

## coming to america

A group effort for Grupo Habita's U.S. debut

By Stacy Shoemaker Rauert  
Photography by Jim Franco/Undine Pröhl

*This photo:* El Privado, one of the two basement bars at HôtelAmericano. *Opposite page, top right:* The hotel's exterior, distinguished by a metal mesh screen.

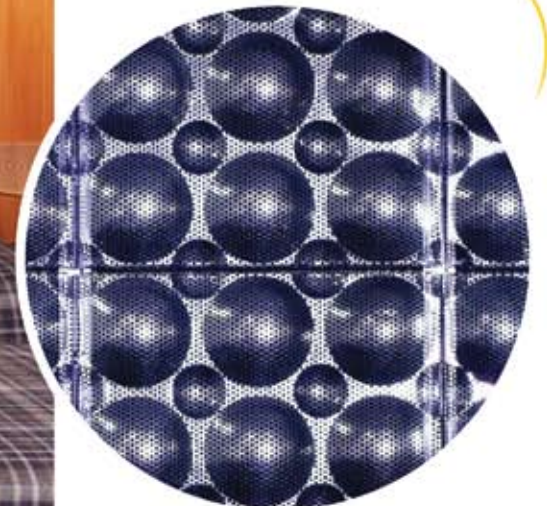




**Hôtel Americano** is making headlines for multiple reasons. Not only is it Mexican hotel company Grupo Habita's U.S. debut, but it's also the first hotel from French designer Arnaud Montigny, and one of the few design-forward boutiques in the still somewhat grungy area of New York's Chelsea neighborhood. "There's this duality about the neighborhood: it's very sophisticated yet very gritty. We wanted to preserve that," explains Carlos Couturier, Grupo Habita's creative eye and managing partner.

With that in mind, Mexican architect Enrique Norten dressed the 10-story façade in a stainless steel mesh screen, and punctuated it with a glass-tiled elevator that runs up the center of the building and pops out on the rooftop. "The building's form is responding both to the needs of the hotel program and strict

A closeup of the steel wall of discs in El Privado, which the design team sourced from France.











*This and opposite page, clockwise from far left:* The wood flanked reception desk; the gallery-like lobby; an overhead view ofAmericano restaurant's vegetation-lined outdoor patio, which Montigny says is a welcome surprise and a highlight of the hotel; pavers with backlit circular grids bring the streets of New York to the rooftop restaurant; and the futuristic, James Bond-inspired Bar Americano.







zoning regulations that define the street wall and height in a way that creates a simple, iconic image," explains Norten, founder of Ten Arquitectos, which has offices in Manhattan and Condesa, Mexico. "The mesh façade and elemental material palette is also a natural fit in a neighborhood that is in transition, but which is still at its core very industrial."

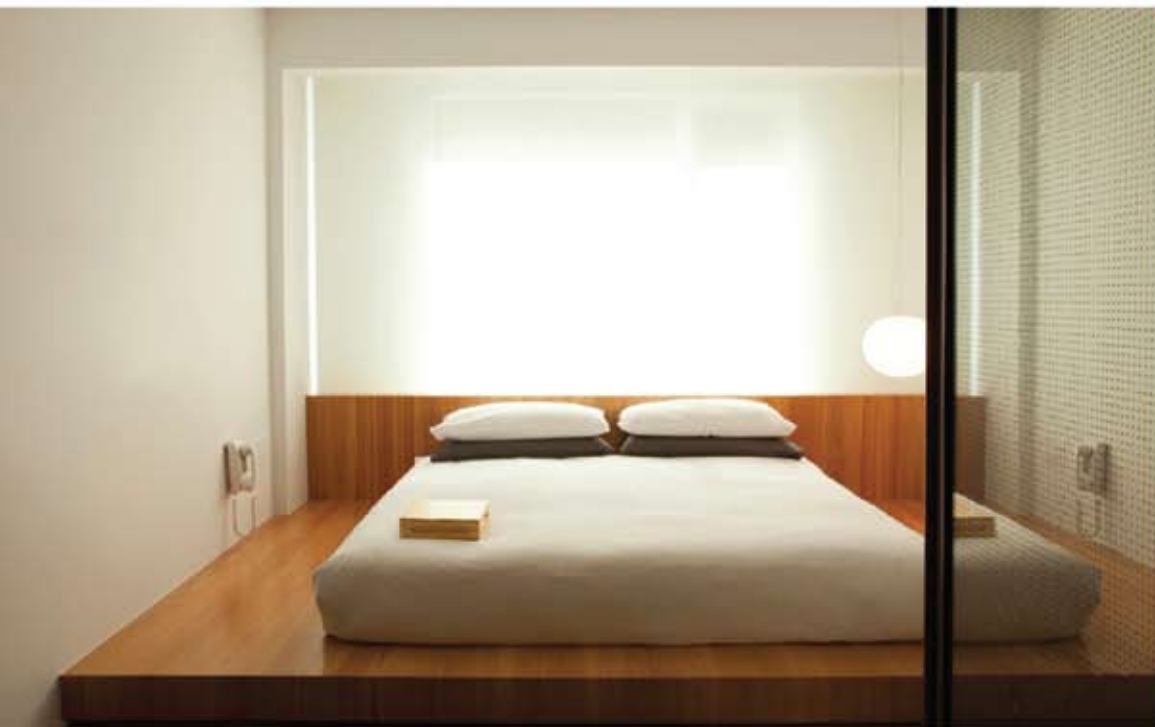
Inside, Montigny crafted an equally urban-modern aesthetic, what he calls "a sobriety," thanks to restrained and natural materials and colors inspired by the hotel's surroundings. "We immediately fell in love with this neighborhood, the mixture of art galleries, scrap dealers, textile workshops, interesting bookstores and restaurants, old warehouses," he shares. "[The hotel] is a place full of all of the positive energy of New York while remaining calm and welcoming."

