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LET A SENSE OF ADVENTURE GET THE BETTER OF YOU

# travel

## NEW YORK, NEW YORK

*From the breathtakingly new to the restored and the refreshed, here's your guide to the very best of the Big Apple hotels.*

PHOTOGRAPHERS: MARTYN THOMPSON MIKKEL WANG PRODUCERS/Writers: LEE TULLOCH AARON PEASLEY

ONE OF NEW YORK'S HOTTEST PROPERTIES, THE GREENWICH, ENTICES GUESTS WITH THE SPANISH VILLA AMBIENCE AT ITS RESTAURANT LOCANDA VERDE.

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A COUNTRY-STYLE BREAKFAST, ABOVE LEFT, AT THE GREENWICH HOTEL; WAIT STAFF AT THE GREENWICH ARE EVER ON HAND AT THE GRAND ENTRANCE TO THE COURTYARD; BREAKFAST CAN ALSO BE TAKEN IN THIS SUMPTUOUS DRAWING ROOM, RIGHT. IN THE WARMER MONTHS, THE LUSH COURTYARD, OPPOSITE, IS A FAVOURED ESCAPE FOR GUESTS.

Ten years on from the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center, New York's hotel scene has never been more vibrant. New hotels are popping up all over the grid – and some of the city's grandes dames have had long-overdue facelifts. Vogue Living visits 17 of the best, from classics to those so new the paint has barely dried...

### 1. The Surrey

**WHERE:** 20 East 76th Street at Madison Avenue.  
**PEDIGREE:** A storeyed Upper East Side residence hotel, built in the 1920s, reopened in late 2009 after a top-to-toe \$60-million renovation. The graceful dowager has been reborn as a plush pied-à-terre, friendly to poodles of both human and canine varieties.  
**DECOR:** Contemporary glamour with a discernible French patois. The beautiful public areas are composed of white, Dior Gray and Chanel Black, a decidedly fashionable palette enhanced by an impressive contemporary art collection, which features pieces from Jenny Holzer, Richard Serra, Claes Oldenburg and Chuck Close (his photorealist painting of Kate Moss is our favourite).  
**STAY HERE IF:** Your taste in hotels reflects that of your wardrobe: monochromatic with expensive accessories and a scintilla of irony, but ultimately as comfortable, discreet and classy as a Chanel suit.  
**NEIGHBOURHOOD FAVOURITES:** Museum Mile, the culture vulture's Shangri-La, is one block away. Art world bigwig Larry Gagosian's new store and gallery is at 980 Madison.  
**LAY YOUR HEAD:** The hotel's 'salons' feel anything but – with large marble bathrooms, gorgeous desks, hand-painted wardrobes, Laura Tonatto toiletries and whimsical design touches such as window-seat cushions hand-stitched with notable New York quotes. Snooze on the impossibly comfortable Duxiana mattresses.  
**CHOW:** Bar Pleiades, an oversized lacquered dutch of a cocktail bar, appeals to the facelift-and-Fendi clientele. Café Boulud, helmed by superstar chef Daniel Boulud, is rather pricey but it's a popular staple with a reasonable *prix fixe* lunch menu.  
**WELIKE:** The 17th-floor rooftop terrace is uptown's most beautiful summer refuge, replete with a handcrafted cocktail menu.  
**HOWEVER:** Wireless – it should really be complimentary.  
**WHEREWITHAL:** Deluxe Salons start at US\$699 per night.  
**BOOK IT:** Visit The Surrey at [thesurrey.com](http://thesurrey.com). AP

