

NEW OWNERS AND HISTORIC RENOVATION FOR CENTURY-OLD MANSFIELD HOTEL

One of New York's Most Pedigreed Hotels Is Renewed to Turn-of-the-Century Stylishness

New York, NY (February 9, 2006) – An architectural and historic landmark, The Mansfield is reinventing itself as the city's newest "old" boutique hotel – infusing the elegance and romance of the early 1900s with 21st century style and offerings. The hotel's new owners, Brad M. Reiss and John Yoon, have set out to bring back the stylish sophistication that once persevered amongst New York City hotels, rescuing and restoring The Mansfield, a 1904 gem designed by one of New York's most famous architects and set on one of the city's most prestigious, history-laden blocks. The ambitious renovation, which is currently being rolled out throughout the property, is slated for completion by the end of 2006.

Saving this small midtown jewel became a mission for the pair. Shortly following the purchase of the property in May 2004, they recruited the design team of Stephen B. Jacobs and Andi Pepper for The Mansfield's restoration, drawing upon the property's history and charm. A few of the team's concepts that are being implemented into the hotel's redesign include a stunning Beaux Arts **Clubroom** for games and reading; a **yacht-design approach to guest rooms** for a less-is-more efficiency; and a redesign of the hotel's **Grand Lobby**. The renovation will also include the addition of a **Fitness Center**, complete with state-of-the-art equipment and a yoga loft; and a kitchen expansion that will introduce full-menu selections to the **M Bar**, currently heralded by *Time Out New York* as one of New York's Top 100 Lounges.

The decision to capitalize on the 126-room hotel’s heritage – a mix of Beaux Arts and Second Empire styles – and to do so on an intimate scale, rather than turn it into a “new, edgy hotel,” will yield a beautifully timeless result. The restoration utilizes artisans to showcase details and rediscover the treasures its original architect installed, all the while integrating contemporary amenities that do not compromise the property’s overall aesthetic appeal.

The Mansfield’s original architect was James Renwick of Renwick, Aspinwall and Owen, whose renown includes a few familiar New York landmarks – St. Patrick’s Cathedral, The New York Public Library and St. Bartholomew’s Church among them. Modeled after prominent European hostelries of the time, Renwick built his hotel for well-heeled bachelors and socialites on 44th Street just west of Fifth Avenue, on what would become “Club Row” – site of the elegant Bar Association of the City of New York and ultimately the Harvard, Princeton, Penn and Cornell Clubs; New York Yacht Club and other historic hotels (including The Algonquin, home to the fabled literary salon The Round Table).

A New Commitment to Preservation

In The Mansfield, Reiss and Yoon saw an unfinished canvas. Their artisans are carefully restoring and preserving Renwick’s signature elements, including the high-ceilinged lobby, terrazzo-floored hallways, and oval cast-iron staircases with red mahogany banisters and intricate balustrades that glide down 12 stories. But, The Mansfield needed more. A prior guest room redesign did not honor the hotel’s heritage and bathrooms were contemporized. Public space did not offer any of the amenities today’s guests seek in a hotel offering The Mansfield’s level of service. Consequently, to best utilize available space the design team has selected in-scale furniture, designed built-ins and chosen lush materials to recreate the

refinement and *joie de vivre* of days when guests could stroll to the theater for the newest Bernard Shaw play or George M. Cohan musical.

The Clubroom

Homage to traditional game rooms was the impetus for The Mansfield's beautiful new Beaux Arts library, christened the **Clubroom**, a name that is taken in part from the historic block on which the hotel resides. Guests seeking a warm, inviting gathering place can enjoy this centerpiece of the hotel's restoration.

The new Clubroom, to the left of the lobby, was originally the hotel's parlor. Artisans have installed honey-colored mahogany woodwork throughout the room, including floor-to-ceiling, fully-stocked library shelves with a rail and rolling ladder.

