

MANSION GLOBAL

Jean-Louis Deniot on Creating the Next Chapter for a New York Icon

The French architect and designer discusses the transformation of Waldorf Astoria Residences from a historic hotel, his “future classic” aesthetic and more

BY SHIVANI VORA



Jean-Louis Deniot has an aesthetic rooted in a sense of history.
COMPOSITE: SOPHIE DELAPROTE; WALDORF ASTORIA RESIDENCE NEW YORK

The French architect and designer Jean-Louis Deniot has worked on dozens of seven-and-eight-figure projects for private estates and developments worldwide, but designing Waldorf Astoria Residences in New York is his largest and most prolific job to date, he said.

Ten years in the making, Waldorf Astoria Residences are scheduled to debut at the end of this year, along with the historic hotel that originally opened in October 1931. “Scale-wise, nothing has been comparable, and being hired to design the residences has opened up many other doors for me professionally,” he told Mansion Global.

Waldorf Astoria Residences are located in an Art Deco building in Midtown Manhattan. They comprise 375 condominiums ranging in price from \$1.8 million to more than \$20 million and three floors of amenities totaling 50,000 square feet. They include a theater, four bars, a library, an indoor garden, a chef’s kitchen and a 25-meter swimming pool. The hotel will have 375 rooms and multiple dining options and event spaces.

Deniot, 50, who divides his time between Tangier, Morocco; Paris and New York, spoke to Mansion Global about his style, the challenges of working on a historic building and where he sees the future of design going.

Mansion Global: How would you describe your overall design aesthetic?

Jean-Louis Deniot: My aesthetic is rooted in a sense of history, yet it remains timeless. It's crafted to be captivating, imbued with high energy and a fresh perspective. It's what I call a "future classic."

How do you adapt your aesthetic to different locales while maintaining your style?

It's a matter of finding that delicate balance between the familiar and the novel, the comforting and the thrilling. A good design is like a great meal—it doesn't matter if you're cooking in Asia, Europe or the Americas; the key is adapting to your ingredients. Infuse local flavors and use native materials. It's about respecting the terroir, if you will, and creating something that feels truly site-specific.



The Waldorf Astoria first opened in 1931.

For the Waldorf Astoria Residences New York, how did you achieve a sense of privacy and tranquility amid the hustle and bustle of Manhattan?

We designed spaces that feel deeply personal. Each resident will have their own "favorite corner," a place where they can retreat and feel truly at home. It's about creating a sense of territory within the building, an extension of themselves. The design carefully considers the scale of the building and the needs of its residents. The amenities and layout are all designed to create a sense of flow and connection while also providing opportunities for privacy and retreat.

Waldorf Astoria New York is such an iconic building in New York City. How did its legacy influence your design approach for the residences?

The building's French-inspired architecture resonated deeply with my own aesthetic sensibilities, but I was equally passionate about capturing the unique spirit and energy of New York City. Manhattan possesses a distinct visual identity—it's a city of grandeur, energy and sharp lines. It's a place where both natural and man-made light play a vital role in shaping the atmosphere. These qualities were my guiding inspiration.

Art Deco is the signature style of the original Waldorf Astoria. What elements or inspirations influenced the design of the residences?

We played with the sense of verticality, creating an illusion of soaring ceilings even in more intimate spaces through carefully considered lighting design. The residences also feature bespoke plasterwork, a signature of the era, and luxurious materials like lacquer, marble and textured wall coverings.

What are your strategies for balancing luxury with livability in your designs?

Good design is inherently easy to maintain and should not require intense care. I preselect finishes knowing they'll age gracefully, and I design spaces with longevity in mind.