

# Room Keys: Hôtel Plaza Athénée

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ROCHELLE LASH, POSTMEDIA NEWS | 13/06/22 | Last Updated: 13/06/21 3:15 PM ET

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Room service comes with a delicious view at the Eiffel Terrace Suite in the Hôtel Plaza Athénée in Paris. Hôtel Plaza Athénée, Dorchester Collection

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Hôtel Plaza Athénée, 25 Ave. Montaigne, Paris, 8th arr. ; 800-650-1842, [www.plaza-athenee-paris.com](http://www.plaza-athenee-paris.com).

At the 100-year-old Hôtel Plaza Athénée in Paris, everything is haute — the cuisine, the decor, the service and the prices.

The Plaza Athénée, a landmark of elegant Avenue Montaigne near the Champs-Élysées and one of Paris's select "palace hotels," is synonymous with Parisian glamour and international VIPs.

The hotel has played host to society A-listers such as the Vanderbilts, the Rockefellers, Jacqueline Kennedy and show-biz celebs such as Maurice Chevalier, Josephine Baker and Grace Kelly. I dined at Le Relais Plaza Bistro as had the notorious Wallis Simpson, the woman for whom

England's King Edward VIII abdicated. And I checked out the grand suite favoured by Leonardo DiCaprio and perused the spa menu at the Dior Institut for Rihanna's favourite Purifying Interlude facial.

Celebrity value aside, what struck me about the Plaza Athénée was that the staff was friendly and good-natured, and not stiff or snobby, even though I arrived jet-lagged and rumped after a long flight, rather than looking like a soignée French fashionista.

## **THE NEIGHBOURHOOD**

You're a half-block from the Champs-Élysée and across the Seine from the Eiffel Tower. Plus, the Plaza Athénée is intimately tied to the world of haute couture. Designer Christian Dior opened his boutique here in the late 1940s to be close to the hotel's prestigious clientele and the fabled fashion road became home to Chanel, Nina Ricci, Valentino and Louis Vuitton. It's still hot-hot-hot. Saint Laurent opened a shop on Avenue Montaigne in May, 2013.

I gazed at a fabulous frock in the window of Dior and considered a purchase. After all, the Plaza Athénée has a Garment Alteration Service at the ready. Hemming the skirt would have cost about \$45, and I realized if I couldn't afford the dressmaker, the Dior dress was out of reach too.

## **The ROOMS**

After a century of classic refinement and formality, the Plaza Athénée has added tech features: iPhone compatible sound systems, flat-screen TVs set inside gilded-framed mirrors and remote control lighting.

But what the Plaza Athénée is really known for is its sumptuous French antique interior decor in two looks: the classic, ornate Louis XIV and XV and Régence styles with opulent marble bathrooms, shimmering crystal chandeliers, and rich silks and damasks; and the newer, sleek, linear Art Deco rooms. You'll sleep well in the princely Royale Suite, one of the largest in Paris, with 450 square metres of lavish furnishings and a price tag of about \$30,000 a night.

## **THE VIBE**

A celebratory air prevails this year. For its 100th anniversary, the hotel is partnering with Baccarat crystal to offer its new cocktail of berries with Cognac and Champagne. And world-renowned chef Alain Ducasse has created culinary masterpieces for the stunning, three-Michelin-star Alain Ducasse Restaurant au Plaza Athénée. The menu changes nightly but stay tuned for French delicacies such as pâté of truffles and guinea fowl, langoustines with caviar, foie gras, spiced lamb with lemon and artichokes, with divine desserts and cheeses.

Room rates start at \$940; Eiffel Terrace Suite, \$13,000/night; Royal Suite, \$30,000/night; a

six-course tasting menu at Alain Ducasse starts at \$450; Le Relais Plaza Bistro, dinner starts at \$80 p.p