HOTEL

BANDOLERO

DESIGN BOOK | NOVEMBER 2026

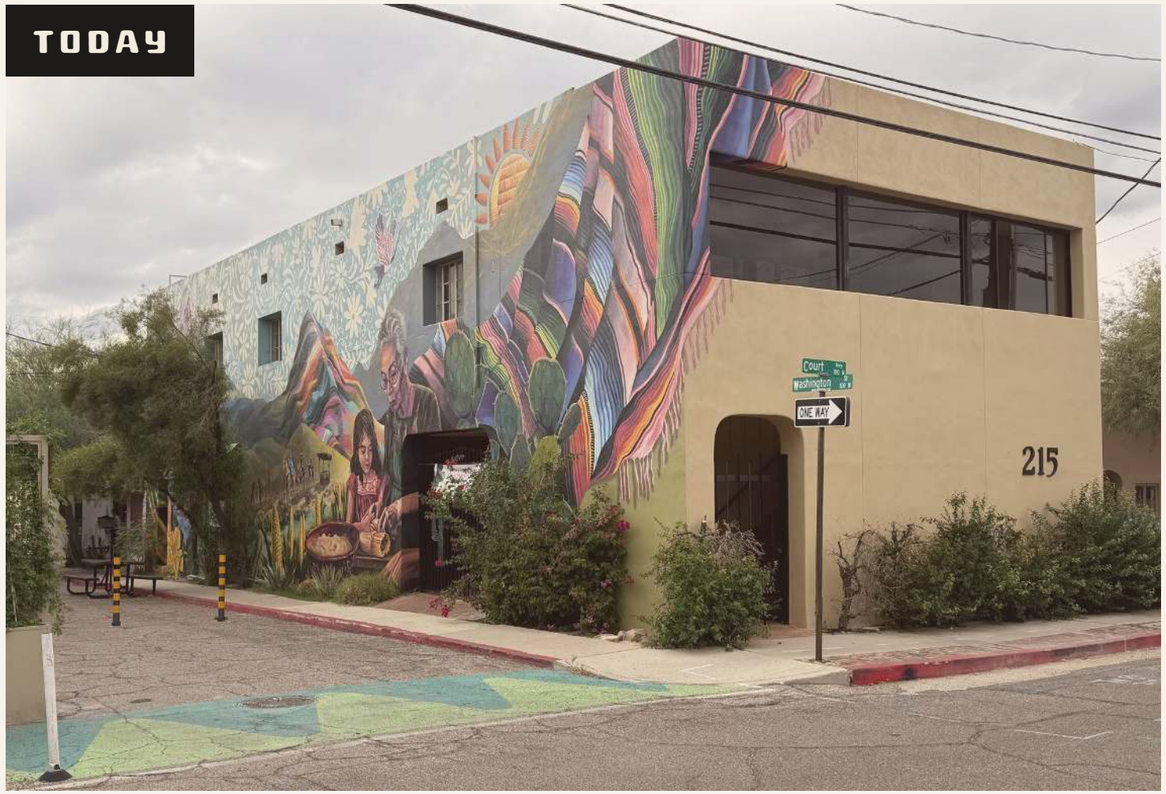
Prepared for prospective partners by Kellner Brown

215 North Court Avenue · Tucson, Arizona



Site

TODAY



A two-story office building of 1939, 3,791 sq ft (Pima County Assessor). It is vacant and listed for sale; both floors are divided into small offices off a central corridor.

PROPOSED



A bar, a banquet hall seating 120 and six ensuite guest rooms. The mural is retained unaltered. The exterior gains a glazed arched doorway, two light columns, a blade sign and a painted mark.

Court Avenue and Washington Street, looking northwest. Photograph, and the same photograph with the proposed changes.

EL PRESIDIO

DOWNTOWN'S MOST HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOOD



Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors

THE PLACE

Neighbors

MUSEUMS

1 Presidio San Agustín Museum
2 Tucson Museum of Art
3 La Casa Cordova
4 J. Knox Corbett House
5 ART HOUSE Centro

FOOD AND DRINK

6 Brandylion
7 JoJo's
8 Ceres
9 El Charro
10 ¡Toma!
11 La Cocina
12 Monsoon Room
13 Talega Cafe
14 Café à la C'Art

SHOPS AND STUDIOS

15 Old Town Artisans
16 La Zia Native Arts
17 Old Paint Records
18 Romero House Ceramics
19 Dead Souls Vintage
20 Velvet Cowboy
21 El Presidio Bed & Breakfast

Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors.



THE PLACE

Context

Downtown Tucson is drawing new investment. Rio Nuevo reports about $10 of private money for each $1 it commits, and almost $60 million in incremental tax in 2025.

The Arizona Auditor General's 2025 audit counted 993 hotel rooms near the convention center and recommended more. A 134-room hotel is under construction downtown.

The patio next door on Washington Street. Photograph, 2026. Sources: Rio Nuevo 2025 annual report and audit response; Arizona Auditor General, 2025.



