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The 10 Most Breathtaking Hotel Lobbies in New York City

In a city where first impressions can make or break a business, these hotel entrances exceed all expectations and then some. Prepare to be impressed

The lobby defines the hotel. And in New York — where making a statement is *de rigueur* — many hotels go all out with their lobbies. Also, keep in mind that facades can often be deceiving in New York — a rundown exterior will sometimes give way to an unexpectedly beautiful interior — so in these cases, the lobby is the hotel's first chance to make a splash. From the cathedral-high ceilings and stellar pop art of Conrad New York to the dizzying black-and-white optical-illusion floors of The Mark to the tufted carpets and Mexican-tiled fireplaces of The Bowery, these are the city's most stunning lobbies — perfect for making a grand entrance.



The upper level of the New York Palace lobby (Photo: The New York Palace)

The New York Palace

Lighter and brighter. That was the mission of the Champalimaud design firm when it was brought on to reinvent the [New York Palace's](#) lobby as part of the hotel's \$140 million renovation in 2013. It was a transformation that included tons of gold leaf trim, vivid leather fabrics and a Diego Rivera-inspired mural that hugs the second floor crown molding and tells the story of the Villard family, whose mansion spawned the hotel. A brilliant chandelier comprised of hundreds of handblown glass spheres tops it all off. But, as most will agree, the best part of any lobby is the bar, and here, the sexy, low-lit Trouble's Trust can be found tucked right under the grand staircase. 455 Madison Ave., 212-888-7000, from \$359, [book now](#)



The Mark Hotel lobby (Photo: Francesco Tonelli)

The Mark

Watch where you walk, but don't stare too long or you may trip. The vertiginous black-and-white-striped floors that greet you in the lobby of this quirky Upper East Side hotel are just one highly visual expression of Parisian visionary Jacques Grange's personal design philosophy, which melds glamour, artistry and intimacy. Originally built in 1927, The Mark underwent a complete facelift in 2009 and the lobby's whimsical use of color and neo-deco style is a throwback to 1920s Paris. The lobby also showcases unique furnishings from other renowned designers, including Ron Arad's "Ge-off Sphere" pendant lamp, Anne and Vincent Corbiere's patina iron and walnut cage tables and Mattia Bonetti's wall-mounted gold orbs in the lounge. 25 E. 77th St., 212-744-4300, from \$599, themarkhotel.com



Andaz Wall Street lobby lounge and staircase (Photo: Andaz)

Andaz Wall Street

Nature is in at [Andaz Wall Street](#). Contemporary yet simplistic, the hotel's Rockwell Group-designed lobby uses natural living materials and textures in its oversized communal living room-style space. Case in point: the wall constructed entirely of rectangular wood paneling and the freestanding pearlescent steel and stone staircase (made to look like a sculpted branch) that leads right up to the new Dina Rata restaurant. Comfort is also in. Traditional check-in desks are eschewed for plush seating, and the double-height space has a snack station that serves gratis goodies and drinks, which you can sit and savor while enjoying real trees and branches through the large windows that open up to a landscaped park. 75 Wall St., 212-590-1234, from \$292, [book now](#)

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citizenM lobby (Photo: Courtesy of citizenM)

citizenM

It's a playroom. It's a coffeehouse. It's a library. Nope, it's just the citizenM's unconventional lobby. The split-personality space, conceived to feel like a cozy living room, is colorful, eclectic and laid back. In the back corner is the café and bar, which connects to a quiet, breezy outdoor area — a wonderfully calm oasis amid overcrowded Times Square. Relax on streamlined Vitra furniture, peruse a photography book courtesy of Mendo bookshop and cop some free WiFi, all while under the watchful eyes of Andy Warhol's *Queen Beatrix* (in homage to the fact that citizenM is a Dutch hotel chain). But, the queen is slightly overshadowed by Julian Opie's gigantic floor-to-ceiling walking figures installation, which dominates the elevator bank. Sorry, Andy. 218 W. 50th St., 2120461-3638, from \$199, citizenm.com



Waldorf Astoria lobby, Park Avenue entrance (Photo: Waldorf Astoria)

