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◀ The Apparatus Room's refreshed menu continues the tradition of dishes that highlight Michigan ingredients, like roasted chicken with truffle mousse, carrots, and maitake mushrooms.



◀ New design elements like soft headboards and Roman shades add warmth and elegance to the rooms.



▲ The dining room now features plush furniture and reclaimed wood tables from Woodward Throwbacks.

to pay homage to the history of the hotel and its setting but also to the Detroit of here and now. “The renovation offered an opportunity to dig deeper into the past, present, and future of our resilient, layered, and storied city of Detroit,” she says. “We sought to honor and acknowledge Detroit’s French establishment, resilience in the face of challenges, and unmatched local pride.”

In The Apparatus Room, remnants of the former DFD headquarters such as the original brass fire poles coexist with lush, Parisian-inspired furnishings in richly colored leathers and velvets. The refined, plush atmosphere extends to the dining area, with tables made from reclaimed materials by Detroit-based designer Woodward Throwbacks. The kitchen, helmed by Executive Chef Rece Hogerheide, has been upgraded and rearranged to face diners, with a new menu featuring an expanded raw bar and mains that celebrate Michigan suppliers.

Nearby, the ground-floor podcast studio has been moved to the third floor to make room for a revamped conference room, which will double as additional public space when it’s not in use. In the rooms upstairs, the luxuriant fabrics and fixtures continue, with soft headboards and Roman shades that add warmth and European elegance to spaces that once leaned rawer and more industrial.

Kitchen sees the refresh of the hotel and restaurant as “a way to invite people back in.”

“I want people to have a good excuse to come back, and critique us more than ever, because we need to continually do better. As ambassadors to Detroit, it’s our obligation.”

To get to know the new Foundation Hotel, whether you’re a regular or first-timer, visit the reinvigorated Apparatus Room, open for breakfast, lunch, dinner, and drinks seven days a week, or check out one of the hotel’s frequent events, such as its popular weekend Vinyl Brunch. 🍷

DESIGN

Welcome (Back) In

The Detroit Foundation Hotel gets a fresh face

BY MEGAN ANDERLUH

EIGHT YEARS AFTER welcoming their first guests, the Detroit Foundation Hotel and its signature restaurant, The Apparatus Room, want to reintroduce themselves. Over the last several months, the space has been undergoing a series of understated, thoughtful improvements, all part of a \$4 million investment in the property meant to ensure it continues to represent the best of the downtown hospitality scene.

That scene has changed a lot since 2017, when the Foundation Hotel opened to widespread acclaim. The 100-room hotel, situated across from Huntington Place in the city’s financial district, was lauded for its unique transformation of the former Detroit Fire Department headquarters, built in 1929.

Michael Kitchen, of Aparium Hotel Group, says “it was time” for an update. Eight years of hosting guests and serving up to 300 covers a

night in The Apparatus Room had taken a toll on the hotel’s rooms and furnishings.

“It would have been easy to rest on our laurels,” Kitchen says. “But that wasn’t the right thing to do. To reestablish our position as a representation of the top of the market in hospitality in Detroit, you can’t let things slip.”

Kitchen and Aparium worked with original partners including Parini design studio, McIntosh Paris Architects, and Sachse Construction to revisit the hotel’s ambiance. “We went back to where we started to audit the ethos of the brand,” Kitchen says. “And the good news was, a lot of it held up.”

The result is more of a “refresh” than a full-scale remodel. Christine Babini, partner at Parini, says the goal of the new design was