OUTSIDE IN™

The Hotel Greenery Guide.

Does greenery change how a stay feels? Guests, reviews and the research say yes. Here’s the design thinking and the proof.



Sudima Auckland City by Outside In



Sudima Auckland City by Outside In



Sudima Auckland Airport by Outside In

01 · THE GUEST CASE

How greenery shapes a stay

A memorable stay begins with a memorable arrival. From the moment guests walk in, light, texture and living greenery shape how a hotel feels, and how they'll remember it afterwards.

01 · THE GUEST CASE

Is greenery worth it for a hotel? The research says yes.

For owners, GMs and design teams, greenery is more than decoration. It shapes the arrival, changes how public spaces get used, and turns up in what guests say once they've gone home. The figures below come from independent hospitality research. Where a study measures biophilic elements other than planting.

36%

of lobby visitors stayed and used biophilic lobbies, vs 25% in conventional ones

2×

as often, guests mention the "experience" in reviews of biophilic hotels

Up to

18%

higher room rates for rooms with a view to nature*

Sources: Human Spaces 2.0: Biophilic Design in Hospitality (Terrapin Bright Green, Interface & Gensler, 2017). Lobby and review figures come from a small observational study of six Midtown Manhattan hotels. *Room-rate figure is from Hotels.com pricing of 100 hotels and measures outdoor views to nature, not indoor planting.

01 · THE GUEST CASE

The shift to green

Greenery is no longer a one-off flourish at a flagship site. The world's largest hotel groups are writing it into their brand standards, from luxury through to economy.

A group-wide guideline

Accor has developed a global Biophilic Design Guideline, covering core principles including how guest rooms should look across its brands.

Source: Hotel Management International, "Power plants".

A planting guide for every typology

Pullman's global planting guide covers new builds, light refurbishments and conversions, with quick-win options for smaller or budget-conscious sites.

Source: Oliver Heath Design, Global Planting Guide for Pullman Hotels.

Not just for luxury

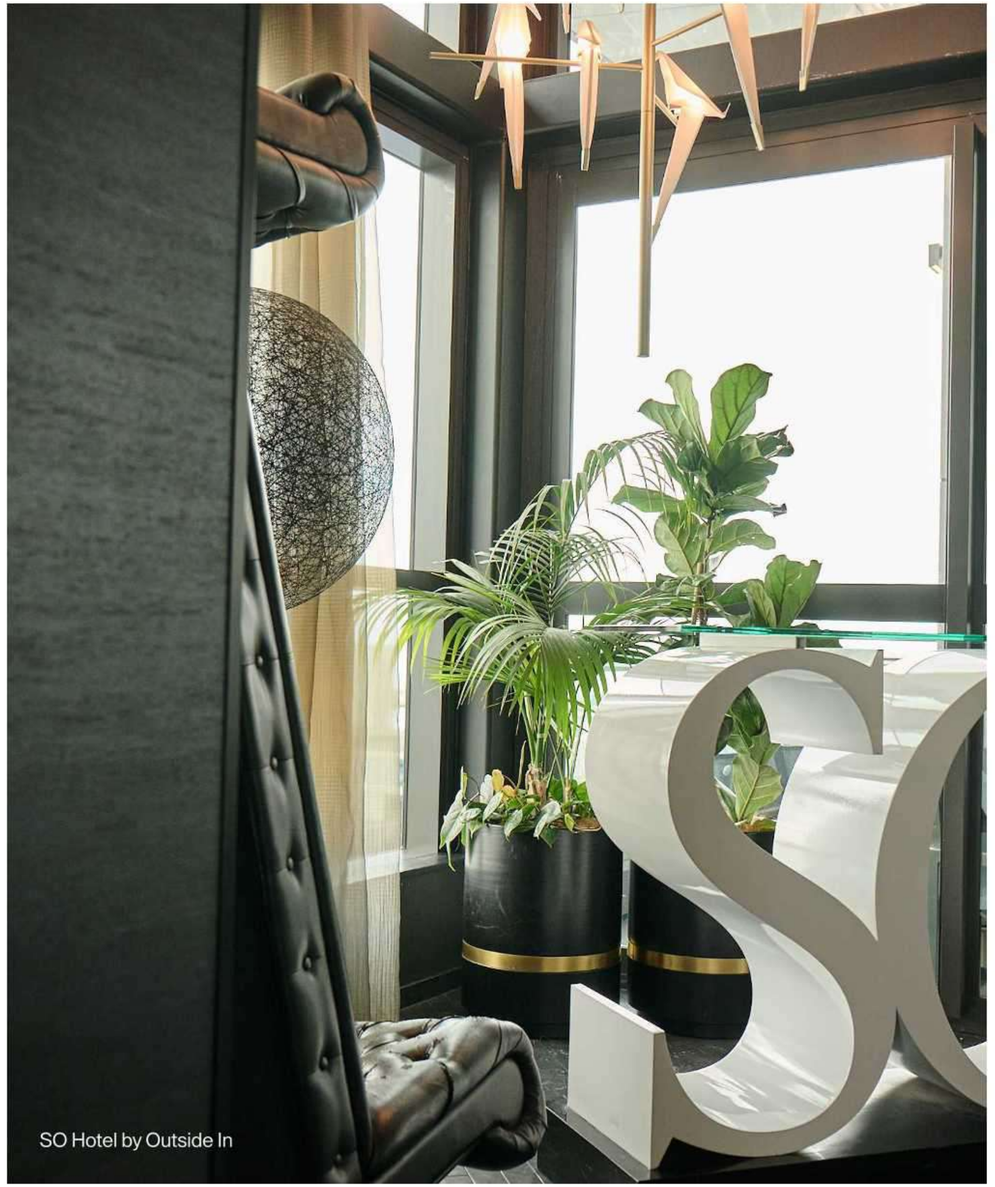
Accor's design lead has said biophilic design isn't restricted to luxury and premium brands, and the group is bringing it into midscale and economy hotels.

Source: Hotel Management (AU), Design Inn preview.

Everyone's at it

Hyatt is doing it too. Hyatt Regency Houston West, a 400-room hotel in Texas, was designed with biophilic design throughout, sitting among a two-acre landscaped setting.

Source: Hyatt Newsroom, "Hyatt Regency Houston West" opening release (August 25, 2021).



SO Hotel by Outside In



Sofitel Auckland by Outside In


Maxim Hotel by Outside In

01 · THE GUEST CASE

More guests stay a while

The lobby used to be somewhere guests passed through on the way to the lift. In the research, greenery is what turned it into somewhere people chose to stay, and that's where the revenue starts.

36%

of guests in biophilic hotel lobbies were seen sitting, working or socialising, compared with 25% in conventional lobbies

Source: Human Spaces 2.0 (2017), Terrapin Bright Green and Interface.

02 · THE IMPACTS

Lobbies that earn their keep

The lobby used to be somewhere guests passed through on the way to the lift. Now it's the hotel's living room, and often its busiest revenue space. The research suggests greenery helps turn a corridor with a front desk into somewhere people choose to stay.

