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New York's Most Legendary Hotel Has Just Reopened After a Multi *BILLION*-dollar Renovation

The OG of Manhattan hotels, The Waldorf Astoria is back - and more beautiful than ever

By: Chris Dwyer
Impressions: 395,546



Give Us the Skinny

There's simply no more glamorous, historic or legendary hotel in NYC than the Waldorf Astoria New York, an icon which came to define the finest in five-star hospitality and subsequently gave rise to the global luxury brand. Previous residents and guests have included Marilyn Monroe, Frank Sinatra, Barack Obama and Paris Hilton— now *that* would be a dinner party—but this 1931 Art Deco beauty has never looked finer than

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today, following a multi-year renovation costing upwards of US\$2 billion and featuring the intricate dexterity of hundreds of artists and craftspeople.

The Vibe



Park Avenue Lobby

That astonishing investment of time and money has resulted in an achingly beautiful restoration of a property which has the magnetic vibe to match its unmatched backstory and refined location. Heritage, luxury and high society combine to sultry effect at the revamped Waldorf Astoria New York, especially in Peacock Alley where people-watching is all the rage—but warm, friendly staff throughout ensure that it never slips into parody.

The Location

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Park Avenue Premier One Bedroom Suite Living Space



Park Avenue Premier One Bedroom Suite Living + Dining

Covering an entire city block on Park Avenue between 49th and 50th, the Waldorf Astoria New York is enviably located in the heart of Manhattan's business, leisure and culture nexus. Some of the world's finest and most alluring retail therapy sits just steps away on Madison and Fifth Avenues, while Grand Central Station, The Chrysler Building, Central Park, MOMA and Broadway are all less than a mile away.

The Rooms

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One Bedroom Suite Bedroom



One Bedroom Suite Living Space

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One Bedroom Suite Bathroom

The hotel once had more than 1,400 rooms, but today there are just 375, meaning that they're some of the most generously sized around, starting at 570 sq ft. Separate living, working and sleeping zones mean that all 11 categories of rooms and suites feel like private apartments, with understated design motifs that reflect the hotel's illustrious Art Deco past. There's every comfort you'd expect, seamless tech, dreamy Frette linen beds and spa-like bathrooms with Aseop amenities – and yes, super-soft robes to make @bathrobemafia proud.

The Crowd

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Peacock Alley with Cole Porter Piano

Affluent Manhattanites, Fifth Avenue fashionistas and cosmopolitan international travelers recreate the Gilded Age with a dose of High Society—aptly, given that its famed composer Cole Porter was another longtime former resident. His original Steinway piano, complete with stains from his Martini glasses, is played nightly in Peacock Alley. A shout-out, too, in this pet-friendly property to four-legged guests such as Bonnie, a German shepherd husky cross I met with gorgeous blue eyes.

The Food and Drink

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Cocktails



Peacock Alley

For such a sizeable property, it's surprising that the Waldorf Astoria New York has only three dining and drinking destinations. But what they may lack in number, they more than make up for in flawless execution and experience.

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Peacock Alley is the beating heart of the hotel, an uber-chic lounge housing the jaw-dropping Waldorf Astoria clock formerly owned by Queen Victoria—and the genesis of the hotel's famed 'Meet me at the clock' mantra. Elevated bar staples pair with cocktails by Jeff Bell of PDT fame. The Empire Old Fashioned crafted from Makers Mark, apple apéritif, demerara and cardamom bitters was Mad Men in a glass.



Lex Yard

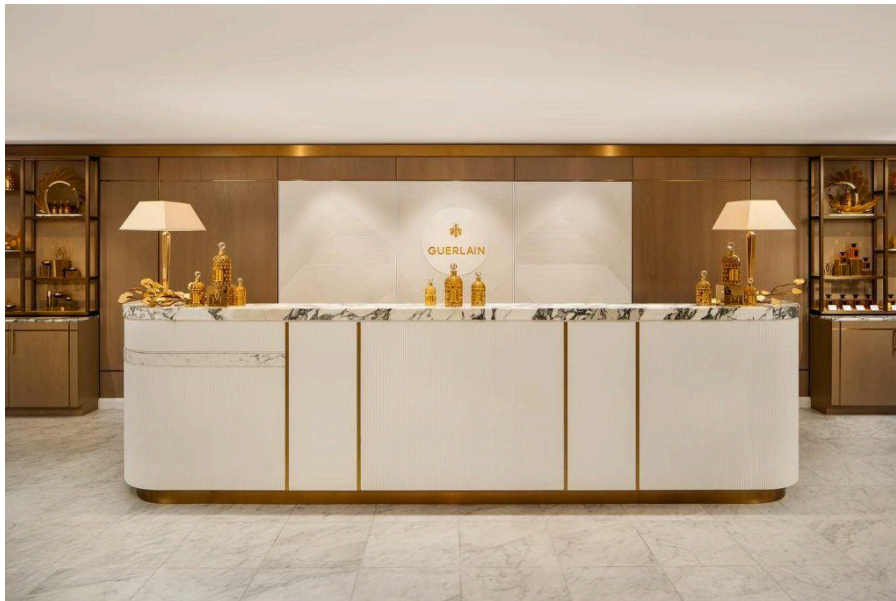
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Thanks to designers AvroKO, Lex Yard is another visually stunning space, an American brasserie open for breakfast, lunch and dinner by Chef Michael Anthony. Already loved by New Yorkers for Gramercy Tavern, his plates celebrate peerless American ingredients such as Elysian Fields lamb chops to brilliant effect.

Finally, there's Yokoshu, an intimate spot which served up one of the finest kaiseki menus I've had outside of Japan. The lobby setting is yet another stunner as beautifully restored murals and a mosaic—featuring 148,000 hand cut tiles—vie for attention with perfectly executed plates like toro tartare with caviar and king crab with tosazu jelly.

Experience Matters



Guerlain Wellness Spa

I was lucky to check out the Guerlain Wellness Spa before it had officially opened and the 22,000-square-foot sanctuary is set to change the game for wellness in Manhattan. It's supremely serene and a slightly surreal contrast to the always-on city just a few floors below. With 16 treatment rooms, a cryotherapy chamber, infra-red sauna, steam room and Moroccan hammam, the approach is based on Guerlain's four wellness pillars of nutrition, movement, sleep, and mindfulness. My therapist Mimi was an absolute magician, righting years of bad posture in a heavenly 90-minute deep tissue session.

The Service

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Porte-cochere

Always smiling and approachable, the service team were a delight throughout the stay, from doormen to the Spa and front desk to the restaurants. The Waldorf Astoria New York is a huge property and when I got lost on my first day, a housekeeping staff member noticed, before sweetly and proactively intervening to help me find my way to dinner.

Would We Visit again?

In a heartbeat. In the musical *Anything Goes*, Cole Porter penned the famous line “I get a kick out of you.” He wrote it while living at the Waldorf Astoria New York—and it’s easy to see why.

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