
BRACH
MADRID




BRACH

MADRID: A VIBRANT, SUNNY DESTINATION

Picture Spain and behold the blue sky of its "*eternal spring*[1]", the ochre of its Andalusian countryside and the gold of its boleros. Smell the intoxicating sweetness of the orange blossom, rediscover the pride of the Picaresque heroes and move to the nostalgic melody of a flamenco guitar.

Think of Spain and its heartland, Madrid, an ancient Umayyad fortress that became the Castilian capital after the Spanish Reconquista. Nicknamed *El Foro*[2], the city has always been the centre of political and intellectual debate.

This is Madrid, with its zest for life, and how, in this unique artistic movement of liberation and protest known as *Movida*, the people of Madrid have risen up from forty years under Franco's rule. How survival gave rise to a celebratory culture.

Think of Spain and all the contrasts that shape its soul. Since the Golden Age, a singular artistic style has been apparent, with El Greco, Velásquez, then Goya, Dalí, Picasso...

From *Don Quijote*, the "knight in shining armour" lost between reality and illusion, to Luis Buñuel's *Chien Andalou*, the same principle applies: the dream blends with reality to create dreamlike poetry. And then there's the *Duende*, that extreme expressiveness of *sentimiento*, that "mysterious and indescribable charm" according to the poet Federico García Lorca. To feel it, you have to put your heart and ear to the ground, listen to the *palmas*[3] and *tacón*[4] of the flamenco dancers, laugh and cry at their lost loves with Almodovar's heroines, or even spend some time in the *modern nostalgia* that designer Philippe Starck has created for Brach Madrid.

Madrid is Evok Collection's second destination outside France. The city's effervescent atmosphere, which is vibrant by day and night, is a perfect match for the magnetic energy of the Brach.

[1] Gérard de NERVAL, "Espagne", Odelettes, 1853
[2] translation: the forum
[3] handclapping
[4] translation: heel. Wooden part of the shoe that the dancer clicks to produce percussion sounds

With its elegant, dazzling white stone façade, Brach is located on Gran Via, Madrid's main thoroughfare, where boutiques, cocktail bars, cafés, theatres and cinemas keep the heart of the city beating, day and night. Its new premises are part of the revival of Gran Via, which is now one of the must-visit districts for the finest luxury brands.

A showcase for the architectural art of the inter-war period, Gran Via features a range of styles that are as eclectic as they are majestic for pedestrians to enjoy. Viennese Secession, New York Art Deco, Plateresque, Neo-Mudejar and Haussmannian styles give a unique tempo to the area that has been dubbed *Madrid's Broadway*.

The seven-storey building, topped by a belvedere, was built between 1919 and 1922 by the architect Jerónimo Pedro Mathet Rodriguez at 20 Gran Via, on a site steeped in French history. On the site where the Brach now stands was the *Palacio de Masserano*, where Victor Hugo lived as a child. The building has also been home to a number of notable tenants, including the *Alfonso* family, a famous dynasty of photo journalists whose studios were based there from 1939 to 1990.

Protected from the ravages of time and punctuated by lofty windows adorned with balconies, the elegantly understated façade now fronts a building that has been completely and magnificently restored. The grand wrought-iron staircase has been preserved and blends perfectly with the timeless décor designed by Philippe Starck. Inspired by his vision of the 1920s and 1930s, the designer considers that each space reveals a form of *modern nostalgia*, while each material and object embodies the contrasting soul of Spain: the telluric strength of the lobby, paved entirely in terracotta, counterbalances the weightlessness of the celestial whites in Spa & Sports Club, while the restaurant's rustic, woven-leather ceilings counter the sophistication of an art gallery window.

And so, the restaurant, the bar, the patisserie, the 57 rooms including 4 suites, Spa & Sports Club, have all been designed with that rare and infinite warmth that only a storyteller can inspire. By dint of his sensitive and romantic imagination, Philippe Starck has revived the essence of a life, of memories and places, rendering them tangible as if they had always existed. Everything is a poetic reminder of opposing polarities. Far from clashing, they combine to form the indefinable, magnetic unity of Brach, the spirit of an establishment to which we return again and again, because it is so dear to us.




