Mama Shelter Lille
Lille, Nord-Pas-de-Calais, France

8/10
Telegraph expert rating

"Mama Shelter brings its playful and affordable design to Lille with a hotel housed in a massive purpose-built building near the city's two train stations. Expect ultra-comfortable rooms, quirky style details, and a lively bar and restaurant which have quickly become a new hotspot on the city’s social scene."
By Nicola Leigh Stewart, Travel Writer

7/10 Location

The hotel is excellently located for access to Lille’s two train stations, with Gare Lille Europe just seven-minutes by foot, and Gare Lille Flandres just a four-minute walk away.

Although there isn’t anything in the way of entertainment around the hotel, Vieux-Lille, the historic old town of Lille and its array of restaurants, cafés, and boutiques is just a 10-minute walk away.
Style and Character

The new hotel, purpose-built for Mama Shelter, makes a rather imposing impression on the Lille skyline. You certainly don’t need to worry about getting lost; you can spot the building’s distinctive pointed roof and large Mama Shelter sign from the near the train station.

Inside, the new address lacks some of the character of other properties, which have lived previous lives before joining the Mama Shelter gang, but the newness of the building does lend itself well to chain’s contemporary urban style, with concrete grey walls, dark carpets, and the brand’s signature black ceiling (brightened up with coloured chalk graffiti) in the public areas.

The restaurant and bar feel more fun though; a mix of clashing colours, jazzy prints, and rattan furniture. In addition to Mama Shelter’s ubiquitous table football, there are also retro-style arcade games dotted around which you can play for free.
Service and Facilities

Service is warm, friendly, and consistently spot-on. Even as the restaurant got packed out on a Saturday night, the service didn’t falter and the team remained enthusiastic and efficient.

Mama Shelter isn’t known for offering guests tons of facilities, but Lille appears to have drawn the short straw and has even less than usual. There is the indoor Mama’s Veranda on the sixth floor, with a fantastic 180-degree panoramic view of the city, but unfortunately it’s for private use only.

Lille hasn’t missed out on a restaurant however, and there is also an outdoor terrace and buzzy bar, with live music Thursday through to Sunday. Glass cabinets in reception sell Mama Shelter’s usual branded merchandise, the famed masks, Absolution beauty products, and even a few sexy bedroom toys.

- Bar
- Parking
- Wi-Fi
- Laundry
- Restaurant
Rooms

Compared to Mama Shelter’s other properties, the design is a little more subdued in Lille; think soft shades of blush pink and grey. The accessories inject some of the brand’s bold personality into the design, with an eclectic mix of printed carpets and cushions, a mish mash of furniture (from leather armchairs to plastic tree trunks acting as stools), and the odd pop of citrus yellow.

The hotel’s signature and now very Instagrammable masks can be found on each bedside lamp, if you fancy playing dress-up. Bedding is up to the same five-star standard as all other properties in the group, and the huge beds and fluffy duvets feel heavenly after a long day of sightseeing.

On one side of the building, rooms have a view over a park and its fairly urban backdrop, on the other side rooms enjoy a more picturesque vista of Lille. One thing worth noting, although it’s proximity to Lille’s two train stations is very handy, it does mean you can hear the train announcements when they’re running. Request a room on the fourth floor or below if you want to be sure of more peace.

The bathrooms are a good size, as are the powerful rain showers. Toiletries are courtesy of organic beauty brand Absolution. In each room you’ll also find a television with a choice of 50 regularly rotating films for some in-room entertainment. There are no tea or coffee making facilities, but you’re welcome to bring drinks up from the restaurant and bar.
Food and Drink

Mama Shelter has knack for serving up crowd pleasing hearty fare, and the Lille outpost is no exception. As with other properties, there are a few firm favourites on the menu, overseen by three-Michelin star chef Guy Savoy, as well as local cuisine such as the Welsh (€18 [£13]), which is Lille’s take on Welsh Rarebit, a dish was has been enthusiastically adopted by the city as one of their own. Be warned that although dishes are described as generous, they are in fact almost obscenely large. You can pace yourself, but to be honest it’s worth sharing. There’s a decent wine list, a few local beers, and the cocktails, which I usually find too sweet at Mama Shelter, have a bit more of a kick here.

You should also come hungry for breakfast, which typically of Mama Shelter is an all-you-can-squeeze-in grand buffet of fruit, yogurt and granola, French cheese and charcuterie, crusty loaves of bread to be slathered with jam or Nutella, and as much tea, coffee, and thick hot chocolate as you want. There is also a good selection of hot dishes (eggs, sausages, cooked tomatoes and so on) and crèpes.
Value for Money
Double rooms from €69 (£59), year-round. Breakfast is €18 (£15). Free Wi-Fi.

Access for guests with disabilities?
Yes, there is a lift to all floors and one room with wheelchair access on each.

Family-Friendly?
Yes. Large Double Mama rooms, which come with two double beds, and XXL Mama rooms, which come with a double and a sofa bed, are well-suited to families. Cots are also available upon request, charged at €15 (£13). The hotel also organises activities during the Sunday brunch to entertain children while parents tuck in.

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