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Group

Dynamic

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With its team of high-profile designers, chefs, and nightlife impresarios, SBE has opened a crop of well-received, event-ready spaces—and has more in the works.

Multi-hyphenate Sam Nazarian helms **SBE**, the entertainment group known for its varied collection of nightclubs, restaurants, and hotel properties that consistently draw event crowds and style-minded consumers. Its current roster of spaces ranges in size from paparazzi-magnet Hyde, which holds 80, to the gay-friendly Abbey, which holds 700, with many options in between.

Nazarian's partnerships with designer Philippe Starck, chefs Katsuya Uechi and José Andrés, and nightlife impresarios Brent Bolthouse and David Cooley help maintain a consistent look and feel across all SBE venues, despite differences in the details. "Building lasting brands that resonate with our guests has been a key focus for SBE," Nazarian says, "and we have been fortunate to find partners with a vision to help build those brands."

Among SBE's recent projects is the second location of **Katsuya**. The group didn't intend to create an exact replica of the Brentwood original when it opened in Hollywood in October. Starck worked on the intimate dining room, which offers leather sofas, flickering candles, and dramatic photos of Japanese women smeared with lipstick—echoes of the venue's Westside counterpart—but knives suspended in Lucite blocks and tapestries hanging from the 40-foot ceiling around the sushi bar are distinctly Hollywood. When the next two Katsuyas open—at the Americana at Brand shopping center in Glendale this spring and at downtown's L.A. Live in the fall—they'll take on characteristics of their neighborhoods, too.

Next to Katsuya Hollywood is **S Bar**, a concept dreamed up with Bolthouse and Starck, which opened in October. Floor-to-ceiling trompe l'oeil images of Versailles cover the walls, lamps hang from the ceiling, and mismatched sofas and ottomans are scattered around the room. SBE's in-house mixologist designed the cocktail menu. According to SBE, S Bar's early acclaim might prompt the group to open more S Bars adjacent to future Katsuyas.

Also in the works is a Starck-designed supper club, tentatively called **Slab**, which is expected to take over the recently closed Privilege space by late summer. (Privilege was a West Hollywood nightclub that changed decor—a ski resort theme, St. Tropez—every quarter.) SBE has also transformed Lobby into the design-heavy **Foxtail**, an Art Deco-meets-early-'60s-London-style restaurant and club, expected to open in February.



The Hollywood location is the second outpost for Katsuya.



SBE may open multiple locations of S Bar.

Sam Nazarian is the multi-hyphenate behind SBE.



By late summer, SBE plans to open the **SLS Beverly Hills** in the former Le Meridien hotel. With SLS, the group is looking to fill a niche. "We are examining and rethinking every possible aspect of the luxury hotel experience," Nazarian says. That means blending the service you'd find at a Four Seasons with the personality of a boutique like Chateau Marmont.

SLS Beverly Hills will have two lobbies—one for guests only and one for the public. The idea is to ensure there's a lively space with a restaurant and lounge (called the **Bazaar**), which hotel guests can

avoid if they prefer. Starck signed a 15-year deal to design this and future SLS properties, and chef Andrés is responsible for all food and beverage services.

Future hotel projects for SBE include the Ritz Plaza in Miami, which will open in 2009. And the group has purchased the Sahara in Las Vegas, which will likely relaunch in 2010. —Lesley Balla