### 2. The Greenwich Hotel

**WHERE:** 377 Greenwich Street.  
**PEDIGREE:** Actor Robert De Niro is the part-owner of this new hotel, next door to his Tribeca Film Center. A member of The Leading Hotels of the World.  
**DECOR:** Italian palazzo/Spanish villa/Hollywood mansion built around a courtyard garden. A new building with old-world charm – worn parquet, old rugs, aged mirrors, reclaimed timber details, vintage overstuffed lounges and chairs, handmade Italian and Moroccan tiles. The artworks of Robert De Niro Sr, the actor's late father, hang in the lobby. The drawing room and Locanda Verde restaurant face the central courtyard garden.  
**STAY HERE IF:** You like an intimate Manhattan hotel that's more like a private club with an insider showbiz buzz.  
**NEIGHBOURHOOD FAVOURITES:** Tribeca Grill, Bubby's, Nobu, The Odeon, Pier 25 amusement park, Hudson River walk.  
**LAY YOUR HEAD:** Each room is entirely different. VL stayed in room 416, a Courtyard Room, which has French windows opening on to the courtyard, a comfortable sitting area and a large marble bathroom with, remarkably, its own sauna. All rooms have beautiful, individual bathrooms done out in differing Moroccan tile. Corner suites are light and spacious with glimpses of the river but entry-level rooms are also a good size.  
**CHOW:** The hotel restaurant, Locanda Verde, serves breakfast, lunch and dinner with home-style Italian flair. It's very popular – you'll find it packed and noisy at night. Hotel guests can also take their lamb sliders reclining on comfy sofas by the fire in the hotel's charming Drawing Room.  
**WELIKE:** The wonderfully atmospheric Drawing Room and courtyard garden. Authentic Japanese Shibui Spa with subterranean pool, and the fact that De Niro's personal trainer is available for appointments in the hotel gym. The complimentary soft drinks and snacks in your room. iPads loaded with classic old movies like *Manhattan*. Those 'wow' bathrooms. We could happily live here.  
**HOWEVER:** The location might be a bit quiet for some, although it's only a 10-minute walk to SoHo and in easy reach of the subway.  
**WHEREWITHAL:** Courtyard rooms from US\$495 per night.  
**BOOK IT:** Contact The Leading Hotels of the World at [lhw.com](http://lhw.com). LT

PHOTOGRAPHER: MARTIN THOMPSON



## 9. *The Standard Hotel, New York*

**WHERE:** 848 Washington Street at 13th Street.

**PEDIGREE:** Hotelier André Balazs' brutalist 20-storey glass hostelery straddles the High Line Park like an architectural rendition of one of Tom Wolfe's masters of the universe.

**DECOR:** Mid-century Euro chic complemented by some industrial gestures, as imagined by au courant designers Roman and Williams.

**STAY HERE IF:** You're in touch with your exhibitionist side.

Floor-to-ceiling windows, bathrooms without doors and a reputation for wild parties may scare off retiring types.

**NEIGHBOURHOOD FAVOURITES:** Jeffrey, the fashion emporium known for its superb shoe collection, fashion canteen Pastis, and Chelsea Market, the best place to load up on goodies for your High Line picnic.

**LAY YOUR HEAD:** There's no getting around it – the standard rooms are Lilliputian, though all feature excellent views. Spring for a Corner King complete with a tub overlooking the Hudson (a groom with a view!).

**CHOW:** Like a Gotham microcosm, the hotel offers more scene changes than a night on Broadway. The Standard Grill is a classically styled eatery serving American classics; the frat-friendly Biergarten is home to ping-pong and pilsner; head to the 18th floor for a pair of swishy venues, the glamorous Top of the Standard and its scruffier younger sister, Le Bain.

**WE LIKE:** The hotel has done away with the traditional desk (who comes here to work anyway?) in favour of a low-slung modular couch with adjustable table – a clever gambit that works well for work and play.

**HOWEVER:** Light sleepers should avoid the upper floors, which can be rather noisy due to the nightlife spaces above. One small caveat: the requisite cadre of male models and actors, not traditionally known for their service prowess, staffs the hotel.

**WHERE WITHAL:** Standard rooms start at US\$325 per night.

**BOOK IT:** Visit [standardhotels.com/newyork](http://standardhotels.com/newyork). AP

## 10. *The Chatwal*

**WHERE** 130 West 44th Street.

**PEDIGREE:** Handsome Stanford White building modernised by Thierry Despont. Part of the Luxury Collection by Starwood Hotels and Resorts.

**DECOR:** Hyper Art Deco. The porters wear camp ballhop uniforms. Many witty touches such as old bakelite telephones in the hallways.

**STAY HERE IF:** You're planning on seeing some Broadway and off-Broadway shows. The hotel's theatre district location means you're in walking distance of most venues.

**NEIGHBOURHOOD FAVOURITES:** Walk to eternally popular showbiz hangouts such as Sardi's and Joe Allen restaurants. Times Square, Radio City Music Hall, Bryant Park are all nearby.

**LAY YOUR HEAD:** IZ stayed in room 307, a Junior Suite. Richly appointed rooms with inspiration taken from classic Malletier steamer trunks. Suede walls, embossed leather-wrapped double doors, tweed carpets, black-and-white prints of Manhattan. The vast bathroom has black granite walls, mirrored double vanity basins, Japanese heated toilet that lights up neon blue in the night. Where's the mirror ball?

**CHOW:** The excellent Lambs Club is open for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Dine on red leather banquettes by a blazing fire (in winter) in the exact room where theatrical legend John Barrymore convened the famous Lambs Club in the 1920s.

