



THE ROYAL PORTFOLIO  
**THE SILO**

## INTERIORS AT THE SILO HOTEL

A contemporary space where art, history, architecture, and luxury travel collide.

Completed in 1924, the grain silo building has played an integral part in the development of Cape Town and of South Africa. The building, once the tallest in Sub-Saharan Africa, standing proud at 57m, was used for nearly 80 years as a grain silo providing crucial infrastructure to the country's agricultural and industrial development. The last shipment of grain to Europe was on board the MV Anangel Wisdom in 1995 and the grain silo ceased operations in 2001. The building was reimaged by UK industrial designer Thomas Heatherwick incorporating many of the original industrial features. The Silo Hotel is located in the grain elevator portion of the building which used to sort the grain before conveying the grain into the 42 storage silos. The hotel occupies six floors above the Zeitz Museum Of Contemporary Art Africa (MOCAA).

The redeveloped building is a beautifully contrasted mixture of historic infrastructure and modern design. This stark contrast between old and new is augmented by Liz Biden's lively and eclectic style of interior design, a quirky distinction from the cold, raw feel of the building's exterior. Drawing inspiration from her travels around the world, Liz has acquired a unique and varied collection of art and interior artefacts. Liz will often incorporate foreign inspiration into local industries by commissioning local artists and designers to help produce her visionary interiors.

*“Decorating this property has welcomed new challenges. It is very different from the rest of The Royal Portfolio. Space for one is restricted by the two core elevator shafts running through the building as well as the cubic geometry of each floor.”* Liz Biden, the founder and owner of The Royal Portfolio

Located on the ground floor of the silo building, The Silo Hotel lobby sets the scene for the contrast between old and new showcased throughout The Silo Hotel. Suspended from the double volume ceiling hangs Haldane Martin's contemporary chandelier, juxtaposed against the original grain hoppers. Mohau Modisakeng's *Ditaola* series, commissioned pieces by Jody Paulsen, *Must be the Rain* and *So Exotic*, and Frances Goodman's *Hooded Lady I, II & III* help showcase this contrasting theme. Continuing up to Level Six, the reception area, Granary Café and Willaston Bar display unique variations of whimsical interior ornaments, colorful contemporary African art, and an original machine head emerging from what was once the distribution floor of the grain silo working house.

Situated above what will soon become Zietz Museum Of Contemporary Art Africa (MOCAA), The Silo Hotel will house its very own collection of contemporary African art, showcasing both up and coming artists and established artists. In addition, The Silo Hotel basement will accommodate The Vault, a private gallery exhibiting upcoming African artists on rotation biannually.

In-room interiors each take their own unique character, carefully thought out and implemented through Liz Biden's eye for the exquisite. The beautiful fabric used in the headboard of Room 603 was made by Halsted incorporating Ardmore ceramics first fabric range – The *Qalakabusha* range, meaning 'new beginnings'. Each room has its own unique collection of crockery made by The Potter's Workshop, a philanthropic project designed to empower local communities and develop creative skills in Muizenberg.

The Oslo chairs in the library have similar fabric insets – a stunning purple fabric called *Monkey Bean* from the Zambezi Collection – Ardmore's second fabric range. Hermes have also used designs from the Ardmore Ceramic Art Studio for their 2016 scarf collection.

*"My goal has always been to pay tribute to luxury and comfort for our guests. This has meant balancing the stark and industrial style of the architecture with aspects of classic glamour and modern comfort."* Liz Biden.

The Willaston Bar is named after the first ship to carry grain from the silo complex to Europe in 1924, the SS Willaston. The teal stools made from soft Italian leather were manufactured locally by Moorgas & Sons, as have the beautiful soft velvet sofas. The circular chandeliers on Level 6 are inspired by the steel rings originally used inside the grain elevator, and were made by ADA Lighting. There are 80 crystal chandeliers throughout the hotel which were handmade in Egypt.