

Hotel Portsmouth updates a Queen Anne treasure

HISTORIC NEW HAMPSHIRE TOWN is a superior stop for exceptional architecture and fabulous dining



ROCHELLE LASH
CHECKING IN

At The Hotel Portsmouth in New Hampshire's Seacoast Region, everything old is new again.

Hoteliers Doug Palardy and Dan Innis have crafted a fetching fusion of vintage and modern — a boutique babe that opened three months ago in an elegant 1881 Queen Anne mansion. The Hotel Portsmouth is a deluxe B & B-style hotel with handsome living rooms, a beautiful sunroom for breakfast, a boardroom and 32 remodelled rooms and suites, accessed by an elevator.

The Hotel Portsmouth is within a few blocks of Portsmouth's Market Square and its historic harbour, both promenades of delightful shopping and dining. The hotel has its own tiny boutique of nautical-inspired gifts, but Portsmouth has so much to do that each guest room is equipped with an iPad so visitors can plan their stay.

The hotel owners

The owners of The Hotel Portsmouth are pros, and this virtually guarantees a pleasant visit. The restoration is top-drawer; the interiors are attractive, the continental breakfast is yummy, and the staff is helpful.

Palardy and Innis previously owned Portsmouth's Ale House Inn. Now, Palardy manages the new hotel, and Innis is multi-tasking: He is a professor of marketing and hospitality management at University of New Hampshire as well as a candidate in the state's First Congressional District in the U.S. Congress.

The couple has spent more than \$1 million on the hotel's makeover, and Palardy supervised the top-to-bottom restoration, which included refurbishing fine hardwood floors, landscaping and gardening, overhauling operating systems and modernizing the accommodations.

The building, circa 1881

The hotel, originally the home of a shipping merchant, stands out on a resi-



Hotel Portsmouth in New Hampshire's Seacoast region is an example of the Queen Anne "stick style" of architecture.

dential street with its New England blue clapboard, dark shutters and cream trim.

Architectural aficionados will appreciate the rarefied Queen Anne "stick style," notable for vertical beams on the pointed gables. The "sticks" are more austere and angular than other ornate Queen Anne designs.

Indoors, the highlight is the mansion's splendid woodwork. The study and the parlour each have spectacular built-in breakfronts that are carefully carved with spindles, decorative swirls, tiny arches, mouldings and glass cabinets for china and collectibles.

The interiors, 2014

Where many vintage inns are floral and frilly, The Hotel Portsmouth is monochromatic and subtle.

Palardy handled the interior decor. He started with carpets in patterns of grey and walls in dusky blues and greys of the sea that change with the daylight.

His pieces de résistance are the two ground-floor common



The hotel's study features handsome furnishings.

rooms: the study and the parlour. The study is an intimate, masculine hideaway with navy walls, smart tufted-leather sofas and bold seascape prints. The parlour is courtly, with graceful charcoal velvet couches and tweedy wing chairs surrounding a working fireplace. A crystal and black onyx chandelier adds a dress-up Victorian touch.

"We kept the public areas traditional to reflect the

house's history, but the guest rooms have a more modern spin," Palardy said.

The Hotel Portsmouth has several room styles, all with simple, functional furnishings such as Shaker-blue painted desks and duvets covered in sporty, striped mattress ticking. There are spacious suites for two or four people, as well as one adapted for physically challenged visitors and one pet-friendly suite, with its own

fenced patio.

Palardy and Innis know about conveniences, so each room has a large flat-screen television, iPod docking station, air conditioning (plus windows that open) and good linens over pillow-top mattresses. The bathrooms, small but deluxe spaces, sparkle with marble walls and floors, walk-in glass showers and sturdy, superior faucets. Stylish Malin+Goetz bath amenities from Italy add another contemporary touch.

The cute, bright yellow telephones are retro collectibles refitted with push-buttons instead of the old dials. Why the alteration? The newer buttons are more efficient, yes, but the manufacturer found that young people don't know how to use the dials.

A West Island connection

Portsmouth was settled in the early 1600s and has a population of about 22,000. It's a captivating city prized for its exceptional Federal, Georgian and Colonial architecture.

It's also a foodie haven. Some of The Hotel Ports-

IF YOU GO

Portsmouth, N.H. is a 4.5-hour drive (480 km) from Montreal.

The Hotel Portsmouth: 603-433-1200, www.thehotelportsmouth.com; 40 Court St., Portsmouth, N.H. Pets are permitted in the Garden Suite, no extra charge. Price: rooms \$189-\$369 U.S., including continental breakfast, Wi-Fi, parking, in-room iPad. From Oct. 20-May 15, approximately \$109-\$269.

mouth's recommendations are the Portsmouth Brewery, Cava, Black Birch, The Wellington Room and Geno's, a waterfront shack with terrific lobster rolls.

