

# Ritz-Carlton Toronto

Toronto, Canada

**CONCEPT:** The fact that the mixed-use Ritz-Carlton Toronto is the only Canadian property in the Ritz-Carlton portfolio put added pressure on the developer, the brand, and by extension the architect and designer, to deliver a distinctive luxury product. While developer Garnet Watchorn, CEO of Graywood Development, Ltd., said he was looking for “international inspired design,” for Ritz-Carlton, it was important that the sleek, 53-story, \$300 million tower communicate that the design was consistent with the “classic, contemporary luxury” that is now characteristic of Ritz-Carlton as opposed to the more staid traditionalism of earlier generations of the brand.

**EXECUTION:** A highlight of architect Kohn Pedersen Fox’s design is a five-story glass podium at the base of the tower that contains a 23,000-square foot “Urban Sanctuary” that includes not only a full-service spa, fitness center, and swimming pool, but a kinesio center and yoga studio. A soaring glass bridge spans the lobby foyer, strikingly contemporary, but also functional. “The bridge consists of a single sheet of glass that connects the upper level of the lobby to the signature restaurant,” noted hotel general manager Tim Terceira.

Likewise, the design of the 267 guestrooms and suites and design of the public spaces by the Atlanta office of HBA/Hirsch Bedner Associates sought out dramatic signature elements and exotic finishes to convey the proper stylish luxury ambiance.

**RESULT:** Hirsch Bedner has a long history with Ritz-Carlton, having designed hotels for the brand in Orlando, Singapore, and Dubai. Consequently, the firm is well versed in the brand’s shift in design direction. Toronto lead designer Howard Pharr, for example, chose African Anigre wood and Portuguese Estremoz marble for their distinctiveness and natural beauty. A neutral color palette of muted golds and taupes sets off rust as the accent color. Attracting attention on a completely different front are the 22-inch HD televisions embedded in the mirrors of the guest bathroom vanities. On seeing the finished product, Graywood’s Watchorn commented, “there’s no building of this caliber in the city.”

—Bruce Serlen



## Design Details:

**Developer:** Graywood Development, Ltd.

**Project Cost:** \$300 million

**Architect:** Kohn Pedersen Fox

**Designer:** HBA/Hirsch Bedner Associates

**Theme/Influence:** Classic and contemporary luxury

**Signature Features:** Glass lobby bridge, natural wood table in destination restaurant, 22-inch HD televisions embedded in bathroom vanity mirrors

**Major Vendors:** LG, Blue Vision, Bose, Frette, Kohler