Ett Hem
Stockholm

Designer Ilse Crawford has curated a guesthouse filled with antiques, art and classic Scandinavian furnishings, in a 1910 building in Stockholm’s Östermalm district.

Designed by Ilse Crawford of London-based Studioilse, Ett Hem is a 12-room guesthouse in the refined embassy quarter of Östermalm in Stockholm. The name translates as ‘A Home’ and the curation of homely items from owner Jeanette Mix’s personal life, including artwork and books, is just part of the enduring ambiance of the house. Without question, the ratio of 14 staff to 12 rooms helps develop that ambience and it is interesting to note that everyone refers to the hotel as the ‘house’. Instinctively this just feels right; it doesn’t feel like a hotel. Guests are visitors in a friend’s house – a friend with great taste who has thought of everything.

Even before she bought the house in 2006, Mix called on the services of Landström Arkitekter to ensure that the property could indeed function as a working hotel. “The key issues were to secure escape routes and a new lift,” explains Magnus Stenmark, project architect. Planning alone took over three years – a particular sticking point being the insertion of the glasshouse in the small courtyard garden.

Within the building, constructed in 1910, is Landström’s other most obvious architectural intervention – the addition of a new staircase accessing the five guestrooms in the attic space. These rooms together with the new conservatory
created an additional 20% of space. And what a space it is. In developing her ideas around the interiors Mix felt that the minimalist, slightly masculine and Scandinavian bias of many local design practices would not be right for Ett Hem. It was whilst having dinner in the Mathias Dahlgren restaurant at Stockholm’s Grand Hotel – with which Ett Hem competes in price, if not size or style – that Mix saw what she wanted: the mélange of Scandinavian and international style by Ilse Crawford of Studioilse in London. Initially hesitant about contacting a designer with such a reputation, Mix finally called and a trusting relationship developed.

There are many historical references within this heritage building. Antique chandeliers, lit by real candles, were sourced by Studioilse. Ceramic ovens were added to those guestrooms that did not have one already. “These elements are part of the subtle reinterpretation of the historic listed architectural ‘frame’. What is in front, the furniture and art, can then be contemporary and will continue to evolve,” explains Crawford of Studioilse’s on-going involvement in the project. “Even Christmas decorations fall into our remit. These can completely change the character if they are not considered. A good interior is never finished; it lives with those that live in it. That is why the overarching concept needs to be strong, yet flexible.”

Studioilse has also created a 100-page housekeeping book detailing everything from how the bathroom is laid out to the room-service trays. “Design is about the
total picture,” explains Crawford, “How it is operated in detail. We don’t just do the interior, we design the experience.”

The detail of those interiors is set against a palette of gentle greys and includes an impressive edit of mid-century Scandinavian furniture alongside classic international gems such as the Eames walnut stool and the Vitsoe 606 Universal Shelving System by Dieter Rams in the library. Many furnishings were custom made for Ett Hem by Studioilse. Equally, Crawford’s designs in production for George Jensen (oval boxes and candle stick holders in brass), Wastberg (w084t2 desk lamp) and De La Espada (444 Bench) also feature.

Comfortable living spaces come from the array of tactile materials – sheepskin, leather, brass, glass, cane and felt furnishings. Much of it was locally sourced, including the broad Swedish oak floorboards and the Gotland limestone used in bathrooms. “Honest with quality,” is Mix’s summary. The quality of craftsmanship is exemplary. The wood paneled pitched roof and walling of the duplex guestroom is sheer class. The suite’s bathtub carved from a single piece of Carrara marble is extraordinary; the lounge chair next to it offers the chance for a conversation between a couple. Says Crawford: “I believe bathing is a life enhancing experience.”

Ett Hem is a beautiful home brought to life by the successful collaboration between a courageous owner, pragmatic architect and talented interior designer. The result is a gem of hospitality that makes the heart soar.
OPPOSITE PAGE: Furniture in the living room includes green Utrecht armchairs by Gerrit Rietveld and Hans J. Wegner’s Bamsestolen / Papa Bear armchairs as well as Atollo Gold table lamps.

RIGHT: This guestroom scheme includes Lamp Pascal 345 floor lights by Vico Magistretti, and a custom-made desk and headboard designed by Studioilse. The art on the wall above the desk is a piece called ‘Next door Nebula’ by Jonas Nobel, one of many of the clients own artworks displayed throughout Ett Hem.