

CONDÉ NAST TRAVELLER 05.2007

WORD OF MOUTH

WOULD YOU ADAM AND EVE IT?

An exuberant redesign inspired by the Garden of Eden turns an Arizona hotel into a tempting proposition. After parting company with founder Ian Schrager, Morgans Hotel Group might have opted to keep a low profile. Instead, it bought the former James Hotel in buzzy Scottsdale, Arizona and called in wildly extrovert designer Benjamin Noriega-Ortiz to turn it into the sister property of Mondrian Los Angeles. The 194-room Mondrian Scottsdale occupies six two-storey buildings that flank a swimming pool. 'The design was inspired by the Garden of Eden: good and evil, dark and light,' explains Noriega-Ortiz. 'The colours in the lobby are innocent, nude,' he continues gleefully. 'Then you move into temptation with the Red Bar, which has trompe l'oeil cherubs and red drapes on the walls. The best thing we have is lamps with naked ladies holding up the shades. The idea came from a little candlestick I bough on eBay; we reproduced them three metres tall.'