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6 COLLABORATIONS
TO KICK OFF THE YEAR

TIMELESS APPEAL

On the brink of showcasing a multimillion-dollar renovation, The Mills House Hotel reveals exciting new amenities.

By Caroline Perrott

It is rare to stay in a hotel or accommodation and have it really feel like a home. Apart from second homes and Airbnbs, hotels can feel somewhat detached or temporary, just by the nature of their function. The Mills House Hotel in Charleston takes the inclusion of “home” in its name seriously, framing the property’s recent multimillion-dollar renovation on just that. “We want our guests to feel like they are entering a friend’s home when they stay with us,” says Michael Linder, general manager. “With the top-to-bottom transformation, the hotel offers an elevated take on Southern hospitality, making it the perfect home base for visitors seeking a genuine Charleston experience.”

The hotel is celebrating 170 years in 2023, having first opened in 1853 by local entrepreneur and its namesake, Otis Mills. It was in the 1960s when the property underwent its first major reconstruction. Today, design for the new chapter of the hotel is being overseen by award-winning hospitality interior design firm Ealain Studio. Upon arrival, guests enter the lobby through a lush garden and courtyard, originally designed by famed Charleston landscape architect Loutrel Briggs, mimicking the way in which you might enter a Charleston single. Inspired by a traditional Southern porch, the first-level space captures plenty of natural light through floor-to-ceiling windows and, just like a porch, is the perfect place for a guest to start their day with a cup of coffee, or end it with a cocktail. CONTINUED...



From top: The front facade of The Mills House Hotel features an original iron lacework porch that runs the length of the building; the front desk at The Mills House Hotel features design by Ealain Studio.



EXPLORE

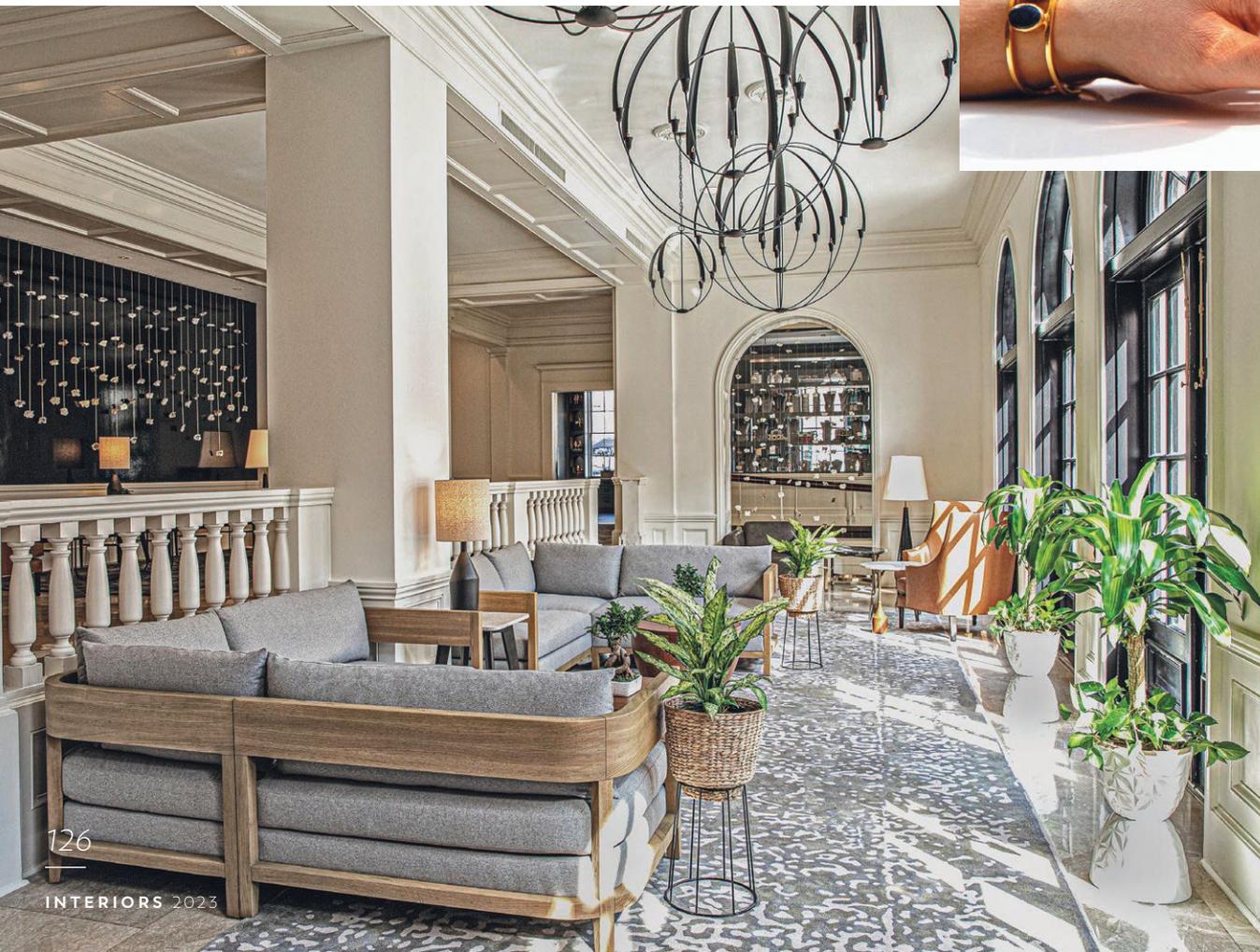
road trip

...CONTINUED An indoor-outdoor flow is optimized throughout the property, encompassing the habits of Charlestonians for decades, consistently going outside to catch the breeze off the water. Speaking of breeze, the hotel's up-and-coming pool and rooftop bar is underway. Says Linder, "With secluded poolside cabanas, lush landscaping, light bites and creative cocktails all offered in the heart of Charleston's historic district, our new rooftop pool and terrace is certain to become a favorite retreat at The Mills House among guests and locals alike."

Also on this first floor are the hotel's revamped dining concepts. The Black Door Café, named after the hotel's panelled door on Queen Street, is more than a hotel coffee shop. It is instead a neighborhood gathering spot, with guests, passersby and the like popping in at all hours of the day for refuel or a dose of caffeine. The Mills House's signature restaurant, Iron Rose, is just down the way from the

cafe, with an optimal view and usage of the courtyard. Led by executive chef Gary Mennie, Iron Rose features contemporary Southern dishes, rotating seasonally and highlighting local ingredients. Upstairs, the redesigned guest rooms and additional suites feature clean lines with sophisticated pops of color. One standout, in both the rooms and throughout the hotel, is the curated artwork. Acting as a common thread, all these works are produced by southern female artists and present female subjects in a variety of mediums, materials and styles. Artists include Atlanta's very own Tracy Murrell, as well as Sara Gsilva, Jill King, Heather Evans Smith, Lisa Krannichfeld and more.

With the renovation of this historic gem, The Mills House has transitioned over to become the first property in South Carolina for the Curio Collection by Hilton—bringing the best food, drink and best-in-class amenities to Charleston citygoers. *115 Meeting St., Charleston, millshouse.com* ■



From top: Local market fish with roasted sunchoke, hen of the wood mushrooms and mustard greens salsa verde; signature cocktail at Iron Rose; a porch-like sitting area in the lobby.