Views that pay

Hotels.com data analysed for Human Spaces 2.0 found rooms with a view to nature can command up to an 18% higher average daily rate.

Source: Terrapin Bright Green, Human Spaces 2.0 (2017), Hotels.com analysis.

Busy from breakfast

Mornings were the most transient time in conventional lobbies. In biophilic lobbies, mornings were the least transient, because people stayed.

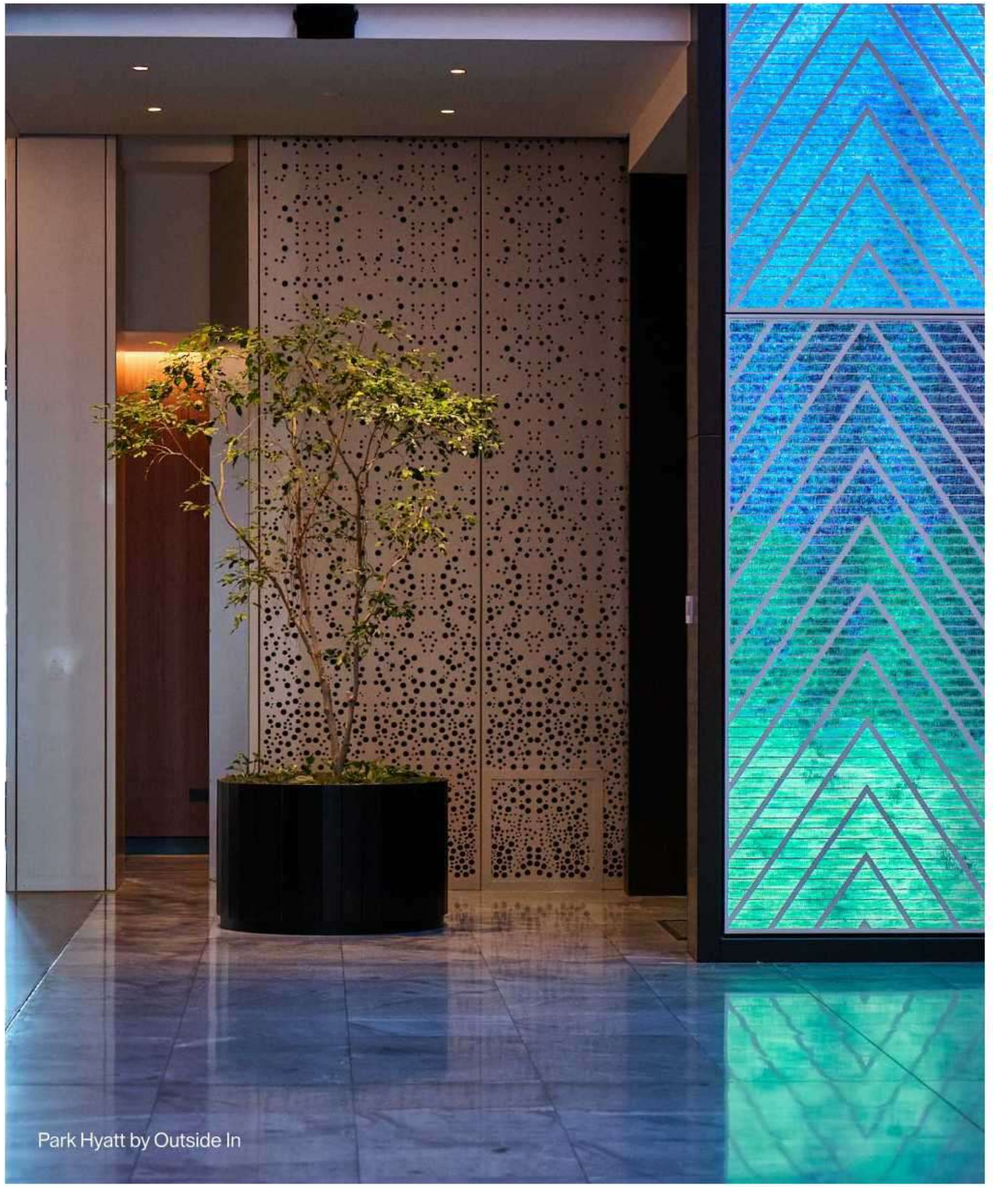
Source: Human Spaces 2.0 (2017), same observational study.

Revenue without another bed

At citizenM Times Square, planting is visible throughout a lobby that fills with guests and locals buying coffee and cocktails all day.

Source: Human Spaces 2.0 (2017), citizenM case study.

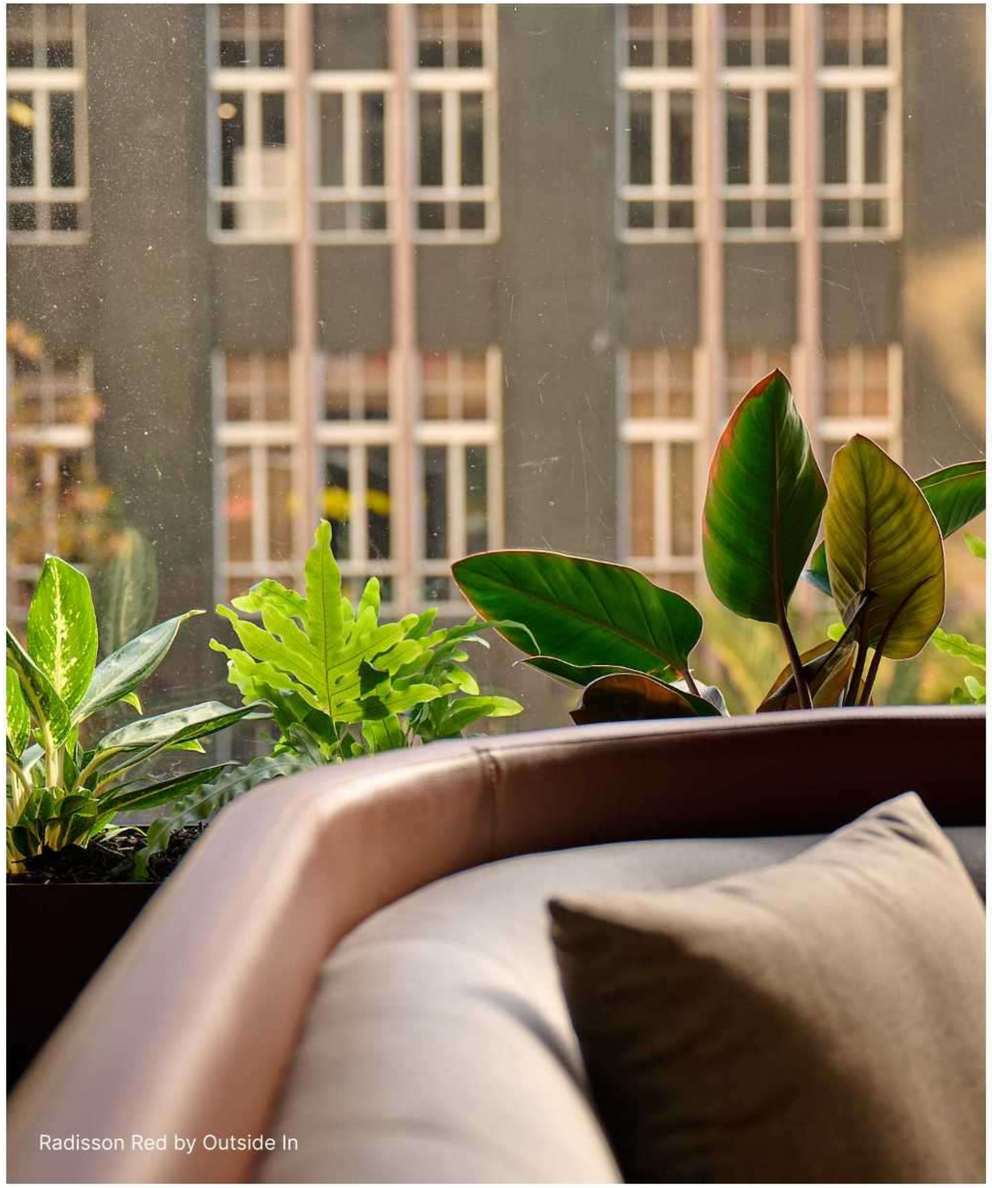
IN PRACTICE We design the first view from the door before anything else, because that's where a guest's impression of the hotel begins.



