

Making an Impression

Apr 15, 2008 12:00 PM, By Eric Stoessel

From a former Masonic Temple in Rhode Island to the trendy and hip hot spot on the other side of the country in San Diego, this year's class of design stars has it all.

We've got chic at the Huntley Hotel in Santa Monica, CA, sleek at the Radisson Lexington Hotel in New York City. We've got classy at the Renaissance Providence in Rhode Island, sassy at the Hard Rock in San Diego. We've got a mix of old and bold in the reuse projects of the Embassy Suites Hotel by Hilton Montreal and Hotel Cass, Mag Mile in Chicago. We've got east meeting west at Hotel Kabuki in San Francisco's Japantown.

The editors of *Lodging Hospitality* have chosen these seven hotels to highlight in the magazine's 15th year of design awards.

Magnificent, for sure, these seven wonders are worth checking out.

Renaissance Providence Hotel

Providence, RI

Interior Design: ForrestPerkins

FORRESTPERKINS BREATHED LIFE INTO WHAT WAS the doomed Masonic Temple. The original building was intended to be the cultural and historic center of the vibrant city, but construction was halted because of the Great Depression.

More than 70 years later, the nine-story, 274-room Renaissance Providence Hotel has been reborn. Inspired by its original intent, the design "conveys a sense of grandeur and theater befitting the hotel's location adjacent to the State Capitol and the city's concert hall," says Cliff Tuttle, senior vice president of ForrestPerkins. "Guests feel as though they are on stage in a rich, theatrical, yet boutique-style atmosphere with a strong connection to the history of the city."

The grand lobby features inlaid marble floors, while rich textures and sumptuous fabrics and trims in the lobby lounge allow guests to relax in front of a stately fireplace.

Hard Rock Hotel

San Diego

Interior Design: Graham Downes

KNOWN FOR HIS CHIC, CONTEMPORARY DESIGNS, GRAHAM DOWNES has taken it to another level with the twin, 12-story towers featuring 420 rooms. This first branded condo-hotel in San Diego opened in January with an edgy, modern twist.

The rock 'n' roll theme starts as guests enter their hip suites to the sounds of Jukebox of the 10

feature a vibrant color palette, textured materials, rich ebony wood floors and stark geometric shapes. No two suites look the same, so return customers will always be able to sing a new tune.

The Rock Star Suite, designed by the Grammy-Award-winning Black Eyed Peas, was designed with personal touches from every member of the band. The group handpicked everything from furniture to linens.

Embassy Suites Hotel by Hilton Montreal

Montreal

Interior Design: Nicole Vekemans

THE 210-SUITE HOTEL DEBUTED amid modern office constructions and renovated older buildings in Old Montreal last August. The adaptive reuse project converted an apartment-condo complex into a luxury hotel providing modern comfort without being exorbitant, bringing together the old and new feel of the neighboring buildings.

A general sense of space was created throughout the property using a gentle tone-on-tone technique with cream, off-white and taupe colors accented with red to add vibrancy.

The most visible space of the hotel is the 20-foot-high lobby that makes certain the interior courtyard, a continuation of the Old Montreal city walls, is clearly visible.

Radisson Lexington Hotel

New York City

Interior Design: Stonehill & Taylor

AN EXHAUSTIVE TWO-YEAR RENOVATION brought the Radisson Lexington Hotel back to its 1920s heyday, mixing bold colors and sensual materials to give the hotel a part-Hollywood, part-Jazz Age feel.

Stonehill & Taylor kept the hotel's Art Deco style in the lobby and bar, but injected a little sex appeal. New custom-designed red area rugs and red, black and silver mohair and leather seating stand out against the new white wall covering and the original brown- and white-stone floors. The same feel extends to the hotel's 600 guestrooms and suites with all new furnishings, carpeting, wall coverings, doors and accessories. Vintage black-and-white photography brings a sense of the city's storied past to each room.

Huntley Hotel

Santa Monica, CA

Interior Design: Thomas Schoos

AFTER AN \$18-MILLION RENOVATION, the new presidential suite is the Huntley Hotel's crown jewel. Set on the 17th floor with breathtaking views, the one-of-a-kind suite is adaptable to each guest with sliding doors on either side of the room that can open and close to customize the space for entertaining or privacy.

Modern furnishings include a sleek, linear leather sofa, lounge chairs and floor-to-ceiling

bathtub, a dedicated LCD TV, a separate water closet and shower area.

The renovation also included all the guestrooms, suites, public areas and restaurant.

Hotel Cass Mag Mile, Holiday Inn Express

Chicago

Interior Design: Gettys

GETTYS TOOK INSPIRATION FROM THE EXPRESSION “where the ornate meets the contemporary” in this \$16-million redevelopment of the 1920s Beaux Arts building. The urban 175-room Holiday Inn Express celebrated its grand opening in October.

The updated formal entry features a fluid glass and steel porte cochere, welcoming guests into a more simplistic, contemporary styling inside the lobby.

Guestroom interiors combine the classic, yet contemporary layering of white tones, crisp linens and sculptural furnishings with a focus on modern conveniences like a large, flat-panel TV screen. Artwork highlights in vogue fashions of the past and reminds guests that the hotel is located in the heart of Chicago's fashionable Magnificent Mile corridor.

Hotel Kabuki

San Francisco

Interior Design: Gensler Design

INSPIRED BY THE RITUALS AND CUSTOMS OF JAPANESE CULTURE, the iconic Miyako Hotel was transformed by Joie de Vivre Hospitality into Hotel Kabuki. Known for furos (deep soaking tubs), tokonomas (ornamental alcoves) and rice paper shoji screens, the new boutique hotel underwent a complete makeover of its 218 guestrooms, suites and public spaces.

The upgraded furnishings, décor, finishes and amenities are respectful interpretations of traditional Japanese culture. Serene gardens and a koi pond flank the lobby, while the two traditional Japanese-style suites are furnished with tatami mats, futon beds and deep-soaking tubs overlooking a Japanese sand garden. The hotel offers a complimentary tea service, nightly sake and wine hour and weekly Japanese cultural classes.