

CORDUROY

Corduroy at Le Westin Montreal...



There's something to be said about contemporary institutions and businesses that pay respect to the past. It's something that made even more compelling when the past is steeped in rich tradition and heritage. This, we discovered, during a recent impromptu visit to Montreal, and a stay at the beautiful [Le Westin](#) hotel.

Housed in the former headquarters of *The Montreal Gazette* newspaper, the hotel took careful pains to acknowledge and honor the three heritage buildings they took over just a few years ago: the first *Montreal Star* building located on St-Jacques Street that dates back to 1899; its art deco-style extension designed in 1929; and the main *Montreal Gazette* building built in the 1950s. The buildings, situated among the cobblestone streets of Old Montréal, were once actively serving the presses of *The Gazette*, which rolled for more than 100 years. In addition to keeping the original elevator banks, many original window frames, and even an old Canada Post mailbox in the lobby, the hotel has accented its decor with work from Quebec and Canadian artists preserved from the original heritage buildings.

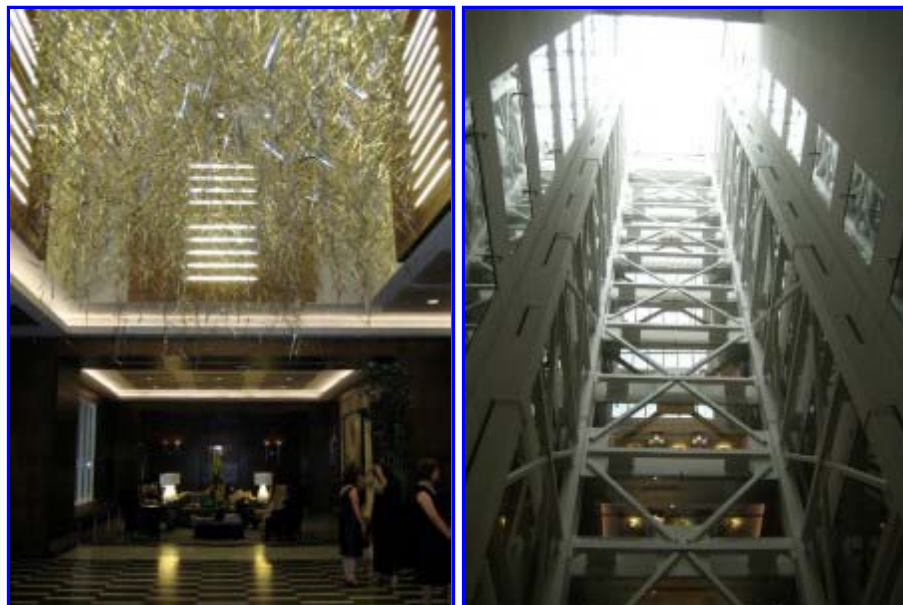


The modern accents are equally as stunning, with a glass bottom swimming pool that hovers high

above the hotel's indoor entranceway, a large-scale and textured painting that greets visitors as soon as they step inside (photo at left) and a massive art installation piece titled "Icicles," that hangs precariously over the main lobby. Created by artist Kelvin Goddard from the "Unit 5" art/metalworks studio in Toronto, the piece is made up of 50,000 pieces of individually hand-cut aluminum shards, hanging on 600 strings. This piece is 21 feet long and 13 feet wide and reportedly took workers more than five days to install.

We wanted to find out more about Le Westin's novel design and its unique relationship with its building's storied history, so we caught up with Robynne Moncur, the lead designer on the project.

Find out Moncur's personal connection to the building and see more photos from Le Westin, after the jump...

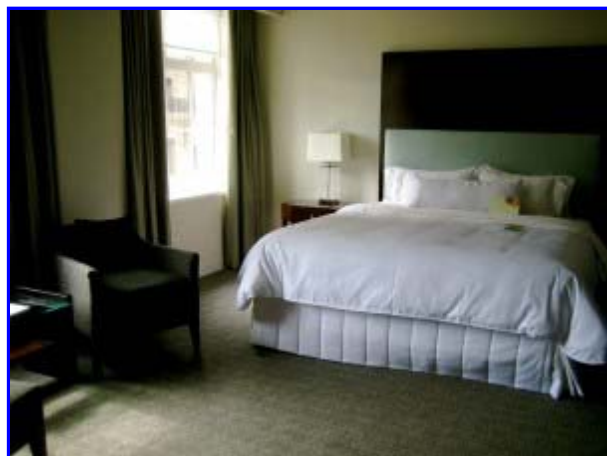


How did you get involved with the Le Westin project?

Moncur Design Associates Inc. is a preferred Starwood designer for both the Westin and Sheraton brands. We were recommended, then interviewed by the owners and then awarded the project. I was born and raised in Montreal and I was familiar with the old *Gazette* building from years ago.

What were your main goals and concerns when taking on this large-scale project?

The goal was to create a property that would fit the Westin aesthetic, and that would celebrate the unique Montreal location. We wanted to create a luxurious and upscale, yet "classically contemporary" full service hotel property.



How did you pay respect to the hotel's past life as home of *The Gazette*?

I am sure the walls are "alive with history." The hotel consists of four separate buildings that were combined to become Le Westin Montreal. Each of these buildings are important components of the hotel property. *The Gazette* building's history is reflected in the materials selected, the historical elements were preserved from the two St. Jacques office towers, and the new tower reflects the architecture of all of the buildings translated into a modern, contemporary form.

Do you have any personal connections to this building or property?

My own experience in setting foot into the *Gazette* building again after many years was seeing the *Gazette* circulation desk, untouched. It was a strong déjà vu moment of going there with my father on Saturday mornings to pay the family's *Gazette* bill. I am thrilled that we were part of the team that made Le Westin Montreal a reality.

For more information on Moncur Design Associates, visit moncur.ca. And for more information about the Le Westin property, visit www.westinmontreal.com.

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