Park Hyatt by Outside In



QT by Outside In



Radisson Red by Outside In

Reviews and reputation

Every hotel promises a great experience. Reviews show which ones deliver. When guests write about a biophilic hotel, they talk less about the basics and more about how the place made them feel.

“Experience” comes up twice as often

Hotel websites mentioned experience equally. Guest reviews of biophilic hotels mentioned it twice as often.

Source: Human Spaces 2.0 (2017), TripAdvisor review analysis.

Beyond clean and convenient

Positive reviews of conventional hotels focused on maintenance, service and location. Reviews of biophilic hotels led with design and nature.

Source: Human Spaces 2.0 (2017).

Planting gets a name-check

At one biophilic hotel in the study, a reviewer singled out the living wall in the dining area. Guests notice the greenery, and write about it.

Source: Human Spaces 2.0 (2017).

The “jungle hotel”

Singapore’s PARKROYAL on Pickering has more than 2.7 times its footprint in planted space. Bookings beat projections and the operators raised the average rack rate.

Source: Human Spaces 2.0 (2017). A precedent, not a controlled study.

IN PRACTICE

We design at least one signature moment into every hotel: a piece guests notice, photograph and talk about.

02 · THE IMPACTS

Perceived value

Guests can't always say why one hotel feels more premium than another. The research shows greenery is part of the answer, as long as it's done with intent rather than in bulk.

Worth paying more for

In a series of experiments, nature elements in hospitality settings raised guests' willingness to pay a premium by lifting how attractive and luxurious the space felt.

Source: Shin, Lee, Min & Legendre (2023), Psychology & Marketing 40(2).

Quality counts

Across 428 guests at hotels with biophilic design, higher-quality natural elements improved wellbeing and perceived value, lifting revisit intentions and willingness to pay a premium.

Source: Tourism and Hospitality (MDPI, 2025), 6(4).

Fine balance

Moderate use of nature elements lifted how attractive a space felt. Pushing into excessive use and the effect levels off. Where nature goes, and how much, matters as much as the amount.

Source: Shin et al. (2023), Psychology & Marketing.

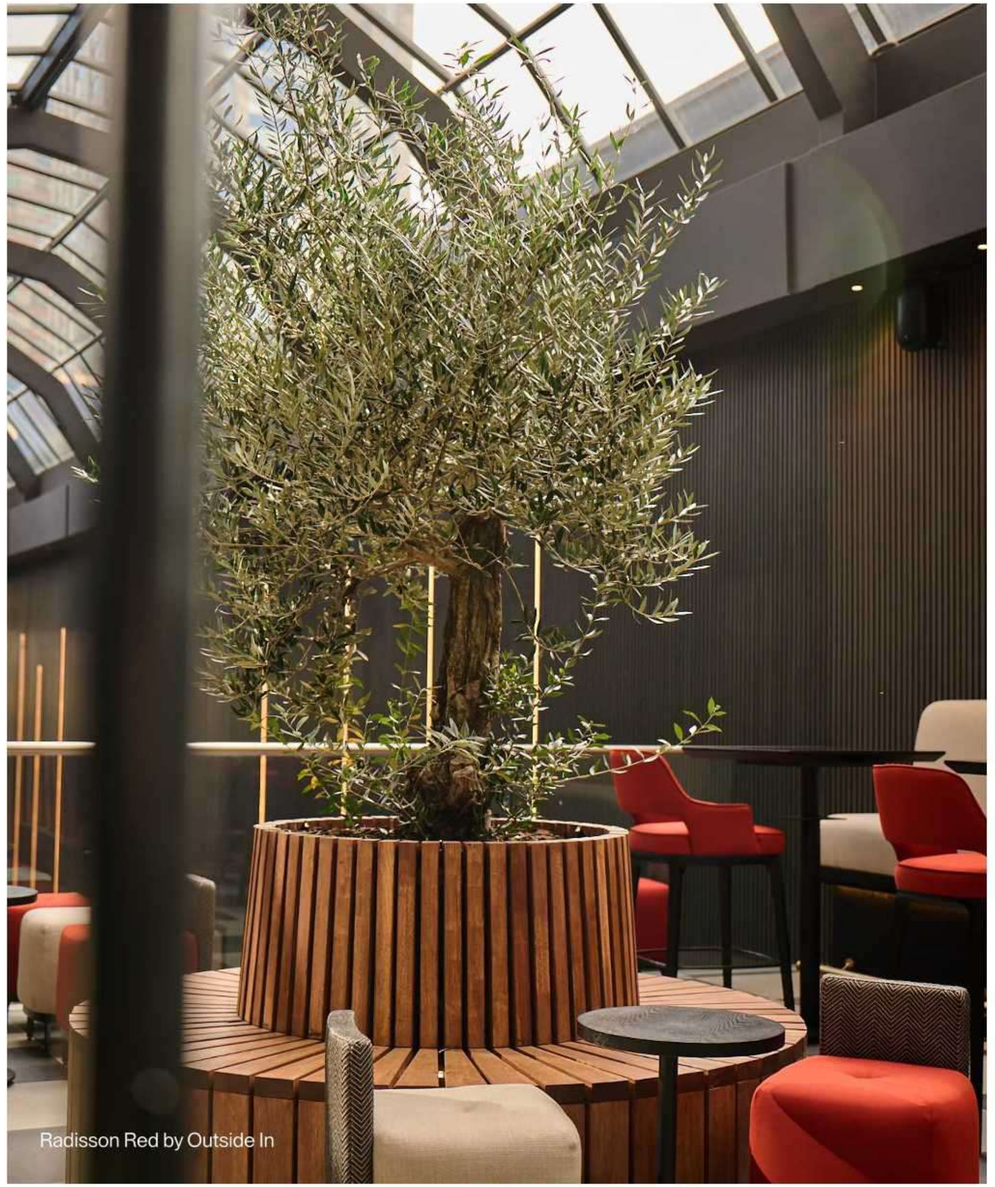
Views carry a price tag

Hotels already charge for nature. Rooms with a view to water were priced 11 to 18% higher than comparable rooms.

