Heritage Hotel: A Marriage of Heritage Tourism and Boutique Hospitality

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Heritage Hotel of Richmond
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by Leah Embrey
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I believe that design is a portrait of the environment and its users.
I believe that who we are is based on where we’ve come from and where we are going.
I believe that design should speak to what is inside of us.
I believe that design should evoke an emotional response from the user.
I believe that the practice of designing should be an aestheticized emotional response to a space.
We as humans have developed a reverence for relics of bygone eras. A segment of the tourism industry specializes in the appreciation for sites that speak to us from the past: “heritage tourism.” The Boutique Hospitality industry has developed over the past decades as a response to society craving individuality and unique experiences. Research in both Heritage Tourism and the Boutique Hotel industry shows that tourists are more interested in holistic experiences—feeling like they are participants in that culture or history.

Heritage Tourism

is defined as a "highly complex series of production-related activities" and applies it to our cultural traditions in the form of our built environment. We go out of our way to visit historic sites to experience an emotional response, a deeper meaning and understanding of some greater "spiritual truth" that relates to these sites. (Nuryanti, 1997)

Boutique Hotels

"are generally smaller in size, with less than 100 rooms; are not part of a large chain; are generally located in urban or city centres; will generally have an historical or other interesting aspect associated with the building; are individual in design with an emphasis on personal service; include a good quality restaurant as an integral feature; are three-, four- or five-star rated." (Aggett, 2007)
Within cathedral-style walls that have stood more than 130 years, vacant for almost a century, the Byrd Park Pump House tells the story of industry, rebirth, and society in Richmond.

When first constructed in 1883, Richmond was still recovering from the Civil War, rising from the cinders to become once again the gleaming capital of southern culture. Colonel Cutshaw, city planner and Confederate vet, designed a structure that looked like a church, served community utilities, and hosted grand events while overlooking the James River. The lower floor housed massive modern equipment for water distribution and energy generation. The upper floor is a 3600 square foot open air ballroom where folks from the community could congregate for everything from parties to concerts to picnics. It was the Gilded Age in America and things were looking up in Richmond.

The Pump House was a place Richmond could be proud of. It boasted the latest technologies, the grandest parties and the most beautiful scenery.

When a new pumping facility was constructed just west of the Pump House, it began its decline into disuse. Today it sits empty, only the thick stone walls remain. It’s closed to the public save special touring events. There have been many attempts at revitalizing the building for modern use, but the vision I have for the Pump House is to become once again a place that Richmond can be proud of and a place that showcases Richmond as a richly unique place to visit. The ballroom will once again host events and serve the community as it once did. It is an experience that is designed to give guests a deep sense of Richmond’s culture and history while offering a place to rest, relax, learn and indulge the senses and curiosities.
In the tourism industry, there is a debate of what tourists are attracted to in particular heritage tourism sites and why they chose to visit them. In the hospitality industry, there are questions such as what features/amenities visitors should expect to see in a hotel.

If the idea is to offer accommodations that reflect and encourage tourism in a particular area, should the hotel compete with area attractions by offering too many amenities? Is having food service (such as a restaurant, cafe, or bar) integrated into the overall hotel experience necessary or should the hotel encourage its guests to visit and patron local restaurants and businesses?

What makes a tourist more likely to repeat a visit in a specific hotel? What makes a place enjoyable and memorable? What sort of design choices can designers make that will enhance a visitor's experience?

A literature review and study on heritage tourism and the boutique hospitality industry will help to understand current trends as well as what separates them from other attractions and hotels.

An interview Lyn Lanier who has studied the site and history of the area will help me better understand the building. Precedent studies on similar projects will also help better understand the process and practice of designing spaces of this nature. They will also highlight ways of dealing with programming different types of spaces including important adjacencies and circulation.

In the 21st century, there has been an emphasis on an individual’s perception of the experience than on the qualities of the place we observe. Studies show that the use of stories and immersive experiences that use all senses- including sights, smells, sounds- make the visit more memorable. (Donnelly, 2002) These findings can help establish design goals that will attention on creating those immersive experiences through texture, pattern, color and lighting.

