

Find your inner Sanctum

Natasha Higgins visits the Sanctum Soho Hotel where, among other things, they pride themselves on their bespoke cocktails created by their talented staff.

Here's a thing worth knowing about Soho's five-star Boutique hotel, Sanctum: They make a mean Cosmopolitan – it's so good, it's reason enough to visit the hotel. Furthermore, on the fifth floor, is a terrific roof terrace with a hot tub, outdoor heating, and a bar. Geographically, you're sitting above Carnaby Street, Regent's Street and are one-minute away from Piccadilly Circus. Add to that a cheeky cocktail and you'll be on cloud nine.

This five-star boutique hotel brands itself as 'rock'n'roll' and the dark aubergine walls, similarly dark-oak floors and corridors lined with black & white photographs of rock stars, past and present, give it a strong *Paint it Black* kinda feel.

To give you an idea, upon entering the lobby through the glass revolving door, is the lift in a striking iron cage enclosure, two leather banquettes and a stunning original staircase which leads up to the bedrooms. The furniture, rugs and joinery are all custom made.

In a nutshell, the aim was to create "the urban glamour of London, from Carnaby Street to underground clubs. The design also draws on Soho's history as a centre of artistic activity and bohemia," says Mark Fuller, Owner.

No 20, The Restaurant

It's the perfect venue for a London stop-over, a casual after work drink or an evening meal at the hotel's No 20. "The Restaurant's colours are drawn from a 'rhubarb and custard' theme – a classic British pudding with lashings of vintage glamour," explains Fuller. It's all leather chairs and wooden tables creating a cosy and exclusive look. Everything down to the wall lights are custom designed including the bar with its mermaid bar clamps.

The menu includes a starter of a butternut squash and



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Chargrilled Haloumi Salad, followed by a Jacobs Ladder Rock'n'roll Ribs and Toffee Apple Crumble Tart – true British fare all to the tune of *My Generation*.

Alternatively, if you're just popping in for a drink, keep in mind that the hotel's cocktail menu states the following: "At Sanctum Soho Hotel we pride ourselves on making cocktails that are completely bespoke to you. Tell us what you like and we'll come up with a delicious concoction that really hits the spot. Or if you'd prefer one of the classics read on..."

The rooms

The rooms are an extension of the theme and a feast for the eyes. Think classic Art Deco: Timber veneers, chocolate wall covering, velvet drapes and cocktail bars instead of desks. "They reflect glamour and slight eccentricity – we want guests to feel they are entering a magical chocolate box of a room!" says Fuller.

The Junior Suites have a bath in the middle of the floor set on glowing pebbles with twinkling white lights over it. The columns, wardrobes, furniture and tiles have reflective surfaces and the windows are adorned with silver drapery and glass beaded wallpaper.

Many of the Doubles have a purple colour scheme and these rooms are all about the bed – a black four poster flanked by a huge black framed Louis mirror, silk drapes and a chaise longue.

Another design scheme in the two-room suites is 'baroque' – a blushing boudoir with French Louis XIV style furniture, pale satins and velvets reflected in crystal lights. Magnifique!



The Cinema Room

Another fun feature of this hotel is its cinema room. The design that draws on an era of cigarette girls and the glamour of the Odeon cinemas of the 1930s for its inspiration – perfect for hosting private events.

All of this in the heart of Soho – London's centre for music and entertainment – how fitting.