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Manhattan Loft Gardens Aims to Transform East London

Harry Handelsman's new hotel and apartment block opens in Stratford



By Gavannandra Hodge

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It is about aspiration, not just accommodation,” says Harry Handelsman of his new hospitality venture, Manhattan Loft Gardens, in Stratford, East London’s former Olympic district. Handelsman, 69, is the CEO of the Manhattan Loft Corporation, known for reviving unprepossessing areas of London via its elegantly refurbished buildings—such as the Chiltern Firehouse hotel, which rejuvenated the formerly staid Marylebone. But this latest project is more than a skyline-transforming, 145-room hotel (The Stratford, opening in May) and apartment block with a destination restaurant, three sky gardens, sleek interiors

by Space Copenhagen and Studio KO and daily yoga programs. It's a social experiment. "I want to create a community," says Handelsman. There are 248 apartments on the upper floors—from light-filled studios to three-bedroom penthouses—which are currently available as weekly, monthly or extended accommodation options inspired by the New York long-stay hotel scene of the '60s and '70s. Handelsman hopes to attract a young creative crowd who will interact with each other and the hotel guests, perhaps in the ground floor's open-kitchen brasserie or around a firepit in the 25th-floor garden. "I know I have an amazing building," he says, "but it's the people who will make it exciting." thestratford.com