

Now

that limestone has entrenched itself as one of the more desirable stone materials among architects and designers, the material is being used in more diverse applications. Specifiers are discovering new varieties of limestone from around the world — most notably Jerusalem Stone from Israel — and they are also using the material in its more traditional three-dimensional form. As a result, stone suppliers are not only providing a broader range of limestone materials, but they have also brought back some of the time-honored stoneworking methods.

One example of this would be the Benjamin Hotel in New York.

Using Indiana limestone with a Jet Mist granite base, the exterior of The Benjamin Hotel in New York was restored to its original 1927 design. With pieces ranging from 2 to 5 inches thick, the limestone facade has a saw-cut finish, while the 18-inch-high granite base is polished.

Designer: DeLeonardo International, Rhode Island

Architect: Ronald Schmidt and Assoc., P.A., Englewood, NJ

Stone Supplier/Carver/Installer: Petrillo Stone, Mt. Vernon, NY





LEFT: Custom moldings and window arches were hand-carved from Indiana limestone to match the design of the original building.

BELOW: Hand-carved limestone moldings were integrated with the brick found on the upper portion of the building.

Formerly known as the Beverly Hotel, the 1927 building was bought by Manhattan East Suite Hotels and renamed after the company's founder, Benjamin J. Denihan Sr. After the 1997 purchase, the company began plans to completely restore the 30-story building. The objective was to recreate the classic European style that was originally designed by Emery Roth, while also updating it to meet the needs of today's business traveler. "Our goal was to re-saw the exterior of the building, and have the interior reflect a style that is very cosmopolitan and sensitive to the original design intent of the building," said designer Bob DeLeonardo of DeLeonardo International in New York. "It's a new interpretation of a classical design."

Construction began on April 1, 1998, and the Indiana limestone on the second and third floor exterior was restored and replaced, covering 7,500 square feet. "We were replicating a project that was already there," said architect Richard Bonanomi of Ronald Schmidt and

