

BOOGIE NIGHTS

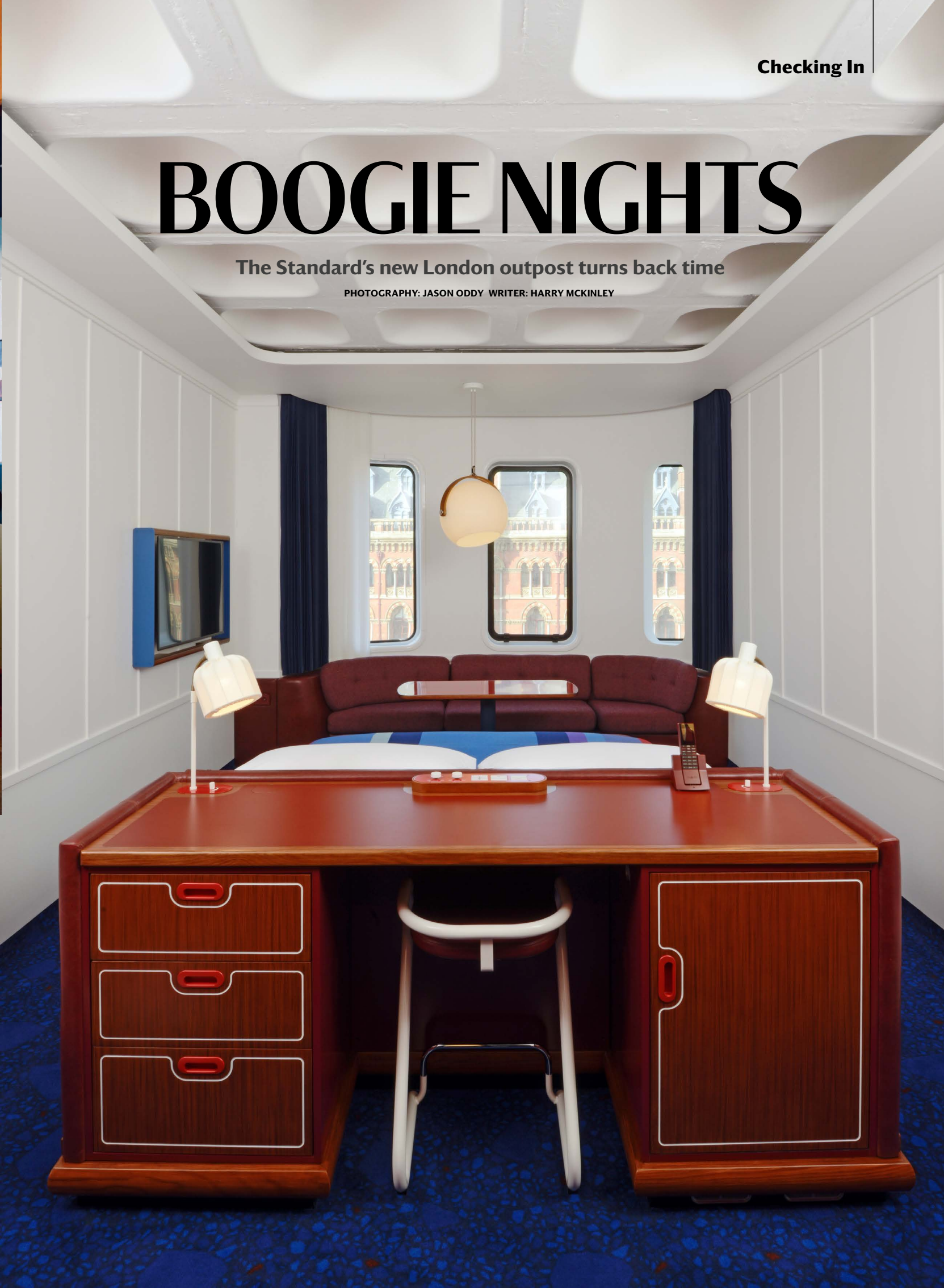
The Standard's new London outpost turns back time

PHOTOGRAPHY: JASON ODDY WRITER: HARRY MCKINLEY



THIS PAGE, THE VINTAGE-INSPIRED RECEPTION NODS TO THE BRUTALIST BUILDING'S 1970S ROOTS AS A HOME TO CAMDEN COUNCIL

OPPOSITE, THE CURVES ON THE FURNITURE MIRROR THOSE OF THE ORIGINAL WINDOWS AND CEILINGS IN ONE OF THE 266 ROOMS



Founded in 1999 by hotelier André Balazs, The Standard hotel group shook up the industry, being the first to seize on the idea that hotels can deliver more than bed rest, becoming a brand celebrated for its culture-led projects, in-house programming – from art events to music gigs – and, as it says, ‘unrelenting un-Standard-ness’.

While Balazs departed in 2017 (handing the reins to CEO Almar Lalvani), the brand continues to expand, with 20 properties due to launch in the next five years. Upcoming openings include Paris, Milan and several properties in Thailand, but first up is The Standard London, the group’s inaugural project outside of the US. Its Eurostar-adjacent location in King’s Cross was chosen to convey an outward-looking attitude, positioned, as designer Shawn Hausman

mentions, not just at a crossroads in the city but, ‘at a crossroads with the rest of Europe’.

Occupying the brutalist 1970s former offices for Camden Council, the hotel is now crowned with a glass new-build addition that houses a Latin American-inspired restaurant and a club, accessible from street level via a dedicated pillar-box-red elevator. Here, the floor-to-ceiling windows look out to a skyline punctuated by London icons, while the interiors represent a renewed love affair with once derided design elements such as rattan, which features liberally, along with macramé curtains and velvet drapes that spill from the ceiling of the club.

In the main building, the 266 rooms and suites are a mix of styles. Some come with terraces, fitted with outdoor hot tubs, and interiors layered with custom timber bench

seating and cabinetry that contrast with patterned carpets and terrazzo tiling. Owing to its listed status, the centre of the building has been smartly transformed into a series of windowless guest rooms. The lack of natural lighting is offset by the controllable ambient glow that bounces from behind headboards.

On the ground floor, guests can perch at the signature red bar in the Double Standard and sample Adam Rawson’s comfort food staples, before meandering to the book-lined lounge (once a public library) for a nightcap.

As expected, The Standard London will deliver a tailored events programme mixing music, art and design. A tried-and-tested formula for the brand but, as it continues to say, ‘anything but standard’. ★
10 Argyle Street, London WC1H,
standardhotels.com. Rates: from £309