**WE LIKE:** A console opens to become a mirrored writing desk. One of the best mini-bars we've seen is not so mini – a wardrobe cupboard featuring bookshelf stacked with magazines and novels, Chatwal playing cards and an excellent selection of tipples. Free wireless internet. Butler service is standard with all rooms.

**HOWEVER:** Service is patchy. A butler greets IZ upon arrival, then disappears forever. The shower could hold a football team (we didn't try) but we didn't find essentials such as shower cap or cotton balls.

**WHERE WITHAL:** Standard rooms start at US\$645 per night.

**BOOK IT:** Contact The Chatwal at [thechatwalny.com](http://thechatwalny.com). LT



THE REBURNISHMENT OF THE MARK HOTEL BY FRANCE'S HIGHLY ACCLAIMED DESIGNER JACQUES GRANGE TAKES HIS PARSIAN STYLE TO NEW YORK'S UPPER EAST SIDE. IN THE HOTEL'S LOBBY, ABOVE, BLACK-AND-WHITE MARBLE FLOORING HAS A CLASSICAL EDGE, WHILE ABSTRACT ARTWORK AND VINTAGE FURNITURE ADD COLOUR AND TEXTURE TO THE SPACE. THE MARK BAR, BELOW, FUSES SCI-FI-INSPIRED LIGHTING AND COUNTRY-STYLE FURNISHINGS, A LA COWSKIN-STYLE UPHOLSTERY THAT WRAPS AROUND THE AMOEBIC-SHAPED FURNITURE. EMBRACING GRANGE'S CLASSICAL-MEETS-CONTEMPORARY AESTHETIC, THE INVITING MARK RESTAURANT, OPPOSITE, RUN BY FRENCH CHER-CHEF JEAN-GEORGES VONGERCHTEN, PROVIDES LUXURY AND COMFORT. DARK TIMBER SURROUNDS, SENSUAL LIGHTING AND CURVACEOUS FURNITURE MAKE FOR A STRONG DESIGN STATEMENT.





## II. The Mark

**WHERE:** Madison Avenue at 77th Street.

**PEDIGREE:** An old favourite is updated in high style, thanks to Jacques Grange and a coterie of decorative artists. A member of The Leading Hotels of the World.

**DECOR:** 1930s Parisian luxury with a big dollop of contemporary glamour.

The striking black-and-white striped lobby is a showcase for some exceptional decorative pieces, such as Ron Arad's 'Ge-Off Sphere' chandelier. The whimsical Mark Bar off the lobby features Vladimir Kagan's freeform cow-print sofas and Guy de Rougemont tables. It's so chic, *VZ* felt the need to borrow a poolie.

**STAY HERE IF:** You're planning on doing some serious public gallery hopping.

**NEIGHBOURHOOD FAVOURITES:** The Mark is perfectly situated on Museum Mile, a short walk from the Whitney, the Guggenheim, the Metropolitan, the Neue Galerie and the Frick Collection. Central Park is half a block away.

**LAY YOUR HEAD:** *VZ* was upgraded to room 414, category Madison One Bedroom Suite, which features hardwood floors, black-and-white striped marble bathroom with extra-deep bath, powder room, king-size bed, huge closets and separate, spacious sitting room overlooking Madison Avenue. Not a detail is left to chance, from the beautiful compendium of writing paper on the desk to the La Maison du Chocolat macarons on turn-down and the art-gallery-perfect ice cubes in the refrigerator drawer. Gorgeous!

**CHOW:** Famed chef Jean-Georges Vongerichten is at the helm of The Mark Restaurant, which serves breakfast, lunch, dinner and afternoon teas. The restaurant is supremely comfortable, with an atrium where an excellent breakfast is served.

**WE LIKE:** Beautiful stationary designed by illustrator Jean-Philippe Delhomme. An iButler service for technological needs. Wardrobe storage services for regular guests. Frédéric Fekkai Salon and sleek, well-equipped John Sitaras exercise studio. Complimentary internet access.

**HOWEVER:** Despite the high standard of The Mark Restaurant, the room service menu is disappointingly limited and service is forgetful. The one-touch remote for blinds, TV, air-con and lighting had a complete meltdown à la *Mou Onle*. We were quite taken aback that it costs \$225 for an evening gown and \$125 for a cocktail dress to be drycleaned. But when you're off to the famous Costume Institute Ball, it hardly matters, one supposes.

**WHEREWITHAL:** Superior courtyard rooms start at US\$625 per night.

**BOOK IT:** Contact The Leading Hotels of the World at [lhw.com](http://lhw.com). 17