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East Brown Cow and Commonwealth Hotels further expansion of The Docent's Collection with new lofts at Thompson Block

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Portland, ME East Brown Cow and Commonwealth Hotels have introduced the newest offerings from The Docent's Collection, a boutique hospitality product situated in the city's historic Old Port. The expansion reflects the brand's continued success and increased demand, with the introduction of seven new lofts on the fourth floor of the Thompson Block, a historic building located at 121 Middle St.

The Docent's Collection has grown exponentially since it was initially launched in 2019. Combining the first-class hospitality of a hotel with the personalization of a luxury residence, The Docent's Collection offers guests a distinctive approach to travel, aiming to provide a

“home-away-from-home” experience within some of Portland’s historic buildings.

“This expansion reinforces our success of rebranding The Docent’s Collection as a distinctive hospitality concept, one that showcases the vibrancy of the Old Port,” said Tim Soley, president and CEO of East Brown Cow. “As we continue to invest in Portland’s urban fabric and aim to preserve its architectural history, we are eager to expand our breadth of offerings to contribute to the city’s continued growth and evolution.”

Located on the top floor of the building, the new lofts were converted from vacant class B office space and showcase the Thompson Block’s historic design features. Alongside the new additions, East Brown Cow led renovations throughout the building’s second and third floors to further enhance the hospitality offering – including renovations to the building’s stairwells and corridors.

Fusing historic architecture with modern touches, each loft is thoughtfully appointed with a fully equipped kitchen, large dining and living area, and custom furnishings. The technology-forward mobile check-in process allows guests to customize their preferred level of interaction with the hospitality team, who engage with guests as a personal “docent” both within and beyond the lofts’ walls. Local touchpoints are woven throughout, courtesy of featured art collections, interior design and amenities, which include handmade furniture from Thomas Moser, oil paintings by Cooper Dragonette, and freshly-ground coffee beans from local roaster, Coffee by Design.

The expansion announcement comes off the heels of The Docent’s Collection’s rebrand from “121 MIDDLE” in 2022, reflecting the success of its unique model and East Brown Cow’s continued investment within the Old Port. In the same year as its rebrand, The Docent’s Collection grew from encompassing one building at the Thompson Block (121 Middle St.) to two buildings with the addition of two lofts on the upper floors of the neighboring 115 Middle St., known within the collection as the A. Robinson Block.

Upcoming plans for The Docent’s Collection include further expansion along Middle St., with construction underway at 178 Middle St. and 184 Middle St. The upper floors of these 19th century buildings, known respectively as the Boyd Block and the William Widgery Thomas Block, are being converted into 19 additional one- and two-bedroom lofts, set to join the collection in spring 2025.

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