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How to Design an Indoor Pool That Makes a Splash

Once lightless, humid afterthoughts, pools are swiftly becoming a star amenity and a design showpiece in many New York developments



*CetraRuddy designed an Art Deco-inspired indoor pool for New York's Rose Hill condo development.
Image: Courtesy Rockefeller Group*

Sure, a rooftop infinity pool looks amazing. Who wouldn't want to take a dip while taking in the New York City skyline? But summer is fleeting, so designers are bringing the glamour inside, transforming what was once a dreary afterthought of the fitness center—the lowly lap pool—into a showstopping destination.

For a statement tower, like Rose Hill, a condo in NoMad that will open next year, your pool has to stand out too. The 40-story building, developed by the Rockefeller Group, the 91-year-old real-estate company that built Rockefeller Center, is a nod to Art Deco New York, with a bronze-tone façade and a lobby with a black marble fireplace, walnut paneling, and handcrafted metalwork. The 50-foot pool is just as sultry, with deep turquoise tiles, handmade in Vermont, and a mosaic of a woman swimming, surrounded by sunrays, a nod to Rockefeller Center.

A pool “is not just a simple space,” says Ximena Rodriguez, the director of interior design for CetraRuddy, which designed the building and interiors. “You have to carry the essence of the interior design into the pool; it has to feel like it belongs.”