



Straight up and down

No-nonsense sleeping studios and a chic entrance café comprise Columbard, a slender addition to the inner-city skyline

Global trends point to a demand for short-stay, inner-city crash pads. Less roomy and less costly than a hotel or self-service apartment, they offer simple, downtown accommodation.

'What you see is what you get' runs the marketing for the rentable, short-stay sleeping studios that make up the arresting slender, inner-city Columbard tower. The concept behind the building's 144

sleeping studios, or crash pads, is economy of size and amenities in exchange for economy of price. The studios are intended for travelling business people or those who need a convenient overnight bolt-hole.

The 8m-wide, 19-floor Columbard was created by Malcolm Brown of Brown Day Architects, with the ground floor café, in place of a lobby, by Paul Brown of architectural firm Clark Brown.

Above: A hip café replaces an entrance lobby for Columbard. Tower entry is by swipe card at the rear.

Right: Rising from a narrow footprint, the 19-floor down-town tower offers spectacular city views.





Above: The bare bones of the tower's services and structure give the café an industrial-look.

Right: Bright tones provide an invigorating atmosphere in Columbard's café and corridors.

Facing page above: There are two styles of studio, with both offering a modest balcony space.

Facing page right: The compact studios provide everything from a microwave, a stovetop, a fridge and crockery through to a television, DVD, stereo and broad band internet connection. There is a shower, toilet, washing machine and dryer.

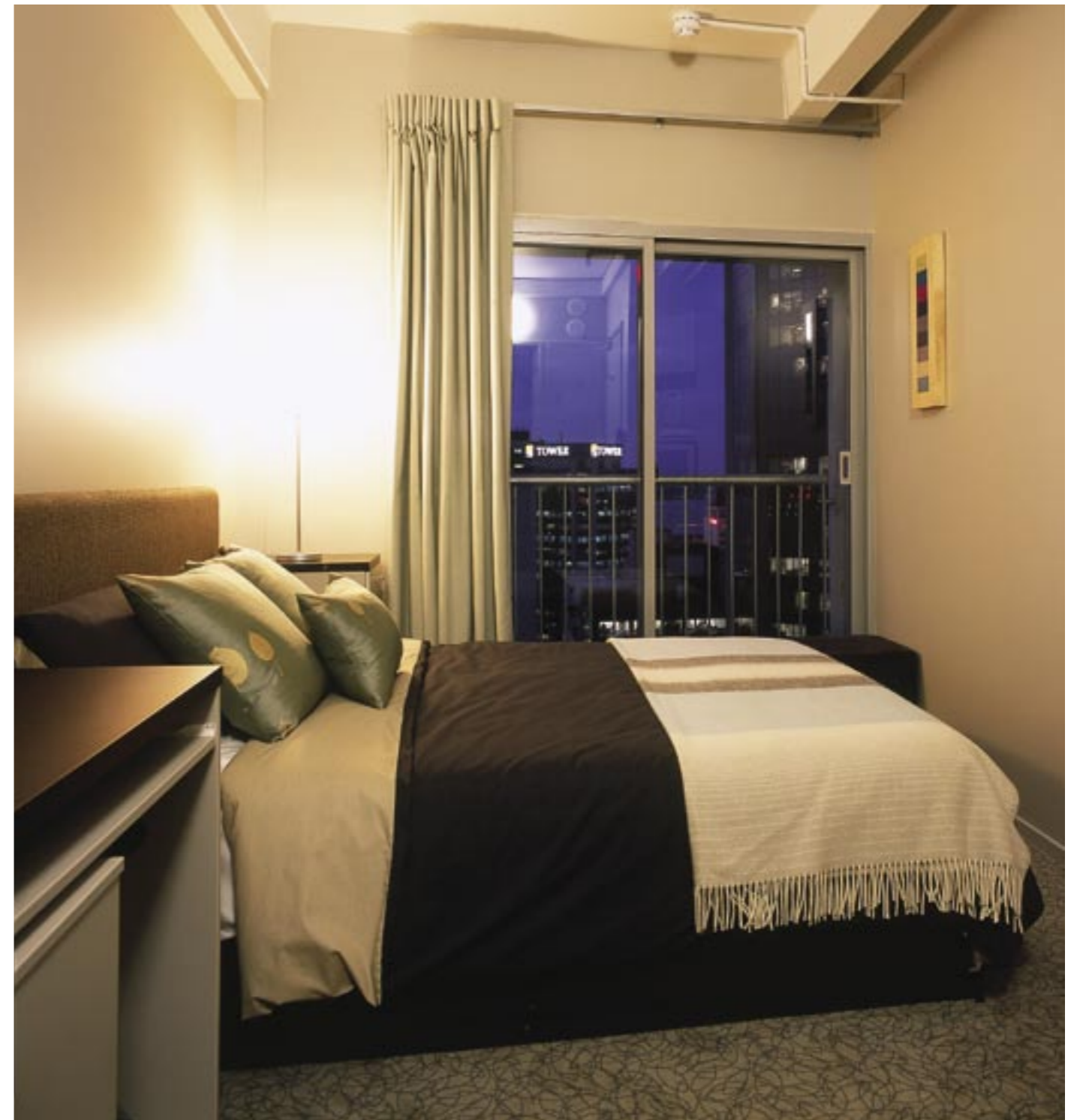


"The entry café's raw, industrial-look interior sets the tone for the honest efficiency of the rooms above," says Paul Brown. "It was a tricky project in that services had to be carefully placed as they would form part of the café's décor."

From Malcolm Brown's perspective, the issue of scale was central to the project.

"The building maximises room numbers over a narrow footprint. Each studio offers every essential on a carefully thought out economy of scale," he says.

Columbard's interiors were by Ray Lind



of Martin Hughes Architecture Interiors.

"Dramatic colour elements were introduced in the café and hallways, in lipstick pink on black. This goes against the trend for access areas finished in light, tranquil colours," says Lind. "Columbard's colours give off a vivid energy."

For the actual sleeping studios, Lind chose a quieter, harmonious finish.

"Finishes are based on natural linens, white on white, and greys on silvers. These tones sit well against the exposed elements of the actual concrete structure."



Location: Columbard, Auckland
Architects: Brown Day Architects (building structure), Clark Brown Architects (ground floor)
Main contractor: Wyndham Construction
Interior design: Martin Hughes Architecture Interiors
Civil engineer: Buller George
Mechanical and electrical engineer: Hilite Electrical
Quantity surveyor: Rider Hunt
Cladding: Zincalume
Façade and roof: Concrete
Window/door joinery: Windows 2000
Cushions and throw: Courtesy of Eon Design Centre

Photography by Kallan MacLeod