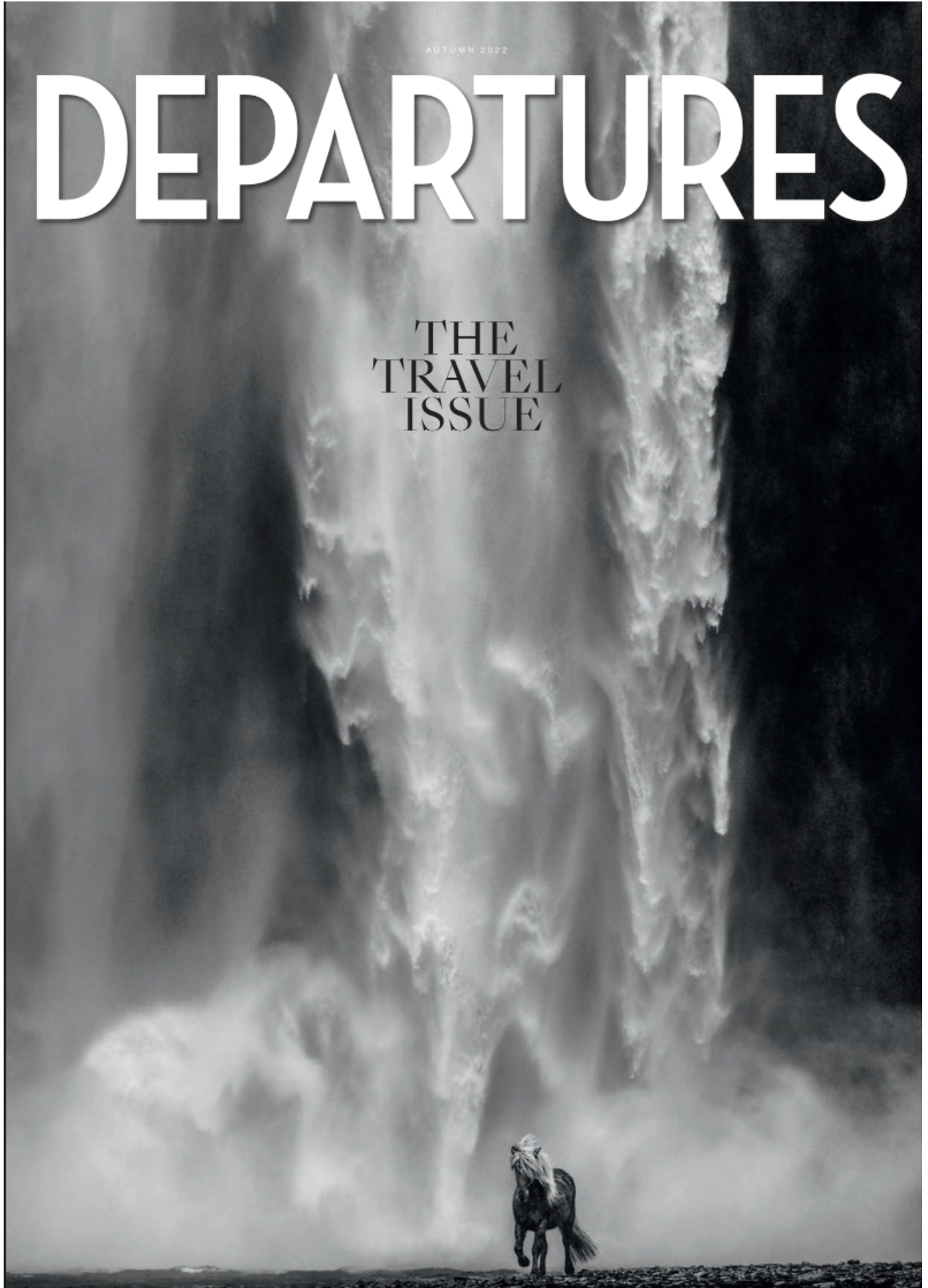


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DEPARTURES

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A maximalist suite at Le Grand Mazarin in Paris

Creativity Required

Kimberley Cohen, co-founder and artistic director of Maisons Pariente, explains why design is essential to the burgeoning hotel brand's DNA.

Why do you put such an emphasis on good design?

We love design, and so it is incredibly important for us. We want to combine everything we love into our hotels – attentive yet discreet service, individual design, privacy – all within a beautiful setting where guests will feel the perfect balance of comfort and luxury. The atmosphere of a place is what makes it so special, and design plays an integral part in this. It is all about personalisation and ensuring we do not standardise. We design our hotels as if they were our own private vacation home, where each address has its own unique identity. We want our customers to be amazed and wish it were their own home. In fact, guests often ask us if they can take the furniture with them! For us, this gives huge satisfaction – as it shows we have designed something special, an atmosphere that guests want to emulate at home.

Each hotel has a different designer and style. What ties the hotels together?

The vision we have for each project – that each hotel should be entirely personalised and individual, yet welcome you as if you are at home – is unified across each hotel. This, combined with the emotion a place generates, is the main starting point for every project. The attention to detail also binds them. It is not only the design but the authenticity behind each decision as to why they were chosen, all the little details that create the ambience and atmosphere; from the signature scent, the playlists, the colours, to the amenities in each hotel. Then, of course, our collaborators and team who offer generosity of spirit and excellent service to create a home-away-from-home experience

What is the design approach that you decided upon with Martin Brudnizki for your new hotel, Le Grand Mazarin, in Paris?

This hotel was a very different project for us. Up until now, we have only worked on seasonal vacation destination

hotels, so this is our first urban hotel which will be open all year long. This is an exceptional opportunity for us and we fully intend it to be as Parisian, eclectic and cosmopolitan as the Marais district. It is also the biggest we have, with 61 bedrooms. We are working with Martin Brudnizki as we wanted to find a designer who had a bold vision and, like us, needed and wanted to create a story about the place, to create a real experience for the guest and not just another hotel. The story is that the building belonged to an educated woman in the 1900s who would organise salonières to talk about the latest books, which was once forbidden. It is said she had creative friends from all over and travelled the world collecting art – a wonderful summation of the avant-garde, creative culture of Le Marais, full of intrigue and surprise. We wanted to reflect this in the hotel. Le Grand Mazarin will have a whimsical design that you can't really tie to a period through the multitude of influences. It is a complete mixture of genres, styles, and fabrics that create a "je ne sais quoi" that makes it warm and cosy but at the same time very luxurious. – *As told to Brian Noone*



Kimberley Cohen

After studying and working in fashion in LA and New York, the 33-year-old now runs Maisons Pariente – whose portfolio now spans four award-winning hotels – along with her sister, CEO Leslie Kouhana. maisonspariente.com

