

# LIGHTING DRAWS IN GUESTS TO **STAY, RELAX, & RETURN**



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LIVING ROOM LOUNGE AND BAR,  
W TORONTO HOTEL

Brandon Barré Photography



**IN HOSPITALITY**, lighting can transform a guest's experience. Designers can paint light throughout the space using an array of product types on hand, including chandeliers, pendants, wall sconces, and cove lights.

BY VILMA BARR

### Lighting can help achieve design

objectives while imparting a competitive edge to a venue. In multipurpose spaces, lobbies, or open plan areas, controls can quickly turn an intimate retreat into a vibrant hub for work or socializing.

Technologies and app-based platforms for personalizing guest stays are gaining in popularity among hotel brands, according to London-based lighting designer Paul Nulty. Guests can preset their lighting preferences before entering their room, and the apps will recall their preferences for future stays in other hotels by the same owner. Other hospitality design trends include:

**Catering to the millennials.** This tech-savvy generation relishes personalized interactions. If they love what they see, they will snap a photo or video for posting on social media. Dining area lighting should flatter the user and the space, and highlight the tabletop.

**Sustainability.** Hospitality professionals are promoting their sustainability practices in the materials they use, from nonhazardous cleaning brands to the locally grown produce served in their restaurants, and to the LED fixtures that reduce energy use.

**Bold statement lighting.** A lighting centerpiece can contribute to the signature impression of a space, like a reception area.

Read further to learn about the design of three recent hospitality projects: The Algonquin Hotel in New York, W Toronto, and Wilmina in Berlin.





## Luminaires add a modern touch to history

**Built in 1902 and designated as a historic landmark in 1987**, the 181-room Algonquin Hotel is one of the oldest operating hotels in New York. In 2022, Stonehill Taylor oversaw the refresh of the Beaux-Arts style interior design and architecture of the ground floor public spaces, including the Blue Bar and the Oak Room.

The hotel was renowned for its regular gatherings of artists. In the 1920s, the Algonquin Round Table in the Oak Room hosted daily lunch meetings frequented by writers, Broadway playwrights, poets, and

“OUR LIGHTING DESIGN FOCUS WAS TO ALLOW THE NEW DECORATIVE PIECES TO FEEL MODERN, AND ... TO EMPHASIZE THE EXISTING DETAILS OF THE SPACE.”

musicians. “The Algonquin’s new interior design references the sophistication of this special period in New York City and the hotel’s history,” says Sara Duffy, a principal of local architecture firm Stonehill Taylor who also co-led the project design with fellow principal Neill Parker. “Our lighting design focus was to allow the new decorative pieces to feel modern, and the architectural lighting to emphasize the existing details of the space.”

Stonehill Parker worked with HB Lighting to design custom decorative fixtures throughout the space. Reveal Design Group oversaw functional and accent lighting in partnership with Jeffrey Nathan Lighting Design.



### ▲ Lobby

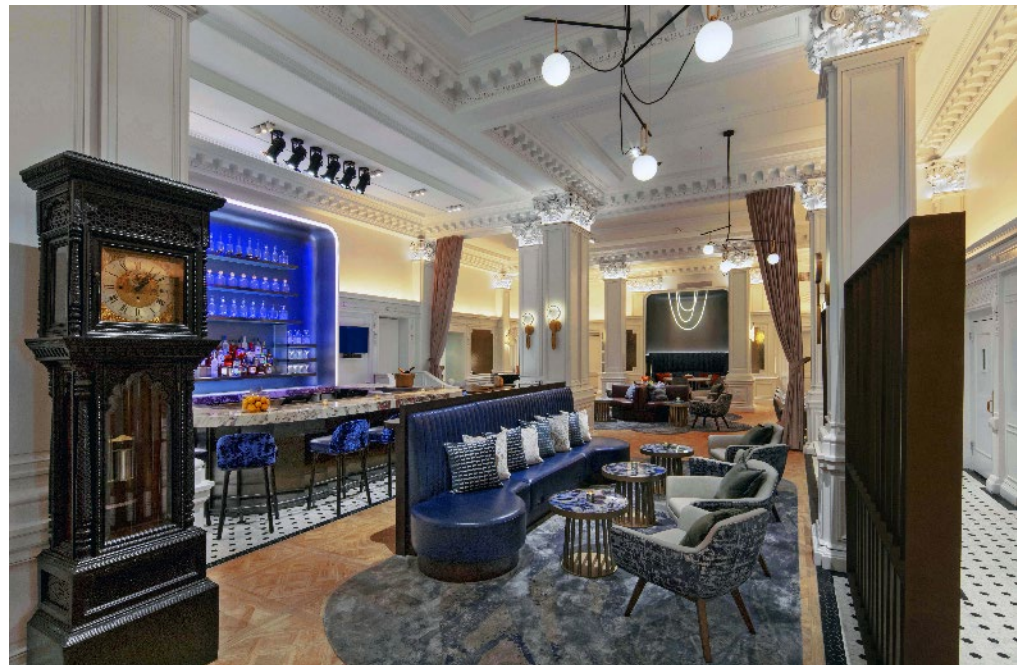
In the renovated lobby, a sculptural modern reception desk combines a marble top with a golden inverted-step base integrated with concealed lighting. Backlit bookshelves create an intimate seating corner.