History

The Presidio San Agustín del Tucsón was founded on 20 August 1775; its reconstructed northeast bastion stands across Court Avenue. The surrounding blocks were listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1976 as the El Presidio Historic District (no. 76000379) and form one of the City of Tucson's historic zones.

In the evenings the tables along Washington Street are in use and the mural is lit by the street lights.

Washington Street at night. Photograph, 2026.



The Washington Street wall, retained unaltered. Rendering.

Style

Pueblo Deco is the name Marcus Whiffen and Carla Breeze gave in 1984 to Southwestern buildings of the late 1920s and 1930s that joined Art Deco form to ornament drawn from the region.

The Fox Tucson Theatre, opened in 1930, is the city's best-known example of the style. Hotel Bandolero's design is its own, working in the style's general vocabulary: stepped profiles, fluted columns, and the plant life and skyscape of the Sonoran Desert.



Fox Tucson Theatre, the restored sunburst ceiling and chandelier. Photograph: EverGreene Architectural Arts (internal use; license before external release).









Ink and watercolor over the current design model: the bar from the Washington Street doors, the upstairs corridor, a felt mesquite between two saguaro columns in room 1, and the suite's tub under its stepped arch.



Light column

The light columns are 11 ft 6 in tall and cut from satin acrylic in a desert-sage green. LEDs set between the flutes light the acrylic at its edges; the green faces are not backlit. An amber crest above the crown is lit from below.

The form is taken from the crested saguaro. Its outline is also the hotel's mark.

Light column. Rendering.







THE IDEA

Design proof of concept

Brandylion is a cocktail bar in El Presidio run by the same owners. Its interior established the Pueblo Deco Revival style that this project extends to a whole building.

The Presidio Museum's Death After Dark walking tour begins and ends at the bar.

The lounge under the stepped arch (photograph: Trustfall); the stepped doorway and the felt clouds (video stills).

