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A historic Manhattan building houses the third Edition hotel

By JOANN GRECO
Photography by NIKOLAS KOENIG





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It's not as if Rockwell Group had been charged with transforming the Chrysler Building into a hotel but in reimagining the iconic Metropolitan Life Insurance tower as the New York Edition, the locally based firm picked up quite a gauntlet. Once Manhattan's tallest skyscraper and modeled on St Mark's Campanile in Venice's Piazza San Marco, the building is distinguished by a cupola with porthole-shaped windows and a four-sided clock that's acted as a beacon on the skyline for decades.

And though working on one of the city's foremost heritage buildings is an exciting opportunity and "a very rare chance," says partner Shawn Sullivan, "it does come with complications." Chief among the challenges: the unusual floor plates of the 1909 office building, which created more than a dozen different guestroom layouts to work with.

"Every Edition has unique solutions to

different design and architecture problems," says hotelier Ian Schrager, who created the brand that's managed by Marriott International. Each of the properties that have opened thus far (in London, Istanbul, and Miami Beach) "have the same attitude, ethos, and approach," he adds, "but are all distinctive visually and with a different feel and different offerings."

Sullivan and his team (in collaboration with Schrager's in-house team) started with the similarities. "The guideposts are to use high-quality materials in simple, modern ways—to reinterpret luxury," he says. "For New York, Ian had a very poetic inspiration for the tower to feel like a classic Manhattan apartment building" with beautiful molding, large rooms, and ornate paneling. "We wanted concrete, but thick and hand-rubbed; plaster, but not decorative."

Visitors step into a lobby clad in timeless

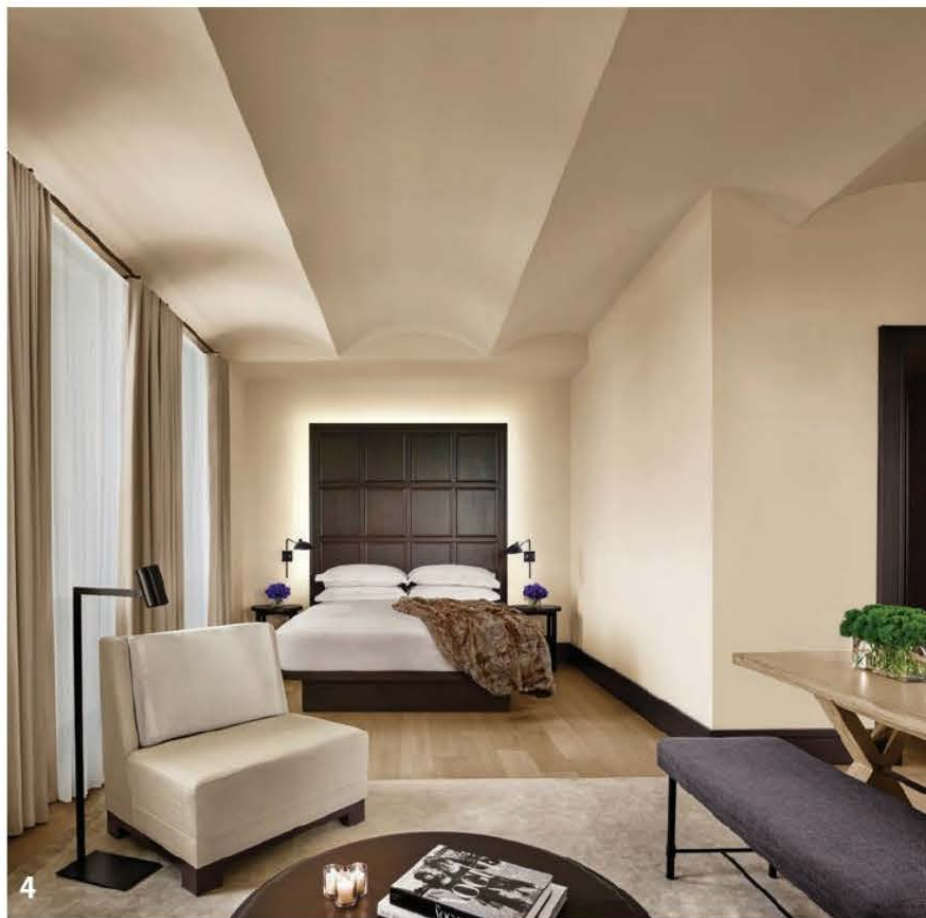
1. A winding staircase wrapped in a curving plaster shell leads the way from the New York Edition's lobby to the second floor and restaurant.

2. In the lobby, Schrager's signature bar glows amber, topped by a black walnut bartop and fronted by barstools done in dark brown leather and green velvet.



3. Modernist-inspired chairs in oatmeal tones cozy up to the lobby's 30-foot-long, hand-forged blackened steel fireplace.

4. The neutral guestroom palette is complemented by dark walnut headboards and contoured ceilings that mimic the building's original vaulting.



materials: limestone floors, concrete window casings, plaster walls, and beamed ceilings. "Everything here is new," Sullivan explains, "but it's suggestive of what might have been." Custom coffee tables and chairs are inspired by 1920s designers like Jean-Michel Frank; off to the left a mahogany desk and paneling mark the reception area; to the right, a bar featuring Schragger's signature striking glowing backbar, made from amber-colored glass with an acrylic diffuser, is lined with barstools upholstered in bright green velvet and dark brown leather. The lobby's most dramatic piece, however, is a winding solid wood stair wrapped in a swooping shell of plaster. "It's a feature staircase but with no bells and whistles," says Sullivan.