Waldorf Astoria New York

Two lobbies equals double the chance to impress. The [Waldorf Astoria New York](#) has two separate — but equally lavish — spaces to welcome you: the grand Park Avenue entrance and the more central, casual check-in hall, which can be accessed via both Lexington and Park Avenues. Restored to its Art Deco glory in 2012, the airy Park Avenue side highlights original limestone and travertine finishes and the eye-catching Louis Rigal “The Wheel of Life” floor mosaic. Look up to gaze at the stunning chandelier with a Lalique surround. In juxtaposition to the light-filled entrance lobby, the check-in area offers a dimly lit but lofty space with thick carpets, an iconic two-ton, nine-foot-tall clock tower and the famed Peacock Alley restaurant. 301 Park Ave., 212-355-3000, from \$235, [book now](#)

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Dream Downtown lobby (Photo: Dream Hotels)

Dream Downtown

Are you in a lobby or a nightclub? It's kind of hard to tell at the [Dream Downtown](#). The glamorous lobby is as much a lively gathering spot as it is a place to check in. The soaring space has colorful, vibrant furnishings, animal-print accents, an American flag backdrop made entirely from Mexican beer cans (go figure) and a curved corner bar. Sip a tasty cocktail while bobbing your head to the tunes of a live DJ. Afterward, ascend to the exclusive rooftop pool to splash around with other beautiful people. But you won't even have to leave your perch to catch the upstairs action — the lobby ceiling doubles as the 50-foot pool's glass bottom. 355 W. 16th St., 212-229-2559, from \$325, [book now](#)



The Maritime Hotel lobby (Photo: Maritime Hotel)

Maritime Hotel

The maritime theme isn't only in the hotel's name. The nautically designed lobby will make you feel like you've walked right onto a ship, which is fitting, considering that the building served as the headquarters for the National Maritime Union when it was built in 1968. Low ceilings paneled in wood preside over plush navy carpets and a handmade pearlized steel fireplace surrounded by Mexican tile and velvet armchairs. Bookshelves are lined with vintage encyclopedias and back issues of *National Geographic*. The arched windows ringed in blue brick give way to the lobby's adjacent garden and the delightful La Bottega Trattoria, which serves up rustic Italian cuisine by Chef Lucia Piscopo. 363 W. 16th St., 212-242-4300, from \$399, [themaritimehotel.com](#)

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The Bowery Hotel lobby (Photo: The Bowery Hotel)

The Bowery Hotel

Great Aunt Mildred's eccentric parlour meets a swank 1920s speakeasy in the Bowery Hotel's cushy lobby. Owners and designers Eric Goode and Sean MacPherson masterfully disguised the fact that the Bowery Hotel is, in fact, a brand new build — the lobby is filled with antique leather-covered furnishings, vintage paneling, iron chandeliers and velvet everywhere. Curl up on one of the gargoyle-backed chairs set on a Persian rug in front of the Moroccan-tiled fireplace with a single-malt scotch from the bar and there's no way you're in the present day. 335 Bowery, 212-505-9100, from \$399, theboweryhotel.com



Conrad New York lobby and atrium (Photo: Conrad New York)

Conrad New York

Resembling a massive wing of MoMA, the spacious Conrad New York lobby exhibits spectacular artwork, starting with the remarkable 15-story-high, blue-and-purple Sol LeWitt *Loopy Doopy* mural. But though LeWitt's largest wall drawing ever is undoubtedly the focal point of the atrium, the two-tiered sculpture *Veil*, designed by Monica Ponce de Leon — for which 77 tons of aluminum and 16 miles of Vectran cable was required — also serves as architectural eye candy. And that's just a small taste of the hotel's carefully curated collection. Check out Pat Steir's striking *Topsy Turvy* painting, which adorns the wall at the top of the grand staircase or *Polygon (Menninge)*, a painting by renowned German artist Imi Knoebel that graces the east entrance. 102 North End Ave., 212-945-0100, from \$199, [book now](#)

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The lobby of the Gramercy Park Hotel (Photo: The Gramercy Park Hotel)

Gramercy Park Hotel

The creation of artist Julian Schnabel, GPH's sleek entrance hall showcases a 10-foot-tall fireplace; internationally sourced finds like a hand-tufted, garnet-and-gold Aubusson rug; and highly acclaimed rotating artwork — quite a few Warhols, Basquiats and Hirsts deck the walls. The [Gramercy Park Hotel](#) opened to guests in 1925, and it was completely revitalized in 2006 under Schnabel's careful eye. Even so, its storied past can be felt throughout, from antique carpets to vintage furnishings to the memories of past guests — the lobby that you're standing in welcomed everyone from Humphrey Bogart to JFK to the Rolling Stones. And while you're giving that some thought, you may just spy the hotel's current fans like Lady Gaga and Daniel Craig. 2 Lexington Ave., 212-920-3300, from \$350, [book now](#)

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