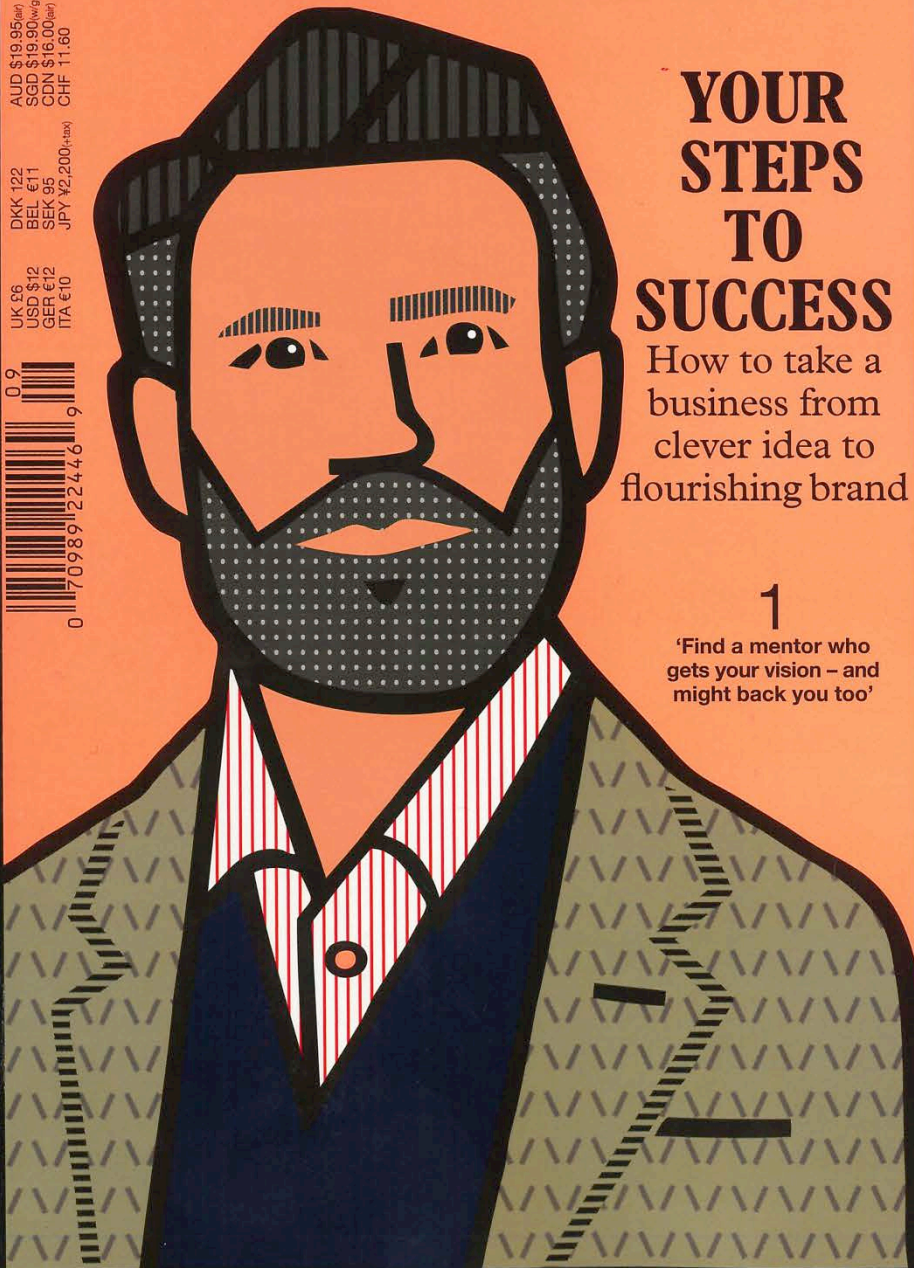


# MONOCLE

**INSIDE: NO MORE EXCUSES – DISCOVER HOW TO START, FIX OR IMPROVE YOUR COMPANY RIGHT NOW!**

**A to F AFFAIRS:** Franco's next move **BUSINESS:** An entrepreneur's reading list **CULTURE:** David Byrne unplugged  
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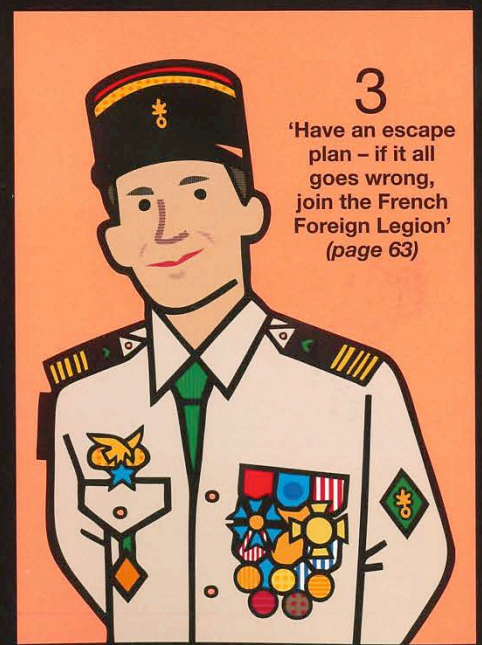
## YOUR STEPS TO SUCCESS

How to take a business from clever idea to flourishing brand

**1**  
'Find a mentor who gets your vision – and might back you too'



**2**  
'Pick your battles: not all tech needs to be deployed'



**3**  
'Have an escape plan – if it all goes wrong, join the French Foreign Legion' (page 63)

**+ i REPORT:** Paris, Austin, Melbourne: three hot hotels to have on speed dial. How to build an **OFFICE** for a start-up maverick and well-honed family firm. A Paris design store that's **BEST IN CLASS**. Plus: late summer **RESORT GUIDES**.



