

Rem Koolhaas designed megahotel  
NH Group near RAI Amsterdam

# 'nhow on air': largest hotel in the Benelux

The Amsterdam skyline will definitely change because of the construction of an iconic megahotel near the RAI convention center. The trendy and luxury 'nhow on air' hotel will be 91 meters high and boast 650 rooms on 25 floors. This will make the NH Hotel Group's latest project the largest hotel in the Benelux countries. Designer Rem Koolhaas of Architectenbureau OMA got his inspiration from the billboard column in front of the RAI.



Ever since the opening in 1961 the Amsterdam RAI convention center had the wish to realize a hotel on its own site. In June 2014, the convention center jointly with the council of Amsterdam invited quotes for the development, realization and exploitation of a 'headquarter' hotel that was to create a link between the Zuidas business district and the city proper. On 28 April 2015 came the announcement that from the eleven offers, the innovative 'nhow' concept of NH Hotel Group had been elected the winner. The megahotel is developed by the Amsterdam project developer COD and is designed by OMA, Rem Koolhaas' architect agency. The start of the construction is planned for the middle of 2016; the hotel is to be completed in 2018.

## 'nhow on air': unique experience

The pioneering 24-hour experience of the trendy nhow concept and the iconic design will make any stay in the four-star hotel into a unique experience. Managing Director Maarten Markus of NH Hotel Group: "nhow Amsterdam RAI will be based on the theme 'On Air', in which elements of connection, innovation and media are interconnected in a special manner. This makes the hotel

a hotspot with international allure which will not only be a base of operation for the corporate market for organizers, trade show participants and visitors of large international events, but also be a special meeting point without hotel stay, thanks to the restaurant and the skybar on the top 25th floor, a multimedia lounge for meetings and presentations, a television studio, a luxury spa and wellness center, sports facilities and a gallery with statues garden." The nhow in Amsterdam is the fourth establishment of the trendy chain of hotels, following hotels in Berlin that has music as the theme, Milan where fashion is the focus, and Rotterdam that has architecture as its basic theme. The Spanish NH Hotel Group exploits nhow Amsterdam RAI. Rufino Pérez, Global Head of nhow, came over from Spain especially for the presentation of the winning design on 28 April. He considers this new, international hotspot to be a big gain for the global hotel chain that now has more than 375 establishments.

## Iconic design

At the presentation Rem Koolhaas of Architectenbureau OMA said that he thought that nowadays, the majority of the hotels look like big lumps that have no con-

nection at all with their surroundings. Earlier, he designed the interior of the nhow establishment on the Rotterdam Wilhelminakade for NH Hotel Group. The inspiration for the winning design in Amsterdam he got from the billboard column 'Het Signaal' that has sat in front of the RAI convention center since the sixties. The hotel consists of three large volumes which are shifted in relation to each other and are shaped like blocks randomly placed on top of each other. "The Zuidas business district is actually detached from the city; with this iconic building we hope to create a connection with the dynamics of Amsterdam. I want

to show that a hotel is not an isolated compound to sleep, but a special location for a stay. Each element will get its own character and the hotel rooms and suites are located around the public utilities. There is also a great deal of room for art." The hotel is in the top 15 of highest buildings in Amsterdam. When it is finished, the individual visitor can ride a dedicated elevator directly to the 25th floor to enjoy the spectacular vista of the city from the skybar or the restaurant.

### Pioneering design

Amsterdam wants to achieve a larger and more varied hotel portfolio spread all



Maarten Markus



over the city. The nhow Amsterdam RAI will have a strong competitive position in the international market for trade shows and congresses. Maarten Markus is convinced that the hotel is a gain for the Amsterdam convention center as well as for his chain of hotels. "This complex will not only be the largest hotel in the Benelux, but will also be high profile because of its pioneering design and the 24 hour experience of the nhow concept, which adapts itself day and night to the 'now' like a chameleon. Business as well as leisure guests can count on a spectacular combination of hospitality and gastronomy with innovation and multimedia." nhow Amsterdam RAI will be realized on a small building site, which makes the footprint during the construction process as small as possible. The largest hotel in the Benelux will constitute the eastern access gate to the Zuidas and will connect this to the city of Amsterdam in a very natural manner. ■

[www.nh-hotels.nl](http://www.nh-hotels.nl)