

PortlandLife

SECTION B

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B2 PORTLAND LIFE

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Old Mallory enters modern phase

New owners unveil Hotel deLuxe, evoking Hollywood in the '40s

By RANDALL BARTON
The Tribune

The venerable Mallory Hotel has gone Hollywood. In the way that Marion Morrison became John Wayne and Lucille LeSueur fashioned herself into Joan Crawford, the Mallory is now the Hotel deLuxe.

The hotel was purchased in August 2004 by the Aspen Hotel Group, which previously had transformed the Imperial Hotel on Broadway into the Hotel Lucia. The company also owns and operates the Hotel Max in Seattle, and an affiliate owns but does not manage Portland's Benson and Westin hotels.

Built during 1912 and 1913, the Mallory was last remodeled in the late 1940s in a Regency style replete with crystal chandeliers that former owner Albert Genter personally selected in Czechoslovakia.

"(Aspen President) Gordon Sondlund gave me a call and asked me what I thought of a Hollywood in the '40s approach to the hotel," says designer David Hill. "Being that it (golden-age Hollywood) has a nostalgic, glamorous appeal to the

Northwest community, it sounded like it could be a perfect fit." "There isn't another product like it in town, a modern retro hotel," says Sondlund, a lifelong cinephile. "It was the building that spoke to me — Hollywood in the '40s and '50s."

An update under the ceiling

"The bones of the structure of the property were and remain fantastic," says Howard Jacobs,

chief operating officer for Aspen Hotel Group. "Much of it had every reason to remain the gold-leafed ceilings, the columns and the crystal chandeliers. But as you came off the ceiling it became sort of diamond in the rough, so to speak."

Named for the Hollywood color lab DeLuxe, the hotel's luxurious environment begins in the lobby, where a mirrored wall surrounds a framed screen that projects motion picture stills. Crystal chandeliers illuminate a palette of cream, caramel and lavender in club and Louis XVI chairs, Art Moderne tables, shagreen lamps and a rug designed by Hill based on those shown at

the 1925 Paris Exposition Des Arts Décoratifs.

The result is more a posh, well-appointed living room than a set where Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers might face the music and dance.

"I didn't want it to look like a set design, because we wanted it to feel charming," Hill says. "It needed to stay a very charming hotel for the Portland community, without getting too exuberant, as those movies can be."

Each floor of guest quarters above the lobby pays homage to the film directors and stars of Hollywood's golden age. Floor 2 nods to Hitchcock. Floor 5 salutes the Immigrants — Otto Preminger, Fritz Lang and William Wyler — with framed stills from their motion pictures lining the hallway.

Photographs throughout the hotel were procured by Tessa Pappas of the Chetwynd Stapylton Gallery. When guests step out of the elevator — lined in handmade mother of pearl (39 layers of black lacquer) — a sensor is tripped illuminating a printed legend that reveals which filmmakers are being honored. This, and all signage in the hotel, is by Portland artist Dardinelle Troen.

Guest room color palettes are designed to be bright, regardless of the weather, and textual finishes have a tactile appeal, right down to the seersucker bathrobes.

Rooms are iPod-friendly

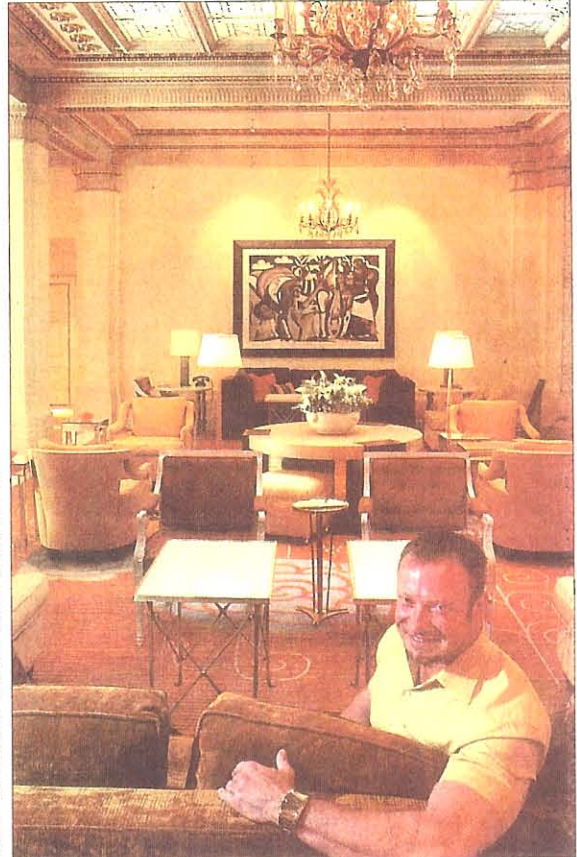
In addition to 24-hour high-speed wireless Internet access and high-definition-compatible flat-screen TVs, rooms are equipped with MP3 docking stations and preprogrammed iPod menus that allow guests to download their musical genre of choice.

Pillow shape and firmness can

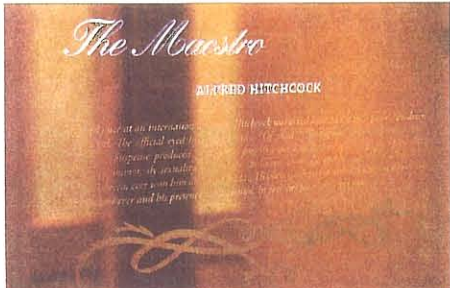
be selected from a pillow menu. Before nodding off, guests can seek spiritual sustenance from another menu that offers two versions of the Bible, the Book of Mormon, the Bhagavad-Gita, the Koran and other books of faith.

"Younger travelers are going to consider it a journey into the past, but with the technology of today and some very modern touches," Sondlund says. "Older guests will say, 'This is the way it used to be when people spent a lot of money to really do a room right.' It's definitely not a beige box."

The dining room and Driftwood Room lounge are operated by Greg Schillinger, owner of Paddy's Bar and Grill at 65 S.W. Yamhill St. Schillinger is partnered with Dyllyn Coolidge, formerly the executive chef at Lucy's Table on Northwest 21st Avenue.



Designer David Hill's streamlined look for the lobby of the Hotel deLuxe — the former Mallory Hotel — draws its inspiration from art deco Tinseltown in its studio heyday. But he wanted to keep the space approachable and intimate. "It needed to stay a very charming hotel for the Portland community," Hill says. TRIBUNE PHOTOS: JIM CLARK



Each floor of guest rooms at the Hotel deLuxe takes its theme from a different Hollywood legend.



The cream-colored, caramel-trimmed walls and photography featured on the guest floors are one example of where the decor of the new deLuxe wipes away all memory of the Mallory of old.

One message he got loud and clear from Mallory habitués was that they liked the Driftwood Room pretty much as it was.

"It had a beautiful framework, that beautiful kidney shape to it, the cedar-lined walls, the lowered ceiling," Hill acknowledges. "But it was very, very dark, always, and it was a little bit on the tired side. We wanted the room to feel fresh."

Freshening included cleaning years of accumulated cigarette smoke residue from the redwood ceiling and walls (the hotel is now smoke-free) and adding embossed leather bumpers to the new granite-topped bar, driftwood sconces and a translucent lavender panel glowing behind the bar.

As every great movie star knows, it's all about the lighting.

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