DESTINATION. . .  
*Austin*

## 2. WALK THE LINE.

*Austin’s old landmark HOTEL has been REINVIGORATED without erasing its sense of place and with firm RESPECT for its mid-century design heritage.*



- (1) Room with Patricia Urquiola’s suede sofa
- (2) Park-facing balconies
- (3) Personal butler
- (4) Brass numbering
- (5) Chef Kristen Kish
- (6) Downtown views
- (7) Not a cowboy hat in sight
- (8) Cement fireplace in the lobby
- (9) Cedar panelling
- (10) Arched windows of the renovated exterior

5



6



8



9



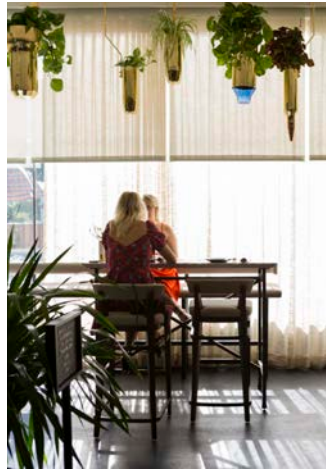
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Forget most of what you’ve heard about Texas. Scrap the clichés of gunslingers and dry, dusty terrain because the Lone Star state’s capital, Austin, is nothing like that. And nor is the arrival of The Line – the latest hotel from the Sydell Group – in the heart of downtown. And yet to claim that The Line Austin entirely steers clear of references to what was once the Wild West would be a little misleading.

“How do you pay tribute to where you are without going over the top?” says Isadora McKeon, the group’s VP of creative and culture, stepping into the lobby of the 1960s modernist building, which formerly housed a Radisson hotel. Designer Sean Knibb, who also created The Line’s first space in LA, found the answer: “You try to tell a story and make it simple and funny.”

With the help of playful details, the hotel’s interior nods to what Texas is famed for – but in the subtlest of ways. In fact, blink and you’ll miss the tiny plastic horse perched on the ledge above the door, or the bullhorns over the minibar.

The guest rooms portray a side of Texas that is less well known: they reflect the greenery of surrounding Hill Country with its natural springs and smattering of vineyards. One of the great boons of the hotel is its location on the edge of Town Lake (a reservoir on the Colorado River). This is referenced in the headboards made from sandblasted plywood to recreate the look of a riverbed, while the metallic, multi-bulb hanging lights from HBA resemble the fireflies that circle the property at night.



1

Indeed, whereas The Line celebrates its environment, Sydell Group CEO Andrew Zobler says that the Radisson had done everything it could to obscure it, including installing a giant fish tank that blocked the view of the lake. “The whole point of this place is that you want to come in and look at the natural landscape.”

The Line revels in its mishmash of influences. The entrance porte-cochère has been stripped back, with its concrete structure exposed to enhance the brutalist flourishes of the building, mirrored in the lobby’s

exposed columns and hulking cement fireplace. Inside, woodwork from Michael Wilson is paired with brightly coloured flip-back chairs that nod to mid-century Italy, and planters shaped like bullet casings that hark back to the Texas we know from Westerns. The slightly risqué reference has led the hotel to install plaques explaining the old-meets-new symbolism.

When fully completed later this year, The Line Austin will have 428 rooms, meaning that it’s too big to be “boutique”. However, Zobler argues that it is tapping into a gap in the market as a large hotel with ample meeting space but one that also manages to be personal and multifaceted.

With a restaurant that serves inventive, beautifully presented dishes prepared by chef Kristen Kish, an infinity pool and the promise of a burger bar and rooftop lounge to follow later in the year, it would be hard to argue that he’s wrong. — EJS  
[thelinehotel.com/austin](http://thelinehotel.com/austin)

## WEEKEND GUIDE: AUSTIN

It’s all about the great outdoors in Austin so head for an alfresco beer spot or for a paddle around Town Lake.

### EAT & DRINK

#### Dinner: Arlo Grey

Texas may be famed for its distinctly unsubtle barbecue but Kish’s food is brimming with flavour and beautifully presented. The beef tartare is a must, as is the steamed striped sea bass. The wine list includes a Texan rosé if you want to try a Hill Country offering.  
 +1 512 478 2991

#### Drinks: Yellow Jacket Social Club

A no-frills bar that does beer and more beer – but you’re here for the patio, one of the things Austin knows how to do like no other city. This tree-filled East Austin beauty is one of the best.  
[yellowjacketsocialclub.com](http://yellowjacketsocialclub.com)

### DANCE

#### Broken Spoke

Yes Austin is cosmopolitan and diverse but you’re in Texas so take advantage by going to this hold-out honky-tonk from 1964. Admire cowboys moving their booted feet around the dance floor; join in or simply watch from the sidelines.  
[brokenspokeaustintx.net](http://brokenspokeaustintx.net)

### EXPLORE

It’s all about the outdoors here so hop in a kayak and take to the lake, or take a plunge in the spring-fed swimming pool that is Barton Springs. Further afield there are other swimming opportunities at Jacob’s Well and Hamilton Pool Preserve.  
[texasrowingcenter.com](http://texasrowingcenter.com)