

Best Revival of an Old Interior Element

hearth and hotel

Designers have sought the crackle of fire in hotel and resort interiors lately, warming anew to an age-old idea. “[Designers] are trying to emulate the home environment. A natural carry-over was to bring in fireplaces,” says 24-year veteran fireplace designer/architect Walter Moberg, who has created hearths in Ritz Carltons, Disney properties, and countless other venues.

Anecdotal evidence—in Hotel Derek in Houston; the Miyako Tokyo Hotel in Japan; the massive hearth in the ground-up Hotel Healdsburg in Healdsburg, California; The Ambrose hotel in Santa Monica, California; and in Sanctuary Spa at Camelback Mountain, Arizona—shows the charming old fireplace is frequently being revisited as a central design element.

“It’s the movement. The color. The sound. It’s very textural. It draws people,” says Steven Susnir, associate architect with Altevers Associates, the San Diego-based firm responsible for nine fireplaces at The Reserve country club in Indian Wells, California, where a double-sided limestone fireplace warms both the women’s and men’s lounges.

Outside space isn’t off-limits, either: The Ambrose, which even has a room named the “Fireside Library,” also boasts fireplaces on outdoor terraces designed by owner Deirdre Wallace. And the allure isn’t lost on Mark Philp, director of Allen + Philp Architects who designed the hearth-rich Sanctuary Spa. “Outside fireplaces have been really popular,” Philp says, adding in summation, “We are drawn to fire for its romance. It’s a primal thing.”—HG

Right: Fireplaces warm Sanctuary Spa in Camelback Mountain, Arizona. (Photo by Al Payne) *Top:* A terrace fireside at The Ambrose. (Photo by Bill Curry)