Source: Human Spaces 2.0 (2017). A proxy: outdoor views, not indoor planting.

IN PRACTICE

We'd rather place fewer, better plants with intent than fill a space. Every proposal starts with a design, not a plant list.



Radisson Red by Outside In



Park Hyatt by Outside In



Sudima Auckland Airport by Outside In

02 · THE IMPACTS

Rest and recovery

Most guests arrive tired: long flights, late meetings, a full day of travel. The most consistent finding in indoor plant research is a measurable drop in physiological stress, which is exactly what a hotel is selling.

Lower blood pressure

Rooms with plants were linked to a significant reduction in diastolic blood pressure compared with plant-free rooms.

Source: Han, Ruan & Liao (2022), meta-analysis of 42 studies. Not hotel-specific; the stress response applies wherever people come to recover.

Small and well placed beats big

The benefits of nature seem to grow with variety, not sheer area. A well-designed planted corner near comfortable seating can do more than a large, generic scheme.

Source: Human Spaces 2.0 (2017), citing Barton & Pretty (2010).

Wellness pays

Hotels earning significant revenue from wellness facilities recorded 108% higher total revenue per available room than hotels with no wellness offering.

Source: RLA Global, Wellness Real Estate Report 2025. Measures wellness facilities, not greenery; context for why wellness spaces deserve design investment.

IN PRACTICE In lounges, spas and terraces we layer species and textures for variety, and choose plants that suit the light and humidity.

02 · THE IMPACTS

Your team

Hotels run on people, and good people have choices. The same greenery that calms guests also shapes whether staff want to work there.

Built-in appeal

For prospective hotel employees, natural light, green outdoor views and indoor landscaping were key to how attractive and restorative an urban hotel workplace felt.

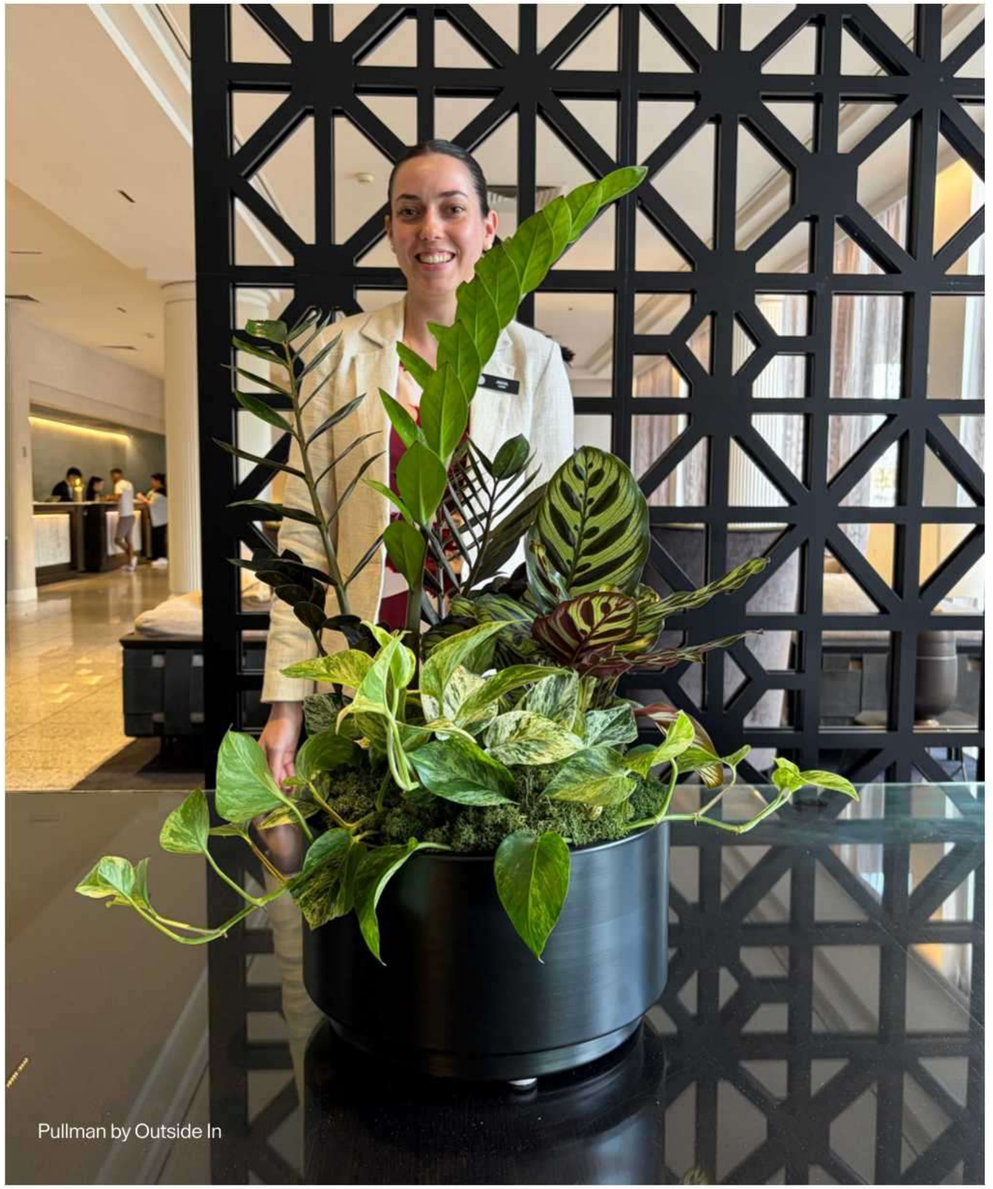
Source: Guzzo & Legendre (2022), International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management. Prospective, not current, employees.

Fewer sick days

Office workers with more plants in their workspace took significantly fewer sick-leave days.

Source: Han, Ruan & Liao (2022), survey of 364 Norwegian office workers. A proxy for hotel back-of-house and admin teams.

IN PRACTICE Back-of-house is an easy addition to any hotel scheme, and a small gesture your team will notice every shift.



Pullman by Outside In

03 ·DESIGNING WITH GREENERY

Arrival spaces that set the tone

A practical framework for getting arrival right, whether you're briefing a designer or reviewing a refurbishment plan.

A guest forms a view of your hotel within moments of walking in. Greenery softens the arrival, signals quality and turns a functional space into a considered one.

That first impression carries through the stay. Guests link it with comfort and care, and it shapes what they say in reviews and whether they come back.

What to consider

Own the first view

Put a statement piece in the guest's first line of sight from the door, not tucked in a corner.

Frame, don't block

Keep check-in, signage, sightlines and egress clear. Every placement is checked before install.

