



RH
West Palm
An integration of food,
wine, art and design
aimed to revolutionize
physical retailing
**+ RETAIL REAL ESTATE
REPORT, AMERICAN GIRL
& REEBOK**

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Glam Gallery

Is it a store, a restaurant, a museum or some over-the-top mansion? None of the above. It's RH West Palm, **The Gallery at CityPlace**—a dazzling, four-level brick-and-mortar flagship in downtown West Palm Beach, Fla., that aims to change the way you furnish your home.

By LOLA THÉLIN

Photos courtesy of
RH, RESTORATION HARDWARE

“RH West Palm is an 80,000-sq.-ft. architectural masterpiece that is an integration of food, wine, art and design, and reflects our quest to revolutionize physical retailing.”

—GARY FRIEDMAN, RH

A

gallery—that’s the terminology high-end home furnishing purveyor RH, Restoration Hardware uses for its large-scale flagships. One of the latest galleries to join their fleet (debuting late-November 2017) is RH West Palm, The Gallery at CityPlace (RH West Palm for short), which serves as both a gathering space and a home design showroom. “RH West Palm is an 80,000-sq.-ft. architectural masterpiece that is an integration of food, wine, art and design, and reflects our quest to revolutionize physical retailing,” says RH Chairman and CEO Gary Friedman.

Designed as immersive experiences, these galleries are helping RH re-emerge as a lifestyle brand after dancing close to bankruptcy the past few years. The company operates a total of 84 retail galleries and 31 outlet stores, in addition to 15 Waterworks showrooms. Including RH West Palm, there are 10 galleries at this size and scale, three of which (Chicago, Toronto and West Palm Beach) have restaurants.

As a way to encourage customers to linger around products in an organic way, RH West Palm blurs the lines between residential and retail, and home and hospitality, by featuring interiors that are curated to have a residential feel and by allowing customers to wander the store with a glass of wine in-hand purchased from the rooftop restaurant. Ultimately, it’s a tactic to combat the rise in e-commerce, but for the customer, it means having a place to congregate with friends and family.

To create a desirable hangout space, Friedman teamed up with James Gillam of Backen, Gillam & Kroeger Architects, an architectural design firm with offices in California’s Sausalito and St. Helena. Architectural inspiration came from Palm Beach’s historic oceanfront estates and glamorous Worth Avenue, and Miami’s edgy vibe and spirit of Art Basel. “To me, Palm Beach has always been about a sense of glamour and luxury, a place everyone aspires to be a part of, like the Hamptons, Aspen, Beverly Hills or Napa Valley,” Friedman says. “We’re all intrigued to know what’s behind the majestic gates or lush green hedges

that surround the beautiful estates. Our Gallery on Okeechobee [Boulevard in West Palm Beach] was built to retail that sense of allure, to spark our imagination while being inspired by the glamour of the past and the innovative spirit of the present.”

The design team decided on two entrances, both with equal dosages of “cool factor.” On the east side, the façade features a dramatic public art mural by contemporary artist RETNA, an 18-ft.-wide-by-14-ft.-tall wall of cascading water inspired by the fountain in New York City’s Paley Park and the valet station. Guests who valet enter the central hall through a barrel-vaulted passageway. Foot traffic from the nearby downtown area enters through the west entrance and encounters an elliptical fountain inspired by Villa d’Este in Tivoli, Italy, and 20-ft. steel gates inspired by the 20th-century Venetian architect Carlo Scarpa. Customers then step into 10,000 sq. ft. of private estate gardens, complemented by RH’s outdoor furnishings, and follow a linear pathway of monolithic bluestone slabs embedded in decomposed granite to the first level.

At RH West Palm, each level is dedicated to one or more of RH’s branches: RH Interiors, Modern, Outdoor, Baby & Child, Teen, Interior Design and Hospitality. Everything is housed beneath 14-ft. ceilings. A gray concrete floor and white walls provide a neutral palette complementary to RH products, beginning with the lighting fixtures, which are all by RH.

From the floor layout to the architectural elements, walking through the space feels personal, like exploring someone’s tasteful home. The second level includes four expansive terraces with crystal and iron chandeliers, gorgeous sculptured foliage and metal trellises accented with jasmine Pandorea vines. The third floor’s aesthetic is minimalist and blends the RH Modern collections with the RH Baby & Child and RH Teen lines. These latter spaces are fused by a rhythmic progression of glass and steel French doors with corresponding Juliet balconies that line the perimeter of the floor.

Every level boasts natural light, washing in from the skylight on the top floor. The floors are seamlessly connected with a grand double floating staircase (spanning nearly 40 ft.) that features

➤ Opposite page: [Top] Design inspiration came from Palm Beach’s historic estates and Worth Avenue, with a touch of Miami’s edginess.

➔ [Bottom left] Guests can sip an espresso and grab a pastry at the fourth-floor Barista Bar.

➔ [Bottom right] RH West Palm’s third floor houses RH Baby & Child.





← A soaring glass ceiling and gorgeous chandelier create a dramatic impact on the rooftop space.

↘ Customers can take advantage of RH's in-house interior design service.



PROJECT FILE

RH West Palm, The Gallery at CityPlace
West Palm Beach, Fla.

RETAILER
RH, Restoration Hardware
ARCHITECT
Backen, Gillam & Kroeger Architects;
Hobbs & Black Architects

GENERAL CONTRACTOR
Whiting Turner
CONSULTANTS/ENGINEERS
Kimley Horn (civil engineer);
Lewis Longman Walker, Alfred Malefatto (local counsel)
STORE FIXTURES/FURNITURE
RH, Restoration Hardware
LIGHTING
RH, Restoration Hardware;
Capital Lighting
SIGNAGE/GRAPHICS
Thomas Swan
MILLWORK
NuHaus
GLASS
Nanawall, Pella Pella
SPECIAL FINISHES
Color Folio
SOUND SYSTEMS
Mood Media

Information in the project file is provided by the retailer and/or design firm.

an installation of 23 crystal Helix chandeliers. With the use of antique gilded mirrors decorating the wall along the staircase, the natural light is reflected back into each level's main space.

But the crème de la crème is the fourth floor. At the top of the grand stair is a dramatic 10,000-sq.-ft. rooftop space with a soaring glass atrium and the RH Rooftop Restaurant, Wine Vault and Barista Bar. This is the hospitality experience for the gallery. The center of the fourth floor houses the restaurant and a 12-ft. central

courtyard. A bluestone herringbone floor helps define the space along with a one-of-a-kind chandelier. "We wanted to create an experience that feels relaxed, welcoming and comfortable, a beautiful everyday café that reflects the casual elegance of West Palm Beach with timeless design and genuine hospitality," says Brendan Sodikoff, founding president of RH Hospitality. The Wine Vault is housed in loggias with gold, groin-vaulted ceilings and checkered French antique white marble and Belgian blue limestone floors.

The Barista Bar is decorated with two 12-ft. Moroccan tile fountains.

The gallery concept for RH West Palm appears to be both a successful and enjoyable approach to showcasing RH products as functional and livable. "RH West Palm is unlike any retail experience in the world and represents everything we value and believe in," Friedman says. Diners stay to linger and shop. Shoppers stay to drink and dine. Everyone who enters RH West Palm experiences more than they bargained for.

↑ The space blurs the line between residential and retail.

→ [Bottom left] The vignettes in RH West Palm feel like you are exploring someone's home

→ [Bottom right] The first floor features a classical arrangement of rooms, highlighting lifestyle installations.

