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As the Famed Waldorf Astoria Is Reimagined Into Luxe Residences, Take an Exclusive First Look at the Stunning Interiors

For the first time in its history, you can own a piece of this New York icon.

By Laura Itzkowitz

Impressions: 1,400,000



Courtesy Waldorf Astoria

The Waldorf Astoria may have had famous residents like Marilyn Monroe, Cole Porter, and Frank Sinatra, but now for the first time in its history, you can actually own a piece of this New York icon. Born out of a family feud between William Waldorf Astor and John Jacob Astor IV, the legendary hotel has been closed since 2017 for a top-to-bottom renovation courtesy of its new owners, China's Dajia Insurance Group (formerly Anbang Insurance Group), which purchased it for \$2 billion in 2014.

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The most significant change is the creation of the Towers of the Waldorf Astoria, which will take up just over half of the building's footprint atop the hotel when it reopens in 2022. There will be 375 new homes and 50,000 square feet of amenities in the residences, plus 375 keys and 100,000 square feet of amenities on the hotel side. Departures got an exclusive look at the residences and the luxurious new amenities spaces open exclusively to residents and their guests.



Entering through the private residential porte-cochere and walking through the lobby, you might feel like you're entering a palace with subtle nods to the building's history. Though the Waldorf-Astoria is one of the world's most famous examples of Art Deco architecture, renowned Parisian designer Jean-Louis Deniot, who's responsible for the residences, insists he wanted to allude to that architectural typology without being too literal about it.

"It gives you the impression of New York in the '30s, but it's a translation of it, because we're not living in the '30s anymore, so there's no reason to recreate something," Deniot told Departures, adding, "It's all about the Waldorf DNA rather than the actual era."

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The subtle allusions to Art Deco continue into the apartments and amenities spaces, though Deniot describes the lines he used as “very sleek lines which could be slightly cubist.” Apartments range from gracious studios starting at \$1.7 million to a nearly 3,000-square-foot four-bedroom penthouse starting at a cool \$18.5 million. For the layouts, Deniot combined the best of Parisian and American traditions, placing the rooms enfilade (where one room flows into the next with doors aligned for a sense of perspective) and creating American-style open kitchens with custom cabinetry crafted by Molteni&C. “It gives the impression that you’re overlooking a very sexy bar, like a cigar bar, instead of having a functional kitchen. So it inspires people to have fun, pop a bottle of champagne,” Deniot says.

The luxe finishes continue into the bedrooms and bathrooms, which feature Italian marble, tile mosaics with a Waldorf-Astoria pattern, polished marble countertops,

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nickel fixtures, and mirrors with a backlit frame, which, according to Deniot, “gives that amazing glow that makes every woman look like a trillion dollars.”

Residents will have exclusive access to 50,000 square feet of amenities, including a 25-meter pool (the first pool in the Waldorf Astoria’s history), a wellness center with a gym and private spas for men and women, the lush winter garden, the presidential library, the grand salon, private dining room, wine tasting room, billiards room, children’s playroom, performance space, and co-working space.



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“The amenities are exactly the amenities you would find in a private castle,” says Deniot, who has ample experience designing private palaces in the Middle East and Europe. He wanted to give residents stunning spaces they will be proud to show off to friends and family and apartments they can adapt to their needs and taste. “You always have a winter garden in any palace, so you have a winter garden which I did at the end of the pool,” he says, explaining that a ballroom was demolished to make way for the double-height pool, which was inspired by a Japanese kimono and Pompeii.

Everywhere you look, the exquisite materials and attention to detail are meant to impress. You can just imagine the fabulous parties these spaces will host—they seem almost like film sets for a modern-day version of *The Great Gatsby*.

“You have the impression that you will write amazing stories—you need great characters, you need people larger than life,” Deniot concludes. “It cannot be too conservative, it needs to have that sense of decadence, which the Waldorf Astoria was all about.”

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