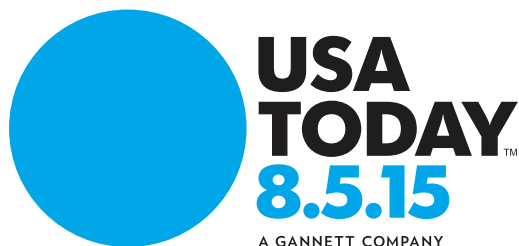


THE NATION'S NEWS



SPECIAL REPRINT

ECO-FRIENDLY 1 HOTEL CENTRAL PARK DEBUTS IN NEW YORK CITY

Nancy Trejos
USA Today

The 1 Hotel brand opens its first hotel in New York City this week. The socially and environmentally-conscious hotel chain, developed by Sternlicht's Starwood Capital Group, debuted in Miami earlier this year.

Going green is not a new concept for hotels, says Gray Shealy, executive director of the Master's of Hospitality Management Program at Georgetown University.

1 Hotels, he says, "aren't the only hotel brand, by any means, to take a stance on the environment ... Almost all hotel groups (luxury included) have some sort of standpoint on sustainability, though they are oftentimes not overly apparent, or overly impactful."

For instance, Starwood Hotels and Resorts, the company Sternlicht founded and led for many years, has Element, a select-service brand that championed the idea of going green in a holistic way many years ago.

But, Shealy says, "1 Hotels is positioning itself to be the first mainstream luxury brand whose guiding mission and core values are green, ecological sustainability."

Sternlicht is no stranger to the New York City hotel world. He founded Starwood's W Hotel brand, which has a large presence in New York, and recently developed the luxurious Bacarat Hotel in midtown Manhattan, which

he promptly sold to a Chinese insurance company.

On a recent preview tour of the 1 Hotel Central Park, Sternlicht showed off what he's calling one of his most significant accomplishments—a hotel chain that adheres to green building and LEED standards while providing a luxurious experience.

As proof of that, the first three stories of the hotel are covered by an ivy exterior green wall. The hotel is also just one block from New York City's largest green space: Central Park.

Guests enter through two large steel doors made out of 16,000 twigs. The ceiling is made from reclaimed oak from the New York area. Floor numbers are represented by different designs made with such materials as penny nails and acorns.

The 229 guest rooms and suites are decorated with furniture made by local craftsmen. Some rooms feature reclaimed wooden timbers and window seats that can be used for sitting or napping.

The walk-in showers were designed to look like indoor greenhouses. The bathrooms are made with natural materials such as mushroom wood and reclaimed brick.

Each room has filters in all taps, sinks and showers and energy-efficient heating and cooling systems.

To cut down on the use of paper, guests can check in electronically. They can also read newspapers and magazines on a pre-loaded Nexus device in each room. 1 Guide, the hotel's app, lets guests control all features in

the room, including the television and temperature.

"It is sometimes said that 'green' design and luxury cannot co-exist," says Greg Bradshaw, one of the principals at AvroKO, the New York-based design company that worked on the project. "We were excited to take on that stereotype and attempt to disrupt the thinking about environmentally-conscious venues."

Guests have access to Tesla premium electric vehicle rides within a 15-block radius, complimentary valet for all electric vehicles for overnight guests, and complimentary bicycle valet parking. Wi-Fi is free for up to five devices.

The hotel encourages guests to stay physically fit with 24-hour access to the Field House, which has a floor reclaimed from the University of Wisconsin basketball court. Rooms have yoga mats and programming. Guests will also be able to take personal training in Central Park with Spartan Fitness.

The food and beverage program is run by celebrity chef Jonathan Waxman. His 100-seat restaurant Jams serves local and seasonal cuisine using organic ingredients.

When guests check in, they get goodie bags filled with snacks curated by Waxman.

"Of course travelers will always want the ultimate in experiences and services," Sternlicht says, "and I believe we can deliver that in a modern, responsible way that feels natural, organic and connected with the local environment."