Magritte

BRACH MADRID BY PHILIPPE STARCK

An emotional history

Entering Brach Madrid is like entering a private home. An infinite number of surprising and mysterious objects, accumulated for their sentimental and therefore priceless value, fill the hotel with fertile dreams and surprises.

Brach Madrid is a place of elegant and precise poetry: every detail, every material is meaningful, and the whole builds a narrative around the happy nostalgia of a man who has known beauty and lost love, and who has dreamt of them ever since. In this way, each space in the address tells a story that everyone is free to reinvent with their own personal feelings.

Madrid is a unique and paradoxical city. Scarred by 36 years of Francoism, it swung from one extreme to the other, from fascist dictatorship to Movida. For Brach Madrid, I wanted to encapsulate the unspoken spirit of Spanish poetry, a form of modern nostalgia that is never backward-looking.

This work of narrative and memory created from my heightened awareness of understanding the Spanish soul and setting it in the building that once housed the famous Alfonso studio was a particular source of inspiration for me. At Brach Madrid, I've created a world of riches that people will be happy to revisit time and time again, with new details that reflect the attentions and whispers of buried memories.

So, you come back to Brach because you feel cherished here, because this place demonstrates its affection throughout.

Philippe Starck, Director of Creative Direction, Architectural Design and Decoration for Brach Madrid.


Magritte

Step into your room and you'll find yourself drawn in by the multitude of details and objects displayed throughout. Their eclectic nature is not a matter of chance, but a conscious choice. The resulting sense of intimacy takes you on an imaginary journey like no other. Philippe Starck tells the story of a love affair, that of a woman loved by the man who adorns Brach Madrid's 57 rooms, including 4 suites, with his memories.

The objects used to decorate the premises and the graffiti on the walls are all reminders of the passage of time and the past lives of those who use these spaces. Around the leather headboard, sketches are found alongside travel notes. Together, they form a travel diary, capturing the marvellous moments of a lifetime as well as the splendours of Spain.

**"The room is sentimental.
The walls are not made of shagreen, but of history, little scars, little details. You're completely in the realm of the emotional."**

PHILIPPE STARCK

Opposite the bed, the wardrobe-shelf is a window into the thoughts and memories of the imaginary protagonist, each element providing a biographical clue. After that, it's up to you to use your imagination. This is the mind game that Philippe Starck has created for each of the bedrooms.

"A small photo of him as a young boxer, with his gloves hanging down. Castanets, in memory of his mother who, like mine, wore a mantilla in the evening and played. A bandurria, a traditional Spanish mandolin whose sound he might have loved. Higher up, a statuette of a little gentleman in a green coat with a light bulb reminds him of his arrest by the secret police. There's also a secret box with a peephole through which anyone who gets close enough can see."

PHILIPPE STARCK












Zaragoza



And because everything is so emotional, other details, such as the wall sconce in the shape of a seahorse, are part of the designer's personal story:

> **"I love the symbol of the seahorse. This truly fantastical animal - a winged horse that lives underwater - is extraordinary, and was ideal for illustrating the spirit, the mind games and the fertile surprises to be found throughout Brach Madrid."**
>
> PHILIPPE STARCK

The jatoba and golden tones of the woodwork, the thick leather on the headboards, the pottery and wickerwork, all lend the rooms the softness and warmth of a setting sun touching the Iberian earth. A few dashes of bright pink or orange on the tassels and trimmings evoke the exuberance of the *chaquetillas*[6] and the liveliness of the Spanish dances.

As for the bathroom, it is elegant and of the highest quality, with its floor in breccia, a precious stone, its beauty lies in the unusual and imposing presence of a mirror with a glazed terracotta frame. Abstract swirls, botanical and organic, appear beneath the bright moss-green enamel with its bronze highlights.

