Novum Hospitality, bringing more guests the space to settle in across the pond.

KC

As mentioned earlier, Candlewood Suites is intended for longer stay occasions. How is that reflected in the room design?

JA

When guests stay for weeks and sometimes months, they need space for their things and ways to keep their routines, and we deliver on both within our room designs.

Each suite includes a full kitchen with a large refrigerator and plenty of cabinet space. Plus, we have the right amount of counter space, should a guest use our lending locker for extras like crockpots or air fryers.

And when it's time for relaxation, every room offers a comfortable seating setup right in front of the TV, like our signature recliners here in the US.

KC

You mentioned earlier that the first Candlewood Suites hotel opened nearly 30 years ago. How has the brand evolved in recent years and what changes have been made to enhance hotel owner returns?

JA

We evolved to stay ahead. We've added flexibility to our prototypical designs. In addition to our standard sized rooms, owners can now choose a slimmer room bay option, which on a tight piece of land, could be worth up to 12 additional rooms.

That additional flexibility extends beyond our single branded prototype, to dual branded hotels. Candlewood Suites has proven to pair nicely with avid hotels, Holiday Inn or Holiday Inn Express, and that extends to conversions of both existing extended stay properties or other suitable limited services properties.

All of this helps us keep growing while maintaining the brand's strong commercial performance and guest satisfaction.

KC

That's fantastic. Thank you very much, Justin. We'll speak again shortly. In the meantime, let's check out Atwell Suites.

ATWELL SUITES

KC

Thank you for joining us again, Karen. So, Atwell Suites is IHG's newest Suites brand following its launch in 2019. How many hotels are open and in the pipeline today?

KG

We are excited to have our first 6 Atwell Suites open in the US and we recently opened our first property in Greater China, and we have over 60 more properties in the global pipeline.

This signals the strong interest from owners and guests around the world for this unique offer that is Atwell Suites.

IHG's suites portfolio is strongly positioned for what guests and owners need. With Staybridge Suites and Candlewood Suites designed perfectly for extended stays – think typically a week plus – Atwell Suites is IHG's hybrid suites brand positioned in the upper midscale segment offering the right mix of amenities in the room and in the public spaces for guests that maybe have 1-2 nights or a longer stay of maybe 4 or 5 nights, but they're not requiring some of the home-like amenities, like full kitchens in their suites.

KC

So it sounds like the target customer differs from Staybridge Suites and Candlewood Suites customer, not only by price point but also by length of stay. Can you provide some additional insight into these guests, their stay occasions and how that's reflected in the room and public space design?

KG

We call our target guest for Atwell Suites an 'Opportunity Seeker.' They view every trip as a chance to discover more. We designed for a younger guest that appreciates and looks for thoughtful design. They are growing in their own personal journey and they see travel for business, leisure or 'bleisure' as a chance to see and discover more.

Knowing these guests and what they need, we designed a brand that provides flexibility, moments of discovery and spaces to connect and build kinship across the guest journey.

Our suites provide spaces to rest, lounge, work, premium sleep experience, a counter height work desk dine space that divides the suite, comfy lounge seating and our efficient wet bar with a fridge, microwave and sink all to support the guests.

We have a few moments of discovery also through the design. One of them is a customized morse code message woven into the artwork, a little wink and nod to the city that the guest is discovering.

Our public spaces are truly unique, providing flexible zones and areas for guests to enjoy when they want when they're out of their suites. So seating, working, grabbing complimentary bean to cup coffee or some water, sitting down for breakfast or stopping by in the evening to enjoy the paid bar serving light bites and beer, wine and ready to drink cocktails. The design allows the spaces to really flex from day to evening with lighting and music evolving all across the day.

We are always listening to guest and owner feedback and we have optimized things like our F&B offering to ensure that it delivers for owners and guests. We actually designed our front desk and bar to have adjacency that allows for cross-training and support so that we can deliver what the guests need through a lean labor model, which helps ensure strong owner returns.

KC

Have there been any evolutions to Atwell Suites' design to further enhance hotel owner returns and the guest experience?

KG

One of the most impactful evolutions has been in our ability to provide owners flexible prototype options for this brand. The teams have been able to work to design not only the layout of the suites you see here at the Design Center, but also creating different dimensions of the suites to support various construction and adaptive reuse sites.

We have also leveraged the flexible zones of our public space design and created varied public space layouts. Again, so that we can support all modes of development. So today, while this brand is still growing, we have examples of new construction prototypes, adaptive reuse buildings, dual brands and conversions, all of which are delivering the Atwell Suites design and experience but in a way that ensures the owner's asset is fully utilized.

KC

Thank you very much, Karen. Let's now check out Staybridge Suites.

STAYBRIDGE SUITES

KC

Thanks for joining us again, Justin. So, we've now seen Candlewood Suites and Atwell Suites. Could you tell us a bit more about Staybridge Suites and how it's positioned relative to the other two brands?

