



The New Downtown: W New York Downtown Hotel Opens



What is Downtown? Is it a location or a state of mind? The new W New York - Downtown hotel is located so far downtown that if it went any farther south it would be swimming with Luca Brasi. Out of the ashes of tragedy, a new downtown is being born. It isn't the old Financial District that's being reconstructed, but a new vision, a new idea, a new city. As glass and steel is welded and manipulated into place, the W is focusing its energies on the soul of the area. For many, the area still brings back hard memories, but going there is also an opportunity to honor courage, and strength, and the reasons we all live here. The new downtown is all about residences and nightlife and amenities that just a few years ago were not available without going at least a good mile north. I used to live in Tribeca, just north of this developing district, but far enough south not to find what we are used to finding. Getting an OJ at midnight was an ordeal. Laundry, restaurants, and fun was a trip to another hood. The new downtown has almost all the services you would ever need, and every day what's missing is being addressed. It's becoming a self sufficient little burg. It feels like another city, until you walk into the W. Then it feels like home. I caught up with the grand dame of the WNYDH, the lovely Sofia Vandaele, and asked her what it's all about.

You are the general manager of the W Hotel on Albany St.

It's W New York Downtown and our official address is 123 Washington St. We're on the corner of Albany, just a block south of the World Trade Center perimeter, and two blocks away from Wall St.

I just got a tour of the hotel, and it's spectacular. And I'm not just saying that—I think it's absolutely beautiful. This area is booming now. The old is being washed away and the new is going up. How does the W Downtown, the WNYDT, intend to embrace this neighborhood? What are you trying to do here?

Well, when you look at the neighborhood, the first feeling you have is a sense of energy, and we're a part of it. There's a lot of regeneration, a lot of revitalization happening in this area, and not just with new buildings and construction. I think it follows you in every aspect of life here. Whether you come to work, whether you come to live here, it's the fastest growing residential community in greater New York. It's a community for us, as a hotel, to reach out to.