> **"I envisioned this mirror as having been fashioned by the clumsy hand of the gentleman whose story I am imagining, who wanted to make the mirror that his wife would have dreamed of having and into which she never gazed. Thinking of her, he took some clay and, with that feminine, baroque spirit, crafted the most moving thing in the world."**
>
> PHILIPPE STARCK

As you enter the Brach restaurant, you can imagine Salvador Dalí, Luis Buñuel, Federico García Lorca, and all the other members of the Generation of '27 sitting here, rewriting the world as poets over *artistic tertulias*[7]. What's striking here is the recreation of the atmosphere of the grand cafés, the hotbed of intellectual and artistic freedom. The many details and ideas employed by designer Philippe Starck give the illusion of entering a place that belongs to the past::

"For me, this restaurant embodies the image that the collective unconscious has of Madrid's grand café of the 1920s. This architecture was the starting point for envisioning an elegant restaurant that has always existed, with its rich wood-panelled walls, tilted mirrors to see and be seen, a large fresco, leather and theatrical lighting."

PHILIPPE STARCK

Distinguished clients and penniless artists would have met here. Painters, poets, journalists and chess players would have lived there, making this "*think tank*[8]" their second home. Sometimes destitute, they would leave a work of art, "a *part of themselves*", as Philippe Starck puts it, as a pledge or in exchange for a little human warmth and a good meal. This is the story told by the window display that has sprung from the designer's imagination. Hanging haphazardly, paintings of different origins and styles create the illusion of a "*poetic memory*":

"Just as in the days when impoverished artists paid with their works of art, a display case contains paintings and a few portraits of Gabriel Garcia Lorca. I dreamt that the poet had passed through there, paying with his passion. Following the same imaginary principle, the central island features collections of beautiful objects, as if left there by travelling visitors."

PHILIPPE STARCK

A prominent and iconic feature of the restaurant, the window is also, for the designer, an artistic way of viewing art, revealed or obscured by the objects and movements reflected in it.

[7] discussions exchange of ideas
[8] names given to the first large European coffees in The Encyclopédie



Mahogany-panelled walls, woven leather ceilings, columns clad in glazed terracotta tiles, thick curtains woven in shades of beige, natural leather armchairs, double lampshades to soften the light - each of these materials contributes to a warm, subdued atmosphere with a timeless elegance. During the day, when the sun is blazing and Madrid's white facades are dazzling, people come here to enjoy the soft dim light and coolness. In the evening, it's the conviviality and warmth of the open, shared kitchen that draws people in.

"With its woven leather ceilings and dark mahogany walls, the restaurant is first and foremost a reflection of the Spanish soul, a soul that has survived the ages without a single wrinkle."

PHILIPPE STARCK

Adopting a traditional feature of cafés, where people go to see as much as to be seen, the mirrors, tilted at precise angles, give those sitting with their backs to the room the pleasure of not only gazing at what's going on behind them, but also of being seen! Dating from the 1920s and imported from the United States, authentic brasserie mirrors deconstruct the space in an infinite interplay of angles.

"The chaotic effect of the mirrors turns the restaurant into a work of art in its own right."

PHILIPPE STARCK

Another of the restaurant's showpieces is the open kitchen, set in a world of fire. Its countertop, clad in interlocking pieces of wood sculpted by designer Patrick Kim-Gustafson, contrasts with its modern, brutalist aesthetic. Above, Ara Starck's large mural crowns this space, with its hypnotic power akin to the dance of flames. The kitchen is the heart of the restaurant, pulsating with energy. This is where the show takes place.

"This mural is a choreography of fantastical elements and constructions, both organic and mechanical. It has been devised like a story. It begins and ends anarchically, inviting the reader to reinterpret the tale each time they visit."

