

CHIC LE MOUNT STEPHEN BRIDGES TWO WORLDS



ROCHELLE LASH
Checking In

The new Le Mount Stephen hotel in downtown Montreal is a high-society marriage of an architectural aristocrat with a sexy new supermodel.

Jack Sofer and Mike Yuval, co-founders of Tidan Hospitality and Real Estate Group, made the match, adding a sleek 11-storey tower to the revered Mount Stephen Club, an exquisite heritage site that dates to the 1880s. (Tidan also owns Hôtel Mont Gabriel and Château Versailles.)

Le Mount Stephen is boutique in spirit, but it is sizable and full service. It has a Clefs d'Or concierge, valet parking, a fitness area and 90 modern, deluxe rooms and suites. You can dine and drink at Bar George, a stylish restaurant and bar with a British accent, and indulge in beauty and body treatments at MBiospa, a tiny two-room sanctuary.

The hotel launched this month with a party for nearly 1,000, and it aims to be a serious venue for entertaining — especially at the Elizabeth Grand Ballroom, which can handle up to 400 revellers.

“We saw a jewel and we decided to polish it,” said Yuval. “And we wanted to complement the beauty and legacy of the George Stephen House with the finest materials and the most modern operational systems.”

Old/new: To start, the opulent interiors and stately exterior of the Mount Stephen Club were restored. The mansion was originally the home of Lord Mount (George) Stephen, president of the Bank of Montreal and Canadian Pacific Railway, and eventually it became an exclusive gathering place for the swells of the Golden Square Mile.

In the building’s third incarnation, Le Mount Stephen is still a destination for a select crowd, but this time it’s youthful and hip.

Now the treasured building is home to Bar George. This antique wing represents patrician grandeur, with ornate carved woodwork, precious stained glass windows, crystal chandeliers, a coat of arms and Lord Stephen’s own period furniture.

In contrast, the modern 11-storey tower is a crystalline world, with angled glass roofs giving the penthouse suites a dramatic view of the city skyline. This new section houses the hotel’s stunning lobby, the front desk and the guest rooms.

Le Mount Stephen’s two wings,



Bar George, a restaurant with a British accent, is part of the stylish new hotel Le Mount Stephen. CINDY LA

old and new, connect via a short passageway, and the time travel between them is sensational.

Interiors: On the modern front, the lobby shimmers with gold-flecked marble floors and an opalescent mural on glass. The loungey furniture has a sophisticated look, with lustrous leather and velvet fabrics in neutrals, alive with touches of burnished copper, gold and silver.

Upstairs, the pièce de résistance is the Royal Suite, a movie-star-worthy haven of nearly 500 square metres, with multiple terraces, a private service elevator, a kitchen in three sections and sumptuous regal décor. The wow factor is the glass ceiling, so the sky is the limit.

Le Mount Stephen also has classic rooms and suites, plus the smashing sky-loft suites. The look is generally minimalist and functional, with creamy vanilla-hued walls and honey-coloured furniture touched with chrome. Luxurious features include plush memory foam mattresses by Harlequin and lovely cotton sheets.

“We wanted to be unpretentious and comfortable,” said Yuval, “but still have the best of everything.”

The bellman gave me a technology tour of my room controls, which was a blessing, because I was worried I would miss TV and maybe sleep with the lights on and the drapes open. But I aced the system and had lamps

IF YOU GO

Le Mount Stephen: 514-313-1000; lemountstephen.com; 1440 Drummond St.

Price: Rates fluctuate; rooms \$400-\$750; suites \$900-\$1,200 for sky-lofts; three-bedroom Royal Suite \$6,500; including fitness centre, in-room Nespresso, Wi-Fi, bottled water. Discounts available if you book directly at the hotel or through Leading Hotels of the World (lhw.com).

Bar George: 514-669-9243; bargeorge.ca; breakfast, lunch, dinner, late-night bites. Brunch Sat.-Sun.

dimming, Netflix streaming and curtains gliding with the touch of a button.

The bathrooms are pristine white marble and equipped with ultra-modern devices: chromotherapy rain showers, and Toto toilets with heated seats and elaborate bidet options, as well as an automatic lid that opened every time I approached, as if to say “welcome.”



The dazzling three-bedroom Royal Suite at Le Mount Stephen hotel is one of the luxurious penthouses with a glass roof. LE MOUNT STEPHEN

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