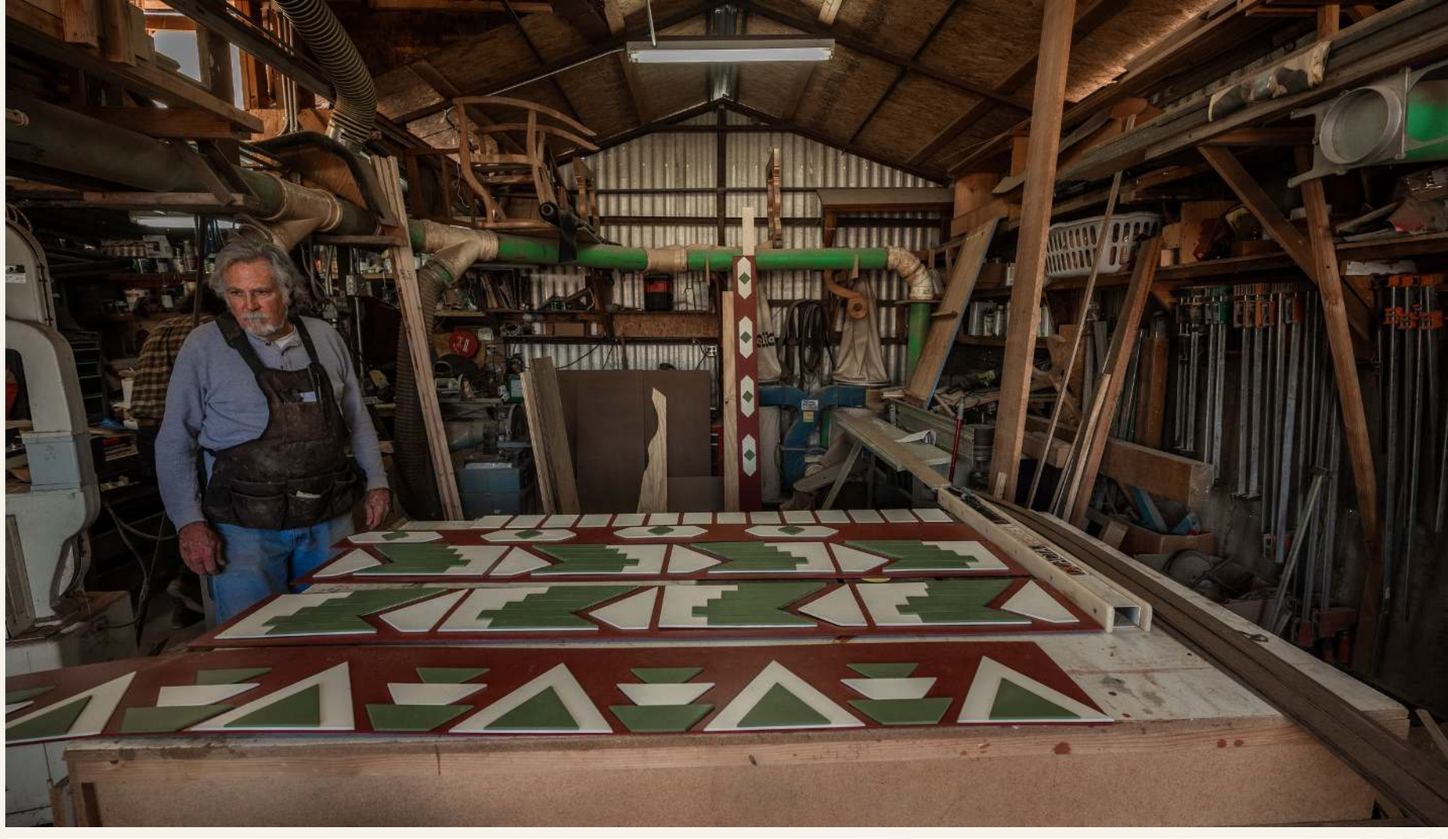
THE IDEA

Local design-build

Brandylion's interior was contracted to Pressed Rat Design, a Tucson-born design-build studio. Its entries, door casings and facades were recreated from photographs of Pueblo Deco buildings in Arizona that have since been demolished, then cut, assembled and finished in the Pressed Rat workshop.

Hotel Bandolero will be made the same way, from the same archive, with local fabricators named and paid for their work.

PRESSED RAT
·TUCSON, ARIZONA·

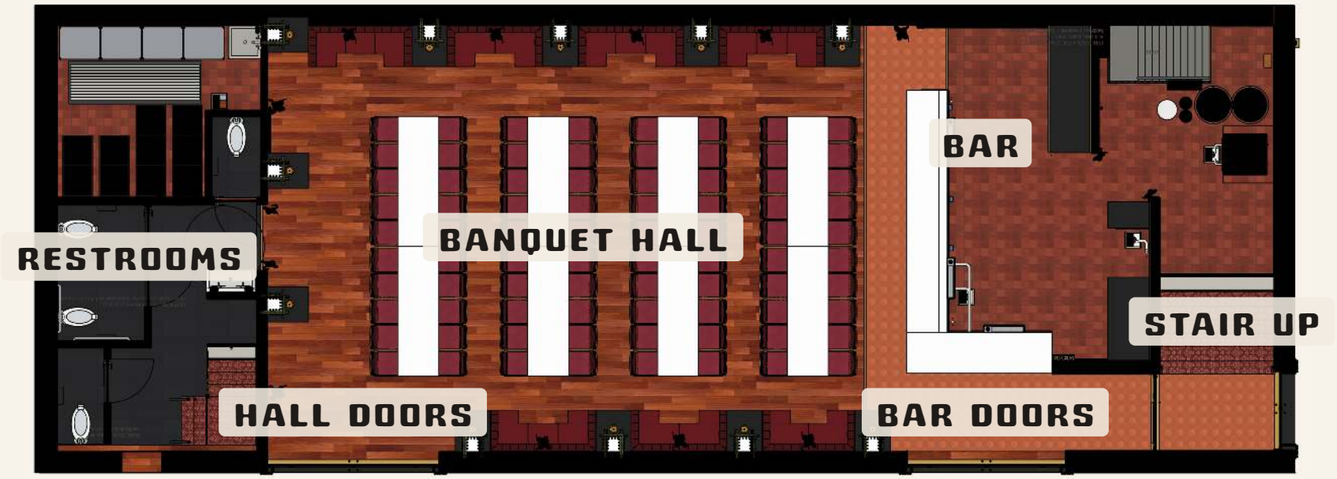




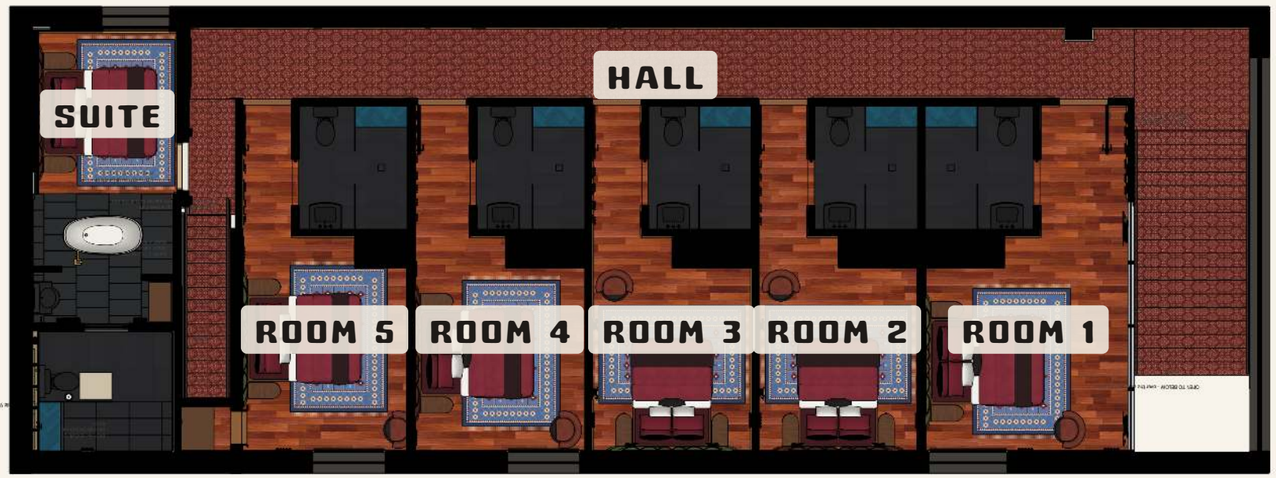
In the Pressed Rat Design workshop: a stepped door casing redrawn from the facade of the Southern Pacific depot in Casa Grande, Arizona (1940; destroyed by fire, 2009). Photographs: Trustfall.

