

The Coolest Boutique Hotel in Stockholm Doubles in Size

By popular demand, Ett Hem founder Jeanette Mix has expanded her beloved Stockholm hotel into two neighboring buildings.

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Sept. 20, 2022 8:30 am ET

One of the more pointed lessons of the past two-and-a-half years has been that home, even on the darkest days, can offer consolation, comfort, intimacy, sustenance, entertainment, community, distraction—the list goes on. Who were we to take it for granted?



Ett Hem founder Jeanette Mix.

Swedish hotelier Jeanette Mix has known these things for years, and a decade ago they led her to open Ett Hem (“a home”), an unusual boutique hotel in the capital’s leafy Lärkstaden neighborhood. Gaining access to Ett Hem means ringing the bell at a walled gate and stepping over a raised entryway, a small but essential act that prepares you to be treated as a member of the family in this rambling arts and crafts-era house, with privileges that extend into the cookie jar in the kitchen and the bar in the living room, the bikes in the courtyard and the puzzles on the shelf.

“There is no back-of-house,” says Mix, standing at the four-burner Marrone stove in Ett Hem’s compact kitchen. “We show everything we do.”

Her daughter Alexandra Mix, a mid-20s version of her mother, joins her at the communal kitchen table for a quick lunch: agnolotti with fresh goat cheese, Parmesan, andouille sausage and asparagus from southern Sweden, followed by lotte poached in white wine and some rhubarb cake for dessert. It’s the same meal the house chef will cook to order for guests throughout the afternoon.



Edward Collinson stools flank the kitchen counter, shown here stocked with fresh mushrooms and vegetables.

When she was in her 20s, Mix trained as a chef and sommelier at Le Cordon Bleu in London, but she had no hands-on hotel experience before opening Ett Hem. She did, however, vacation frequently with her husband, private-equity investor Harald Mix, and their three children, becoming a very discerning and inquisitive hotel guest. “I like to be connected to the community wherever I go,” she says, unfolding her napkin. “I want to go to neighborhood places. I want to go to the local bakery. Where do the fashionable ladies in the city do their shopping?”



A gated entrance to the new Ett Hem building.

Back home, she took the informal but attentive service she’d admired at Thailand’s Amanpuri resort and South Africa’s Kurland Estate and pushed it further, breaking the fourth wall between guests and staff. There is no check-in desk at Ett Hem, and every staffer aims to help you out or answer a question with just the right proportion of deference, humor and sunny self-confidence. As one online reviewer put it, “If you don’t like people, you may not like this ‘hometel.’ ”

An overwhelming number of people do, though. Ett Hem’s concept has been so successful that its 12 guest rooms and artfully scattered dining tables are perpetually booked, which can be a frustration for travelers, especially celebrities and other VIPs who might want to book a few adjacent rooms. (Mix says they often work around the situation by staying elsewhere and hanging out in Ett Hem’s living room and garden.)



A guest room with Mazo TMBO chairs; a tub under an arched ceiling in the attic suite.

Almost as soon as the hotel took off, Mix was already thinking about expanding. She wanted a bigger kitchen, where guests could feel free to join in the daily pasta-making, and more gathering spots for hotel guests as well as friends from the neighborhood who might want to come by for dinner. Just across the garden lay the answer: a second house, built in the same unpretentious arts and crafts style and dating to the same year, 1910. But it was in the hands of another owner, who definitely wasn't selling. By the time the owner came around, Mix says, another problem emerged: "That house is actually connected to a third house. And that's when my neighbor came in."

Living within whistling distance of Ett Hem, in the same tidy neighborhood, is Max Martin, the Swedish music producer who's written or co-written more *Billboard* No. 1 singles—for artists like Taylor Swift, Katy Perry and Britney Spears—than anyone in history outside of Lennon-McCartney. Martin spends part of each year in Los Angeles. But when he's at home, Mix explains, he's often at Ett Hem.



A living area with a custom Studioilse sofa by George Smith and a Hans J. Wegner Papa Bear chair.