Go vertical in tall volumes

Green walls and aerial planting fill double-height lobbies without eating floor space.



SO Hotel by Outside In



Pullman by Outside In

03 ·DESIGNING WITH GREENERY

Social spaces shaped by atmosphere

Lobby lounges, bars and restaurants are where guests choose to linger, and where a hotel earns beyond the room rate.

In bars, restaurants and shared lounges, atmosphere decides how long guests stay. Planting adds warmth and softness, so a big room feels relaxed and sociable.

Done well, these spaces become destinations in their own right, for guests and locals alike: somewhere to meet, not just somewhere to pass through.

What to consider

Create pockets

Use floor planters and planted screens to carve large lounges into smaller, sheltered zones.

Plan around service

Keep planting clear of service routes, table turns and the flow between bar and kitchen.

Look good at 7am and 11pm

Choose species, planters and lighting that work for breakfast and late-night drinks.



Sofitel Hotel by Outside In



Maxim Hotel by Outside In

03 ·DESIGNING WITH GREENERY

In-between spaces that lift the journey

Lift lobbies, corridors and guest floors are some of the most-used, least-designed spaces in a hotel.

Guests walk these spaces every time they head out or return to their room. When they feel considered, the whole stay feels more cohesive and refined.

The right greenery adds moments of interest and continuity, carrying the quality of the lobby all the way to the guest-room door.

What to consider

Create moments of pause

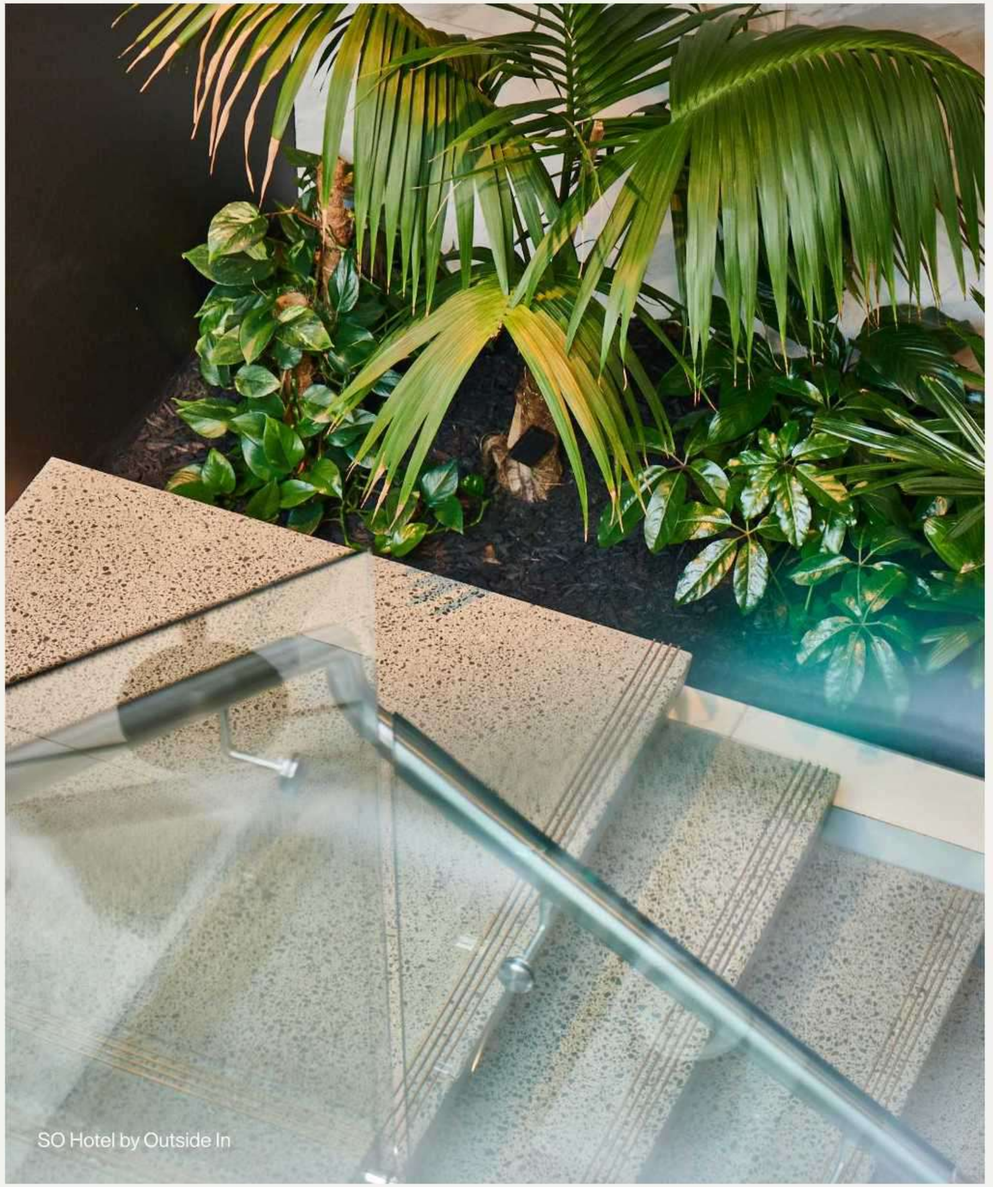
A single feature plant at a lift lobby or corridor end gives the eye somewhere to land.

Right plant, low light

Shade-tolerant species, or a preserved moss wall, where daylight is scarce.

Keep a consistent thread

Repeat planters and species floor to floor, so every level feels part of one hotel.



SO Hotel by Outside In

03 ·DESIGNING WITH GREENERY

Spaces for rest and wellbeing

Spas, pools and rooftops are where biophilic design has the greatest impact, and where guests expect it most.

Wellness spaces should feel calm, restorative and a world away from the day. Layered planting helps create that immersive feeling.

Done well, these spaces become part of the hotel's identity: somewhere guests seek out, book again, and tell their friends about.