“Ambiance” is a main factor in customer satisfaction, and can be explained by addressing three factors: atmospheric, social, and design. Atmospheric deals with the background condition, i.e. lighting, scents, noise, temperature, etc. The Social deals with the “people component” and finally the Design factor addresses “functional and aesthetic” elements. When all three factors are cohesively woven together, a space will have a specific and favorable ambiance which in turn enhances the experience of the guest. As a tool it is used to evoke an internal emotional response to the space which affects behavior. (Heilde, 2007)

The Heritage Tourism industry grew with the Historic Preservation movement, out of a need for society to preserve the memories of the past by preserving the structures that we made in the past. That feeling of connection- to a place and to our history as humans- is intangible and exclusively available through real life interaction with those sites. The rise in boutique hospitality could have a positive impact on heritage tourism by providing a unique, holistic, seamless experience that marries the history of the area with the current experiences of the visitor, effectively being a part of tomorrow’s history by participating today.
Boutique Hotels

As defined by Wai Mun Lim and Mel Endean in 2009 in their article “Elucidating the aesthetic and operational characteristics of UK boutique hotels” in the International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, Boutique hotels have less than 100 rooms, have an individualistic and unique design, are often in historic buildings, and have highly personalized service for guests.

Ambiance has the biggest impact on a guest’s experience in a boutique hotel. Ambiance is defined as “The result of the interaction between people and the physical environments. Can be perceived and experienced. It is abstract and ambiguous and people vary in their perception of it” (Heide et al., 2007).

Heritage Tourism

Heritage implies inheritance—something that is passed down through generations, traditions, placed “infused with aura of person or time.” We use “intellect and imagination to receive and communicate messages, constructing [our] own sense of historic places to create [our] individual journey of self-discovery” (Young, 2007).

In the 21st century, there has been an emphasis on an individual’s perception of the experience than on the qualities of the place we observe. Built heritage is man-made elements possessing historical values and meaning derived in which the settings in which they occur and the societal values that ascribe worth to them.

There has been a severe decline in heritage tourism in the last two decades. The most successful heritage tourism sites offer amusements and services. Ways that are the most “beneficially related to income” include restaurants, gardens, and souvenir shops. Other added amusements include tea shops, woodlands, trails, caravans, nurseries and plant shops, playground areas, collections, and overnight accommodations. (Nuryanti, 1997)

Heritage Themed Boutique Hotels:

1. Respects the history of the building it is housed in, preserving as much of the original structure as possible.
2. Takes advantage of the unique features the historical building offers, highlighting them with design choices.
3. Educates guests on the history of the building and the surrounding area with both information and design.
4. Encourages guests to visit and engage with other heritage tourism sites in the area, offering concierge services and ticket packages.
Kruisherenhotel Maastricht
Castelvecchio
The Liberty Hotel
Menokin
A church and Monastery in the Netherlands re imagined as a hotel and event venue. Built in 1438 and abandoned in 1981, a hotel company purchased the complex with the intention of creating a space where guests felt the intangible ambiance of history but didn’t feel like they were in a church through the use of contemporary materials such as the copper-clad funnel-like entrance. As per Dutch preservation law, the new architectural elements were installed so they can be removed in the future with no damage to the original site. The side chapels have become lounges, conference rooms and restrooms. One of the interesting decisions they made was to separate the public and private areas of the hotel the same way it had been historically- with the church serving the public and the monastery serving the guests only. This organizational method works in the Pump House, as well. Historically public spaces such as the dance floor should remain public and the less public space that housed turbines could now house guests. Another lesson from this hotel is the addition of a level in the church, the placement of which was determined by an existing division in the vertical space- the balcony. (Kural, 2006)

In the Pump House, the cat walk on the lower floor divides the space, creating an ideal place to add another level.