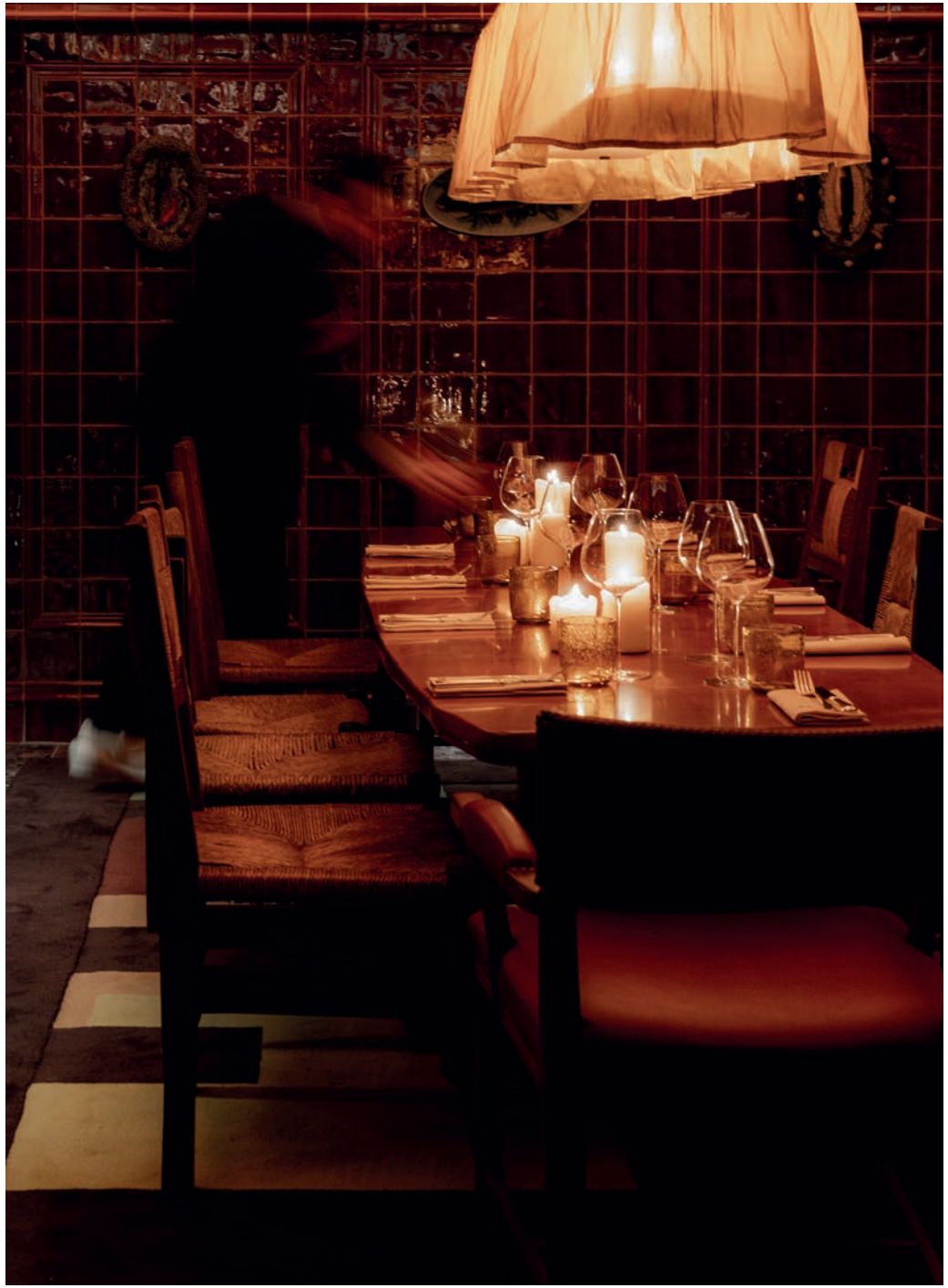
ARA STARCK

LA SALLE À MANGER

Nestled within the restaurant, La Salle à Manger unfolds like a secret alcove, a timeless retreat where intimacy reaches its fullest expression. Reserved for a select few, it offers a rare experience, where every moment suspended in this unique atmosphere becomes a poem to be savored, far from prying eyes.

[9] translation: from the soul. This is also the title of a famous *vals criollo* or tango waltz composed in 1911 by a young Uruguayan, Rosita Melo.





Created by Chef Adam Bentalha, the menu at Brach Madrid is inspired by the Mediterranean, with hints of the Middle East, and a relaxed, friendly atmosphere. By bringing together the flavours of these sun-drenched countries, his dishes in Madrid are a natural extension of Spanish cuisine, which is all about sharing.

