

THE 68 MOST EXCITING PLACES TO STAY THIS YEAR

TRAVEL + LEISURE

THE

HOTELS

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The check-in desk
at New York City's
Beekman hotel.

• THE HOTELS ISSUE

9 REASONS TO LOVE HOTELS NOW

A great hotel can be the highlight of your trip, the key that unlocks a location, even a destination in itself. Which is why we celebrate the latest trailblazing properties: the ones that elevated design, redefined wellness, whetted our appetites, and reminded us that true hospitality is always in style. Plus, on page 34, we present the 2017 It List—the best openings of the past year.



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Because the right hotel will lead you to new places.

Years ago, it would have seemed odd for a visitor to New York City to book a hotel in the Financial District, which basically used to shut down on the weekends. Now the area is one of the most exciting places to be for travelers and New Yorkers alike. Sparked by the post-9/11 building boom, shops, markets, and restaurants continue to move in, catering to an increase in residents and businesses (including *Travel + Leisure's* parent company, Time Inc.). The neighborhood has one of the biggest hotel debuts in town: the **Beekman, a Thompson Hotel** (thompsonhotels.com; doubles from \$619), is set in an 1881 landmark that took more than four years to bring back to its original architectural

splendor. Over a century ago, Edgar Allan Poe wrote several novels here, when the site was home to a library. The public spaces evoke a moody den, with dark walls and glass cases displaying curiosities. On a recent Friday, the lobby bar, which sits in a restored, nine-story Victorian-era atrium, was packed with visitors and locals.

The 287 guest rooms, which are arranged around this central atrium, feature a quirky mix of art and furniture (fringed lamps, oversize leather headboards); it feels like you're staying with a wealthy, eccentric relative. Downstairs, Tom Colicchio's Fowler & Wells serves refined American classics like diver scallops and pork with apples, while Keith McNally's French bistro, Augustine, turns out a killer *steak frites*.

The Beekman is within walking distance of some of the city's best new attractions, like the Santiago Calatrava–designed Oculus, a transit hub and shopping mall. There are more than 100 stores inside, and it connects to a branch of the Italian-food emporium **Eataly**, where Osteria della Pace serves the city's best spaghetti carbonara (eataly.com; entrées \$23–\$41). Nearby is **Blacktail** (blacktailnyc.com), a Cuban-themed bar inside the Pier A complex. And the **Four Seasons Downtown** recently opened with Yabu Pushelberg–designed rooms and Wolfgang Puck's Cut steak house (fourseasons.com/newyorkdowntown; entrées \$31–\$88). There are also eight more hotels in the works. Centering a vacation around the Financial District might have seemed ludicrous in the past, but it's now a real—and very attractive—possibility. —STEPHANIE WU