What to consider

Lean into calm

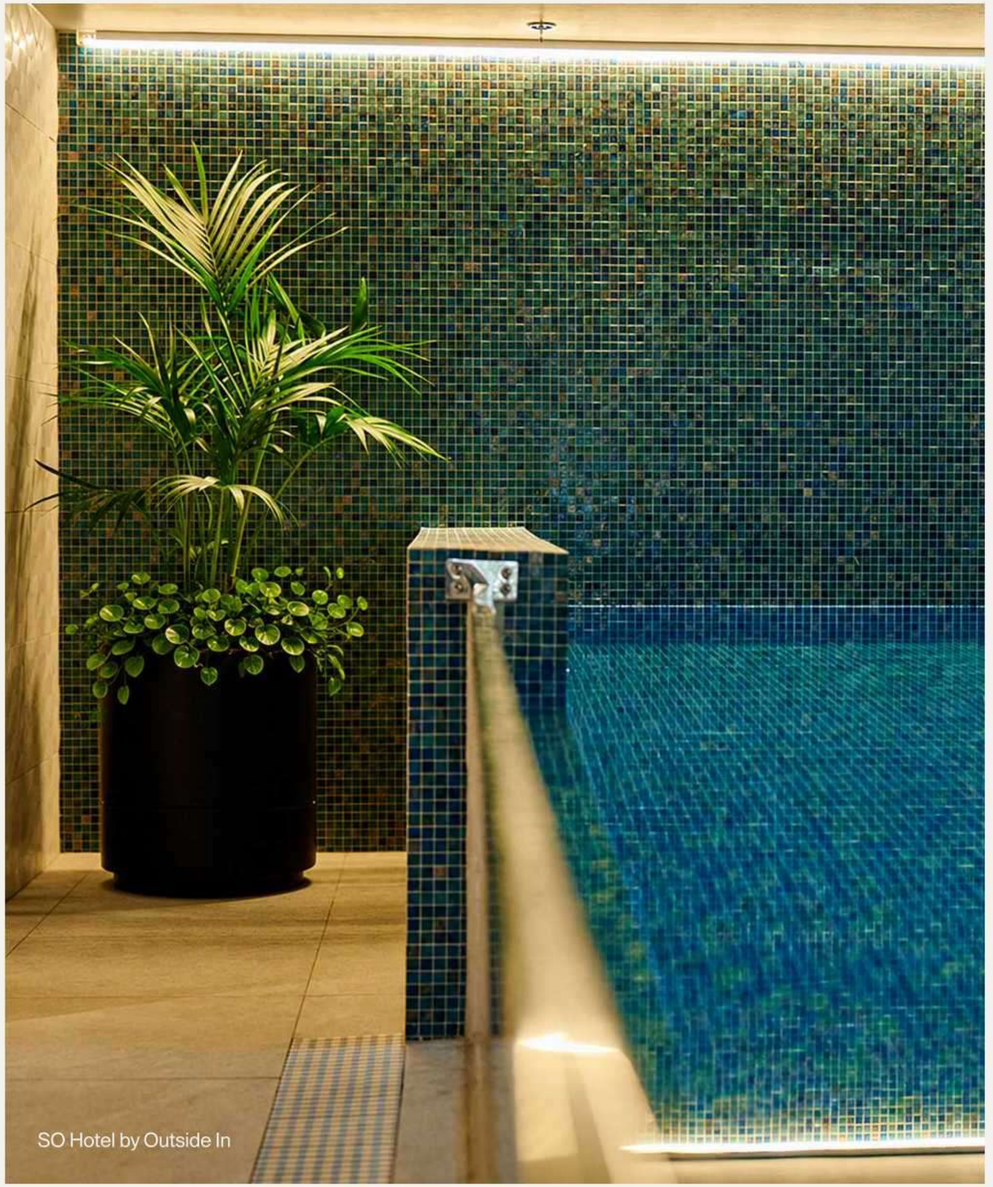
Soft, layered planting in spa receptions and relaxation rooms sets the pace before a treatment starts.

Match the conditions

Heat and humidity near pools call for specific species, or preserved options where living plants won't thrive.

Blur indoor and out

Carry planting through to pool decks and rooftops with bespoke exterior schemes.



SO Hotel by Outside In

03 ·DESIGNING WITH GREENERY

Event and meeting spaces

Conferences, weddings and gala dinners are where a hotel's spaces get photographed most.

Function rooms and pre-function areas often get the least design attention, yet they host the moments guests photograph and share for years.

Greenery gives these rooms warmth and a backdrop that works in photos, and it can change with each event without adding cost every time.

What to consider

Backdrops that photograph well

Green walls and moss walls give every event a ready-made, on-brand backdrop.

Flexible by design

Mobile planters can be rearranged to suit a theatre, banquet or cocktail layout.

Divide without walls

Planted screens split large rooms into breakouts, or soften pre-function areas.



Pullman Auckland Airport by Outside In

The right system for every space

A hotel holds every condition going: bright atriums, windowless bars, humid spas, corridors that never see daylight. There's no single product that suits them all, so we match the system to the space.

Living planting

Floor planters, green walls and aerial systems bring real life and movement. Best where there's light, or where we can design lighting in.

Preserved moss walls

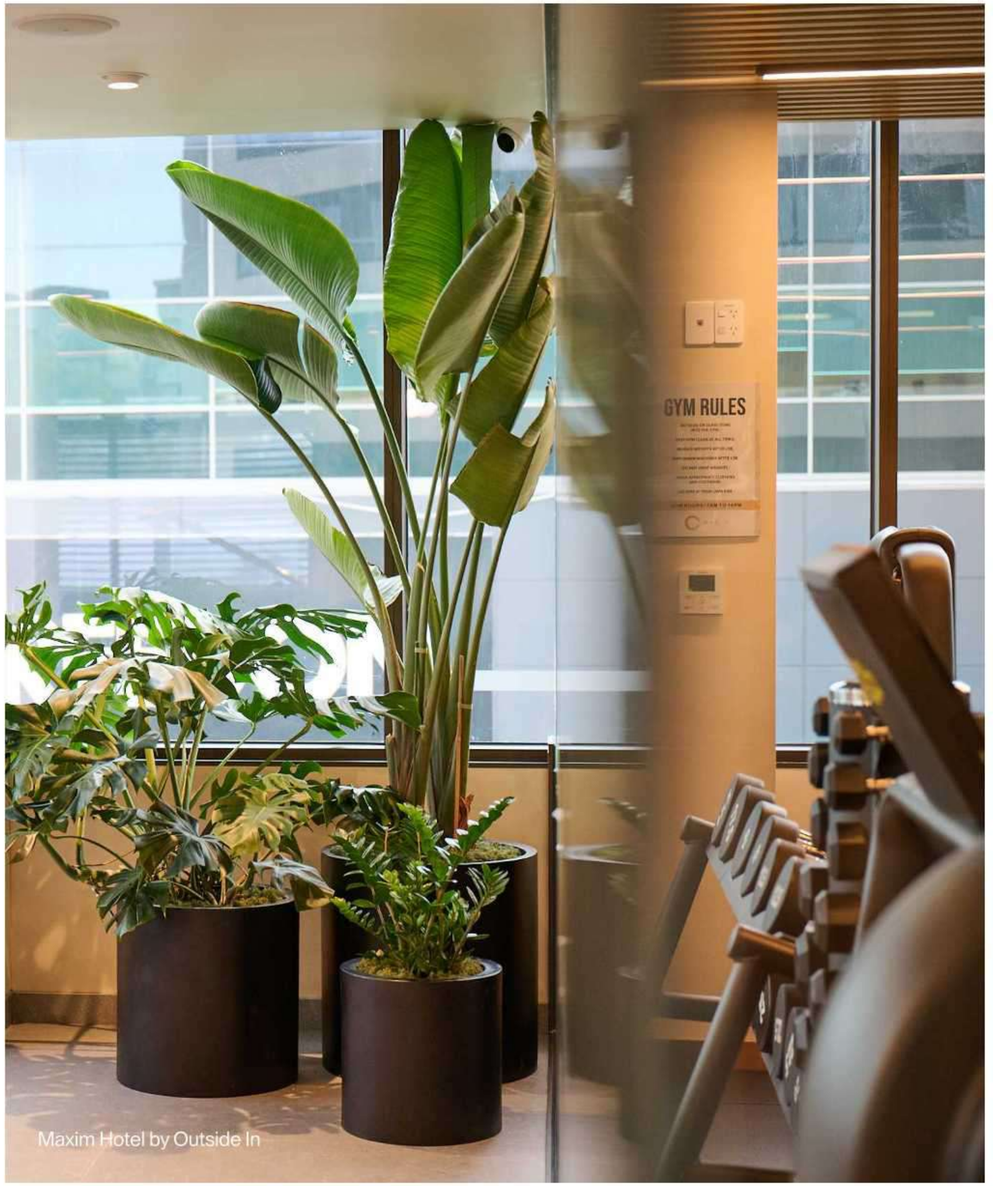
No water, no light, minimal care. Ideal for windowless corridors, basement bars and feature walls behind reception.