> **"In Madrid, my menu will really come into its own, because we're now in a country where the gastronomic scene is very cosmopolitan, and our cuisine speaks to everyone."**
>
> ADAM BENTALHA

The Brach Paris classics and signature dishes are still featured in Madrid, and a Spanish touch is added to the menu, with a few nods to certain typical dishes.

"We work with local producers and exceptional local products such as olive oil, red tuna, Galician beef and, of course, Bellota ham."

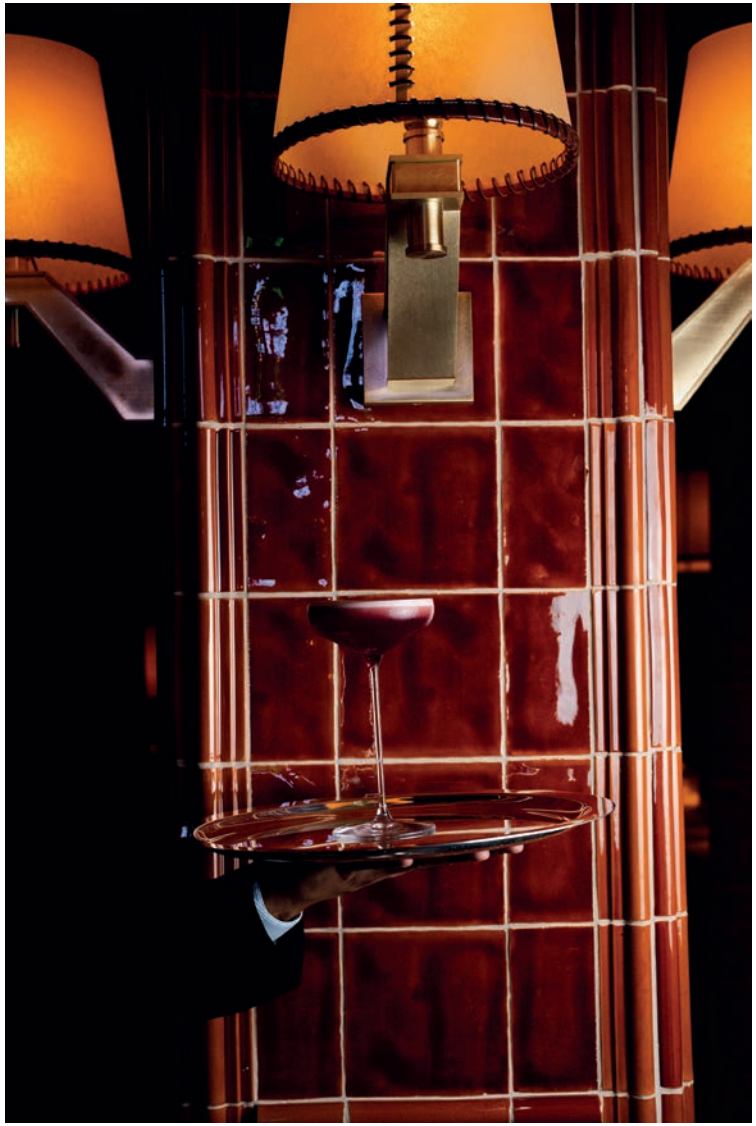
Brach Madrid incorporates a strong component of Spanish culinary culture: using fire and cooking on a grill. And with a real charcoal oven in the kitchen, large pieces of meat can be grilled and shared, providing dishes to gather around.





In a nod to Spanish village cafés, Brach boasts a cocktail bar featuring large bottles wrapped in woven straw. Their shape is reminiscent of the balloon bottles in which Catalan wines such as Rancio are aged. Lined up above the counter with small taps, these bottles add a fun, folksy dimension to serving drinks. This simplicity contrasts with the sophisticated mirrors, which make the glassware, bottles and guests' eyes shine.





LA PÂTISSERIE

If there's one quintessentially Madrilenian gourmet ritual, it's the sacred hour of coffee served with pastries, mid-morning and late afternoon, at home or on the city's crowded terraces. The little vintage-inspired shop with its white enamel stands in the heart of Brach restaurant, ready to cater for your sweet tooth at any time of day.

