



The 96 contemporary rooms and suites at Opus Vancouver feature one of five vibrant colour schemes. OPUS VANCOUVER

CHECKING IN

OPUS HOTEL VANCOUVER A STAR OF STYLISH YALETOWN



ROCHELLE LASH

When I checked into Opus Vancouver, I thought I had stepped into the pages of an avant-garde design magazine like Wallpaper. This boutique hotel is contemporary and fresh, with a distinctive style all its own. The virtual Opus has been in magazines, but the real thing is the hospitality centerpiece of Yaletown, Vancouver's super-stylish residential district that has evolved — no, exploded — to be a cornucopia of food, beverages and lifestyle services. With a high-end lobby and a young staff, Opus looks like a trendy hotel, but it is more. It has earned four stars on Forbes Travel Guide, with sharp service, a sexy lounge at Opus Bar, excellent Italian cuisine at La Pentola and a relaxed look in the accommodations. “We have full hotel services, but when you're in your room, you feel like your best friends have given you the key to their deluxe condo,” general manager Nicholas Gandossi said. “Our rooms have a residential feel, and Opus really is part of Yaletown's vibe.” Vancouver is a stronghold of

Hollywood North's film industry and Opus has been host to such celebs as Jimmy Kimmel, Lady Gaga, Cher, Jennifer Lopez, Christina Aguilera and Bradley Cooper. Accustomed to a high maintenance clientele, Opus delivers deluxe services like evening turn-down, local rides in a pearl-white Jaguar XJ-12 and a welcome drink — mine was B.C. bubbly spiked with Okanagan cranberry. And the staff wants to personalize your visit. They'll walk your dog, set up an elopement package with a justice of the peace, or place a framed photo of your children in your room. The hotel, contemporary and plugged-in, boosts the tech factor with iPads in every room and mobile phones on loan, in addition to Wi-Fi, flat-screens and iPod docks. All guests also get a generous package that includes movie channels on TV, in-room pod coffee, free local calls and bottled water. Plus, if you book directly with the hotel, your reward is a \$25-per-day credit for food or drinks and a 1 p.m. late checkout. If you are stopping in Vancouver for a cruise to Alaska, Opus offers complimentary pickup and drop-off at the ship terminal. The hotel's summer packages include boat tours of Granville Island and paddle boarding in the Fraser Inlet.

DESIGN LIFE Interior designer Robert Bailey coordinated walls and furniture fabrics in five vibrant colour schemes for the guest rooms — hibiscus red, Hermès-inspired orange, periwinkle blue, earthy taupe and perky citron. But, the design uses pure white where it counts most. Opus's supremely comfortable beds are topped with white Egyptian cotton sheets and down duvets. And, the bathrooms are tiled in pristine white porcelain with vanities in charcoal granite. Major frills include glass-walled rain showers, Malin+Goetz toiletries, and my favourite, heated floors. Some rooms add soaking tubs. All rooms have sofas, ergonomic chairs and work desks; suites add microwaves and mini-fridges. The two Opus Signature Suites have corner windows, Juliet balconies, double-sided gas fireplaces and jet tubs. **LA PENTOLA** Executive chef Travis McCord says his heart is in Italy, even if his name is not. His passion is clear, though, and La Pentola was named best restaurant in 2016 in Yaletown by Vancouver Magazine. McCord cooks up Northern Italian fare with such delicacies as burrata (flown in daily from

Italy), eggplant fritti, artichoke panzanella, Parmesan soufflé and house-made pasta dishes like pappardelle with sausage and porcini and taglierini with crab and lemon butter. Even traditional dishes have a modern La Pentola twist: Wild risotto is blended with foraged wild mushrooms, and lasagna is layered with ricotta and kale. The creative main courses are built around robust cuts of lamb, short ribs, game hen, cod, duck and hanger steak. La Pentola has an impressive wine list, mostly Italian, some B.C., plus premium vintages available by the glass using the Coravin preserving system. **YALETOWN LIFESTYLE** Opus has a downright fabulous location, one block from a scenic promenade along a marina that is beautiful for jogging or cycling (the hotel loans out bikes). Almost adjacent to the hotel are such lifestyle essentials as a bike shop, hot-yoga studio, massage clinic, juice bar, oyster bar, brow bar, small-batch gin distillery, micro-breweries, the Urban Food market, and Swirl, a wine shop that stocks only B.C. products. However, you don't have to leave the building: A happening scene is thriving in-house at Opus Bar, one of Yaletown's favourite lounges, for cocktails

IF YOU GO

Opus Hotel is across the street from Yaletown-Roundhouse Canada Line transit station, linking to Vancouver International Airport in 25 minutes. **Opus Vancouver:** 866-642-6787, 604-642-6787, opushotel.com; 322 Davie St., Vancouver. **Price:** If you book directly with the hotel, you will get a \$25 food and beverage credit that can be used for breakfast, mini-bar or other. Rooms start at \$279 Nov.-April; \$459 May-Oct.; suites cost more. Included: courtesy Jaguar, welcome beverage, TV movies, free local calls, in-room coffee, iPad with Press Reader, iPod dock, mountain bikes/cruisers, 24-hour fitness centre, mobile phone. Pet friendly, \$30 per visit, per pet. Extra: 24-hour room service. **La Pentola:** (604) 642-0557, lapentola.ca; lunch, dinner and Sunday brunch. Dinner à la carte or sharing menus: \$55 for five courses/ \$90 with wine pairings; or \$65 for seven courses or \$110 with wine. **Tourism Vancouver:** 604-683-2000, tourismvancouver.com; hellobc.com.

like the Mamie Taylor (Scotch, lime, ginger beer). Happy Hour (3 p.m. – 6 p.m.) features \$5 wine, craft beer and light bites like ricotta on toast, grilled prawns, squid and spicy sausage and spicy meatballs.

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