

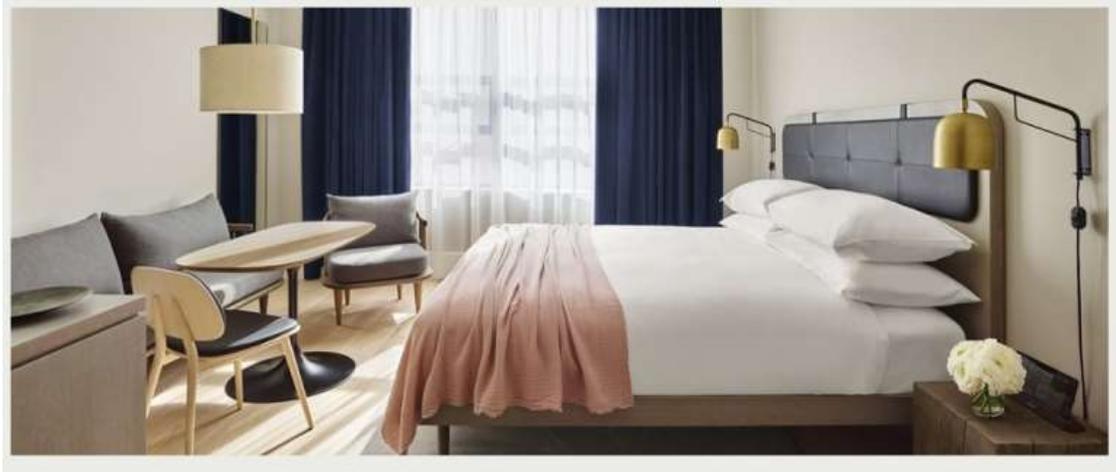
JetSetter.com

April 14, 2016

2,126,907 Unique Monthly Visitors

<http://www.jetsetter.com/feature/11-howard?nm=magazine>

JET SETTER



The Hot New Hotel You Need to Know About

NYC has no shortage of buzzy hotel openings this spring—and we're already playing favorites. Siobhan Reid checks into Soho's 11 Howard, a Scandinavian-chic newcomer with a museum-worthy art collection and the hotel bar of our dreams.

There are New York City hotels that open with a bang: lavish parties, velvet ropes, throngs of paparazzi loitering outside with long lenses at the ready. Then there are hotels like 11 Howard, which debuted in lower Manhattan earlier this month, to something of a faint murmur—no celebrity sightings or VIP fêtes, just a curious Instagram assemblage of drink coasters bearing images of iconic blonds like Marilyn Monroe and James Dean from the the hotel's bar cheekily named, The Blond. Needless to say I was intrigued. How does a swanky new SoHo property—and one from New York real estate tycoon Aby Rosen, at that—open without making so much as a peep? Eager for answers, I booked a room for that Saturday night.



Photo by Lauren Dishinger

The first thing I noticed as I pulled up to the front of the hotel was its understated design. At the crossroads of Bowery, Chinatown and Little Italy, the property exudes a polished, residential vibe completely at odds with the neighborhood. It's something I'd expect to see away from the tourist masses on the Upper West Side, but not Lower Manhattan. What stops me in my tracks is the hotel's massive, 150-by-50-foot mural on its South-facing wall, which was commissioned by New York-based public arts organization Groundswell, and artist Jeff Koons. A visual interpretation of SoHo's history, the striking black, white and cobalt mural combines imagery of an industrial worker, tenements, and a Basquiat crown.



Photo by Lauren Dishinger

In the airy lobby, which has 15-foot ceilings, bleached oak wood paneling, polished concrete floors and Alexander Calder's Untitled, 1976 mobile, I'm greeted by a smiling bellhop who leads me up a cylindrical staircase to the "The Library"—a multipurpose space where guests check in, mingle, order food and cocktails and answer their emails at a large communal table. Designed by Danish studio Space Copenhagen, The Library's functional, fashion-forward interiors are a study in Scandinavian-like

restraint, with a bankers-grey color palette, leather stools, luxurious fur throws and angular, custom-made furniture from Rick Owens and Giò Ponti, among others.



Photo by Lauren Dishinger

I narrow in on a striking black-and-white photograph of Radio City opposite the front desk. "It's a Hiroshi Sugimoto," the front desk clerk says, referencing the Japanese-born artist. "There are two others by him as well. Most of the hotel's artwork is from Aby's private collection." She leads me around the room pointing out the various pieces curated by the developer, an avid art collector. There's a silk mural by fashion designer Holly Fowler, a mixed media neon sculpture by Dan Attoe, ceramic works by Katie Yang, and in The Blond, several pieces by Japanese photographer, Nobuyoshi Araki. The whole place is a showcase for international art and design, some understated, some provocative—but all working to create a supremely intimate feel.



Photo by Nikolas Koenig

Upstairs, guestrooms channel the same clean-lined, subdued look as the lobby—soaring 11-foot ceilings, brass fixtures, natural bamboo area rugs, super soft bedding topped with a bubblegum pink wool afghan and an abundance of natural light streaming in from oversized windows. Looking out over the city's vast skyline, I'm reminded of the rumor I'd heard earlier in the lobby: supposedly, Rihanna just moved into the penthouse next door. For a hotel with such a quiet opening, the area's star power is no joke.



Photo by Lauren Dishinger

At 8 o'clock I make my way to The Blond, a sultry spot with burnished mirrors, bronze-faced busts and a plush velvet couch spanning the length of the room. The bearded bartender takes my drink order and scoots back seconds later with a Marilyn coaster in hand, sliding it across the bar's sleek surface. He pours my drink, a lavender gin-based cocktail called the "Norma Jean," explaining that the bar has been abuzz ever since it opened. "We've had some crazy nights—I mean, you come into work the next day and the place is so cleaned up that it's hard to believe people were jumping on the couch 6 hours earlier." In the time that we've been talking, the room has filled up to near-capacity. A young, international crowd clinks flukes as a disco ball reflect fractals of light across the room. "Just so you know," the bartender, says as the lights dim even lower, "the bar will close for a private party at 10."



Photo by Lauren Dishinger

A faint murmur of a hotel opening? Evidently, only to those of us who are late to the party. But let's see just how long 11 Howard can keep this a secret.



Photo Courtesy of Ben Jacoby / @thegritter