Plans

GROUND FLOOR



UPPER FLOOR



The ground floor, now divided into small rooms off a central corridor, becomes a single hall. The bar occupies the Court Avenue end, with its own doors to Washington Street. The hall, 26 ft 2 in by 39 ft 4 in, seats 120 for dinner. Restrooms are at the west end.

The upper floor holds six guest rooms, each with its own bath, off a corridor along the north wall.

North up; Washington Street along the bottom, Court Avenue on the right. From the design model; today's layout is still to be measured on site.





THE WALK-THROUGH

Entry

Steel-and-glass doors replace the existing gate on Washington Street, set between two light columns. The bar is immediately inside.

The arched doorway on Court Avenue becomes the hotel entrance and leads to the stair and the guest rooms.

The Court Avenue corner today (photograph) and the bar from inside the Washington Street doors (rendering).

Bar

The bar specializes in the floral, herbal and vegetal regional liqueurs now found in bars across South American cities, alongside the spirits of Mexico, house infusions and the standard repertoire.

The shelving of the back bar is lit from within, the bar front carries a continuous light strip, and the walls behind are clad in starred cement tile. The bar is open on nights without events.



Back bar. Rendering.



Sound and felt

The hall's ornament is also its acoustic treatment. The clouds, fringe and wall hexagons are PET acoustic felt, so the surfaces that carry the pattern also absorb the reflections of a full room: speech stays clear at dinner and music stays defined.

Each guest room is built as a room within a room: new walls held off the 1939 masonry with Rockwool in the cavity, on a floor floating on Rockwool, so sound from the hall has no rigid path to the beds. The design target is the code's STC 50 and IIC 50.

The hall with its ceiling lit: felt clouds and fringe under the matte black deck. Rendering.

USES

Six arrangements of the hall

Furnished from the hall's own chairs and tables. Seat counts from the design model.



Banquet, 120 seated



Wedding ceremony



Quinceañera, 82 seated



Tango



Live music



Morning workshop



Guest rooms

Both floors are gutted to the 1939 shell and built out new. Upstairs, each guest room is framed with new walls on its own floating floor, isolated from the hall below.

The walls are clad in navy felt hexagons that shift to oxblood toward the ceiling. Each room has a fan-shaped headboard between two small light columns and velvet drapery.

Room 1: queen bed, Washington Street window. Rendering.

Room types

Rooms 1, 4 and 5 face Washington Street. Rooms 2 and 3 face inward, with a mirrored niche behind velvet in place of a window. Room 6, the suite, adds a tub room.

Each room has its own furniture layout, and its own bath just inside the door.





Room 4, felt mesquite wall; Room 2. Renderings.









THE WALK-THROUGH

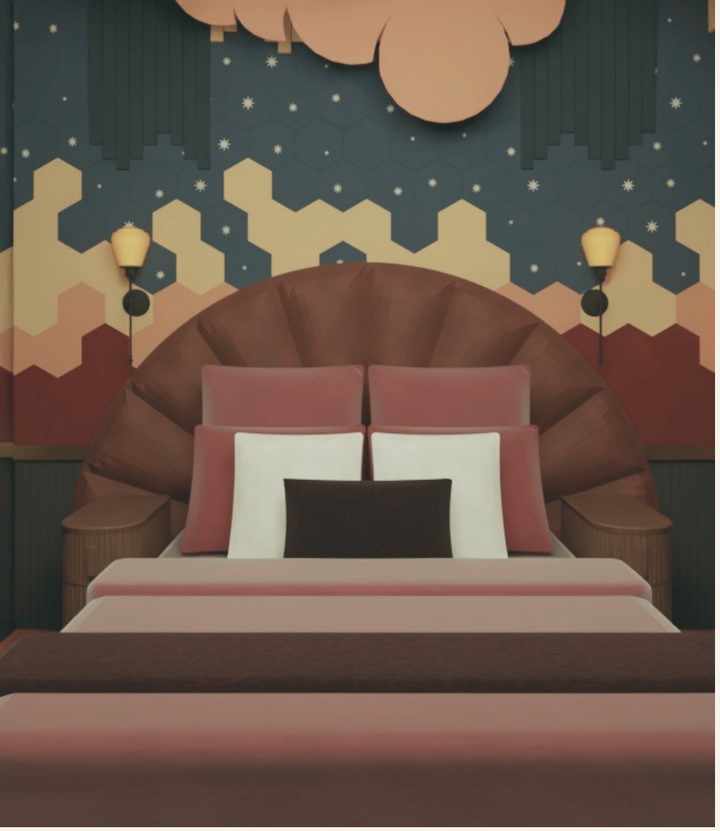
Baths

Every guest room has its own bath, about 7 ft 8 in by 6 ft 9 in, entered through a 34 in pocket door.

