

STYLISH STAYCATION

Hilton's future face

The five-star hotel has never looked better, after an extensive revamp, writes STEPHEN SCOURFIELD

Parmelia Hilton Perth reopens on February 1, with a \$45m face lift and leading the way with new technology.

For Perth's oldest but transformed five-star hotel, which has been closed since April for the refurbishment, has touch-less technology that includes a digital key delivered to a guest's phone.

They can arrive at the hotel, pass through the lobby, activate the key and get into their room or suite and some other parts of the hotel without having contact with anyone. As marketing and communications manager Amy Celisano put it: "They can simply walk in the front door and go to their room." Or the swimming pool. Or the gym.

Equally, they can go old-school and personal, and be checked in and helped by the same experienced staff they would have seen at Parmelia Hilton Perth before the shutdown, and who have been kept on during the coronavirus epidemic. "We reopen with all that experience," says commercial director Des Shanks says. "It's a positive."

The hotel has a bright, contemporary new frontage on

Mill Street. The lobby has been expanded and restyled, and the colour scheme and artwork reflect WA's story, landscape and attitude. Subtle colour coding along the walkway between the lobby and the Brookfield Place precinct moves, west to east, from oceanic deep to light blue, turquoise and sand to the red of the inland. The walkway is a crucial feature, as it connects guests to Brookfield Place, home of companies such as BHP, Wesfarmers, Multiplex and Telstra.

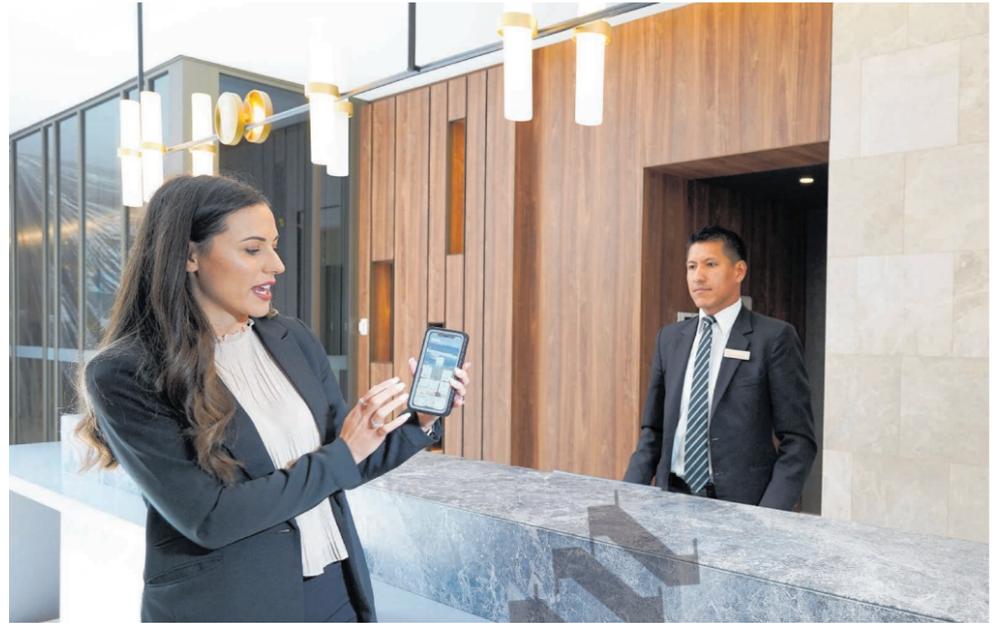
Between the lobby and Brookfield Place, the Parmelia Hilton Perth's new executive lounge offers not just work and meeting spaces, but breakfasts and a contemporary and calm, earth and ocean colour palette. It is a crucial link for this city business hotel, Mr Shanks says.

To the left, a lounge reflects the hotel's history, with a bespoke artwork carpet by artist Marion Borgelt which reflects WA's landscape; from pink lakes to Kimberley red.

An artwork by Leon Pericles tells the State's story, and emphasises the hotel's links to it. For it is named for the ship Parmelia, which brought the first civilian officials to what was then the Swan River Colony, in 1829.

At the other side of the lobby, Samuel's restaurant has an emphasis on WA produce, and is named for Samuel Kingsford, who built a flour mill here in Mill Street in 1833. Samuel's has a list of 100 wines, and many craft beers, with a WA focus.

Rooms have had a major renovation, with new bathrooms, air-conditioning, flooring, furniture and in-room technology.



Amy Celisano shows how guests can use the digital key app.

And rooms and suites have been increased from 284 to 309.

For the reopening, the hotel is relying on WA. It is encouraging locals to have a "staycation" in the city with prices from \$249 for a package including a room, parking, breakfast and some of the experiences offered by the hotel.

And it will reopen with Hilton CleanStay and EventReady programs in place, with high standards of cleanliness and disinfection. A seal is placed on each room door after cleaning.

"We are happy and excited to welcome WA people back to the hotel," Ms Celisano says.

"We encourage West Australians to come and stay in the city and enjoy the heart of Perth. There have been a lot of challenges over the last 12 months and it is up to us to move with those challenges."

PART OF PERTH

The hotel was built in the late 1960s, and has been a Hilton hotel since 1979. Hilton stayed on to run the hotel when the Hawaiian group bought it in 1999. As is its philosophy, the group has continued to strongly reinvest in the property.

Hilton area general manager David Constantine says:

"It is very exciting to be refurbishing a hotel that has made such a significant contribution to the growth and development of Perth over many years."

And Hawaiian chief executive Russell Gibbs adds that the significant investment reaffirms the group's commitment to delivering quality experiences to travellers to WA.

He explains: "Hotels and resorts are an important part of Hawaiian's property portfolio, with Parmelia Hilton Perth being the group's first hospitality acquisition in 1993. The hotel has been an icon of the Perth CBD for many years." He says the refurbishment reflects the changing needs of modern travellers.



The refurbished exterior. Pictures: Mogens Johansen

Commercial director Des Shanks in the new Hilton executive lounge.





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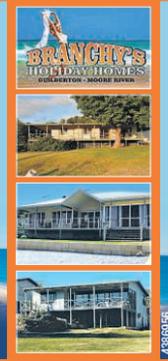
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