

DE BERGENSKE

Bergen
August, 2017



Bergen Børs remakes history.
Bergen's former stock exchange is reborn.

Slap in the centre of Bergen, beside the Torgalmenningen – the main city square – stands a rather imposing neo-renaissance structure clad in red clay tile and soapstone. This was once the *Børshuset*, the city's stock exchange and the commercial heart of Bergen, where transactions were made, hands shaken and gavels banged onto heavy wooden desks to close the deal.

Today it is very different. Swedish architecture and design firm Claesson Koivisto Rune has transformed the landmark building – and two of its neighbours – into a new 127-bedroom hotel, where quietly luxurious contemporary design commingles with remnants of the building's prestigious past. Designed to be as appealing to the business traveller of today as it was to the financiers of yesteryear, the hotel is also set to attract the design-conscious leisure audience with a combination of refined interiors, Nordic seasonal cuisine and an exceptional location.

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*Five truly unique hotels in Bergen:
Augustin, Grand Terminus, Villa Terminus, Zander K and Bergen Bors.*

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Bergen Børs is the third hotel opening from the De Bergenske group in the past year. Like previous launches Villa Terminus and Zander K, the hotel retains its own distinct identity – that of a relaxed, impeccably dressed and mildly eccentric gentleman-about-town – while responding to the history of the building it inhabits.

Stock exchanged

The original stock exchange was completed in 1862 and redeveloped in the 1890s. Its neighbouring building, a former bank, dates from several decades later, while the third component was purpose-built for Norway's DNB banking group in 1967. Together, they occupy an entire city block. The task faced by Claesson Koivisto Rune was to harmoniously combine three buildings, from three distinct architectural periods, into a coherent whole with a clear and consistent design language, without sacrificing the character gifted to them by history.

The firm have subtly and seamlessly united the trio, with most of the work concentrated on the third to sixth floors (the lower levels are largely devoted to commercial space). Apart from the occasional change in ceiling height, you'd never notice you're stepping between buildings and across decades.

Against an understated palette of colours and materials (occasionally accented with an arresting pop of colour and pattern), a number of the børsuset's original features tell snippets of its story. Wood-panelled walls stand testament to its days of trade; the soundproofed doors that once guarded confidential conversations from eavesdroppers now open into one room's ensuite; and the former stock exchange manager's office, complete with heavily protected safe, now offers respite and privacy to whichever hotel guest is lucky enough to be handed the key.

We like the fact that it's difficult for a guest to tell when the hotel was designed. For a guest it should feel seamless, like you're staying in one hotel – not an "old" or a "new" room. Certain parts of the project had beautiful original woodwork or other fine craftsmanship – handmade lamps, beautiful cast windows, or elaborate metalwork. Everything new had to co-exist with this. Therefore our design has a certain neutral modernity attached to it. True luxury is always modest. We have tried to keep a restricted palette in both colour and materials – to make the hotel feel luxurious, but with a somewhat discreet atmosphere.

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The dining room has floor to ceiling draperies and opposing full mirror walls, making the halls endlessly repeated in reflection.



The stock exchange boardroom is now the cocktail bar. With original, restored woodwork and new Carrara marble bar.

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The erstwhile Chamber of Commerce on the third floor is now the hotel's bar and BARE restaurant – one of Bergen Børs headline attractions. From above the bar door, a bust of a former stock-exchange CEO gazes down rather austere-ly at the long marble cocktail counter below (not surprising, given he was a noted teetotaller). Everywhere here, old and new vie for attention. Wooden panels dating back over a century are complemented and contrasted by mirrors cut and faceted to match them. These reflect the light of the chandelier – another souvenir of the past – adding an air of warmth and turning the bar into a shimmering box of light.

While the bar is cosy and club-like, the adjacent harbour-view restaurant – BARE – is a bright and open dining room, given a touch of character by wicker-backed Thonet chairs and graphic Serge Mouille light fittings, and granted the illusion of infinite expansion by wall-filling mirrors. Bar, dining room and reception are all composed in a palette of wood, leather and marble; Claesson Koivisto Rune have purposefully chosen tactile materials that will acquire a patina with time and use, telling Bergen Børs' ongoing story as the hotel ages.