To take away or eat in, the creations and desserts of the pastry chef are delicious morsels of the French lifestyle, right in the heart of Madrid.

Behind the display window, strawberry shortcakes, lemon meringue tarts, Paris-Brest, Opéra, éclairs, creamy flans... everything that French gastronomy has to offer in the way of attractive pastries is on show for all to see and taste. Depending on the season, the fruit tarts are adorned with the sun-kissed oranges that are the splendour of Andalusia. Some pastries pay homage to Spain's favourite flavours, such as almond and honey, while others, like turrón, are reinterpreted by the pastry chef. For brunch at the weekend, the menu is expanded with a sumptuous buffet of cakes to share: tropézienne tart, kouglof, lemon meringue pie, cake... As for breakfast, guests can count on the pastry chefs' expertise with delicious home-made pastries.







SPA & SPORTS CLUB

A place where you can discover and redefine yourself

The sensation of weightlessness is what you get when you visit the Spa & Sports Club. An intimate sanctuary in the heart of the bustling Brach, much more than a luxurious spa, the Spa & Sports Club is a 400m² space for personal transformation and exploration.

Embellished with gold, the pure white of the furnishings and areas is a blank canvas for the body and mind in search of well-being. Spa & Sports Club invites you to enjoy a totally new holistic experience.

"While gravity is very much in evidence throughout the hotel, particularly due to the choice of materials such as wood and terracotta, I envisioned the Spa & Sports Club as a cloud, an unblemished, intangible, floating space. Weightlessness changes relativity and the weight of the body is replaced by pure spiritual energy."

PHILIPPE STARCK

A 20m long swimming pool, mindful movement sessions, fitness coaching, hyperbaric oxygen chamber, guided ice bath, infrared sauna, steam room, floatation bath, recovery room, massages (cupping, Tui Na, Chi Nei Tsang...), the most advanced technologies combine with the best of traditional holistic practices to promote a rebirth of both mind and body.

The brand Clarins and its Precious range, offer face and body treatments.