A 39 by 92 in walk-in shower runs behind two fixed glass panels, with a tiled bench at its end. The toilet and pedestal basin, Kohler Highline and Archer in black, face each other across the room.

Walls are Newport Teal herringbone with black grout, floor to ceiling, over honed slate.

A guest bath: the shower and bench, the wet wall, the shower glass and vanity, the basin. Renderings.







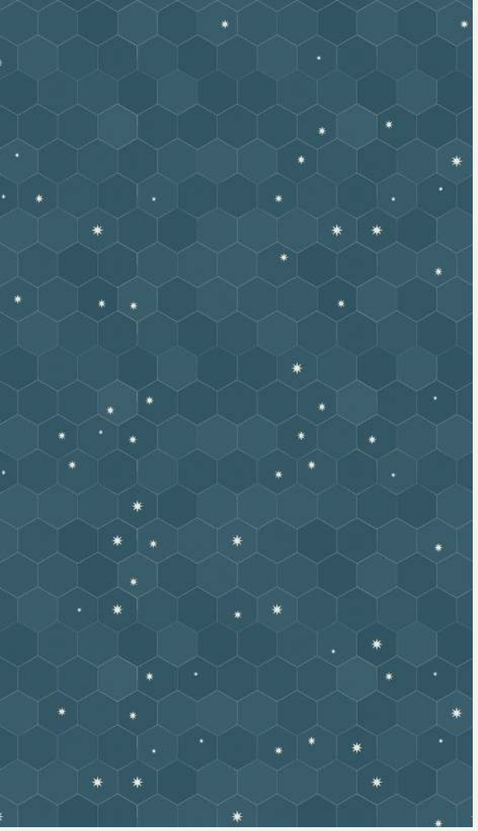


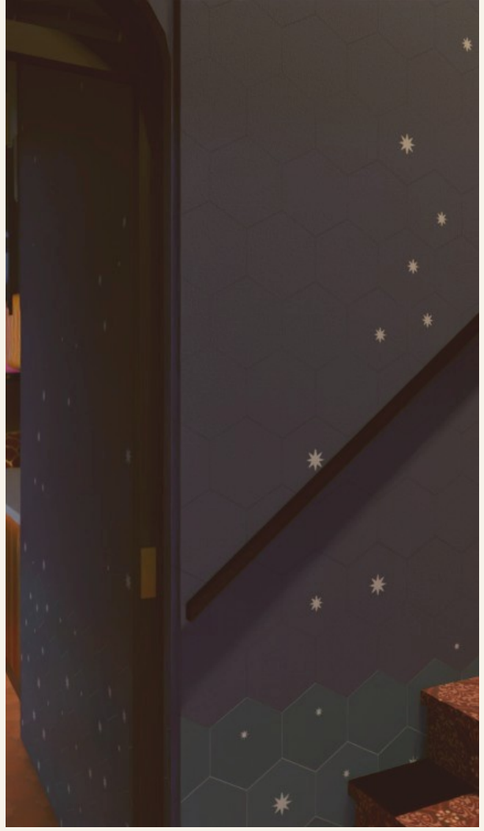
The suite

In Room 6, the suite, the walls carry the felt hexagons from navy at the base to oxblood and amber toward the ceiling, under a felt cloud.

The bed has a fan-shaped headboard between two lit sconces, with a bench at its foot. Beside it, a tub room holds a freestanding soaking tub with a brass filler on a slate floor and opens to the bedroom.

The suite; the tub and its brass filler, the bed beyond; the tub room; the tub from the dressing area. Renderings.