JA

Staybridge Suites is our upscale extended stay brand, launched in 2000, with over 300 open hotels and more than 150 in the pipeline globally.

It's designed for what we call the 'Experienced Traveler.' Guests who know how to balance work, relaxation, and connection while on the road.

They're looking for a sense of home, inspiring design, and spaces that support all their routines, from cooking and gathering to finding quiet moments or enjoying the fresh air outdoors.

Staybridge Suites delivers some of the highest guest satisfaction scores across IHG's brands, delighting extended stay and short stay guests alike, thanks to a rich offer: spacious studios and suites, daily hot breakfast, our beloved social happy hour three times a week, and other perks like guest laundry, storage lockers, and of course our welcoming staff who genuinely connect with our guests.

With that level of offer, Staybridge Suites sits above Candlewood and Atwell Suites in terms of rate, cost to build, and staff requirements.

KC

Let's double-click on that positioning. Could you provide some additional insight into the ways in which Staybridge Suites' more premium offering is reflected in the room and public space design?

JA

That premium positioning shows up in both size and in the little details.

Our public spaces, like the breakfast buffet and surrounding seating and the outdoor living room, are larger than what you would find in the other brands. Staybridge Suites also offers one- and two-bedroom suites, with separate living and sleeping areas, which the other brands don't offer as much.

And throughout the hotel, you'll notice elevated touches, such as wood accents in the lobby ceiling, mixed metals in lighting and furniture, wallpaper in key areas, string lights around the outdoor firepit, and high-quality stone and tile in the kitchens.

All those intentional details provide for a more premium experience.

KC

Have any of those design features evolved in recent years? The brand was launched 25 years ago.

JA

We introduced our next generation designs back in 2017, which brought in many of those additional premium touches. But we've kept evolving, bringing more efficiency and flexibility to our design solutions.

For instance, for our Americas hotels, we've streamlined our prototypical studios without sacrificing any of key parts of the room experience, helping to reduce building size by around 2% and site size by 9%.

Leveraging best practice from across our EMEAA region, we also launched the Staybridge Suites Smart Studio, a new room type for shorter-stay guests who want that extra space but don't quite need a full kitchen experience. Our Americas hotels can now take advantage of this new room type, which still includes a full-sized refrigerator and kitchen cabinetry, but no cooktop or 'hob', helping further reduce build costs.

And for select markets and select operators, we now offer the option to add a paid bar experience to their designs. The bar complements our social happy hour, while giving owners access to additional revenue opportunities.

All these updates help keep Staybridge Suites a strong investment for owners while staying true to what guests love.

KC

Thank you very much, Justin. Let's now head over to Hotel Indigo, the only one of IHG's six Luxury & Lifestyle brands with a presence in the Design and Innovation Center.

HOTEL INDIGO

KC

Vicki, thanks for joining us today. So, Hotel Indigo was launched just over 20 years ago. Can you tell us more about the brand today, its positioning and its target customer?

Vicki Poulos, Vice President, Kimpton and Hotel Indigo (VP)

Thanks, Kate. Hotel Indigo is what we call the world's neighborhood hotel. The brand is built around illuminating the neighborhood. Every hotel tells a local story through its design, experiences, and connections to culture and people. That makes each property feel one-of-a-kind while still delivering on the consistency of IHG.

Our guests are curious and creative and looking for authentic experiences that reflect who they are and who they want to be. They don't just want to stay in a city, they want to belong to it.

And the momentum speaks for itself. We now have over 170 hotels open, more than 130 in the global pipeline, and Hotel Indigo is the fastest-growing lifestyle brand in the world.

KC

That's fantastic. I mentioned to our viewers earlier that Hotel Indigo is the only Luxury & Lifestyle brand with a presence in the Design and Innovation Center. Why is this the case? How does the design process and IHG's role differ for Luxury & Lifestyle brands relative to Premium, Essentials and Suites brands?

VP

That's a great question, Kate. In Luxury and Lifestyle, the design process is different because the guest expectation is different. These travelers aren't looking for something standard. They want something that feels one-of-one, a reflection of the place that they're in and often of their own aspirations.

For Hotel Indigo, that starts with the neighborhood story. From day one, we sit down with the owner and design team and ask, what makes this neighborhood so distinct, and how do we bring that to life? That narrative then shapes everything from the bar to the artwork to the details in the guestroom.

It's a true collaboration. Designers bring the story to life, and we refine together to ensure it delivers for guests. Our role at IHG is to guide and to inspire, not to dictate. That's why Indigo belongs in the Design and Innovation Center because this level of creativity, collaboration, and storytelling is what defines Luxury & Lifestyle.

KC

Now, that level of customization and detail can elongate the development timeline relative to developing a highly standardized hotel like Holiday Inn Express or avid. IHG has created innovative solutions, though, to speed up the design process for Hotel Indigo through the Design Studio. Can you provide some additional detail on the Design Studio and how it works?

