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ESCAPE

TRAVEL / RESTAURANTS / CULTURE Edited by KATE WORTHINGTON

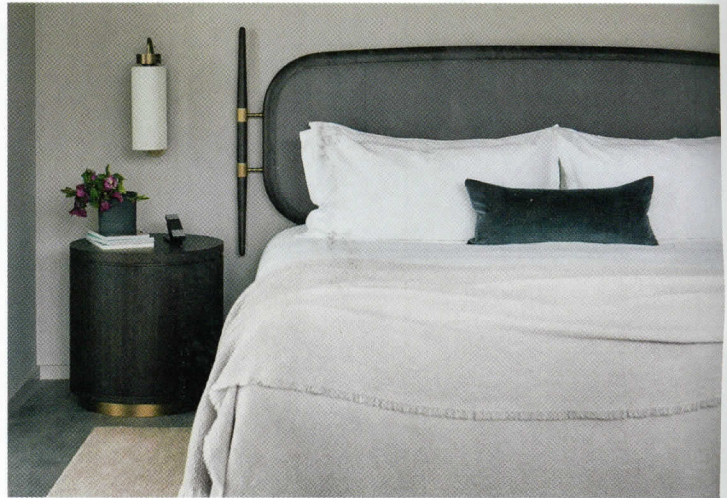
SKY HIGH

East London has a new landmark, and you can book a room in it. As The Stratford hotel, situated in the 42-storey Manhattan Loft Gardens building, opens its doors, we take a look. Turn the page to see inside its luxury suites...

PICTURE: RICH STAPLETON



From Manhattan Loft Corporation, the company behind the Chiltern Firehouse and St Pancras Renaissance Hotel, comes the hotly anticipated The Stratford at Manhattan Loft Gardens. Housed in a skyscraper by SOM, the architecture firm that designed One World Trade Center, the hotel is part of a new wave of settlers forging Stratford's status as the city's cultural hub, opening ahead of the V&A East, Sadler's Wells East and CrossRail. Its sophisticated interiors are the work of Danish designers Space Copenhagen – think muted greys, tactile fabrics and high-quality craftsmanship. On the ground floor, next to the spectacular seven-storey glass atrium, is relaxed all-day eatery The Brasserie, while seven floors up, beside a meadow-inspired garden, is Allegra, a restaurant headed up by former Chiltern Firehouse head chef Patrick Powell. From £199 per night (manhattanloftgardens.com).



GLORIOUS FOOD *The V&A's 'Food: Bigger than the Plate' explores our complex relationship with the stuff that sustains us – from how we grow and sell it, to how we cook and serve it. One of the highlights is 'The Human Trace Tableware' by anthropologist Ewa Klekot and ceramicist Arkadiusz Szwed. Produced by workers wearing gloves dipped in cobalt salts, which, once fired, turn dark blue, each piece reveals the human role in manufacturing. 18 May–20 October (vam.ac.uk).*



MAMMA MIA

Step back in time to a reimagining of a 1970s Italian trattoria at Gloria, a new Capri-inspired restaurant in Shoreditch. The first opening this side of the channel from French restaurateurs Big Mamma Group, whose eateries in Paris and Lille attract queues around the block, both the food and the interiors are designed to wow. Its two floors are packed with flamboyant details, from the pink marble bar to the retro lamps and hand-painted tableware. Downstairs, the vibe goes Studio 54 with a mirrored ceiling and fabulous carpets. Sip a negroni from one of the comfy banquettes and tuck into Italian staples, such as the belt-tightening ten-layer lasagna or the decadent la gran carbonara – served in a whole wheel of Parmigiano-Reggiano (bigmammagroup.com).