Key Facts:
32,000 sqft
Lighting Designer: Ingo Maurer
Interior Designer: Vos
Location: Maastrict, Netherlands

Kruisherenhotel Maastricht
Connection without Attachment

Adhere
Connect
Link
Anchor
Fasten
Bridge
Span
Engage
Interact
Interlock
Truss
Suspend
Rest

Image from chateauhotels.nl
In the mid-fourteenth century in Verona, Italy, a military style fortress was constructed with various components within—including a keep, seven towers and a courtyard. The structure was surrounded by water due to the ditch filled in to create a moat. The Castelvecchio has a lot in common with the Pump House—such as utilitarian function, gothic architecture, stone construction, and the water that originally surrounded it. In the mid-nineteenth century, Carlo Scarpa came in and began to revive the old structure, turning it into a museum and work of art in its own right. His architectural style is incredibly sensitive to the historic fabric, juxtaposing the old with the new in ways that highlight and celebrate the two. (Scarpa, 2016)

Where parts “A” and “B” come together both tell a story and asks a question.

Key Facts:
- Originally constructed: 1354-1376
- Renovation: 1959-1973
- Architect: Carlo Scarpa

Image from http://archiobjects.org/
Once a residence to inmates in Boston, Massachusetts, today this building is home to visitors to a city rich in history and culture. The building’s history reads loud and clear thanks to design choices such as the lighting and materials as well as the preserved features of the original structure such as the brick walls and exposed metal beams. Guests aren’t simply experiencing the history as witnesses, they are becoming a part of the history.

The design team referenced the building’s history and the history of the area by using abstracted 19th century motifs typical of New England in various design elements, such as in carpet design, surface patterning, etc. They also left as much original material as possible, such as the exposed iron railings and brick walls. (Liberty, 2015) These practices could be carried over into the Pump House design, using motifs, materials, patterns and details that are unique to Richmond or Virginia.

Key Facts:
298 guestrooms (400-800 sq ft each)
10 suites with separate bedrooms, living, dining areas
9 “rentable” event spaces (listed on facing page)
Architect: Cambridge Seven Associates
Designer: CHAMPALIMAUD
Location: Boston, MA
represent
abstract
interpret
motif
device
telescope

image from oyster.com

image of the Margaret Potts quilt from gelicaso.blogspot.com

image from oyster.com
A signer of the Declaration of Independence once lived in this house in the Northern Neck region in Virginia. Now in ruins, the design Menokin foundation has hired a team of firms to come together to create an entirely new narrative in the landscape of historic preservation. Rather than restoring the structure to tell the story of a man, the team is taking an entirely unique approach and encasing a large percentage of the building with structural glass to “reveal the historic fabric” focusing on the actual materials, craftsmanship and design of the architecture. By doing so, visitors get an opportunity to see in detail how the building was put together, layer by layer. It becomes a center for academic research in areas of countless disciplines, including architecture, crafts, history, design, sociology, and more.

Key Facts:

- Machado Silvetti
  Design Architecture, Lead Consultant
  Boston, Massachusetts

- Reed Hilderbrand LLC – Allan Brown, Consultant
  Landscape Architecture
  Watertown, Massachusetts

- Robert Silman Associates
  Structural Engineering
  New York, New York

- Eckersley O’Callaghan
  Glass Design
  New York, New York

- WSP Flack + Kurtz
  Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumbing
  New York, New York

- Tillotson Design Associates
  Lighting Design
  New York, New York
reveal
protect
expose
teach
layer
show, don’t tell
The Byrd Park Pump House and The Heritage Hotel
Richmond, Virginia, is known for its rich history and culture. It is home to hundreds of heritage tourism sites, museums, galleries, and restaurants. Each neighborhood has its own personality with unique histories and architectural features. This map highlights just a select few of the heritage tourism sites that Richmond has to offer and their proximity to the Pump House.
City planner Colonel Cutshaw designed the Pump House in the Gothic Revival style in 1883 as an energy generation facility/open air gathering space for parties, dances and concerts. In the 1920s, a new Pump House was built next door and this building went out of use. Shortly before WWII the metal and machinery in the building was removed by Japanese metal scrappers. In the 1950s it was at risk of being demolished and the city sold it to a church for $1. James River Park Service now owns the Pump House and is closed to the public.
The Exterior
The First Floor
Plan of Second Floor
The open air ballroom was originally used as a dance and concert hall by the community.

