

Soho House Toronto

How your new House was designed

Photography Mark Seleen, Caitlin Cronenberg



Anwar Mekhayech, Matt Davis and Allen Chan

SEPTEMBER saw us throw open the doors to our first Canadian club, Soho House Toronto. Set on Bishop's Block, which dates back to the 1800s, the building was one of Toronto's first hotels. The 10,000-sq-ft site was recently restored, brick by brick. As with all of our Houses, the process was led primarily by Nick Jones and the Soho House design team, in this specific case Vicky Charles and Sarah Hubbard from our NY office. And, as is common, we partnered with a local team to ensure that the final building project is rooted in the local area and its creative community.

In Toronto, this saw us working with The Design Agency; founded by three friends, Anwar Mekhayech, Matt Davis and Allen Chan, The Design Agency has over 15 years' experience in the world of design and architecture, primarily in hospitality projects.

In February 2012, having visited the other Soho Houses worldwide, Mekhayech, Davis and Chan met with Jones, whose plan was to restore the building

with a vintage feel. Crucial to his vision was Bishop's Block's long history as a hotel and a tavern through the early 1900s and the heritage that gave the site. However, a challenge was posed by the fact that a major part of the building had effectively been torn down in 2007 and the façade had been restored over a new infrastructure. As a result, all the texture – and even the third floor – had to be added back in.

Nothing in the proposed design was off-the-shelf; every hinge, handle, door, wall panel, tile and light fixture was either custom made or reclaimed. When what was needed couldn't be sourced locally, the team looked internationally, resulting in many unique elements being flown in for installation: reclaimed French parquet flooring; oak panelling from a church in upstate New York; wood and a tin ceiling salvaged from New York City.

Soho House Toronto is now fully open at Bishop's Building, 192 Adelaide Street West, Toronto M5H 0A4. T: 416.599.7646 enquiries@sohohousetoronto.com