In the lounge, cove lighting highlights the extensive molding, paneling, and Corinthian columns. Custom chandeliers created by HB Lighting use LED strip lights to illuminate the acrylic disks, Duffy says.



All images: Eric Lohmeier / courtesy of Stonehill Taylor





▲ **The Blue Bar**

The Blue Bar was relocated to its original location, in what is now the main lobby. Bar shelves integrated with dimmable LEDs create a focal point, Duffy says. “Theatrical lighting mounted on the ceiling provides the blue glow. The outer halo is a dimmable linear LED tape light.”

At one end of the room is an interpretation of the Round Table, under a catenary chandelier of dimmable LEDs—Tracer Loop by Luke Lamp Co. Seating areas are flanked by Aura table fixtures, also by Luke Lamp Co. The dining section features NH S3 brass and blackened metal chandeliers with hand-blown white glass globes, designed by Neri&Hu for Artemide.



◀ **The Oak Room**

Stonehill Taylor reimaged The Oak Room as an event space. Ceiling fixtures arranged in an interlocking pattern use champagne-colored metal with linear LED lights suspended above.

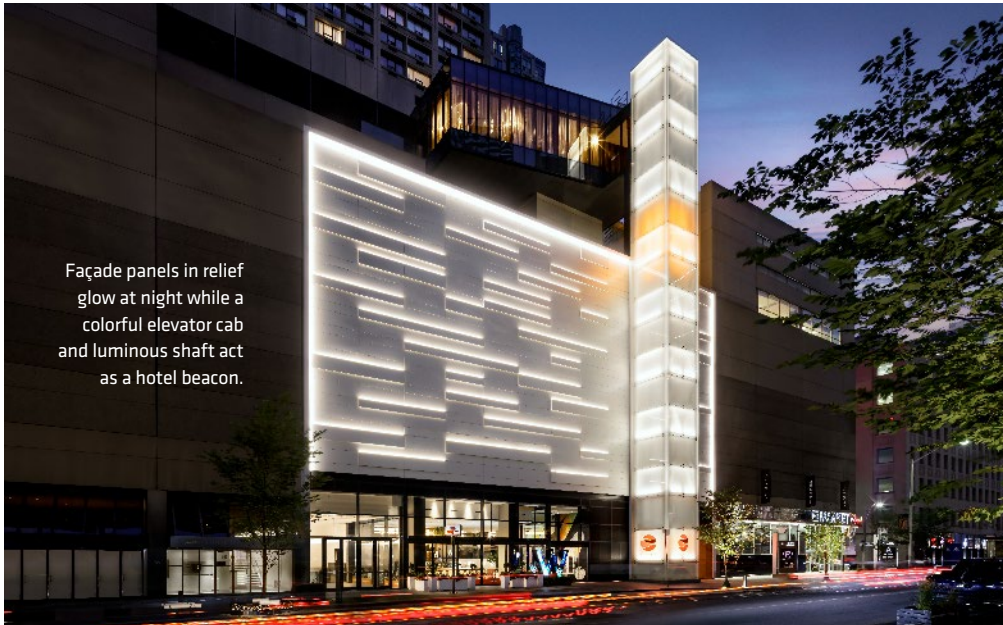
**LIGHTING PRODUCTS**

**Luke Lamp Co.**  
Tracer Loop, Aura  
[lukelampco.com](http://lukelampco.com)

**Artemide**  
NH S3  
[artemide.net](http://artemide.net)



# Lighting nods to a city's energy and culture



Façade panels in relief glow at night while a colorful elevator cab and luminous shaft act as a hotel beacon.

**The \$40-million makeover of an 11-story,** 254-room former Marriott into the W Toronto has created a destination of high-end dining and event spaces that attract both visitors and local patrons. The hotel, located in the Toronto's Yorkville section, reflects the multicultural city's diversity, style, and architectural heritage.

Montreal-based Sid Lee Architecture directed the design program for the public spaces and guest rooms. "Connection to the community is an important part of W's DNA," says Martin Leblanc, a senior partner at Sid Lee. "The original layout of the building was an integration challenge. Our team's role was to create an exterior-interior activity connectivity hub." The local office of the Ombrages Group served as lighting design consultants.

The new identity is communicated by a geometric façade of white rectangular panels, some of which are in relief. At night, cove lighting accentuates the faceted panels and the building elevation. A bright-colored cab zooms through a glowing elevator shaft, which doubles as a beacon for the hotel.

Guests check in on the sixth level, which also houses W Toronto's Living

Room, a 5,000-square-foot dining space and lounge surrounded by glazed curtain walls. LED strips, CCT 2700K, mount to a semicircular acrylic panel fixture above a 24-seat bar. "Ceiling-hung pin lights

"CONNECTION TO COMMUNITY IS AN IMPORTANT PART OF W'S DNA."

surrounding the curve cast a glow onto the surface of the acrylic structure," says Cedra Samaha, director of design for Larco Hospitality, a hotel management company that W Toronto commissioned. Above the open fireplace area, concealed 2700K LED strips on the underside of the seating and counter cast ambient light. Overhead, Samaha notes, suspended theatrical-style pendants cast a soft glow.

