

DETAILS

TRAVEL

EDITED BY BILL PRINCE

GUEST STAR

Set to be a major player on the New York hotel scene, Robert De Niro's Greenwich Street guesthouse is a high-end home from home



Greenwich Hotel
TriBeCa, NYC

Greenwich downtime
The at-ease aesthetic of the drawing room is typical of Robert De Niro's 88-room New York hotel (below left)

Robert De Niro has declared – and who are we to argue – that the boutique hotel, with its homogenous luxury and sterile opulence, is dead. The usurper? The Greenwich Hotel: a lavishly appointed, European-style guesthouse erected less than a year ago on the site of a car park overlooked by the actor-director's TriBeCa office.

On entering, it's clear that the term "home from home" was the key objective, perhaps a result of De Niro's occupational hazard of perennial drifting. Consequently, the space feels like the holiday residence of a well-travelled friend: eclectic, mismatched (sometimes even a little chaotic) and seasoned, due to the fact that many elements have been reclaimed, hand-made or simply rediscovered. This notion of borrowed history extends throughout the building, from the rustic factory beams in the lobby's ceiling to the tarnished glass (taken from the city's iconic Flatiron Building) in the Thirties-style dining room and stairwell. "Our goal was to create

a space that would serve guests more as a residence than a hotel," says De Niro. "It's a place for people whose sense of home combines sophistication and authenticity."

The project, a collaboration between De Niro, his son Raphael and developers Ira Drukier and Richard Born (of the Mercer and Bowery hotels), is rare indeed: each of the 88 rooms has a slight twist in design or layout (some suites have working fireplaces for chilly nights) and are made homely with threadbare books, reclaimed bookcases and large glass jars of M&Ms and Reese's Pieces. Siberian-oak floorboards reinforce the comfortable aesthetic.

In the basement, the impressive Shibui spa features a small yet perfectly formed lantern-lit pool that runs beneath a 250-year-old Japanese pine farmhouse transported from Kyoto. This wood skeleton, erected without the use of a single nail, lends a quirky but peaceful mood to the unexpected space and is a real testament to the hotel's refreshing interpretation of luxury. **JH Rooms from £320. 377 Greenwich Street, New York NY 10013. 001 212 941 8900. www.thegreenwichhotel.com**



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The St Moritz Hotel

Bayside bedrooms at cool coastal belt hole, the St Moritz Hotel

CORNWALL GRAND DUCHY

The CNLA (Cornish National Liberation Army) will choke on their pasties when they hear about the newest hotel set to attract "English incomers" to their beloved region. The St Moritz Hotel, rebuilt at a cost of £13.5m on the coast above Daymer Bay near Rock, is a chic, Art-Deco inspired retreat with an immaculately cool brand pedigree. The brainchild of Virgin Atlantic chief executive, Steve Ridgway, and his brother Hugh, the St Moritz interiors come courtesy of Absolute Design (the company behind Jamie Oliver's Fifteen Cornwall in Watergate Bay), the head chef is Elliot Ketley (culinary veteran of J Sheekey and Le Caprice), and the Cowshed spa has, of course, been touched by the hand of Nick Jones. It's not quite Soho House-on-Sea (for that you'll have to wait until the Soho Beach House opens in Miami next year), but it's probably the next best thing. **PH Rooms from £95. Trebetherick, Wadebridge, Cornwall PL27 6SD. 01208 862242. www.stmoritzhotel.co.uk**

BAGGAGE CHECK

Hard to miss these (from left): 22" carry-on, £495. Air Force bag, £255. Both by Tumi Alpha. 020-7493 4138, www.tumi.com



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