VP

When we created the Hotel Indigo Design Studio, we started with two needs in mind. First guests, every Hotel Indigo has to feel unique. For owners, the process has to be efficient and clear. The Design Studio was built right at that intersection.

We found that successful projects share a few key ingredients: a talented designer who can work with an open brief, a sharp focus on where to invest for the biggest guest impact and strongest returns, and the right partners to bring it all together. Out of that came the three innovations that you see here.

First, our Design Partners: four vetted firms who know Hotel Indigo and give owners speed and confidence. Second, the Design Collection: a customizable guestroom casegoods that save nearly a month of design work. And third, our Vetted Suppliers: who guarantee lead times and even reimburse model room costs. Together, these tools can cut up to seven months of pre-construction, reduce cost overruns, and still deliver a hotel that feels one-of-a-kind.

KC

Thank you, Vicki. Those are fantastic examples of the ways in which IHG is enhancing the design and build process while staying true to a brand as unique as Hotel Indigo. Let's now check out IHG's newest brand, Ruby, and the final stop on today's tour.

RUBY

KC

IHG acquired Ruby in February 2025, making it our 20th brand. While the brand has a long track record in Europe, Ruby became franchise-ready in the US only a few weeks ago, marking an exciting milestone in the brand's international expansion journey. Lauren, can you give us a brief overview of Ruby, its positioning and its target guest?

Lauren Krostue, Vice President, EVEN Hotels and Ruby (LK)

Ruby is positioned in the premium, urban lifestyle segment and sits in the upscale category. The brand has 16 open hotels and 18 in the pipeline, including 4 that were signed after the acquisition. And, owner interest has been strong.

At Ruby, we focus on modern, cost and style conscious travelers, and they want to be in the heart of the action, experiencing not only the culture of a city, but they also want comfort and quality when they come back to the hotel.

They don't want to pay for things that they just don't need. Instead, they are looking for what matters most to them: a great night's sleep, a powerful shower, stylish design, and a social space where locals might gather, all at an approachable price point.

Ruby is designed to speak to these guests. They are filled with stylish, laid-back charm and soul, with authentic stories and design, rooted in the cities they call home.

We pair that storytelling with signature and elevated touches, like cozy rooms that focus on comfort and relaxation with a great bed and rainfall shower, but also barista coffee and unique cocktails in 24/7 destination bars that really draw locals in.

At the heart of the hotel is a 24/7 bar where our hosts greet guests who can enjoy bottomless barista coffee and a healthy regional buffet breakfast in the morning as well as delicious cocktails, coffee, and light bites in the evening.

We weave music throughout the experience. Guests can use their in-room Marshall amp and Bluetooth speaker, take a guitar from the bar, tune into Ruby Radio, and catch live music in the evening.

We put guests in control through 24/7 self-check in, but we also always have helpful hosts available to deliver personalized service every step of the way.

We're all in on delivering what guests truly value, and leaving out unnecessary frills. That makes it a smarter value for them, and ultimately, for our owners.

KC

You mentioned the brand is conversion and new build friendly. Can you explain how the room and public space design supports both build-types?

LK

Ruby delivers space efficiency through multifunctional, efficient public spaces that focus on what our target guest most values.

It includes a modular architectural system with our compact rooms, meaning we can fit up to 25% more rooms in the same space versus a traditional premium hotel room.

We have room types that can flex based on multiple room sizes and configurations.

But it's also a prototypical guest room with 4 main room types that can easily be adapted for new builds.

What that means is we have high flexibility and proven success in new-build locations and we're also highly conversion-friendly, including for adaptive reuse across a range of commercial property types.

We've also developed a turnkey development process through a 'kit of parts' approach, tailored to both new builds and conversions, resulting in reduced costs for owners

KC

Are any design changes being made to adapt the brand to the US market or will the look, feel and guest experience largely be the same in the US relative to Europe?

LK

The overall brand concept and design resonated strongly with US guests and owners in the segment, so the look, feel and guest experience will largely be the same.

However, based on consumer insights, we made some slight modifications to the guest room to warm up the space, and we will be regionalizing the food & beverage offer, specifically breakfast.

KC

Thank you very much, Lauren. Let's now meet back up with Jen to conclude the tour.

CONCLUSION

KC

Well, Jen, a big thank you to you and your team for taking us through IHG's Design and Innovation Center. We've been able to see firsthand the outstanding work you and your team and many others across the business are doing to create brands that guests and owners love. Are there any last thoughts you'd like to leave us with?

JG

Our teams are passionate about guests and owners, and we have the ideal space here at the Design and Innovation Center to constantly think about them, to ensure our brands are fit for purpose and for the future, and that's all really exciting. IHG is really unique in having a space like this, and it's been great to show you how we use it to support IHG's great growth momentum.

KC

Thanks again, Jen.

JG

Thank you.