

ambassador makes guests feel at home in their designer accommodations – and in the local arts scene.

‘We Dutch don’t receive guests with rich food, but with culture.’

interview by Chris Reinewald
portrait by Elsbeth Struijk van Bergen

> Long before the branding of Amsterdam as a ‘creative city’, Suzanne Oxenaar, Otto Nan, Liesbeth Mijnlief and Gerrit Groen dreamed of a hotel that would serve as a ‘cultural embassy’, providing information on the city’s diverse arts and entertainment scene to visitors. Eight years later, their dream came true when they opened the Lloyd Hotel in the eastern docklands.

A year later, in 2004, Oxenaar looks back on her unusual position as the city’s unofficial cultural ambassador. “Every day I meet the most remarkable people,” she says. “Only this morning in the lift I bumped into a Brazilian lady, around 60 years old, who turned out to be a journalist. I told her that this hotel was once the point of departure for ships to Brazil, and that Lithuanian emigrants on their way to the United States also stayed here. It turned out that she had a Lithuanian friend in Brazil, so later I presented her with one of the Lithuanian socks, made by emigrants, which we sell here in remembrance of them. But we’ve made it a hotel, not a museum. We