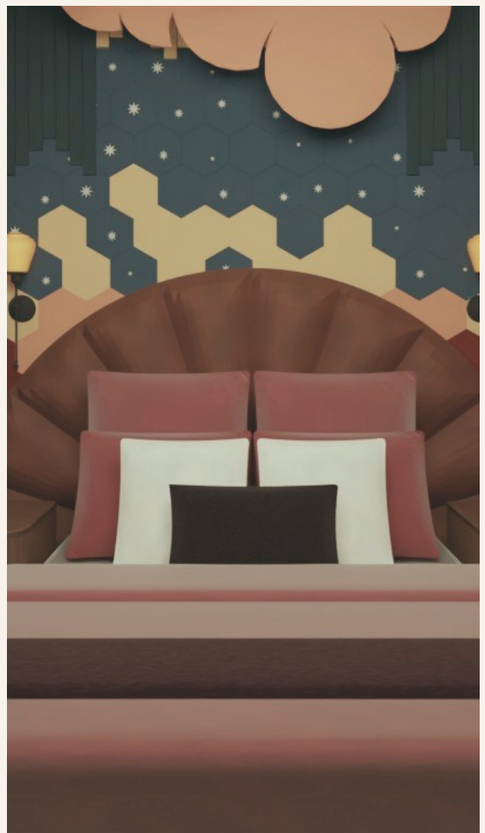












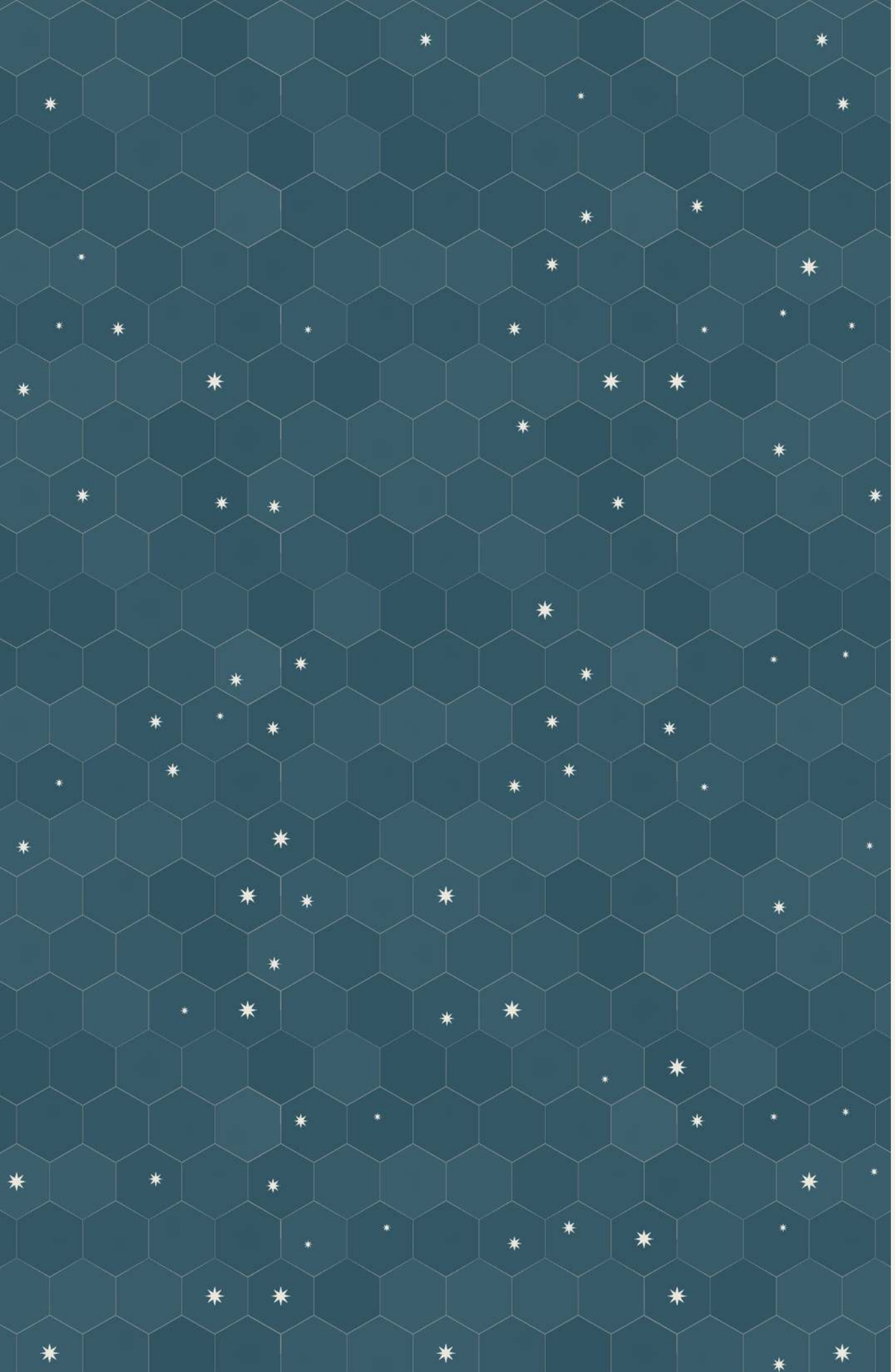
One hexagon

One hexagon runs through the house. At the bar and the entry walkway it is Starry Night cement tile, one tile in three carrying a star.

Past the Washington Street doorway it continues in acoustic felt: up both stairwells, along the upper hall and into every guest room. At the back, tile rises 3 ft for mopping, with felt above.