All impeccable suggestions, but I dashed to the Black Trumpet Bistro & Wine Bar to meet co-owners Evan and Denise Mallett (before marriage, she was Denise Dwinells from Beaconsfield on the West Island).

Black Trumpet is a gastro-nomic restaurant in a charming, rustic warehouse nestled in the historic port. Everything is fresh from the farm, the market and the sea, so the menu changes frequently.

"We simply call it creative cuisine," said Denise, "but the dishes have American, Mediterranean and Latin influences, and we go with the seasons."

My table lucked into delectable soft-shell crab, lobster agnolotti and paella chock full of the best catch of the Atlantic Ocean. Mallett, a finalist at the annual James Beard Society chef competition, also cooks up perky treats such as sesame duck breast, octopus with lemon aioli, shrimp escabeche, and braised lamb shortribs with radicchio gremolata. The grass-fed Angus beef is from Archer Farm in Maine. Among the unique desserts is the mango-basil crêpe with lemon grass yogurt and oat crumble.

The writer was a guest of the hotel which did not review or approve the story.

Rochelle@rochellelash.com
Twitter: rochellelash

WHERE TO STAY

ALSO FIND US ON montrealgazette.com/wheretostay

TO ADVERTISE please call 514-987-2350

1000 ISLANDS

GLEN HOUSE RESORT – SMUGGLERS GLEN GOLF COURSE

In the Heart of the 1000 Islands and choose from one of our many Stay and Play or Romance Packages, starting at \$136 per night based on double occupancy. Enjoy our 18 hole championship golf course, onsite spa, casual fine dining, local Theatre, Boat Cruises and Casino. Visit www.glenhouseressort.com or Call **1-800-268-4536** for details.

NEW YORK

RIVERSIDE TOWER HOTEL – NEW YORK CITY

Singles USD \$134. Doubles USD \$139. Suites USD \$149-\$169. Lincoln Center area. Hudson River views, 18 floors, kitchenette, 5 minutes to midtown. Safe, quiet luxury area. Riverside Drive & 80th Street. For more info, call **800-724-3136** or visit www.riversidetowerhotel.com

AMERICA'S BEST VALUE INN

In wonderful Plattsburgh, NY. Only \$140 for 2 nights. Canadian cash. Up to 2 people, additional pers. add \$10 more per night. Free continental breakfast. Located conveniently off exit 37 on I-87. Some holidays, wknds & spec. events do not apply. Up to 70% occ. daily. Based on availability. Call 518.563.0222 or toll free 1.800.358.2137

NEW HAMPSHIRE

WHITE MOUNTAINS • NORTH CONWAY

Enjoy the comforts of our historic "country elegant" boutique hotel with panoramic mountain views, cozy Martini Library Lounge, renowned international dining. Some guest rooms with fireplaces and/or Jacuzzi. Golf, hiking & tax-free outlet shopping nearby. From \$78ppdo(US) includes Full Breakfast & Dinner (off regular full menu). Photos, amenities & menu online. **603-421-6146**
www.StonehurstManor.com

MAINE

OCEAN WOODS RESORT

Goose Rocks Beach Kennebunkport

RELAX, peaceful, affordable lodging near sandy beach. Spacious rooms include full bath, cable TV, wireless, AC, mini-fridge, coffeemakers, hairdryers and FREE breakfast. Outdoor pool, hot tub, shuffleboard. Complimentary beach towels, chairs & umbrellas. 10% discount for 5 or more nights. Call Kathleen Spang @ **207-967-1928. www.oceanwoodsresort.com**

VERMONT

SMART SUITES

Summer Special. Come and enjoy our hospitality in either a studio efficiency at US \$92.95 or a more spacious one bedroom suite at US \$102.95/night, including a deluxe continental breakfast and free WIFI. Call toll free **877.862.6800** and mention the Gazette special. Not valid with other discounts and subject to availability. Effective 05/02/14. 1700 Shelburne Rd., So. Burlington, Vt. Take Exit 13 off I-89, left on rt. 7 for 1.5 miles, same entrance as Holiday Inn Express.

NEW JERSEY

DIAMOND CREST MOTEL Across The Street From The Beach Book Now And Save

2 Room kitchenette suites sleeps up to 6. All rooms have pool/ocean views. Daily maid service/bbq facilities/sun decks. July summer specials 7/3-7/13 – 7/13-7/20 5 Night special 750.00 Plus tax 7 Night special 1050.00 Plus tax (4 Person) a & b suites Extra person add 12.00 Per night August special please visit our website. Rates only apply to new reservations Diamond Crest Motel, 7011 Atlantic ave, Wildwood Crest, NJ 08260 **(609) 522 1700**
www.diamondcrestmotel.com