Guest room corridors are illuminated by 3000K LED strips for walls and cove-lit ceilings. The W brand's Wow and Extreme Wow guest suites include a conversation area illuminated by a grid of overhead light fixtures, comparable



**TOP:** Living Room lounge and bar.



**ABOVE:** Overhead marquee-like lighting creates a theatrical experience in W Toronto's Extreme Wow suites.



▲ Cove lighting helps illuminate hotel corridors.

to theatrical marquee lights.

W Toronto's ninth floor hosts the Skylight rooftop bar, a 134-seat restaurant and open-air patio. A rectilinear grid with brise-soleil styled panels creates visual interest above the bar. Individual and clusters of white globe pendants can be adjusted for brightness by an Encelium control system. "LED strips cast a soft glow on the patterned tile bar face," Samaha says. Wall sconces on angled black supports accent the dining tables below, in the Skylight Den.



# Once a prison, now a boutique hotel



Markus Grötsche ©Bocci / courtesy of Grüntuch Ernst Architekten

### ▲ ART IN LIGHT INSTALLATION

Staircase with Bocci light installation, Omer Arbel, at the Wilmina.

In West Berlin, the historic Charlottenburg women's prison at Kantstraße 79 has been transformed by Berlin firm Grüntuch Ernst Architekten into the boutique hotel Wilmina. The adaptive reuse connected the circa-1896 prison with an adjoining courthouse and reconfigured interior spaces and former cells.

The elegant 44-room destination and restaurant is now a lively urban hot spot for locals and travelers. "It has become an oasis in the heart of the city," says architect Almut Grüntuch-Ernst.

Glowing arrays of glass orbs—Bocci's 14 series—suspend via cable at varying densities and lengths to provide visual unity throughout public areas. For the 6-inch diameter fixtures, the architects specified 10W xenon lamps, 2800K, with CRI 100. (Bocci's 14 series is also available with 1.5W LED lamps.)

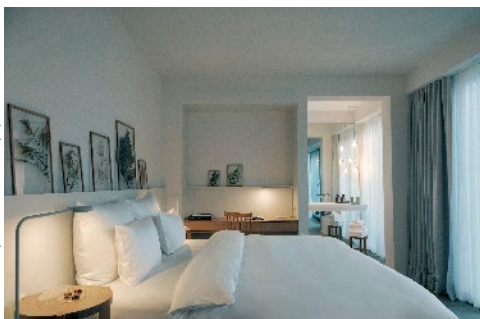
The main hotel entrance, originally a window opening, was enlarged into a door connecting the garden courtyard with the lobby, a warm, double-height room with arched windows and a cascade of Bocci's 14 series. The architects made the open atrium the heart of the building. "The former cell wing extends over five levels: four existing floors and a new penthouse floor on top," Grüntuch-Ernst describes. "Doorways line up along narrow galleries with wrought-iron balustrades." Soaring lightwells introduce daylight on a striking washed-brick wall.

Guest rooms range in size from a compact 118 square feet to the spacious, 807-square-foot Garden Loft, formerly the assembly room. "No room is exactly alike," Grüntuch-Ernst says, "but all have light colors, soft textures, and generous natural light."

Sited in the former prison yard, the Lovis restaurant has panoramic windows that look out to lush gardens. Here, Bocci's 57 series with their organic glass volumes, 1.5W LED, strewn overhead in organized chaos, while Grau's iconic Salt & Pepper 5W LED luminaires cast a warm glow on patrons' faces from tabletops. ●



Patricia Poinjeaud ©Bocci / courtesy of Grüntuch Ernst Architekten

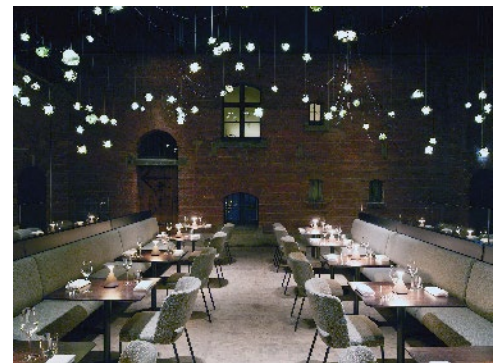


### ▲ LOBBY AND GUESTROOM

Bocci's 14 series pendants greet guests in the Wilmina lobby; suspend in the multistory lightwell; and in a guest room.



Harry Fricker ©Bocci / courtesy of Grüntuch Ernst Architekten

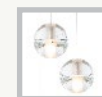


Robert Rieger ©Bocci / courtesy of Grüntuch Ernst Architekten

### ▲ LOVIS RESTAURANT

Bocci 57 series overhead combined with Grau's Salt & Pepper LED luminaires illuminate tables and patrons in the Lovis restaurant.

### LIGHTING PRODUCTS



**Bocci**  
14 series (left)  
57 series (right)  
[bocci.com](http://bocci.com)



**Grau**  
Salt & Pepper  
[grau.art](http://grau.art)