A mix of both

Most hotels use both: living planting where guests gather, preserved moss where conditions are tough. One team designs and looks after it all.

"[Designer quote to come: one or two sentences on what makes hotel greenery work.]"

[Name], [Role], Outside In



Maxim Hotel by Outside In



Park Hyatt by Outside In

CASE STUDY

Park Hyatt Auckland

Greenery quietly woven through the interiors, creating moments of calm, warmth and understated luxury.

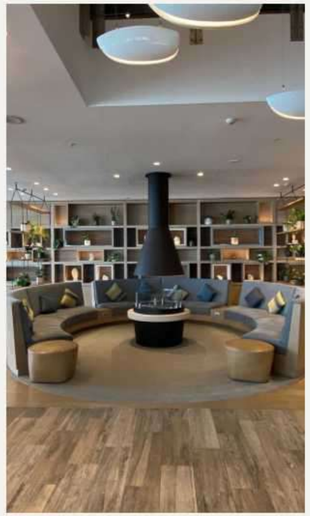
Planting runs through the Welcome area, Pantry, Onemata Dining and The Living Room. Working closely with Bossley Architects, we chose materials and forms that sit comfortably within the refined interior palette.

Species were selected to thrive in the available natural light, with complex installations coordinated around existing services. Hanging and wall-mounted planting softens large volumes and keeps sightlines open, without compromising circulation or maintenance.

The result is greenery that enhances the hotel experience without overriding the original design vision.

Client: Park Hyatt · Location: Auckland, NZ · Collaborator: Bossley Architects

More hotels by Outside In



Hilton
A living green wall frames the lobby, with trailing planting through the lift lobby.



Sudima
Greenery that lifts the guest experience from the moment you walk in.



Park Hyatt
A softer, warmer welcome for travellers on the move.



QT
Layered planters in weathered pots frame the entrance to Esther restaurant.



Maxim Hotel
A double-height lobby anchored by a tall ficus and monstera.



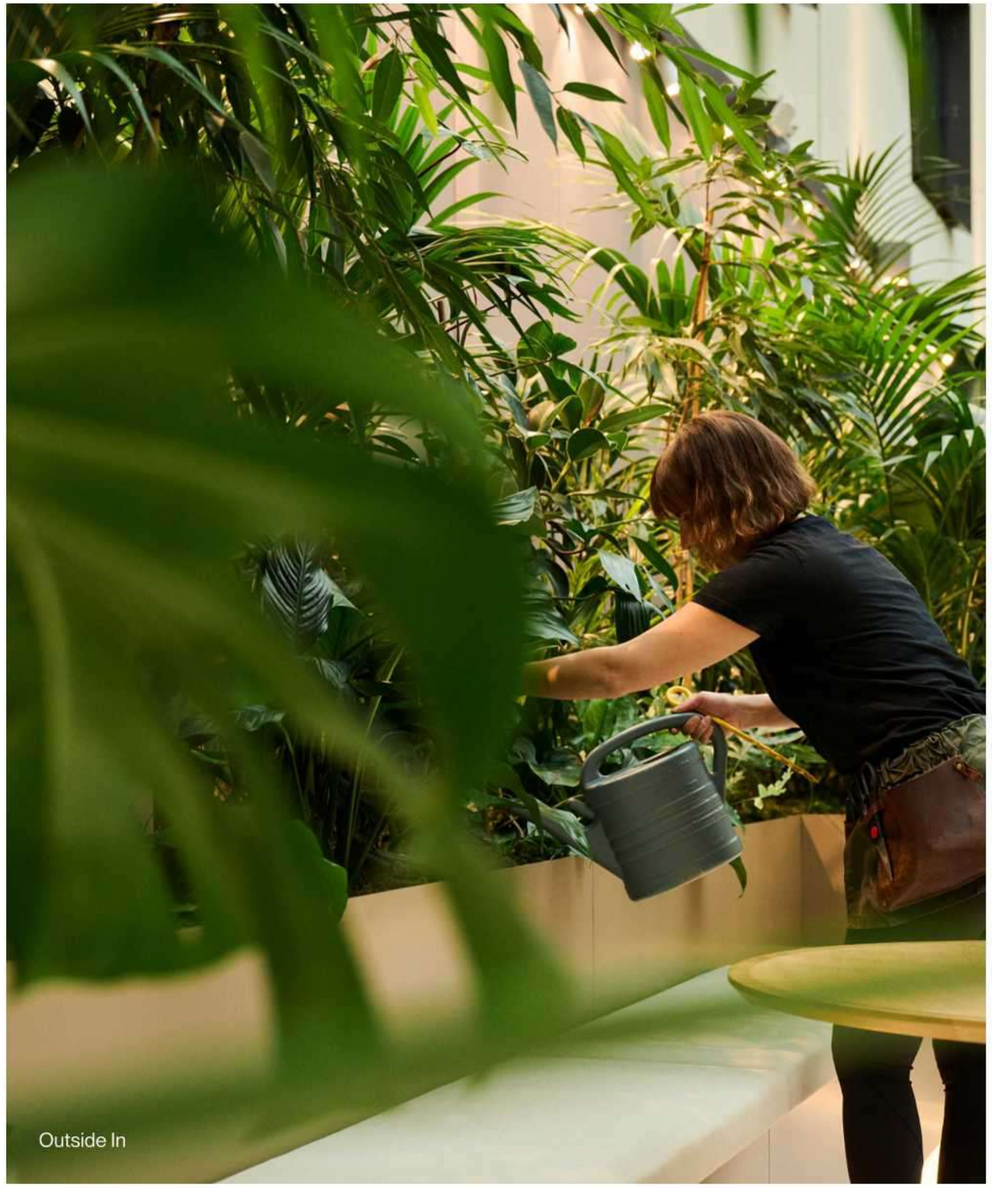
Adina
Statement planters in weathered pots soften the entrance.



SO Hotel
Palms and figs bring life to a moody, design-led lounge.

"The team really took the time to understand our vision, delivering beautiful greenery that has completely transformed our spaces. Their professionalism, creativity, and attention to detail have made them a valued partner."