Reflected Ceiling Plan of First Floor
A system of trusses supports the second floor. In the original part of the building, these trusses are made of iron. In the additions, they are wooden.

Plan of First Floor
This floor housed the turbines and pumping equipment and the machinery used to generate energy.
Section A
(LOOKING EAST)
This section cut shows the dance floor, the trusses, the operating rooms that housed the machinery, the various floor levels in that room, the cat walk, the canal, and the two additions beyond.
Guest Rooms: 3,500 sqft
Lobby: 1,000 sqft
Ball Room: 3,600 sqft
Maintenance: 250 sqft
Restrooms: 700 sqft
Kitchen: 1,000 sqft
Offices: 800 sqft

First Floor: 8,666 sqft
Second Floor: 5,969 sqft

Gross Area: 14,625 sqft
Net Area: 9,900 sqft
Efficiency Ratio: ~70%
Total Occupancy: 550

The Numbers
After presenting these layout ideas to the class, it was recommended that the administrative space on the added second floor could reduce in size, leaving extra square footage for more programmed space. A business center and a pre-function space for events made the most sense and added the most value to the Heritage Hotel.
The Lobby

Description: Guest guests check in & check out small gathering area

Code Requirements: Assembly Group A2
ADA accessible

Times of the Day in Use: 6 AM-11 AM, and 3 PM-11 PM (receptionist present at all hours)

Area & Occupancy: 750-1000 sq ft max capacity 50

Privacy & Security: open to the public
doorman and receptionist present

Furniture and Finishes Required: reception desk, lounge seating: sofa, chairs, occasional tables, "wood" eye-catching focal point, local artwork, commercially rated, durable materials

Administrative Offices

Description: Administrative duties Event Planning Office

Code Requirements: Assembly
at least 1 must be ADA accessible

Times of the Day in Use: 8 AM-5 PM (except when present at all hours)

Area & Occupancy: About 100 sq ft max occupancy 12

Privacy & Security: secure

Furniture and Finishes Required: Desks, executive chairs, guest chairs, durable materials

The Parlor

Description: Pre-function space for the bridal party to get ready for events

Code Requirements: Residential Occupancy R2
One must be ADA accessible

Times of the Day in Use: 10 AM-5 PM
daylight

Area & Occupancy: 200 sq ft

Privacy & Security: secure

Furniture and Finishes Required: Step chair, occasional seating, buffet table, dressing room, storage, lots of light

Guest Rooms

Description: Close, relaxing rest space sleep, downtime

Code Requirements: Residential Occupancy R2
One must be ADA accessible

Times of the Day in Use: Any time of day

Area & Occupancy: 325 sq ft

Privacy & Security: secure

Furniture and Finishes Required: Bed, Dresser, TV, Desk, Nightstands, Lounge Chair, Closet, Bathroom Window treatments, carpet, lighting fixtures Each room to be designed individually

The Study

Description: Business center for guests to use during stay or for conference guests to use to prepare for presentations.

Code Requirements: Assembly

Times of the Day in Use: About 1000 sq ft max capacity 30

Area & Occupancy: 350 sq ft

Privacy & Security: secure

Furniture and Finishes Required: Individual work stations, conference table and chairs, informal meeting area with occasional seating. Work table with copy, fax and printing machines

The Ballroom

Description: Large open flexible space for events such as receptions, weddings, conferences, meetings, etc

Code Requirements: Assembly Group A1
ADA accessible

Times of the Day in Use: Any time of day

Area & Occupancy: 3,655 sq ft

Privacy & Security: public

Furniture and Finishes Required: Multi-function space with seating, conference tables, banquet chairs, Bar area. Many different types of lighting with control. Commercially rated, durable materials

Laundry and Mechanical

Description: Storage of cleaning materials

Code Requirements: Laundry equipment

Times of the Day in Use: 9 AM-2 AM

Area & Occupancy: 200 sq ft

Privacy & Security: private (from guests)

Furniture and Finishes Required: 1 Washer 1 Dryer (industrial) Durable, cleanable materials