The stairs lead to Clocktower restaurant by restaurateur Stephen Starr, laid out as a series of paneled rooms with original architectural details such as fireplaces, plaster ceilings, and extensive millwork. "We restored everything, then came up with a concept for the restaurant that was all about intimacy," says Sullivan. Diners are greeted by a billiards lounge with amethyst accents. To the right is a circular gold-leafed bar presided over by an opalescent globe chandelier. To the left are the dining rooms

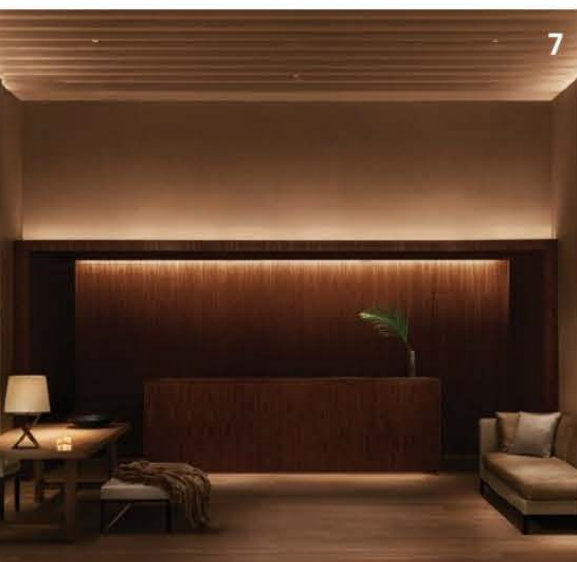




5. Vintage photography lines the walls above the wainscoting in the sapphire-toned dining room.

6. An iridescent globe chandelier hangs above the circular gold-leafed bar.

7. A mahogany desk and paneling sit under beamed ceilings in the reception area.



in ruby, emerald, and sapphire tones, all laden with photos and paintings hanging above the wainscoting and revolving around a different central theme (New York artists and musicians, say, or edgy city life). “The art brings each room to life,” he adds.

The 273 guestrooms, by contrast, are an exercise in minimalism with neutral palettes enhanced by dark walnut headboards, plank flooring, and contoured ceilings designed to echo the building’s original vaulting. “We obsessed over details like these,” Sullivan says. “The finish, hand, and polish of all of the surfaces were incredibly important.” hd

rockwellgroup.com; editionhotels.com

New York Edition

Owner

Abu Dhabi Investment Authority

Management Company

Marriott International

Architect of Record

AAI Architects, New York

Interior Design Firms

Ian Schrager Company, New York, and Rockwell Group, New York

Interior Design Project Teams

Ian Schrager Company: Michael Overington, Paul Haslhofer, Robert Ashton, Kirstin Bailey, and Gilles-Fleur Boutry

Rockwell Group: David Rockwell, Shawn Sullivan, Jae Chang, Saerom Moon, Ashley Yoon, Michael Horowitz, Erica Klopman, Insun Cho, Stephen Croke, Marek Kusio, James O'Meara, and Elle Sears

Purchasing Firm

Purchasing Associates

Engineers

DeSimone Consulting Engineers (structural) and ADS Engineers (MEP)

Lighting

Isometrix Lighting Design, Fisher Marantz Stone, and WALD Studio

A/V

EL Media Group

Acoustics

Shen Milsom & Wilke

Kitchen

Next Step Design

LOBBY, LOBBY LOUNGE, BAR, AND GALLERY

Area Rug

Masland Carpets & Rugs

Spiral Staircase

Fabricated by Empire Metal

Concierge Desk

Christian Liaigre

Fabric and Upholstery

Christian Liaigre, Donghia, Bramson House, Holly Hunt, and Kvadrat

Wood Blinds

Bramson House

Lighting

CRW Lighting and Christian Liaigre

Leather

Tiger Leather

Tables

Coast to Coast Designs, Shimna, Plantation, and ARTCO International

Seating

Cassina Contract, Matzform, A. Rudin, Quality and Company, and M2L

GOLD BAR, CLOCKTOWER RESTAURANT, AND DINING HALL

Host Station

Shimna

Upholstery

Holly Hunt, Upper South Studio, and Edelman Leather

Lighting

Christian Liaigre and Eric Schmitt

Dining Tables

Saint-Damase and Shimna

Seating

Artistic Frame and B&B Italia

Wood Blinds

Bramson House

Billiard Table

Blatt Billiards

GUESTROOM

Area Rug

Masland Contract

Artwork

Milton Bleier and Trunk Archive

Artist

Melvin Sokolsky

Throw Pillows

Quality and Company

Bed Throw

Archipelago Design

Drapery

Fabricated by Bramson House; textiles by James Hare and Kravet

Lighting

Siena Lighting, Neidhardt, and Atelier de Troupe

Upholstery

Pierre Frey, Brochier, Kravet, and Casamance

Leather

Crest Leather and Demar Leather Company

Seating

Quality and Company, A. Rudin, and David Edward

Furniture

Saint-Damase

Minibar, Headboard, Nightstand, and Desk
Stickley