

W

It's not just the summer sun that's making the **W Hotel** sizzle this season. SPACE took a tour of the new space with redesign mastermind **Thom Filicia**



By Anna Curtis

The idea behind the \$17 million renovation of the W Hotel in Los Angeles was to infuse a new personality and function in the mid-century structure while maintaining the vibe of the existing atmosphere—fresh, young and vibrant. To accomplish this aesthetic, Emmy-award winning designer Thom Filicia (of Bravo's *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy*) and his Manhattan-based team of creators was strategically placed at the helm.

"We were inspired by Thom's hands-on ability to create real eclectic juxtapositions, cross-referencing regional tones and integrating his style with that of the W," says Ross Klein, president of Starwood's Luxury Brands Group. "What our guests will experience is the perfect balance of Thom's signature couture comfort style infused with the voice of W."



"The building is unique and amazing and tells its own story," says Filicia. "The design reveals itself with a natural Southern California ease that stems from the original details of the building, combined with the sophistication associated with the W."

As you'd expect with such an elite brand of hotels, the decision to refresh its look was a winning one. "It's sharper; it functions better," Filicia says of the design result, standing amid the newly reupholstered poolside cabanas. "Not only from the hotel's viewpoint of providing service, but also from the aspect of the guest."

One of the functions he's referring to is the hotel's introduction of the poolside PDA *intellChaise* device, through which lounging guests can remotely order ahi tuna tartar with habanero vinaigrette or Wisconsin cheddar burgers with sweet potato fries before turning over to sun their backsides. Early afternoon libations like cabana coolers made with lychee juice show up chair side with one well-manicured push of a button. ▶





New outside color schemes of teal, cyan and deep browns meander throughout the interior of the hotel as well, rolling down the hallways in increasingly subtler tones, leading up to doorbell-equipped suites. "These rooms are really generous in space," Filicia says, wandering from the main lounging area to an ante room and then on to the main bedroom. "We wanted the color concepts to be warm and inviting without losing that L.A. edge."

To achieve this, Filicia says he incorporated organic elements into his design palette. Woven wood tones on the walls and plush chocolate-and-midnight carpet soften modern twists like stone countertops and plastic Eames chairs. "We used a light box behind the couch as a soft way of illuminating the atmosphere and displaying the art in a fun way."

Each design component works together to lend a feeling of being tucked stylishly away—whether reclining atop the hip modular couch with its flipable cushion squares or curled deep beneath the feathery softness of the W's exclusive coverlet. A "peek-a-boo" honeycomb wall of glass separates the shower from the master bedroom, and charcoal-colored bathroom tiles lead to an alabaster sink big enough to bathe an infant in (don't tell us you're already thinking of leaving the little ones at home?).

Downstairs in the lobby, smoothly cemented walls boast humongous black-and-white prints of super-celebrities like Seinfeld and Springsteen, and an upper-class staff accommodates your every whim with expert ease (well, at least some things at the W haven't changed). Add to that the summertime program for opulent overnighters—including prix fixe picnic baskets and nighttime film projections of a truly iconic nature—and you won't be able to resist indulging yourselves.

We didn't even try. □