The Clubroom also features a **cell phone booth**, a growing trend in insuring privacy. At the far end of the room, the English phone booth-style door creates a large, private nook, where plush banquette seating, upholstered in dark cherry material, comfortably seats several people for intimate conversation.

The room's focal point is a working fireplace framed by a mahogany and marble mantel and, hanging from the center of the ceiling, a dramatic, double-tiered black iron chandelier with hanging globes of frosted glass. Period-style sconces provide accent lighting around the room. Grey-streaked marble countertop accents, opulent pewter silk draperies and rich chestnut, taupe and pewter patterned carpet provide background for oversized club chairs, upholstered in pale sage green; ottoman stools covered in moss-green leather; and

graceful, curved-back chairs with eggplant velvet seats and brown suede backs.

Guests can read and relax (or borrow one of the leather-bound tomes), enjoy cocktails, and play cribbage, chess and backgammon at custom-designed game tables. The Clubroom also contains a 24-hour complimentary cappuccino/coffee/tea bar.

Guest Rooms

The intimate scale of The Mansfield consists of 49 standard guest rooms, 50 guest deluxe rooms and 27 suites, including several larger suites and a loft-style duplex suite situated on the Penthouse level.

The team will use a yacht-design approach – with built-in furniture for multiple uses – to maximize the space in each of these **guest rooms**, unify their appearance and create user-friendly living spaces. Since the hotel was built with no closets, the designers will build closets into the millwork along one wall, incorporating a flat-screen TV, desk and mini-bar. On another wall, the bed headboard is padded in soft, finely pebbled grey suede and surrounded by built-in storage. Built-in shelves, drawers and countertops save space throughout the room and offer more convenient access.

To create a dramatic, period look, walls, shelves and floors will be finished in ebony-stained wood. A plush striped area rug in chocolate brown, sage green, tan and wheat will sit before the bed. Unstructured Roman blackout shades in a creamy ivory silk will frame a deep, **plush window daybed seat**, covered with black and ivory striped velveteen. Black suede and stylized ivory and black floral throw pillows will accent the window

seat. A custom-designed, high-backed trapezoid desk chair in distressed leather will add a smart touch. Suites will have living room-style sitting areas with a three-cushioned sofa covered in herringbone tweed.

New Fitness Center

A sleek, contemporary **Fitness Center** will replace the hotel's former conference center, a change that is expected to create a lot of excitement with guests. Italian-designed TechnoGym equipment will include state-of-the-art treadmills, elliptical trainers, weights and a multi-use area. Hidden light fixtures and an innovative use of colors and lighting will create the illusion of being outdoors, reinforcing the fitness room's soothing ambiance. Above the equipment area, a **Stretching Loft** with yoga area will permit small classes and private lessons.

Kitchen Expansion for M Bar Dining

A scheduled redesign of the kitchen will introduce full-menu dining to the **M Bar**, already a local gathering place known for its signature oval, domed Beaux Arts skylight and live music Tuesday through Thursday evenings. While the music and atmosphere won't change – the performers and their variety of styles rotate – this expansion will enable the M Bar to move from a light menu and limited room service to a full complement of menu options and expanded room-service menus.

The Mansfield stands as a testament to an era long past, maintaining a genuine commitment to each of its guests and offering an unparalleled level of personal service. Amenities include luxurious 300-count bed linens and comforters, new pillow-top mattresses, plush cotton terry robes, Aveda bath



amenities, DVD players, *The New York Times* delivered daily, complimentary high-speed wireless internet, a business center and discounted valet parking at a nearby garage.

The Mansfield is at 12 West 44th Street, 212-277-8700, www.mansfieldhotel.com. Located just off Fifth Avenue with its designer boutiques, the hotel is within walking distance to Grand Central Station, Broadway and Times Square, Madison Square Garden, Rockefeller Center, Empire State Building, St. Patrick's Cathedral, Bryant Park and The New York Public Library.

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