The felt is cut to the tile's repeat and thickness, so its first course fits the last course of tile. One felt hexagon in three has a flush star inset.

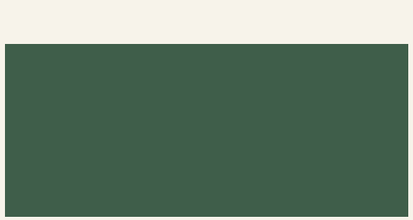
The tile; the entry stair; the bar wall; the landing; the upper hall; the suite. Renderings.



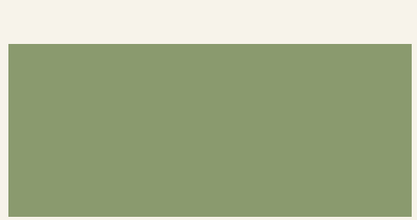
MADE HERE

Materials

Glazed cement tile at the bar, the entry and the base of the back-of-house walls. Acoustic felt in the same hexagon above the tile and throughout the upper floor. Brass and walnut at fittings and thresholds. Flame-retardant velvet at the drapery. Teal ceramic tile in the baths.



Agave



Saguaro acrylic



Brass



Oxblood velvet



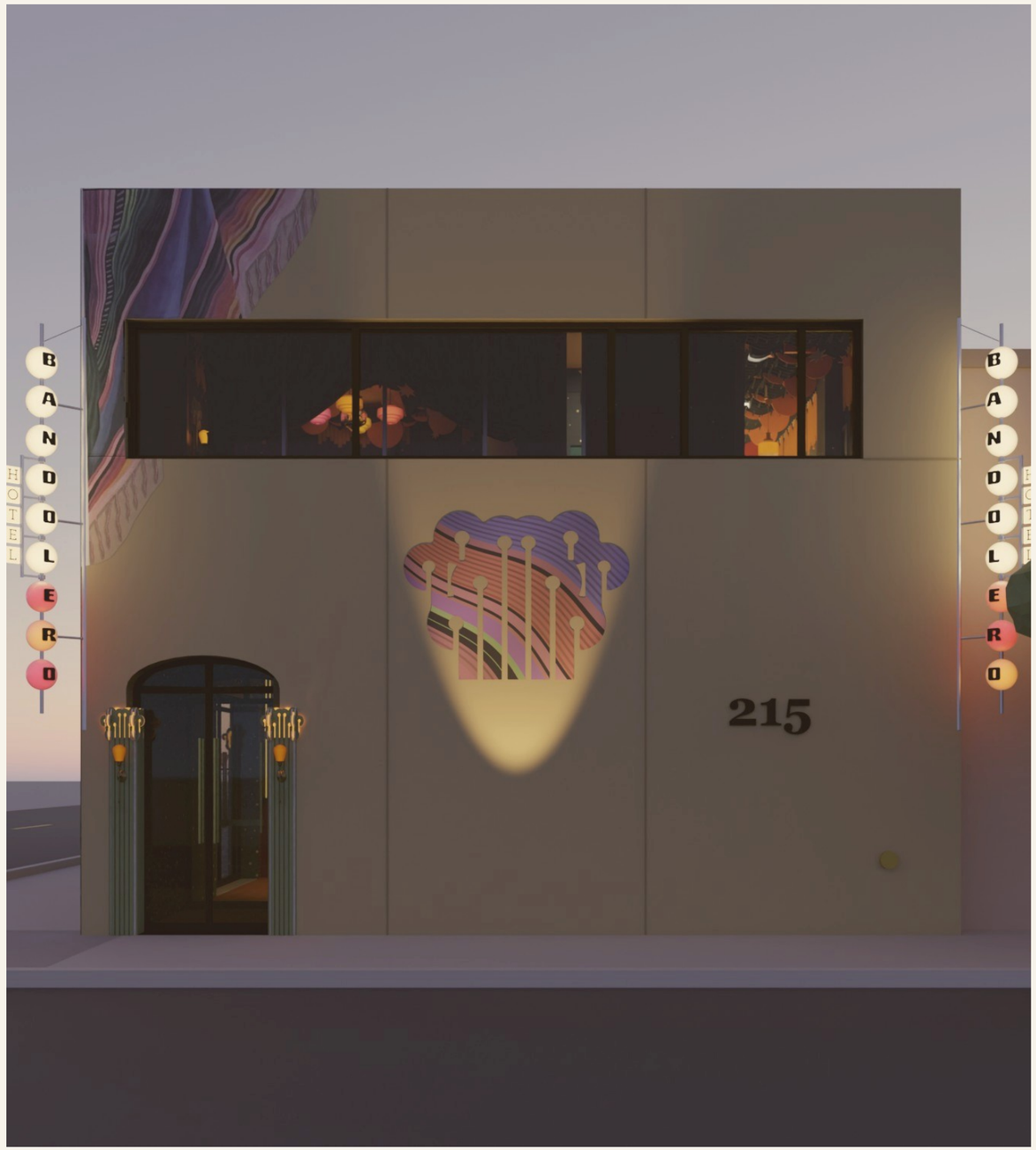
Walnut



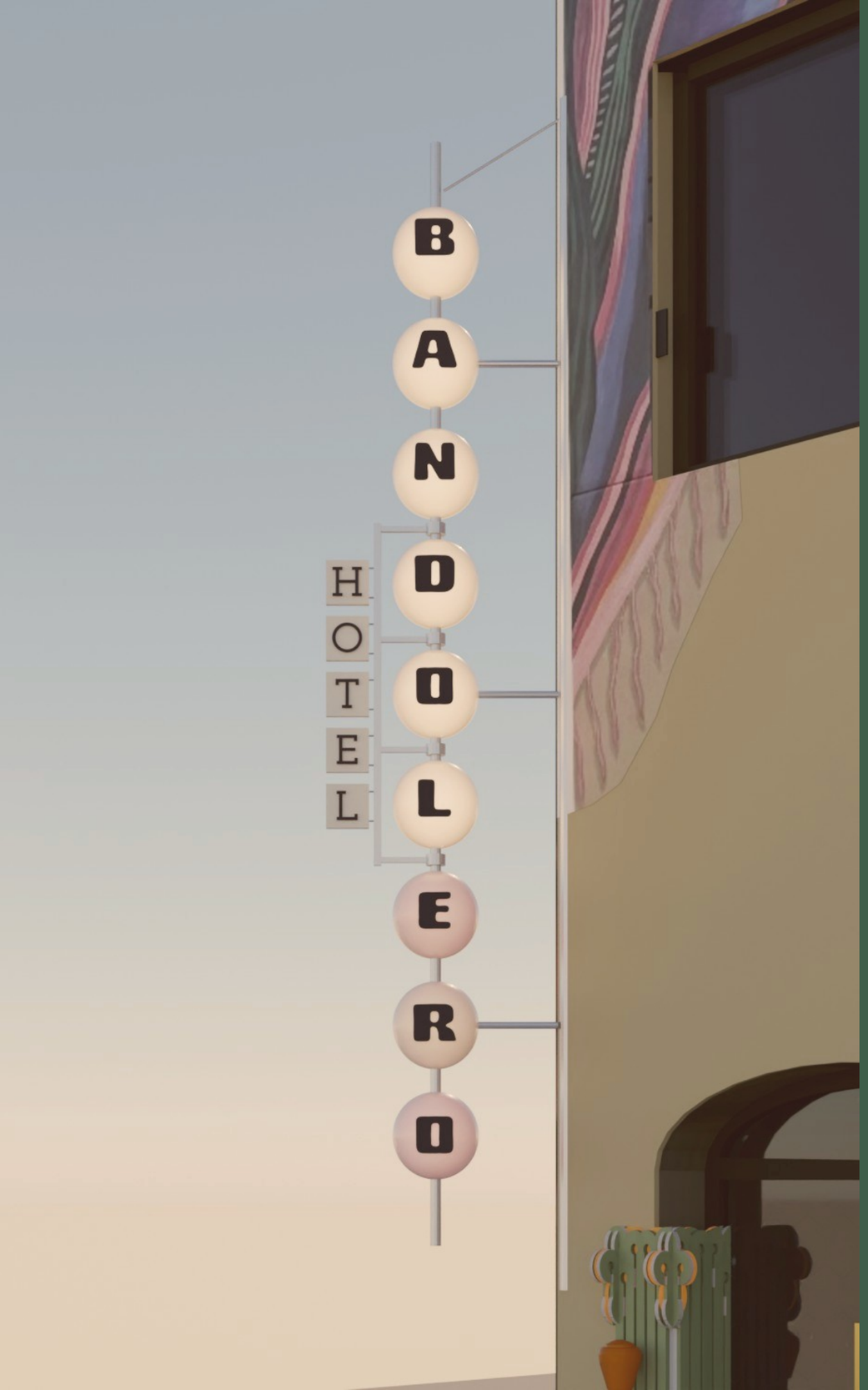
Teal herringbone



Wall mark on the Court Avenue wall, framing the mural's serape stripes. Drawing.



Court Avenue at dusk, the mark lit from the planting bed. Rendering.



Ornament

The ornament in this book is drawn from Art Deco geometry and the plant life and skyscape of the Sonoran Desert. It does not reproduce any Native pattern or sacred symbol.

Images

Renderings and drawings show a design in development; photographs are identified in their captions. Design, finishes and signage are subject to change and to permits and approvals, including El Presidio Historic Zone review. The mural is shown as it stands and is retained unaltered.

Credits

Design, drafting and modeling by Pressed Rat Design, which retains all rights to the design work. Brandylion photographs by Anna Coy and Alina Mottley for Trustfall. Set in Kyroh, the typeface of the building's sign, and Baskerville. Hotel Bandolero is a Tiny Dutchmen hospitality concept.