

# Hyatt announces Andaz hotel for Palm Springs



[Barrett Newkirk](#), The Desert Sun 8:32 p.m. PDT March 26, 2015



An architect's sketch of the Hyatt Andaz Palm Springs to be developed in the 150-room hotel development planned for the corner of North Palm Canyon Drive and Alejo Road in downtown. (Photo: Rael Development)

The boutique hotel seems ideal for Palm Springs' village scale and resort vibe, but it's also set to be a good match for the luxury, customized hotel brand Andaz, by Hyatt.

Hyatt announced Thursday it's bringing its Andaz luxury hotel brand into the new Rael Development due to break ground in early summer at the corner of North Indian Canyon Drive and Alejo Road. Development officials anticipate opening in the fall of 2016.

The 150-room, 17-suite Andaz Palm Springs will be built as a group of small buildings and bungalows surrounding two outdoor pools and gardens, Hyatt Hotels Corp. said in a news release.

The hotel also will offer spa services, a restaurant and lounge, and include about 25,000 square feet of retail space and meeting facilities on its first level.

"The Andaz is very much a luxury, lifestyle hotel, said Graeme Rael, president and principal of Rael Development Corp., the developer leading the hotel and mixed-use project on a four-acre swath of blank desert.

The announcement comes after the Palm Springs City Council unanimously approved plans for the site, which has been the subject of development talks for at least a decade.

The goal has always been to create a project uniquely Palm Springs, and the Andaz brand has a proven record of offering a customized hotel experience that fits its location, Rael said.

"One of Andaz's strengths is they really immerse themselves into the local culture. If you look at their project in Costa Rica, it looks very different than Wailea (on the island of Maui in Hawaii). And that looks very different from the project in Napa," Rael added. "So this is just not another 'branded hotel.' It's a personal project for them. They're very good at capturing the local spirit. And that was very important to us."

Twelve Andaz hotels are currently open: Andaz 5th Avenue and Andaz Wall Street in New York, Andaz San Diego, Andaz West Hollywood, Andaz Napa, Andaz Savannah, Andaz Maui at Wailea, Andaz Peninsula Papagayo in Costa Rica, Andaz Liverpool Street in London, Andaz Amsterdam Prinsengracht, Andaz Xintiandi, Shanghai and Andaz Tokyo Toranomon Hills.

"Our opportunity is to do a very upscale project here," Rael continued. "One that is also very Palm Springs. It's been very important to us to do a project that fits in Palm Springs."

Tourism officials praised the announcement, also expressing excitement for bringing another boutique hotel to Palm Springs.

"It was more this Andaz brand within Hyatt that was so appealing to us," said James Canfield, executive director of the Palm Springs Convention Center.

The Andaz brand could be popular among convention planners, however, it is primarily designed for leisure travelers, officials say.

"This project really is very much a boutique hotel," Rael said.

"The Andaz brand is a great match for Palm Springs and is consistent with the experience that visitors expect," Canfield said.

Andaz Palm Springs will collaborate with local artists, musicians, designers, and other cultural influencers to deliver events and programs on themes unique to its location in Palm Springs.

"We are delighted to see Andaz Palm Springs come to life in such an iconic California community," said David Tarr, Senior Vice President of Development – Americas for Hyatt, in a statement. "Andaz Palm Springs will embody the local culture, infusing it throughout the guest experience. The hotel will be an urban oasis, offering personal style, comfort and sophistication synonymous with the Andaz brand."

The Andaz joins other key Palm Springs hotel projects in development such as the Kimpton's 155-room Palomar hotel going up just blocks down the street in the Museum Market Plaza development. It is due to open its doors in Spring 2016.

That project will be closely followed by the 135-room AC Marriott, also planned for the Museum Market Plaza, nearly next door to the Palomar.