Catering Kitchen

Description: Equipment for food storage and prep by caterers

Code Requirements: Must be ADA accessible

Times of the Day in Use: Any time of day

Area & Occupancy: 350 sq ft

Privacy & Security: semi-private

Furniture and Finishes Required: Table, sinks Commercially rated, durable materials

Restrooms

Description: Restrooms

Code Requirements: Eco-friendly, efficient, ADA

Times of the Day in Use: Any time of day

Area & Occupancy: any time of day

Privacy & Security: secure

Furniture and Finishes Required: Toilets, sinks Commercially rated, durable materials
Concept:
A New Setting for Heirloom Jewels
Thanks to the Industrial Revolution and the advent of new technologies that led to mass production, there was an ability to create more elaborate and ornamental furniture that formerly was only available to the highest classes of society. Wood carving, textile production and advances in printing technology brought “fancier” furniture, upholstery, drapery, carpets and wallpaper to the masses. It was the time of revivals—gothic, rococo, tudor, and other decorative arts styles were reinterpreted with the new “modern” technologies and materials. Darker colors were coveted in all of the newly discovered dyes—especially those of jewel tones. The richer and more indulgent, the better. The Victorians were all about class and society and the more prestigious ones home and belongings were, the higher social standing they had. This principle led to a more-is-more philosophy in architecture and interior design—evident in the grand Victorian style houses which are dripping in applied decoration. Historical styles were viewed to be more prestigious, which undoubtedly influenced Colonel Cutshaw to design the Pump House in a Gothic Revival style.
Built heritage that has been passed down through the generations deserves to be revered and preserved. However, in its current state it is not able to function and serve modern society. To bring the building and the story back to life, it's time to take the fabric and the essence of the Pump House and the Victorian era and give it a new setting. This setting is in a contemporary configuration that holds, compliments and allows the Pump House to shine without being the main focus. For the new additions to the building, such as furniture and finishes, the intention is to "Revive the Revivals" with today's technology, to reinterpret the historical styles in a contemporary manner with contemporary materials.

Stone represents strength, and permanence, and like precious gems, the Pump House as an institution can be hidden from view for a time but its beauty and value is unyielding. While both evoking reverence, the natural roughness of the masonry stone speaks to shelter and monument, the precise, delicate cuts of a gemstone speaks to treasure and preciousness. Facet can mean both one of the small, polished plane surfaces of a cut gem or an aspect/phase of something, like a project or problem.
Plan of First Floor

N 1/16" = 1'-0"
Plan of Second Floor

N 1/16" = 1'-0"
Plan of Third Floor
At each juncture of copper wires, a light bulb shines light up to the trusses above, casting an ambient glow to the space below, and glittering off the metallic shine of the surrounding materials. The overlapping wires connecting the various elements in the space creates a faceted appearance.

When guests enter the Heritage Hotel, they are greeted by original stone walls and floors, with concrete and gold leaf filling in the cracks. The reception desk is installed like a piece of furniture, a granite slab inlaid with metal wires that reference different points in the space, creating a faceted appearance. The extension of the lobby has a buffet surface (clad in the same granite as the reception desk) for self-serve breakfasts and luncheons to be held. Catered food can be stored and prepared in the small kitchenette adjacent to it. Small receptions and parties can be held in this flexible space.
For overnight guests, accommodations in the guest suites are a unique experience. When the Pump House was in use, the first floor held the massive machinery and turbines with large pools of water inside the structure. The steps that led into these pools have been preserved with a secondary stair made of glass. This makes the guest rooms multilevel, with the bathrooms on the lower “pool” level and the guest room on the second level. From the floor of the guest room level to the ceiling is almost as high, with windows face south letting in a large amount of daylight. The color scheme of each room is based off of a precious stone - emerald, topaz, ruby, amethyst and diamond. The furniture in each room is the same but the fabric and decorative elements are unique to the scheme of each space. The Emerald Suite is accessible to all, being one level. Instead of a step up like the rest of the rooms, the stairs and floor have been excavated and leveled out so that anyone can enjoy a stay at the Heritage Hotel.