AirPod

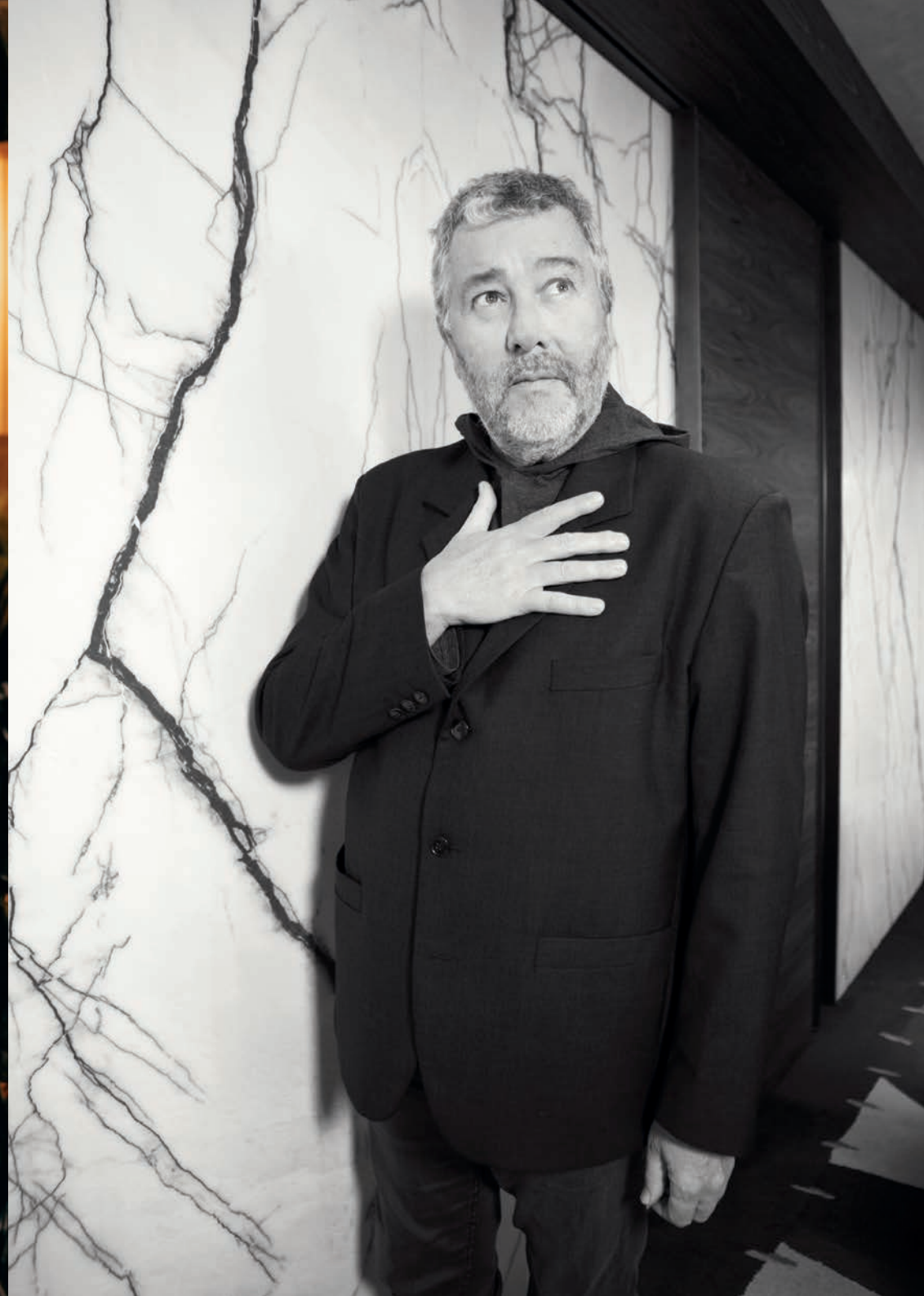





BRACH







Philippe Starck

A leader and pioneer of *democratic and environmentally friendly design*, Philippe Starck has been pursuing a mission for over 50 years: to make life better for as many people as possible. To achieve this, this visionary uses his humour and tireless multi-faceted inventiveness in every field. From everyday objects to furniture, hotel and restaurant architecture, naval engineering and space engineering, Philippe Starck designs new lifestyle solutions inspired by his dreams of changing the world and a deep understanding of societal change. He sees his duty as a designer as "*political, ethical, subversive, environmentally friendly and humorous*".

An intuitive visionary, he anticipated the advent of dematerialisation and the need for downsizing. His 10,000 creations have always been based on the same principle: "*demand the maximum from the minimum*". Because humanity is not short of objects, but of poetry in its daily life, his creations focus more on the service provided than on the object itself.

An inventor, creator, architect, designer and artistic director, Philippe Starck is a honest man as the Renaissance humanists understood it. A citizen of the world, the designer knows Spain well, having traversed it many times by motorbike. Following Paris, Brachid Madrid is the second Brach establishment on which Philippe Starck has collaborated with Evok Collection.

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Evok Collection is actively committed to progress, placing Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) at the forefront of its actions, as illustrated by the "Ambition for a better future" programme. Its objective is to promote a more responsible tourism and hotel industry, one step at a time, and to be a committed participant in our economic and social environment.

In June 2024, Evok Collection was awarded the Green Globe label, a prestigious international certification that rewards tourism companies and destinations for their sustainable practices. This certification rigorously assesses their environmental, social, economic and cultural impact, promoting waste reduction, responsible resource management, gender equality and respect for human rights. To obtain this accolade, companies must meet strict criteria, assessed by independent auditors.

This label reinforces Evok Collection's commitment to building a more sustainable future that respects the planet. Evok Collection is involving all its teams, both employees and clients.

While Evok Collection's objective is to evoke feelings that will create exceptional memories, it also has a duty to invent a new way of travelling, one that is more responsible and sustainable, while preserving the well-being and safety of all.

“If you design a fashionable hotel, it's going to last five years! In five years’ time, all the materials and energy that went into it will be thrown out. It will be wasted and a source of pollution. My ambition is to create something that will last at least a century. The notion of duration is the fundamental notion of ecology.”

PHILIPPE STARCK



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