



INN OF CHICAGO MAGNIFICENT MILE Redesign Backgrounder

When Oxford Lodging Advisory & Investment Group, LLC, (OLAIG) purchased the 357-room Inn of Chicago in February 2006, the new owners envisioned a property-wide interior redesign that would update the hotel's 1928 "classic Chicago" interiors and theme with contemporary boutique-hotel elegance.

The results, to be unveiled July 26, 2007 after a six-month floor-to-ceiling remodel, help Re-establish the historic Windy City landmark as one of Chicago's premiere business and leisure destinations.

But more importantly, perhaps, they give the Inn of Chicago Magnificent Mile the unmistakable sense of energy and buzz it has enjoyed at varying times since its opening as the Hotel St. Clair during the height of the Roaring 20's.

"The property has a rich history, even by Chicago standards, so we knew we wanted to recapture that sense of electricity and magic in anything we did," explained Maxine Taylor, Oxford Lodging's senior vice president of asset management. "It really came down to releasing the hotel from years of different owners, brands and design styles – and re-establishing a level of timeless, club-like exclusivity the original architects intended."

Taylor and her team eventually chose San Francisco-based Rachman Massucco Interiors, LLC, for the challenge of returning a sense of intimate, boutique-hotel charm to the Inn of Chicago's imposing public spaces and guest rooms, many of which had been redesigned numerous times in the property's 79-year history. In honor of the extensive redesign and the property's location in the heart of the city's shopping, dining and entertainment district, the hotel was rechristened the Inn of Chicago Magnificent Mile.

"We knew this gorgeous 1928 building off Chicago's offered the potential for luxurious, lounge-like glamour on the scale of an Audrey Hepburn movie – however, it was hidden under layer upon layer of paint, carpet, varnish and wall coverings," explained Julie Massucco, principal. "Our goal was to design a space as intriguing as the historic 1920's building itself – one that would generate its own allure among visitors and Chicago locals alike."

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INN OF CHICAGO IS REBORN AS NEWEST WINDY CITY LANDMARK

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For the lobby, Rachman Massucco Interiors sought to recapture the hotel's once-exclusive, club-like feel with a color palette of mink brown, lavender grey and Macassar ebony, and such accents as chocolate-colored wool area rugs, a dramatic Lucite-backed central banquette and faux zebra-skin ottomans. A special highlight are crystal glass-beaded wall and window treatments, and pearlized metallic wall coverings, that give the room a glittering feel reminiscent of its 1920's roots.

The cozier feel of the Inn of Chicago Magnificent Mile lobby extends to the new, all-day InnBar bar and lounge concept, which will offer guests their choice of signature martinis and the very best cordials and liquors, plus light appetizers. A new Lavazza Café, serving Lavazza's renowned espresso-based coffee beverages and gourmet breakfast, lunch, afternoon snack and pastry selections, opens adjacent to the lobby in the fall.

Upstairs, in the newly renovated 58 executive guest rooms, a chocolate brown and celery color scheme replaces the quintessential teal/pink 1980s décor, and is punctuated by lacquered brown writing desks and sculptural table lamps made from aluminum and blown glass. All 357 guest rooms now feature 100-percent sateen bedding packages that include Serta Perfect Sleeper pillow-top mattresses and 400-thread-count down-feather duvets and pillows. All bathrooms were redesigned in an all-white "spa" theme inspired by the Thassos white marble floors, and feature more luxurious showers.

Susanne Wehl, a San Francisco mixed-media artist known for her design work for such Northern California companies as Robert Mondavi Winery, Kimpton Hotels and Williams Sonoma, was commissioned to create a series of permanent pigment prints on Hahnemuhle cotton rag specifically for the property. The framed geometric- and flower-motif prints hang in all Inn of Chicago Magnificent Mile guest rooms and bathrooms.

Rachman Massucco Interiors also redesigned the Inn of Chicago Magnificent Mile's 5,100 square feet of meeting space, encompassing 4,000 square feet of existing ground-floor meeting and banquet space and 1,100 additional square feet of space including a new executive boardroom. All existing meeting spaces were enhanced with new carpeting and wall coverings in keeping with the hotel's sophisticated new look.

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Suppliers

Lobby

- Beaded window treatments – Boyd Lighting, San Francisco and showrooms nationwide
- Beaded wall coverings and Pearlized metallic wall covering – Innovations
- Foil tree wall covering – Osborne & Little, London and showrooms nationwide
- Patterned fabric on banquette – Donghia, Mount Vernon, NY, and showrooms nationwide
- Area rugs – Savnik, Inc., Scottsdale, Ariz., and showrooms nationwide
- Lighting – Light Me Up, San Francisco and showrooms nationwide
- Furniture – Custom through Rachman Massucco Interiors

Guest Rooms

- Fabrics – Schumacher and showrooms nationwide
- Linens – San Francisco Linens
- Custom Artwork – Folio 2 and Susanne Wehl. San Francisco
- Furniture – Custom through Rachman Massucco Interiors
- Carpet – Custom through Rachman Massucco Interiors

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