

A photograph of a restaurant interior. The room features a dark wood-paneled ceiling with a geometric, recessed design. The walls are also wood-paneled and decorated with several framed abstract artworks. The walls are punctuated by vertical chrome or metal rods. Warm, ambient lighting is provided by wall-mounted sconces. In the foreground and middle ground, several round tables are set with light blue tablecloths, white plates, glasses, and small white lamps. Dark wood chairs with a checkered pattern are tucked around the tables. A dark, upholstered booth runs along the back wall.

Rosalieke Fuchs, The Los Angeles Bonaventure Hotel
The Mark Hotel and Caviar Kaspia, Manu Moreno, Fondazione Dries Van Noten

The Manual Review
ISSN 63782-8472
Three

The Mark Hotel and Caviar Kaspia by Pia Riverola

The Mark Hotel and Caviar Kaspia at The Mark

* Credits
Photography: Pia Riverola
Words: Stella Vie Peters

In a city where such esteem is truly earned, The Mark Hotel is known as distinct and exceptional. Situated on the corner of Madison Avenue and 77th Street in New York City, it opened in 1927 as the Hyde Park Hotel, a residential apartment hotel for the kind of tenant who wanted the discretion of a private address and the services of a grand institution. Nearly a century later, it remains on the same corner, wearing its history with the same practiced ease as its guests, who arrive to entwine their own experiences of the city with those of the hotel. To stay at The Mark, then, is to converse with history in a way that brings guests directly into the storyline.

The building itself was designed by Schwartz & Gross in the Renaissance Revival style—a mode of construction that borrowed liberally from Italian *palazzos*, favouring rusticated stone bases, arched windows, and a verticality indicating permanence. In the 1920s, this was the grammar of prestige on the Upper East Side, a neighbourhood that was busy defining itself as the residential counterpart to the cultural and commercial churn of Midtown. Built to outlast the moment in which it was born, the hotel is much like the neighbourhood’s residents—perched somewhere above the fray, enjoying a rather distinct ambiance.

The decades that followed have tested the hotel again and again. It passed through a foreclosure auction during the Great Depression and sold for \$550,000 in 1936. It was renamed several times, cycled through owners, and survived the broader mid-century decline of the Upper East Side’s institutional grandeur. By the time the current ownership group took possession of it in the early 2000s, all that remained was the question of what to do with it. Queue its comprehensive renovation by Jaques Grange in 2009.

The Mark Hotel entrance







p. 118

The Mark Hotel and Caviar Kaspia at The Mark

Travel

View of Central Park from The Mark Penthouse (\$100,000 per night)



Travel

Bathroom at The Mark Hotel

A French interior designer, Grange's client list is essentially a roll call of modern cultural aristocracy: Yves Saint Laurent and Pierre Bergé, Karl Lagerfeld, Valentino Clemente Ludovico Garavani, Princess Caroline of Monaco. Blending Proust and minimalism, he made his breakthrough in Paris in the 1970s. When he was tapped to reimagine The Mark, the brief was to honour its pre-war bones while bringing it up to speed for a new world.

The lobby's signature black-and-white striped marble floor operates as both period reference and bold gesture. A nod to Art Deco, the contemporary graphic has become a recognisable signature. A reception area with the feeling of a thoughtful installation, it features furnishings by Vladimir Kagan and Ron Arad, artworks by Karl Lagerfeld, and custom pieces commissioned by Pierre Passavant, a Parisian antiques collector.



From Left to Right
Details from The Mark Hotel Lobby
Light fixtures in The Mark Penthouse
The Mark Hotel entrance
Details from The Mark Hotel Lobby
Bedside details at The Mark Hotel
The Mark Penthouse

The guest rooms and suites are finished in ebony, sycamore and granite, with floor-to-ceiling Italian marble bathrooms and private bars fitted with black granite countertops. The ceiling heights are as generous as the original building would allow. The project’s design architects worked to preserve as much as possible, while threading updated mechanical and electrical systems throughout its 16 floors. Where other renovations of historic properties sacrifice volume to logistics, The Mark’s interiors retain the sense of air and proportion that distinguishes pre-war construction from the architecture that followed.

Then there is the penthouse suite, the largest hotel suite in North America, and reportedly the most expensive to book in New York, with a terrace overlooking Central Park. Here, hospitality can function as the backdrop to one’s stay or as the driving force that defines it. The Mark is capable of both. It is fluid, moving between historical lines and bending to the needs of the moment. This capability to hold such duality is what allows it to be, at once, the facilitator of so much culture and dimension, and a reliable destination for its guests.