Guest Suite Bath Elevation (not to scale)
Walls are a granite in the color family that corresponds to the stone the room is named after. The tub is the 65” Ellery Hammered Copper Footed Tub from Signature Hardware. The light fixture is the Connections 8 Light Large Pendant from Zinc Decor. The shower and water closet spaces are enclosed with panels of frosted glass held in place by metal channels in ceiling element and floor. LED light strips sit on top of ceiling element casting light onto ceiling, creating ambient effect in the rest of the space.
Topaz Suite

Isabella Chair

Haute House
29"W x 41"H x 29"D

Juno
Worlds Away
48"W X 34"H X 18"D

Bronze Mirror
Large
Worlds Away
48"W X 34"H X 18"D

Abigail Ahern
26"W x 65"H

Wide-screen Vent-less
Fireplace
Hearth Cabinet
42"W x 21"H x 11"D

Jet Set Chest
Bernhardt
34"W x 31"H x 19"D

Carree
Christopher Guy
79"W x 97"H x 4"D

Brittany Large
Lantern
Visual Comfort
24"W x32"H

Rock Candy
Glass Lamp
Swank Lighting

Erased Heritage
Jan Kath

Jewel Suite

Emerald Suite

Amethyst Suite

Ruby Suite

Custom Wallpaper, based on Passaro Damask Wallpaper
Black on Charcoal

Guest Suites
The Diamond Suite

- Olivine S
  - Global Views
  - 20"W x 18H x 20D
- Laurel Sofa
  - Hickory Chair
  - 80"W x 36"H x 33.5"D
- Belden Floor Lamp
  - Arteriors
  - 23" dia 64"H
- Aretha Bench
  - Bernhardt
  - 28"W x 19"H x 18"D
- Criteria Side Chair
  - Bernhardt
  - 21"W x 39"H x 26"D
- Bevilacqua Chandelier
  - Currey and Company
  - 27" dia 68"H
- 3-Sided Fireplace
  - Hearth Cabinet
  - 42"W x 30"H x 20"D
- Diamond Crystal Lamp
  - Ralph Lauren
- Custom Wallpaper, based on Dorain Damask Wallpaper
  - Grey, Thibaut
  - 33"W x 42"H x 28"D
- Cotswold Large Sconce
  - Visual Comfort
- Jet Set Chest
  - Bernhardt
  - 34"W x 31"H x 19"D
- Juno
  - Worlds Away
  - 48"W X 34"H X 18"D
- Bronze Mirror
  - Large
  - Abigail Ahern
  - 26"W x 65"H
- Isabella Chair
  - Haute House
  - 29"W x 41"H x 29"D
- Existing Stone Walls
  - Salvage
- Cole and Son Wallpaper
  - ADÔ-1001
  - Surya
  - 86
For those guests who desire a place to get work done, the Study is a full service business center offering copy/print facilities as well as different options for work space. Individual work stations, formal conference seating and casual lounge seating are available. It is situated so that it overlooks the grand stair, allowing a view of the full height windows and a peak under the glass stairs at the original stone floor and steps. LED light strips on the trusses both highlight the historic craftsmanship and gives the cozy space an ambient glow.
This space is designed with the needs of a bride and her wedding party in mind. Elegant but functional, each area of the room offers a place to lounge, be pampered, and prepare for an event. The original spiral staircase that led up to the cat walk has been kept in place, framed in with glass making it take on a sculptural purpose. French doors allow some of the sunlight to pass between the parlor and the corridor. A large all inclusive bathroom adjoins the parlor for the party including a full sized accessible shower, double vanity and an accessible water closet. All of the furnishings and finishes are in keeping with the concept of reinterpreting Victorian styles.
Returning to its original intended function as an entertainment space, the design of this space is meant to not only highlight the historic architecture but allow for a whole new generation of guests to be able to make the most out of the space. Events of all kinds can be held in the space, including weddings, receptions, conferences, dances, etc. The furniture and finishes are selected to go with any scheme a host would want. A catering kitchen is adjacent to the space for convenient service for guests, as does the bar, while the stage makes a great place for performers or speakers.
Our thesis exhibition was held at the Depot Gallery on Broad Street in Richmond Virginia from April 29th through May 15th, 2016.