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Aloft Detroit opens, brings apartments, hotel to David Whitney Building

By [Sherri Welch](#)

The **Aloft Detroit** opened Friday, bringing a boutique hotel and new apartments to the historic David Whitney Building downtown.

The opening couldn't come soon enough, said Mike Damitio, senior vice president of acquisitions and development at **Trans Inns Management Inc.** Damitio's **VOS Hospitality** lifestyle boutique division is managing the hotel, apartments, restaurant and bar and lounge areas in the building.

All 108 apartments at **The Residences** at the David Whitney have been leased, and all of the hotel's available 136 rooms were sold out for its first weekend, he said.

"People have been pulling on the doors, basically, for several months now," Damitio said.

Though the apartments are all leased, the management company is still taking applications for a waiting list, he said.

The plan is to begin moving residents in after the first of the year in staggered fashion. "We're trying not to create too much chaos at once," Damitio said.

Trans Inn and **The Roxbury Group** teamed up to create the joint venture **Whitney Partners LLC**, which bought the vacant building near Detroit's Grand Circus Park in 2011 for \$3.3 million and launched the \$94.5 million historic renovation project.

The hotel, whose Aloft brand operates as part of **Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide Inc.** (NYSE: HOT), is anticipating it will once again be at full occupancy during the **North American International Auto Show**, Damitio said.

The building's **WXYZ** bar and **Re:mix** lounge are also open, but the **Grand Cirque Brasserie**, its restaurant, isn't expected to open until some time in 2015, Damitio said.

Chef Jacques Van Staden, president of **JVS Culinary Group**, who has opened 136 restaurants — including **Alize** in Las Vegas — will develop and oversee the menu for the new restaurant.

Anjana Schroeder/Crain's Detroit Business



The renovated David Whitney Building.