As the Upper East Side experiences its own renaissance, The Mark has felt a certain freshness as well. In February 2023, a storefront on the street level of The Mark became the first New York location of Caviar Kaspia, a Parisian restaurant that originally opened on Place de la Madeleine in 1927 (the same year The Mark’s building first opened). Having spent nearly a century becoming one of the world’s most mythologised dining experiences, its cult status rests on a very specific combination of factors: the intimacy of its space, the improbable democracy of its clientele, and the quality of its caviar. Conceived in partnership with the Paris team, Caviar Kaspia at The Mark remains closely connected to the Parisian original.

The New York outpost was again designed by Jacques Grange. Taking inspiration from a Viennese bar where the seating was panelled in timber, Grange introduced wood panelling on the walls to absorb sound and deepen the colour, making what is public feel private. The lighting by L’Observatoire International is kept low, pooling and receding and receding and pooling to finish the effect, while the white curtains block the street, dripping with an escapist seclusion in a setting where exclusivity is, in fact, the greatest inclusion into the wider ecosystem.



Against this backdrop, emerald green mohair banquettes carry Caviar Kaspia’s original Parisian palette into the New York outpost. The iconic blue tablecloths of its Paris location are also present, layering references like creme fraiche spread on a *blini*. Here, historical and Franco-cultural forces are at play in the very best way. Meanwhile, the bar has the same black-and-white stripe detail that appears in The Mark’s lobby, creating a signature that unites the two institutions.

Caviar Kaspia’s cult favourite is the Twice-Baked Potato, its hollowed-out interior crowned with a generous portion of caviar. The *blinis* with smoked salmon are more classic to the canon to which this cuisine belongs. A vegetarian caviar, made from liquified and spherised truffle, speaks to the kitchen’s willingness to honour the requirements of the modern diner. Caviar Kaspia at The Mark has also developed a few signatures of its own. Dishes such as the Caviar Grilled Cheese, French Fries, Potato Rosti Pizza, Kaspia Burger, and a caviar-topped soft serve bring a distinctly American sensibility to the cuisine. Cigarettes and



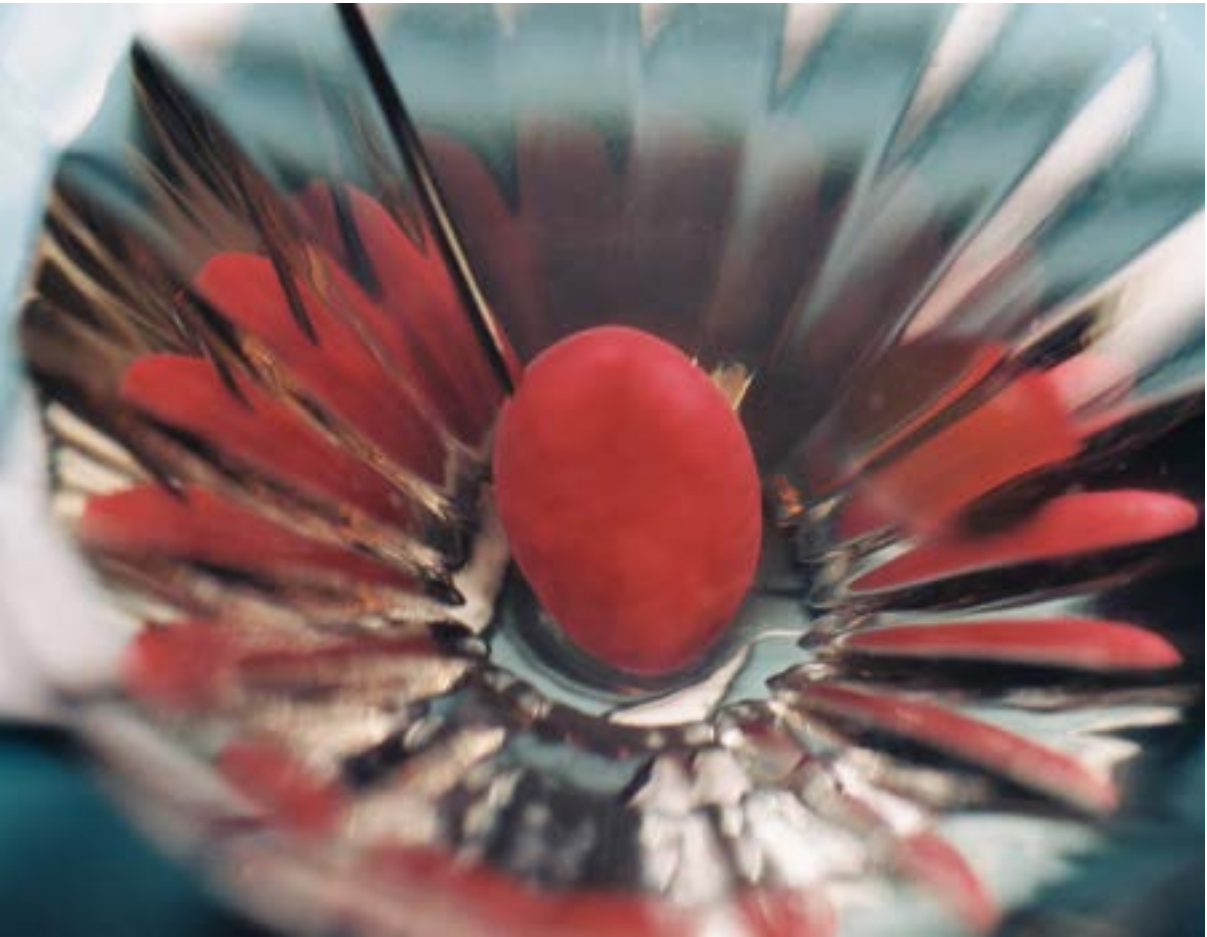
In addition to the experience of dining at Caviar Kaspia, guests may also enjoy a Jean-Georges hot dog cart in the lobby, which charges \$6 per dog. The offerings match the range and multifaceted experience of the city. Continuing to host and facilitate a certain New York, The Mark is rooted in another century while clearly living for the characters of this one.