Tailor-made

One of the key design inspirations behind Claesson Koivisto Rune's work on Bergen Børs is the world of fashion and fine tailoring (because what good is a financier without a sharp suit?). Bedrooms and hallways contain subtle sartorial nod: pinstripes running down the wallpaper and drapes; herringbone parquet and grid-pattern carpet on the floor; chequered and argyle tiles in the bathrooms; and houndstooth upholstery on the lounge furniture. You might never notice it if you weren't looking closely, but Bergen Børs is a tailor's swatch book brought to life.

We were looking for things that were unchanging and non-trendy. That led us to the world of men's tailoring, where aesthetic values are somewhat constant, and a certain distance from trendiness is preferred. That feels very at home in a classic upscale hotel.

– Eero Koivisto, architect, Claesson Koivisto Rune

For images or more information about Hotel Zander K and the four other De Bergenske hotels, please contact Dorothy Bourne on +44 07939-200519 or at dorothy@zetteler.co.uk.

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The reception with its large chequered floor and desk made by master marble makers from Altamura, Italy.



The eternal gaze of Andreas Odfjell, former stock exchange commissioner, monitors the lobby waiting area. Light provided by the Aria lamp by Claesson Koivisto Rune.

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About Bergen Børs (notes for editors)

Rooms: 127, spread over two floors
Room features: Shower and bathtub, desk, wardrobe, telephone, minibar, TV
Facilities: Bar and restaurant, conference rooms, fitness suite, free WiFi, 24-hour reception
Officially Opened: August 16, 2017
Architect: Claesson Koivisto Rune
Identity: Henrik Nygren Design
Previous functions: Stock exchange; bank
Location: Vågsallmenningen 1, Bergen, Norway
Website: bergenbors.no

About De Bergenske Hotels

Family-owned for four generations, the De Bergenske group owns and operates five hotels in Bergen, Norway, all centrally situated. Each one represents different facets of the culture and history of the city. Alongside Zander K, De Bergenske's hotels are:

Grand Hotel Terminus: A 131-bedroom Continental-style hotel opened in 1928.

Villa Terminus: An atmospheric 18-room boutique hotel set in a beautifully restored Baroque villa and housing landmark mid-century and modern-day design.

Augustin: Bergen's oldest family-run hotel, with a relaxed atmosphere and a harbourside setting.

Bergen Børs: Officially opens August 31st. An elegant hotel and Nordic fine-dining restaurant in Bergen's former stock-exchange building.

Zander K: Officially opened June 7th. Bergen's sleekest and most modern hotel, set beside Grand Hotel Terminus.

Website: debergenske.no

About Claesson Koivisto Rune

Claesson Koivisto Rune is a Swedish architectural partnership, founded in Stockholm in 1995, by Mårten Claesson, Eero Koivisto and Ola Rune. It started as an architectural firm, but has since become an internationally acclaimed, multi-disciplinary office with an equal emphasis on both

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Original restored chandelier and ceiling in room no. 323. The vault was the former bank director's.



A simple twist of the tiling turns the bathroom into a harlequin pattern space. The Stockholm basin is designed by Claesson Koivisto Rune.

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architecture and design.

As the first Swedish office to have exhibited in the international section at the Venice Architecture Biennale, in 2004, they are also responsible for award-winning projects such as the Tind Prefab house collection for Fiskarhedenvillan, Widlund House on Öland, Örsta Gallery building in Kumla, Sfera Building culture house in Kyoto and Nobis Hotel in Stockholm.

Claesson Koivisto Rune, 2017: Mårten Claesson, Eero Koivisto, Ola Rune, Deta Koivisto Gemzell, Patrick Coan, Kumi Nakagaki, Lotti Engstrand, Louise Bahrton, Farnaz Fazeli, Oliver Cap, Åsa Ekwall, Linnea Freij
Website: claessonkoivistorune.se