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Spring 2018

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One of a kind...

Multi-award-winning The 25 Boutique B&B in Torquay prides itself on a unique approach, says its co-owner **Andy Banner-Price**

To stand out in a crowded market, you've got to be doing something different,' says Andy-Banner Price. He and partner Julian are most definitely doing that. From the vibrant reception to the 'funky' bedrooms, eye-catching décor is the order of the day (and, of course, there's that glorious mannequin). The AA Five Star Gold B&B has won many awards as a result, and was shortlisted for 'Bed and Breakfast of the Year' at the VisitEngland Awards 2018. We ask Andy for his secrets to success.

QM You run a 'boutique' B&B. What does the word boutique mean to you?

ABP It is an over-used term and some people think adding the word to their name is enough to change the fortunes of their business. I think it means small, independently owned, offering an excellent quality product, a more personal service and something a little different. For us, our décor is unique and, as there's only myself and my partner, Julian, we're really interactive with guests.

QM Your décor is amazing. How did you go about creating the look?

ABP I just had fun. Because every room is completely different, I was able to use practically every design idea I've ever had. I wanted to try and get a statement piece for each room and searched the internet a lot for unusual items. What I couldn't find, I made or upcycled to make it my own.

QM Does that décor attract guests?

It helps us get noticed. But this has to be backed up by a great product. We also offer little touches like home-baked daily treats to make our guests' experience more special.

QM And how do your little extras (Nespresso, iPads and fluffy bathrobes in rooms etc) contribute to the success of The 25 Boutique?



Bright idea: Andy and mannequin, an Ebay item painted and repurposed into a lamp

'I wanted a statement piece for each room and searched the internet for unusual items'

ABP When people spend their hard-earned cash on a luxury break, they are looking for something better than they have at home. But one by one the extras become the norm and we are constantly innovating and adding new features such as bathroom TVs, mood lighting and smart room technology.

QM What makes a great B&B breakfast?

ABP People eat with their eyes too. We have thought about the design of the breakfast room, and the presentation, plates, cutlery and linen – they all add to the experience.

QM What is great customer service?

ABP It's about having a good memory and noticing little details. If, the next time they

come, you remember someone likes hot milk with their coffee at breakfast, they feel very special. It's the little things that make the difference. We also ask for feedback proactively, so we can continually improve. We'll never have a finished product.

QM Tell us a funny guest story.

ABP There's the person who asked to go into our private garden, which is only accessible via our flat. When I asked why, he said he had accidentally thrown a part of his electric razor out his window into our flower border!

QM What keeps you awake at night?

ABP Working so hard during the day usually means I'm asleep within minutes!