THE CAMPBELL

BAR

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rand Central Terminal, opened to the public in February 1913, is a story of great engineering, stunning architecture and rich history. It's no surprise, then, that John Campbell, jazz age financier and member of the New York Central Railroad's Board of Directors, wanted to be part of that legacy. In 1923 he chose the southwest corner of the balcony for his private office. The space proved to be a perfect location for the discreet ways Campbell used it - private office by day and reception hall by night - and then as now, the over-the-top room pays homage to the concept of the "salon" for entertaining in its truest form. Legendary for its opulence, Mr. Campbell's den, a single 60-foot-long room, was used for entertaining as well as for lucrative business deals. Designed to resemble a thirteenth-century Florentine palace, it quickly gained notoriety for its impressive and tasteful details: a soaring handpainted ceiling and leaded window; imported Italian furniture; a large stone fireplace where he kept his steel safe; a pipe organ, piano, and a Persian rug so large that it covered the entire floor. When it opened in 1999 as a bar called The Campbell Apartment, it retained much of its original trappings but lacked the vibe of a modern cocktail bar.

All that changed last year when Gerber Group, a New York-based leader in the hospitality

industry, took over the space, closed it for 6 months, and reopened it in May as the new and improved bar/restaurant called The Campbell. Maintaining the integrity of the property's historic architecture while introducing contemporary design elements, Gerber Group divided the original venue into three principal areas that provide distinctive guest experiences: The Campbell Bar, the original office featuring a bar topped with green quartzite, custom brass sconces that illuminate the ceiling, and mohair and leather furnishings; The Campbell Palm Court, an indoor lounge surrounded by palm trees that overlooks the main concourse; and The Campbell Terrace, an outdoor (seasonal) veranda.

The best of Campbell's historic touches were not lost on Gerber who, along with the renowned design team of Ingrao Inc., maintained the aesthetic integrity of the architecture while introducing contemporary design elements, a wide selection of classic and modern cocktails, and elevated bar fare. Pleased with the transformation, Principal/CEO Scott Gerber hopes to make The Campbell a destination for cocktails and great food for commuters, locals, and tourists who pass through Grand Central Terminal. Forget the clock — "Meet me at The Campbell."

-MARGARET M. JOHNSON