"We got to know each other very early on," she says. "I just told him one morning over breakfast, 'You know what, there is finally a possibility to buy the house, but now it's two.' And he said, after a very short breakfast, 'You know what, maybe we should buy it together.'"

When the project was still in the planning stages, Crawford says, she got wind of a sale of Axel Einar Hjorth furnishings and advised Mix to snag as many examples as she could of the Swedish modernist's work, which has since gotten trendy. "Jeanette bought an enormous collection," Crawford boasts. "And now it's unaffordable." One of the multipurpose rooms pairs Hjorth's scoop-backed chairs with a Venetian-red lacquer table and a tubular chandelier that's part Fernand Léger, part Formula 1. It's a journey, literally and figuratively, from there up to the top-floor attic suite, where a hand-painted floral ceiling original to the building and landmarked by the Swedish government dips down to meet paneled walls, lending the space a folktale romanticism.



Axel Einar Hjorth chairs surround a bespoke Studioilse table.

In 2018 they did, and a multiyear construction project began. As she'd done with the first Ett Hem, Mix partnered on the renovation with Ilse Crawford and her London-based design firm, Studioilse. Crawford believes that well-designed interiors can be transformative, and she sees her ongoing assignment in Stockholm as "making this lovely space so that people feel connected and happy the minute they walk in." As far as Mix is concerned, Crawford understood what she was trying to do with Ett Hem at least as well as she did herself, and challenged her to go further than she thought possible.



Vintage Antti Nurmesniemi chairs for lounging.

“I think you two are very aligned in work philosophy,” Alexandra says to her mother before skipping out on dessert. “Because this is a philosophy more than a place, just like you say.”

The new building, known for now as Number 4 (for its address on the street called Sköldungagatan—the original is Number 2), is sunnier and offers better views than the original, with balconies overlooking a puzzle of rooftops and the pleached crab-apple trees in the hotel garden. Crawford and Mix have filled it with a generous ground-floor kitchen, public and private living rooms, 10 guest rooms and a new Relax (Ett Hem—ese for “spa”), while the third building, Number 6, is being converted into three short-stay apartments slated to be ready this winter. The notion of a flat with access to hotel amenities is foreign to Swedes, Mix says: “I think actually, maybe I will be the first one to do it.” To knit Number 6 together with the other houses, the two women de-signed an airy ground-floor gym open to all hotel guests.



The stairway’s carved railings; vintage Swedish vases line the mantel.

A decade ago, Ett Hem sparked a fashion for living rooms with seal-gray walls and low-riding Danish chairs strewn with sheepskins, a cozy combination that continues to play well during Stockholm’s long winters. The new rooms are brighter and quirkier, peppered with contemporary art and rustic-modern furniture arrayed on soft-colored wool rugs.



A powder room with blue floral tiling by Glithero.

Crawford says that, for all its variety, Number 4 has the same DNA and values as Number 2. “But it’s not a copy-paste on any level,” she says. “It would be a development.” There are spaces for flower arranging and for casual public readings, a firelit room for dinner with a friend and an even more enticing spa where you can unwind at the end of the day. Just as crucially, Number 4 offers the staff easier access to fresh linens and the hotel’s 3,000-bottle wine cellar.

“Ett Hem is not a collective, exactly, but very close,” Crawford says. “It’s very much a shared project and a community.” That the venture took root in Sweden is no accident, she adds. “There’s a belief in a better world, and one you can be instrumental in helping to shape. It’s not idealistic—Sweden is all about being together.”



In the garden.

In the months leading up to the summer opening of Number 4, as construction crews worked long and hard to make up for Covid-related delays, Ett Hem made the rounds of the neighborhood with bottles of gratis champagne and small gifts from Svenskt Tenn, the carriage-trade boutique in nearby Östermalm. Neighbors have been among the first to sample the new kitchen’s uncontrived cuisine, served on the hand-glazed ceramics of octogenarian Stockholm potter Birgitta Watz—an extended member of the Ett Hem family whose plates and cups are available for sale if you ask.