

EXPLORE

EYE SCANDI

A Brutalist 1960s block in Stockholm will get a second flowering when it re-opens as the visually very appealing Villa Dahlia, the latest super-sumptuous venture from the Malmström family of hoteliers

By Ranyechi Udemezue



Genus of the *Asteraceae* family, the dahlia is adored by anthophiles and certain decorators for the sheer range of varieties and its blowsiness. Even so, naming a Brutalist building after the flower might be deemed just a little incongruous. Yet somehow the juxtaposition that suggests is entirely appropriate, for textural contrasts are everywhere in the building in question, a hotel due to open in Stockholm the autumn of 2024 as a sister to the Villa Dagmar, owned by the Malmström and Cappelen families.

Located next to the tranquil Tegnérslunden park in the centre of the city, Villa Dahlia straddles the buzzy Norrmalm commercial district and residential Vasastan. The building it occupies – Barnhusväderkvarnen 22 – dates to 1966 and was previously the

Hotel Tegnérkunden, on the site of a mill belonging to the Stora Barnhuset orphanage. These days the names of surrounding city blocks are all that remain to remind us of it.



The architect Per Öberg has completely remodelled the building, transforming it into something redolent of Milanese town houses of the 1920s and 1930s, Art Deco's peak. Central to the whole project has been Anna Cappelen and her daughter Pauline, who were guided by 'the Italian way of integrating the old with the new' and 'the romance that remains within postwar architecture'. The new exterior seamlessly blends with the turn-of-the-century buildings that surround it, says Cappelen. The interior, she adds, presents 'a completely different and unexpected world'.

Sustainability has been a key concern. The property itself will be BREEAM-certified, while the Cappelens meticulously vetted prospective suppliers and favoured local artisans who share their taste for timeless design.



Although mother and daughter both admire the hand-crafted, their aesthetics diverge when it comes to the finer details. Anna is drawn to ‘warm, welcoming and luxurious’ neutrals, a palette that is paired with materials such as walnut and bronze. Pauline, meanwhile, prefers the more ‘daring and sensual’, in her words, mixing intoxicating dahlia red with Swedish tapestries and traditional Italian murals. Old mirrors, Murano glass and velvet add rich layers, alongside objects picked up from their travels,

auctions and galleries; the objective being 'to create a feeling of a curated home rather than a hotel'.

There are 103 rooms in all, as well as all the modern essentials for an indulgent getaway: a spa, gym, boules court, cocktail bar and restaurant with a private dining room.

For more information, visit hotelwilladahlia.com