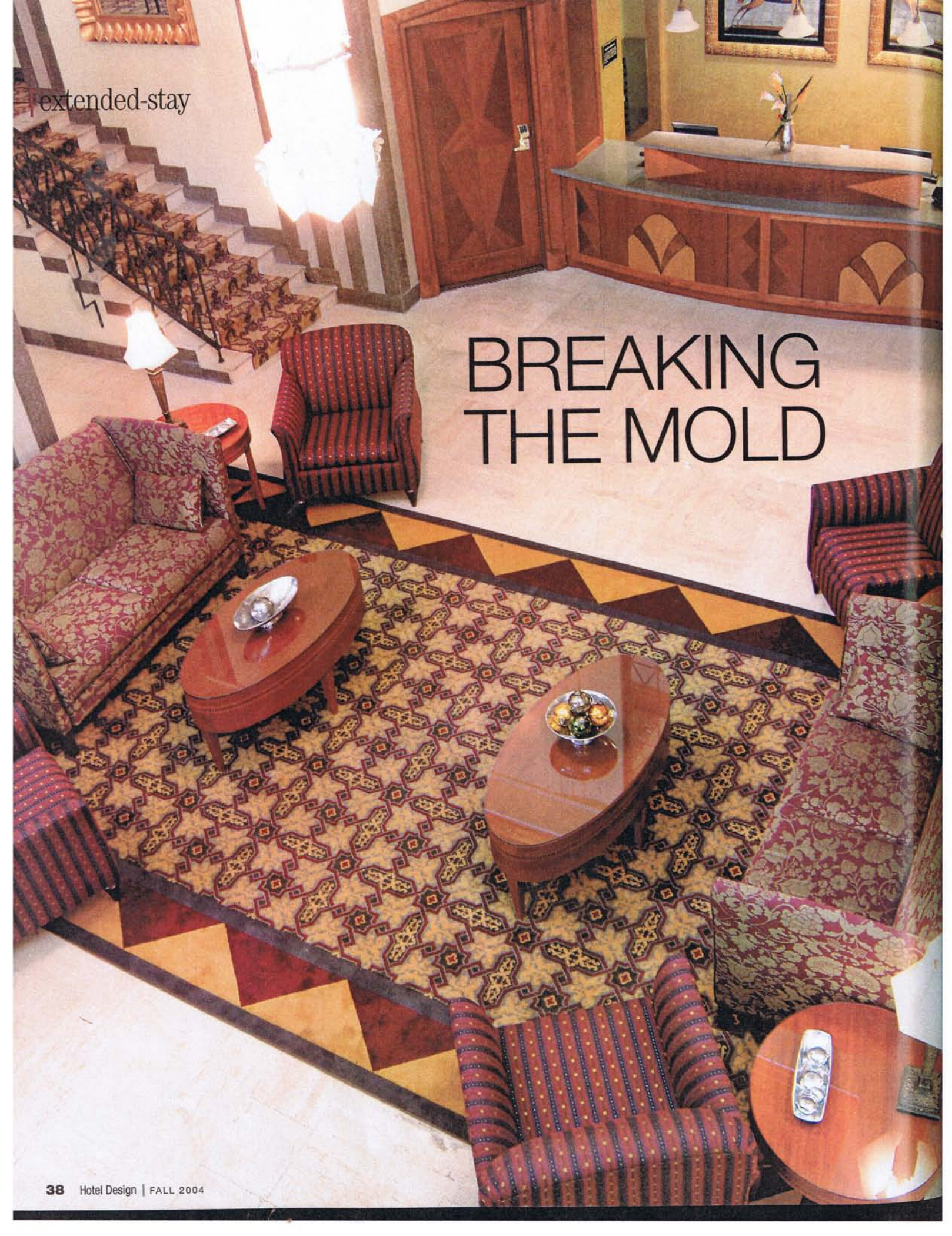


extended-stay

# BREAKING THE MOLD





## Hands-on owner, brand standards enhance design of Memphis building that returns to its hotel roots as a Residence Inn extended-stay property

PHOTOGRAPHY / STEVE ROBERTS

Tony Trim knew there were three masters to serve when he agreed to design a Residence Inn by Marriott that was being developed inside the shell of an historic building in downtown Memphis: himself, a hands-on owner in Larry Wright of Wright Investment Properties and a stringent Marriott International design palette.

He ended up being three-for-three.

"It works well when owners are actively involved and [Wright] has strong design opinions," says Trim, a principal with Saia Trim Group and lead designer for the 90-suite Residence Inn. "He has excellent design concepts, and having a hands-on, strong-willed client gives me an advantage because I don't have to scratch around for things I need."

That, coupled with Marriott's design specifications, gave Trim little leverage to create something unique.

"But we were allowed enough

changes to make it work very well," Trim says.

The building, which Trim calls somewhere between art deco and art nouveau, is the perfect casing for a boutique-style hotel. It started its life as a hotel in 1927, was transformed into an apartment building and has come back to life as a hotel.

Vertical stripes in the original marble walls in the lobby set the tone for the Residence Inn.

"It provides a very tailored, very clean, contemporary feel for the building," Trim says.

A hearth room, a billiards room and a couple of meeting rooms with custom-crafted tables give the lobby level a homey feel.

Original elevator doors, detailed iron railing circling the second floor that overlooks the front desk, and original window designs capture the building's history, Trim says.

The guestrooms have a unique element in that the bedrooms are actually elevated and open—a byproduct from the renovation into an apartment building.

**LEFT** Utilizing the original marble floor, the original vertical-lined marble walls and original light fixtures keep the Residence Inn by Marriott Downtown Memphis close to its roots, even after adding other elements that give it a boutique-hotel look.

**ABOVE** Guestrooms include colors not included in Marriott International's standard palette for Residence Inn properties. Other elements remain constant—including the in-room dining table and built-in headboard.

**BELOW** Large windows and local artwork helped lead designer Tony Trim develop focal points in the Residence Inn's 90 guestrooms.



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**THIS PAGE** Custom millwork in the hearth room and the breakfast room (above) maintains the art deco look established by the original elevators in the building (left). Contemporary furniture, flooring and accessories help complete the look.

“The typical Residence Inn has separate bedrooms, but this approach with a curved wall and raised bedroom make a very compact space feel very spacious,” Trim says.

Utilizing Marriott’s specifications for built-in headboards and nightstands allowed Trim to stay with the flow of the bedroom.

Color schemes throughout the hotel are slight variations from Residence Inns’ core package.

The biggest challenge for the designer was dealing with the long, narrow corridors leading to the guestrooms.

“It is very unique,” Trim says. “We wanted to make them look more open and spacious, so we have unique carpet designs. We have a border on one side of the carpet that squares off the series of columns in each floor. It gives an illusion of spaciousness.”

—Jeff Higley

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No more than a two-page typed description of the property, including the property name, dates of construction, whether the project was new construction or renovation, a summary of the project's principal features—including design intention, challenges, resources, budget, and the project's owner. Other specs can be included as warranted.

- A minimum of four (4) and maximum of seven (7) photographs of the property. The photographs must be burned onto a CD-ROM, and must be at least 8-by-10 inches in size and a minimum resolution of 300 dpi. The photographer's name and contact information must be included.
- A low-resolution print of the submitted photographs.
- A specific source list of all items and materials used in the project.
- The complete name of the design firm handling the project. Include a complete mailing address, e-mail address and phone number.
- A list of the design team's members, including titles and contact information. Please specify the primary contact on the team.
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