At the end of 2025, Assouline—the Parisian publisher, whose coffee table books function, in certain circles, as the closest thing the luxury world has to a canonisation—released a dedicated monograph on The Mark. When Assouline commissions a book about a place, it signifies that the place has arrived, or, more precisely, that it arrived some time ago, and has now been officially installed in the cultural permanent collection. Written by Derek Blasberg, *The New York Times* best-selling author, *Vanity Fair* and *Vogue* contributing editor, and perennial figure in fashion’s inner orbits, the book traces the hotel’s century-long evolution, from residential apartment hotel to cultural touchstone. Reading as an insider testimony, a longtime fixture in the same rooms as The Mark has spent decades cultivating, Blasberg was a natural choice.

Dirty Eliá (\$34), the signature cocktail crafted with Kástra Elión Vodka, Greek Olive Brine, and Cerignola Olive, at Caviar Kaspia at The Mark



Caviar Kaspia at The Mark, designed by Jacques Grange





The pop cultural dimension of The Mark has grown exponentially. The hotel’s close proximity to the Metropolitan Museum of Art makes it a natural staging ground for the annual Met Gala. What might have been born of simple convenience, has quickly become a ritual. Preparations for the Gala begin months in advance to make its meticulous choreography appear effortless. On Met Gala Monday, celebrities and their teams descend on The Mark, like armies on a strategic high ground. X marks *this* spot for the unofficial Met Gala preview. The team behind this feat of service and discretion is proud to have cultivated a singular sense of calm that allows The Mark to be such a special gathering place for guests during the festivities.

Anna Wintour herself has described The Mark’s staff as “caretakers and stewards of the highest order—discreet, courteous, kind—whether you’re seeking shelter from a storm... or somewhere to gather before a grand night out on the first Monday in May.” It is the kind of endorsement that collapses the distinction between institution and tastemaker, between hotel and cultural engine. The hotel’s forthcoming centennial, in 2027, is already being anticipated, alongside plans for the September launch of The Mark Epigenetic Wellness & Longevity Spa by Augustinus Bader, in response to guests’ growing desires for wellness experiences within the confines of the hotel.

The Mark has understood for some time that what it is offering is not merely accommodation but membership to a particular idea of New York’s Uptown, where storied experiences can often only be felt via a residential tenure. Here, the streets are quieter, the buildings are old, and the guests play a part in the rhythm. Whether bringing their own fanfare to the mix or allowing themselves to blend into the existing rhythm, guests move as if they have been, and will continue to be, there for a very long time.

