GOURNET

HOT HOTEL

Factory to neighbourhood fixture

The Ludlow promises to become a Lower East Side hub.

Sean MacPherson is the mixologist of the hotel world, a master at blending tried-and-true Manhattan tropes – up-and-coming neighbourhoods, social butterfly-attracting lobby bars, lively restaurants – with intimate, understated European style. Joining his hot portfolio of The Bowery, The Maritime and The Marlton, MacPherson's latest venture is The Ludlow, a 184-room property that takes its name from one of the Lower East Side's landmark thoroughfares. Book a suite overlooking Ludlow Street and you can spy on the queue of pastrami enthusiasts lined up outside legendary Jewish deli Katz's on the corner.

The red-brick and casement windows hint at the building's former life as a factory, but once inside understated luxury dominates – mosaic marble floor tiles sparkle, oak-panelled walls lend the lobby the air of a gentlemen's club. Dramatic custom light fixtures of jagged oxidised metal and one-off pieces – the coffee table carved in the shape of Manhattan Island, the Chesterfield sofa on the terrace that looks like tufted fabric but is actually fibreglass – are witty nods to the neighbourhood's artsy heritage.

The guest rooms are surprisingly tranquil (merci, double glazing) and are full of high-end details such as hand-carved Indo-Portuguese wooden beds, pressed-tin ceilings, Moroccan brass lamps, handmade silk rugs and nightstands made from petrified wood. The standouts are the Sky Box Lofts, rooms with adjoining glassed-in terraces flooded with natural light and blessed with downtown views.

The hotel's restaurant, Dirty French, which was due to open as we went to press, is the work of Mario Carbone, Rich Torrisi and Jeff Zalaznick, the team behind cult restaurants Torrisi Italian Specialties, Parm and Carbone. The property is so freshly minted it still has that new-hotel smell, yet somehow The Ludlow already feels like a neighbourhood fixture. Rooms from \$313. 180 Ludlow St, New York, Iudlowhotel.com EMMA SLOLEY