Concrete, wood, chrome-plating, painted glass, wool, and leather done in gray, black, dark brown, and white abound, and vintage and custom pieces mix with modern Dutch and French furniture. Even though the hotel may have a gallery feel, don't expect to find art here. "We excluded it on purpose to create a space that was neutral for this community, focusing instead on the architecture, interior design, and graphics to make a statement," Couturier explains.

Statements come in the form of the rooftop restaurant, lounge, and pool, where Montigny incorporates the city into the hotel. "The volumes are basic, openings were created in function with perspectives on the city, and the architecture is very discreet to allow maximum interaction with the exceptional setting," he explains. For a true New York

*From top:* El Privado has a very vintage American '50s and '60s feel, complete with a circular wall fireplace; heady city views from the rooftop pool. *Opposite page, from top:* Beds in guestrooms sit atop a wooden platform; studio rooms feature orb fireplaces and bean bag chairs for a whimsical touch; and Americano restaurant, which opens up to an outdoor patio.





feel, floors are done in concrete pavers with a grid of glowing circles, similar to those found on the streets of Soho.

These circles become a design element in the basement bars, where "there is a certain feeling of time-travel," admits Montigny. Bar Americano is lunar and futuristic, a James Bond villain secret hideaway with a concrete wall dotted with cutouts and filled-in circles. Meanwhile, Montigny says El Privado "has a more hushed and intimate atmosphere, but with a certain amount of mystery and intrigue, like Hitchcock," outfitted with a wall of metal discs, plaid furniture, and a circular fireplace set in a wooden wall. "There's a vintage-esque American feel of the late '50s and '60s," adds Couturier.

Meanwhile, the 56 guestrooms are Japanese in style, a complete departure from the rest of the hotel, where the bed is the focal point. Placed on a raised wooden platform, it looks away from the window at the chrome box housing the bathroom that does double duty as a mirror, reflecting the chain mail façade. Says Montigny: "The feeling is of a very intimate space, hidden away; it's a very contemporary version of a ryokan, but with a playful visual interaction of the city." hd

[www.ten-arquitectos.com](http://www.ten-arquitectos.com);  
[www.mch-montigny.fr](http://www.mch-montigny.fr);  
[www.hotel-americano.com](http://www.hotel-americano.com)

## Hôtel Americano

New York

### Owner and Management Company

Grupo Habita

**Architecture Firm** Ten Arquitectos,  
New York

**Architecture Project Team** Enrique  
Norten

**Interior Design Firm** MCH Arnaud  
Montigny, Paris

**Interior Design Project Team** Arnaud  
Montigny and Gianni Lavacchini

**Graphics** Pandisolo Co.

**Marketing** Design Hotels

### BAR AMERICANO

**Chairs and Stools** Jasper Morrison

**Lamps** Christophe Pillet

**Tables** MCH Arnaud Montigny

### DOWNTOWN KING

**Bed Platform** MCH Arnaud Montigny

**Lamp** Jasper Morrison

### DOWNTOWN KING BATHROOM

**Pouffe** Eric Jourdan

**Desk/Shelf/Mirror** MCH Arnaud Montigny

**Sink Fixtures** Dornbracht

### EL PRIVADO

**Chair** Vintage

**Table/Fireplace/Carpet** MCH Arnaud  
Montigny

**Pouffe** Jasper Morrison

**Sofa** Cini Boeri

**Chairs** BBPR

**Lamps** Joe Colombo

**Metal and Mirror Structure** Jacques  
Toussaint

### FRONT DESK

**Bench** Jasper Morrison

**Key Rack** MCH Arnaud Montigny

**Chairs** Poul Kjaerholm

**Clock** Vintage

### HOTEL AMERICANO ROOFTOP POOL

**Seating** Paola Lenti

### LA PISCINE

**Chairs Covered in Black Cotton** AA

**Pouffe** Paola Lenti

**Black Metal Chairs** For Use

### LOBBY

**Chair** Antonio Citterio

**Vintage** Grundig speakers

**Credenza/Rug** MCH Arnaud Montigny

**Stool** Vintage

### STUDIO

**Bed Platform/Desk/Shelf/Mirror/Rug**

MCH Arnaud Montigny

**Lamp** Jasper Morrison

**Pouffe** Eric Jourdan

**Sink fixtures** Dornbracht

**Chair** Richard Lampert

### THE AMERICANO

**Banquettes** MCH Arnaud Montigny

**Chairs** BBPR

**Workstations** MCH Arnaud Montigny

**Large Suspended Lights** Foscarini

**Small Suspended Lights** Tom Dixon