Kevin Dias, Hotel Manager, Sudima Auckland City


Outside In

04 · HOW WE WORK

It has to look right every day

A hotel never gets an off day. The guest checking in on a wet Tuesday in July expects what the reviewer saw on opening night. Our service model is built around that, with one team, a fixed schedule and a clear cost, so your greenery is one less thing for your team to manage.

We lead with design

Every scheme is shaped by your architecture, your brand and how guests move through the building, so it feels as though it was always meant to be there.

Responsible from start to finish

Design, project management, installation and care sit under one roof, with one account manager. Every placement is checked against egress, signage, accessibility and finishes.

We guarantee it thrives

A standing maintenance schedule, carried out discreetly around your guests and backed by the Happy Plant Guarantee. Servicing records are ready whenever owners or brand teams ask.

WHAT WE DO

Greenery Design

Planting schemes from concept to detailed documentation.

Plant Hire

Plants, installation and proactive care, under the Happy Plant Guarantee.

Special Projects

Atriums, living walls and technically ambitious installs.

05 · SCALABILITY

Start at arrival, scale to the portfolio

Most hotels start with the highest-visibility space, the arrival, then extend the same standard through the property as confidence builds. For hotel groups, the same model rolls out property by property.

Package	Typical scope	What it solves for you
Arrival	Entrance, lobby, reception	The first impression every guest gets. High visibility, quick to approve.
Social & dining	Lobby lounge, bars, restaurants	Supports dwell time in the spaces where guests spend.
Guest journey	Lift lobbies, corridors, guest floors	Carries the lobby standard all the way to the room.
Whole property	Every space, one contract, one account manager	One cohesive scheme, designed, installed and maintained by one team.
Portfolio	Multiple hotels, brands or regions	One approach rolled out property by property, with one point of contact and consistent standards across NZ and Australia.

Brand planting guides tell each hotel what to aim for. We're the team that makes it happen on site, and keeps it looking right long after opening day.

06 · COSTS

How much does it cost?

Every hotel and brief is different, so we don't work from a standard price list. We meet with you, understand the scope and come back with a fixed-price quote built around your actual property.

That flexibility means we can work with almost any budget, from a few hundred dollars a week to several thousand. Once quoted, the price is locked: no hidden call-out fees and no variable billing. What you're quoted is what you're invoiced.

07 · ACCOUNTABILITY

The Happy Plant Guarantee

If a plant in our care isn't thriving, we replace it on our next visit at no extra cost. We carry the risk of plant loss, so you never have to ask.

Our technicians inspect every plant on every visit and work with discretion around your guests. If something drops below its best, it's replaced, keeping your property looking exactly as designed.



Park Hyatt by Outside In

08 · WORLD-CLASS GREENERY. BEAUTIFULLY DELIVERED

Outside In is an internationally award-winning specialist in bringing nature into the built environment. We design, install and care for exceptional indoor greenery that transforms spaces, elevates experiences and makes places better for people.

Founded in Auckland in 2014 by Ryan McQuerry and Nick Lubeck, we've grown from a garage-based start-up into one of the industry's most awarded companies, trusted by leading brands, architects and designers to deliver ambitious planting projects.

Our hospitality clients include Park Hyatt, QT and Sudima, alongside global names such as KPMG, Westpac, Westfield, Air New Zealand and Qantas. With nationwide coverage in New Zealand, teams in Sydney and Melbourne, and the capability to deliver internationally, we bring together creative vision, technical expertise and ongoing plant care under one roof. From a single statement tree to an entire precinct, we make extraordinary greenery work beautifully for the long term.

28 international industry awards since 2018

5	7	6	4	1
Diamond	Platinum	Gold	Silver	Bronze

12+ years

Delivering commercial fit-outs across NZ, and more recently Sydney and Melbourne

NZ, AU & beyond

Nationwide NZ service, teams in Sydney and Melbourne, plus international special projects

200+ projects

From single feature trees to whole-precinct developments

Global recognition

Highest honours at the International Plantscape Awards three times, and the Diamond Award at the 2024 International Biophilic Design Awards

09 · FAQ

Common questions from hotel owners, GMs and design teams

Can you work within our brand standards?

Yes. We design to your brand guidelines and interior palette, and for hotel groups we can roll one planting approach out consistently, property by property.

Will servicing disrupt our guests?

No. Visits run to a standing schedule agreed with your team, and our technicians work discreetly around your guests and operation.

What about corridors and bars with no daylight?

We choose species to suit the light, add lighting where it makes sense, or use preserved moss walls where living plants won't thrive.

We already spend on fresh flowers. How does this compare?

Fresh flowers still have their place at reception. Greenery gives you an always-on baseline at a fixed, predictable cost, maintained and guaranteed.

What does a hotel greenery programme cost?

It depends on your property, the impact you're after, and whether you're in Australia or NZ. Every proposal is scoped with a fixed quote and no surprise call-out fees.

Can you look after multiple hotels?

Yes. We service nationwide across NZ, with teams in Sydney and Melbourne. Portfolio clients get one point of contact and one standard across every site.

Let’s create a stay guests remember.

Every project starts with understanding your property, your guests and your goals. Get in touch for a complimentary consultation to explore what’s possible, whether that’s one lobby or a whole portfolio.

Get in touch

SYDNEY michaela@outsidein.com
Sydney (+61) 432 717 305

MELBOURNE sam@outsidein.com
Melbourne (+61) 409 710 682

NEW ZEALAND tracey@outsidein.com · hello@outsidein.com
Nationwide (+64) 21 165 2424

We work exclusively with commercial spaces. We’re not able to support residential, standalone food & beverage, or short-term/event hire enquiries.



Sudima Auckland Airport by Outside In

SOURCES

Terrapin Bright Green, Interface & Gensler (2017). Human Spaces 2.0: Biophilic Design in Hospitality. Includes Barton, J. & Pretty, J. (2010) and Walsman, Verma & Muthulingam (2014), Cornell Hospitality Reports.

Shin, M., Lee, R.H., Min, J.E. & Legendre, T.S. (2023). Connecting nature with luxury service. Psychology & Marketing, 40(2).

Quality of Hotel Biophilic Design and Its Impact on Guest Well-Being, Perceived Value, and Patronage Intentions: The Moderating Role of Guest Delight (2025). Tourism and Hospitality (MDPI), 6(4).

Han, K.-T., Ruan, L.-W. & Liao, L.-S. (2022). Effects of Indoor Plants on Human Functions: A Systematic Review with Meta-Analyses. Int. J. Environ. Res. Public Health, 19, 7454.

Guzzo, R.F. & Legendre, T.S. (2022). Biophilic design for urban hotels: prospective hospitality employees' perspectives. International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management.

RLA Global & HotStats (2025). Wellness Real Estate Report 2025.

Hotel Management International. Power plants (biophilic design at Accor, Hilton and others).

Oliver Heath Design. Global Planting Guide for Pullman Hotels (Accor).

Hotel Management (Australia). Design Inn Symposium preview, interview with Damien Perrot, Accor.