

MODERN GETAWAY IN THE HEART OF TORONTO



ROCHELLE LASH
Checking In

The sparkling new Delta in Toronto opened two weeks ago and already is a game-changer on two fronts:

Delta Toronto at SouthCore Financial Centre is the flagship of a new generation of the all-Canadian hospitality company. Dowdy no more, the brand is gradually transforming its 38 hotels and resorts coast-to-coast into modern getaways that still sport attractive prices.

The Delta is an instant anchor of Toronto's South Core district, across the street from the CN Tower, Ripley's Aquarium and the Rogers Centre, and linked indoors to the Metro Toronto Convention Centre, Union Station and PATH, the subway and underground city.

A BRAND EVOLVES

The newly-built Toronto Delta astutely reflects life in 2015: It has high-tech features, LEED eco-conscious operations and public transit connections so extensive that you will toss away your car keys. And the Delta is casual, befitting today's relaxed meme. No stuffy hotel dining here. The SOCO Kitchen + Bar is a cool hangout to have cocktails and creative cuisine. And SOCO To-Go furnishes tasty meals for people on the run.

Toronto Delta is a steep upgrade for the brand, with deluxe marble bathrooms, an indoor pool under an atrium, a classy Canadian whisky bar and a Clef d'Or concierge, Genevieve Moir.

The hotel's clean, uncomplicated interior design — by former Montrealer Alexandra Champalimaud — features amusing colour pops such as lemon-yellow leather chairs and mauve pillows. And a witty collection of artwork includes a wall sculpture of hockey sticks by Rob Baytor and a mural of Canadian landscapes by Adrian Forrow.

SMART ROOMS

The Delta Toronto features 567 sizable rooms and 16 extended-stay suites with kitchenettes. The spare, business-like decor in crisp white and smart navy is warmed by modular blond-wood furniture and earthy carpets. The wow factor is the view, either



The Delta hotel in Toronto opened in November with contemporary interior design by former Montrealer Alexandra Champalimaud. DELTA HOTELS AND RESORTS.

IF YOU GO

Porter Airlines: 888-619-8622, 416-619-8622, flyporter.com. Porter flies to Toronto's downtown island airport from Montreal (from \$99 one-way), Mont Tremblant (seasonal), Ottawa, Quebec City and Windsor.

Delta Toronto: 888-890-3222, 416-849-1200, www.deltahotels.com; 75 Lower Simcoe St., Toronto.

Price: approximately \$199-\$239 for rooms; suites cost more, including Wi-Fi, indoor pool, fitness centre, baby gear. Extra: premium Wi-Fi, valet parking (\$42). Delta Privilege members get perks, incl. free local calls.

SOCO Kitchen + Bar: 416-637-5465, socokitchenand-bar.ca; daily until 2 a.m.; brunch on Sat.-Sun. Gluten-free, vegan and to-go menus available.

Visitors info: Toronto: 416-987-1739, www.seetorontonow.com; South Core: southcore.ca; Ontario Tourism, live chats at: ontariotravel.net.

north to Toronto's urban lights or south to Lake Ontario — both are breathtaking, especially if you have a corner room. Plus, you can sing in the glass shower while you're gazing at the skyline.

The accommodations are called ModeRooms for the modern vibe, with ModeClub and ModeSuites

offering such extras as evening turndown and access to a private lounge with continental breakfast, afternoon hors d'oeuvres and beverages.

Delta is tech-forward, both for businesspeople and for screen-savvy kids. The conference rooms are equipped with wireless AV equipment, so no more tripping over cables at meetings. And each room's SmartDesk connects your mobile device to your television for gaming, streaming and access to YouTube and Netflix. Plus, you can sync the day's sightseeing photos and upload to your TV. To make all of this happen, Delta's Internet is 100 mbp (megabytes per second), among the highest of any hotel in Canada.

Technology also is helping to personalize each guest's visit. When you check in, the front desk will remotely activate your thermostat's eco-settings for power and climate control. And, by the time you arrive at your room, you will have a menu of onscreen options for dining and activities.

FOOD AND DRINK

SOCO Kitchen + Bar is a sleek, modern bistro that embraces a corner lounge, leather booths, a sports bar and high-topped tables for grazing or casual lunches and dinners. Music throbs, chefs in the open kitchen toss and chop, and bartenders and servers rush to serve a packed house, especially on game nights.

Executive chef Daniel Craig cooks up comfort dishes — his ingredients are remarkably fresh — such as rotisserie chicken, chickpea stew and prosciutto pizza, as well as delicacies including oysters, lobster tagliatelle,

duck confit, braised lamb, bison tartar and roasted scallops. The desserts are exceptional, especially the chocolate pot de creme

and homemade ice cream.

Even breakfast is great, with choices ranging from rich eggs benedict with pesto hollandaise to a healthy berry smoothie and tomato-spinach-wild mushroom omelette.

SOUTH CORE HUB

The Delta's gleaming 46-storey tower already is a landmark of Toronto's South Core, a muscular district south of the CN tracks that is home to highrise waterfront condos and the city's most popular attractions and sporting events. You are across the street from the CN Tower, Ripley's Aquarium, the Metro Toronto Convention Centre (connected via an overpass), and Rogers Centre (Disney on Ice Presents Treasure Trove, Dec. 19-28). Within one block is the Air Canada Centre (showcasing Cher on Jan. 13, Toronto Maple Leafs vs. Canadiens on April 11). Rochelle@rochellelash.com twitter.com/rochellelash

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