



# Historic Eitel Building Finally Ready For its Closeup—As The State Hotel

Timeless materials, touches of Seattle's creative spirit, and a new-meets-old aesthetic prevail in this 91-room hotel near Pike Place Market.



Seattle's historic Eitel Building at the corner of Second Avenue and Pike Street downtown has quite a past. The seven-story, 45,000-square-foot structure, built in 1904, has been mostly vacant since the 1970s, and multiple attempts at rehabilitation over the last several years have failed.

All that changed when Seattle-based urban real estate firm Lake Union Partners purchased Eitel in 2015 and announced plans to transform the blighted building into an independent hotel with a ground-floor restaurant and bar. Opened this past March, the 91-room *State Hotel* celebrates the landmark building's history, while also bringing it into the 21st century.

“We went into the project wanting to preserve as much as possible,” says Lake Union Partners’ Principal Pat Foley, “but the interior condition was so damaged from the 2001 Nisqually earthquake and years of neglect that unfortunately there wasn’t much to save on the inside.” Seattle architecture firm [Weinstein A+U](#) and Bellingham, Washington-based general contractor [Exxel Pacific](#) worked to preserve what they could, including the building’s original heavy timber and steel structure. (These elements were required to be fire rated, so they were covered with wall finishes.) Outside, the team restored the original masonry and terra cotta details, then installed new thermal wood windows that matched the original single-hung versions.

“Working with the Landmarks Preservation Board, we designed and installed a new classic wood storefront system to be aesthetically consistent with the era in which the building was designed,” Foley says. The hotel also boasts an added eighth floor where its penthouse-level suites feature private terraces and a private bar for hotel guests.



*Courtesy The State Hotel.*

On the inside, Portland-based [Vida Design](#) emphasized a classic look with an eclectic, comfortable, and textural overlay in furnishings, accessories, and art. Timeless materials such as marble, wood, brass, and leather honor the provenance of the building. “The combination of new and old was also important, given the history of the building and it’s new use,” Vida’s CEO and founder Rachel Sowiejka says.



Old details include a knob wall in the lobby, created by Portland-based custom fabrication studio [Acme](#). Vintage knobs are sourced from Portland and Seattle, vintage Turkish rugs are from Portland's Wild Shaman, and a circa-1890s table in the lobby once had its home inside a Los Angeles Catholic school, but was eventually found and refurbished by Seattle's [Kirk Albert](#). Among the new elements are hand-drawn, Pike Place Market-inspired wallcoverings from Northwest artist [Kate Blainstone](#)—the hallways of each floor feature a different pattern (think vivid seafood, produce, and florals), as well as a wall-length mural in the hotel's Ben Paris restaurant—named after one of the Eitel Building's original occupants—designed and painted by local illustrator and tattoo artist [Kyler Martz](#).



*Courtesy The State Hotel.*

“When a guest walks into The State Hotel,” Foley says, “we want them to feel a connection with Seattle and the creative, artistic spirit that has always been part of its fabric.”

*The State Hotel, 1501 Second Ave., Seattle; [statehotel.com](http://statehotel.com)*