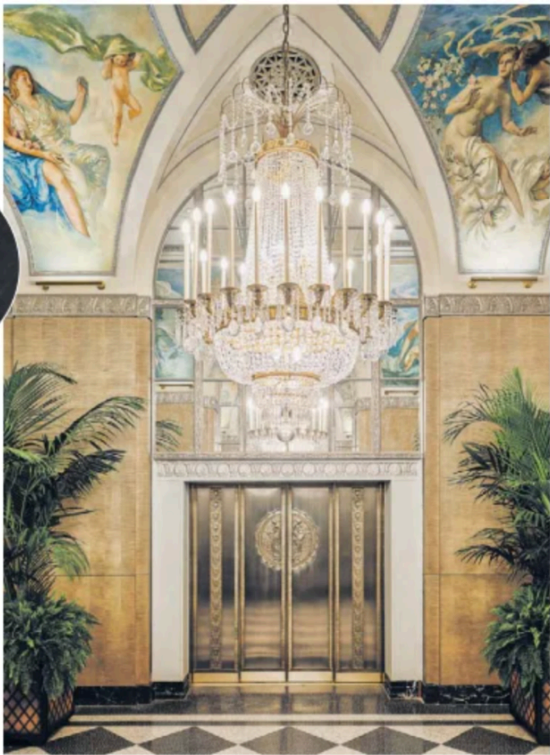


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Designer Jean-Louis Deniot (above) dreamed up the new residences at the reimagined Waldorf Astoria New York (right), transforming 1,400 former hotel rooms into 372 mansion-inspired homes.

PHOTOS BY COLIN MILLER, COURTESY OF WALDORF ASTORIA.



5 QUESTIONS

WITH DESIGNER JEAN-LOUIS DENIOT

You created the new residences and amenities at the reborn Waldorf Astoria New York. That hotel has a strong existing aesthetic. How did you blend that with your own approach? For the residences, I created a slick version of Art Deco, where Art Deco style is suggested and not so literal. [Elsewhere,] I used the vocabulary of private mansions, creating designated areas such as the theater, the spa, the winter garden, the library and the show kitchen — spaces that you would find in a palatial home. I used my experience building private mansions in many different countries to tailor the spaces to international expectations. **What was the central challenge of that project?** How do you turn 1,400 hotel rooms into apartments, with nice architectural details that convey the Waldorf DNA but without being too Art Deco? It was to make sure that all the residences, which means all 372 units, are perfect apartments. There are 180 configurations, and each layout was maximized from a very thoughtful sense of function and proportion. **You are based in France with your partner, 1stDibs co-founder William Holloway. Together, you've renovated and preserved a 200-year-old country house outside Paris. Is designing for yourself different?** It's all made with the same dedication, passion and love. I'm totally passionate about history ... and I love many different eras. I'm here to protect what is successful in a period building, but I am also there to correct the faults and to turn the faults into something of quality. **Are you guided by a particular philosophy?** My philosophy is well-being. My philosophy is design integrity. My philosophy is no waste. My philosophy is no ego. I believe in balance and harmony. I believe in magic, and when surroundings can reflect all of that, the human being can only be happier, entertained and captivated. **Where do you find inspiration?** I recharge in nature. In the French countryside, we grow watercress. There is spring water and all the birds you can imagine, with the most beautiful trees and the most beautiful sky. It helps me reflect. It makes me feel grounded. I also do this in North Africa in Tangier, where I have a property on the seaside looking directly at the Strait of Gibraltar. It's incredibly lush and beautiful. By touching paradise with my eyes and the tips of my fingers as often as possible, I'm able to translate it into my projects. — Christopher Cameron