

# AUDREY LOUNGE & CAFÉ, NEW YORK

**CHALLENGE** At Audrey, a lounge/café located in the W New York – The Tuscany on Manhattan’s east side, guests can start the day with an espresso and end it with a cocktail. Focus Lighting, who has worked with the Starwood Hotel Group on several other projects, met the challenge of this multi-functional space, creating a lighting design that seamlessly evolves from day to night with a palette of colors to set distinct moods.

**ARCHITECTURAL AND LIGHTING SOLUTION** The lounge/café, furnished with contemporary décor infused with the classic essence of actress Audrey Hepburn in *Breakfast at Tiffany’s* (hence the name), is “all about transition and transformation,” says Focus Lighting’s principal Paul Gregory. During the day the majority of the space is illuminated in a bright white light. But at night, vibrant hues, including reds, ambers, and blues, create a definite transition from cheery café to sultry lounge, conjuring a sexy and moody atmosphere.

No matter the hour, Audrey radiates a soft and comfortable vibe through the use of evenly illuminated surfaces. Because hard materials such as acrylic, glass, and mirror were used, great care was taken to soften them. As Gregory explains, “These are both great and difficult materials. They make the space edgy and special, but, unlike fabric, can also make it very cold.”

One way in which the lighting designers achieved a soft luminescence is through the bar-front’s internally illuminated glass façade, where linear low-voltage light strips with 5W xenon lamps create an amber glow. This also helps to emphasize a chandelier silhouette etched into the glass. Recessed adjustable low-voltage 50W MR16

downlights provide direct illumination on the bar’s countertop. This large surface area of even, shadow-free light “is extremely flattering and pleasant,” says Gregory, “like sitting around a fire.” The back wall of the bar is comprised of a three-panel mirror also sandblasted with the pattern of a chandelier. During the day, the mirror helps to provide a sense of spaciousness for the otherwise small area (capacity is around 50 people) and the chandelier pattern is highlighted in a rainbow of colors via LEDs concealed behind a cavity containing display shelves. At night, the panels slide open to reveal liquor bottles silhouetted by a sheet of backlit white acrylic.

In front and to either side of the bar stand two columns made up of acrylic shelves. During the day they are internally lit with dimmable warm-white LED strips located behind the acrylic, and serve as the buffet location for the breakfast service. An amber filter corrects the blueness of the LEDs and a diffusing filter evens out the light. At night, RGB color-changing LEDs transform the columns into illuminated light boxes.

The cast of light from the bar and columns provides much of the illumination for the entire space, where only recessed adjustable low-voltage downlights have been added to highlight table surfaces. Because the hotel wanted “fool-proof harmonious color environments that would present different feelings within the space,” explains Gregory, eight pre-set color schemes are programmed for the columns and bar. As the sun goes down and the candles come out, the setting warms up. Gradually, Audrey becomes infused with sunset colors. And, thus, the transformation is complete. **SALLIE MOFFAT**

**By day, the chandelier pattern, sandblasted onto the bar’s three-panel mirror, is illuminated by LEDs; but at night, the panels slide open to reveal a backlit cavity containing shelves of liquor bottles.**

## DETAILS

**PROJECT** | Audrey, W New York – The Tuscany, New York  
**DESIGN TEAM** | Focus Lighting, New York (lighting designer); W Hotels, New York (interior designer)  
**PHOTOGRAPHY** | Courtesy W Hotels  
**PROJECT SIZE** | 1,000 square feet  
**WATTS** | 5.4 watts per square foot  
**MANUFACTURERS** | ACME, Boca Flasher, CSL Lighting, ETC, Doug Fleenor Design, Juno Lighting, Tokistar Lighting

