



Boutique's Elites

Twelve top-tier hospitality projects took home the trophies in the sixth annual Boutique Design Awards.

BY MATTHEW HALL

BEST HOTEL
Dream Downtown,
New York
 Handel Architects LLP,
 New York

Converting a building that noted architect Albert Ledner originally designed to house a maritime union hall into a flagship Dream hotel was potentially a nightmare commission for Handel Architects. For example, natural light was scarce within the '60s-era structure. To help overcome that problem, designers took the bold step of removing four floors from the center of the building to create a new pool terrace that's overlooked by guest rooms with balconies. Beyond that, the Handel team worked to saturate the hotel interiors with the Dream brand's trademark mix of the sexy and the surreal. That includes the 200 hand-blown glass globes that float through the lobby and congregate over The Marble Lane restaurant (shown), filling the space with what designers describe as "a magical light cloud." Says competition judge Eric Lam: "The design statement matches perfectly with the name of the establishment. Dream Downtown is vibrant, chic and authentically boutique." The hotel also won a BD Award for Best Exterior (see page 28).

Bruce Damonte



Michael Weber

« BEST OUTDOOR SPACE

Thompson Hotel Toronto, rooftop lounge

By IV Design Associates Inc., Toronto;
Architects Alliance, Toronto

Sitting atop a new 16-story hotel, this rooftop space offers 360-degree panoramic views of downtown Toronto. To help make this 3000-sq.-ft. outdoor locale in the city's Fashion District an "it" destination, designers stocked it with such features as a retractable, full-length glass wall that opens the lounge to outdoor seating, an infinity pool and custom high-tack lounge chairs.

BEST GUEST ROOM »

Kempinski Hotel Yinchuan, China

DiLeonardo International, Warwick, R.I.

This new-build project in a mixed-use tower is designed to offer a five-star introduction to the concept of international luxury to the burgeoning Chinese city it's based in. To that end, designers included such sophisticated touches as bed head-walls with upholstered paneling and dropped ceilings bearing a silver-leaf finish in the guest rooms.



Dennis Fung and Kerun Ip



Ken Hayden

« BEST BATHROOM

Waldorf Astoria Shanghai, China

HBA/Hirsch Bedner Associates, Singapore office

In converting this century-old English Renaissance building into a luxury hotel, designers were asked by the owners to create rooms that would satisfy visiting royalty. That included the rooms' oversized baths, which were made into mini-palaces of marble elegance.