

# HYB26

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# Top 10 Luxury Hospitality Design Trends for 2026

Regenerative design

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*Scott LaMont, Chief Executive Officer & Principal at EDSA, outlines ten luxury hospitality design trends that will shape 2026, from mixed-use integration and regenerative landscapes to human-tech balance, embedded wellness, and “destination-first” thinking. He shows how thoughtful, flexible design can turn hotels into living landmarks that serve guests, locals, and the environment while staying adaptable and commercially strong over time.*

The hospitality industry is evolving, and with it, the very definition of a destination's value is being redefined. At the heart of this shift, design has become a defining force – shaping a property's identity, elevating its appeal, and influencing its long-term success. Looking ahead to 2026, here are ten luxury hospitality design trends that industry leaders should know as they embark on new projects, renovate existing properties, and look to strengthen their investments.

## INTEGRATE HOSPITALITY INTO MIXED-USE CONTEXT

Hotels are no longer isolated enclaves – they are active players in the life of a city. Thoughtful design transforms ‘places of stay’ into spaces that influence circulation, connect community realm, and establish a seamless flow between private and public being. In this way, a hotel can feel both intimate and expansive – a destination within itself and an anchor to the character of the larger urban fabric.

**Tip:** Transitional plazas, central courtyards, and outdoor lounges that link neighborhoods, retail, and lodging knit the hotel into its surroundings and establish layered experiences for both guests and locals.

## CREATE WELL-ACTIVATED VENUES

It is not enough for hotels to be aesthetically appealing. By understanding how land use, revenue, and onsite experiences work together, luxury hospitality design can create immersive environments that elevate guest satisfaction and boost return on investment.

**Tip:** Integrate areas for flexible programming, capitalize on access to regional experiences and excursions, and define intimate spaces curated for wellness or cultural events that encourage longer stays and more spending.

## MAKE SILENCE GOLDEN

Travelers are increasingly seeking destinations that allow them to unplug from the pace of everyday life. This shift presents an opportunity for hotel leaders to reimagine a property as a series of intimate, restorative spaces. By incorporating private terraces or tucked-away nooks, hotels can create moments of calm that appeal that enhance a sense of exclusivity and thoughtful care.

**Tip:** Incorporate secluded gardens, gentle water features, fragrant plantings, and subtle lighting to craft outdoor retreats that invite reflection and a deeper connection to the property's surroundings.

## THE HUMAN-TECH BALANCE

Technology undeniably continues to shape the guest journey – from mobile check-ins and contactless amenities to data-driven personalization. AI and smart systems now streamline operations and allow staff to anticipate needs with unprecedented accuracy. Yet even with these advancements, authentic human interaction remains the element that elevates a guest experience from good to exceptional. The challenge for hoteliers and designers is striking this delicate balance: integrating technology in ways that enhance convenience and efficiency without diluting the warmth, empathy, and intuitive care that make a stay truly memorable.

**Tip:** Design spaces with flexible infrastructure so smart technology can improve the guest experience without diminishing the personal service and subtle gestures that define exceptional hospitality.

## WELLNESS IS THE “NEW ITINERARY”

Wellness today is no longer a discrete amenity or optional add-on. It has become fully integrated into every aspect of the hospitality experience. Travelers increasingly seek environments that support calm and renewal without requiring a scheduled class or curated program. This shift gives hoteliers the opportunity to let design itself become a wellness offering, crafting spaces that invite guests to pause, breathe, and engage at their own pace. From a sunlit terrace opening onto a quiet garden to gently winding pathways through layered landscapes, every design gesture can support wellness a natural, seamless part of the stay rather than a separate activity.

**Tip:** Shift from prescriptive wellness programming to creating spaces that invite spontaneous, intentional moments. This could take the form of an open lawn for meditation or a sensory rich pathway woven throughout the property.

## DESIGN DESTINATIONS, NOT JUST HOTELS

A hotel's true allure isn't measured in square footage. It's felt in the stories it inspires. Exceptional properties are more than places to stay – they invite guests to explore and share. Achieving this requires design that looks beyond the present moment, anticipating how a property can grow, adapt, and evolve with shifting trends and guest expectations. Flexibility in layout, amenities, and communal spaces allows a property to remain relevant and economically resilient over time.

**Tip:** Treat every design decision as an investment in the future. Adaptable multi-use public spaces and flexible amenities create opportunities for reinvention and enduring relevance in a competitive marketplace.

## GENERATE REGENERATIVELY

True regenerative design goes beyond certifications or checklists. It's about shaping a property in ways that leave the land, community, and ecosystem healthier than before. Thoughtful design considers the long-term environmental impact while creating meaningful connections for guests – spaces that feel alive, purposeful, and rooted in their surroundings.

**Tip:** Look for opportunities to weave nature into the guest experience. Replacing traditional lawns with native plantings, restoring habitat corridors, or integrating natural water features can reduce resource use, enhance biodiversity, and create authentic experiences that connect visitors to place.

## BESPOKE PLACEMAKING

While many properties offer similar core amenities, it is essential to move beyond the expected and create experiences that are unmistakably and uniquely a hotel's own. Culinary programs that highlight regional flavors, refurbishing rather than replacing existing site history, and integrating local art or cultural elements craft a richer, more memorable sense of place.

**Tip:** When looking to renovate or refurbish a site, start by recognizing the elements that already make the property special – its viewsheds, cultural spirit, and unique character – and amplify those qualities.

## MORE FUNCTIONALITY, THE BETTER

Every guest arrives with their own priorities, so hotels must plan and accommodate for a spectrum of needs. Design that embraces flexibility with adaptable layouts, multifunctional amenities, and thoughtful infrastructure, allows a property to respond to seasonal shifts and generational preferences. Spaces that effortlessly transform from quiet retreats to lively social hubs not only enhance guest satisfaction but unlock revenue opportunities – extending the property's value and relevance.

**Tip:** Consider how programming can interact with flexible spaces. Designing areas that support multiple activity types maximizes both guest engagement and operational versatility without requiring constant physical changes.

## PRIORITIZE PLACE

The best hotels don't just occupy a location – they define it. Design that amplifies what makes a destination unique creates spaces unmistakably tied to their environment and community. Market distinction is about crafting experiences that guests remember, talk about, and return for – turning a property into a true landmark. Thoughtful use of landscape, architecture, and programming can create signature moments, both small and grand, giving every guest a sense of connection that's impossible to replicate anywhere else.

**Tip:** Lean into your location and provide an experience that only that location can offer. It is more memorable, even if it is just local coffee.

