

# Sophistication, style combine at luxe Vancouver landmark



ROCHELLE LASH

Sumptuous and sophisticated, stylish and smart.

The aristocratic Rosewood Hotel Georgia in Vancouver is both a Jazz Age beauty with exquisite bones and a thoroughly modern pacesetter starring Hawksworth, the city's chic gourmet hot spot. The Georgia is marking its 90th anniversary in 2017, a considerable run of prestige and privilege, and after a meticulous restoration a few years ago, it still is at the top.

This fine hotel has earned capital ratings by virtually every arbiter of taste that counts, including Forbes Travel Service, Travel + Leisure, Robb Report, Condé Nast Traveler and, on a populist level, Trip Advisor.

What does it take to reach such lofty heights?

**Let's start with top-drawer everything:** grand public spaces including the splendid Spanish Ballroom, the city's coveted venue for charity balls and high-society weddings; lustrous decor in 156 spacious rooms and suites; Sense, a Rosewood Spa, where a Canadian Maple Pedicure and an Ultimate Facial are among signature treatments; and a stunning 16-metre indoor saline pool glowing with underwater lights.

And The Georgia's food and beverage scene has rocked Vancouver's culinary world. Hawksworth is the place for languid breakfasts, power lunches and gastronomic dinners. The new Prohibition Bar is a sexy club with handsome decor of tufted leather sofas, an absinthe fountain and a curated selection of rare whiskeys. Reflections is The Georgia's garden terrace for après-work Champagne, drinks and tapas like lobster and prawn rolls. And the darling Bel Café brings light fare to gourmet heights, with flaky pastries, comforting tomato herb soup and creative sandwiches such as chicken with lemon grass and cilantro.

**Service:** Elite travellers have elite requests. Chief concierge

## IF YOU GO ...

**Rosewood Hotel Georgia:** 604-682-5566, 888-ROSEWOOD (888-767-3966), rosewoodhotels.com/hotel-georgia; 801 W. Georgia St., Vancouver

Rosewood Hotels and Resorts includes the Carlyle Hotel in New York City, the Mansion on Turtle Creek in Dallas, and in 2017, The Crillon in Paris.

Prices fluctuate, starting at approximately \$349 for a superior king room, Nov.-April, or starting at \$549, May-Oct. (one- to four-bedroom suites are available), including evening turndown, courtesy car, indoor lap pool, 24-hour fitness centre, newspapers/magazines, in-room Nespresso, shoeshine and overnight laundry.

**Extra:** valet parking, TV movies, 24-hour in-room dining.

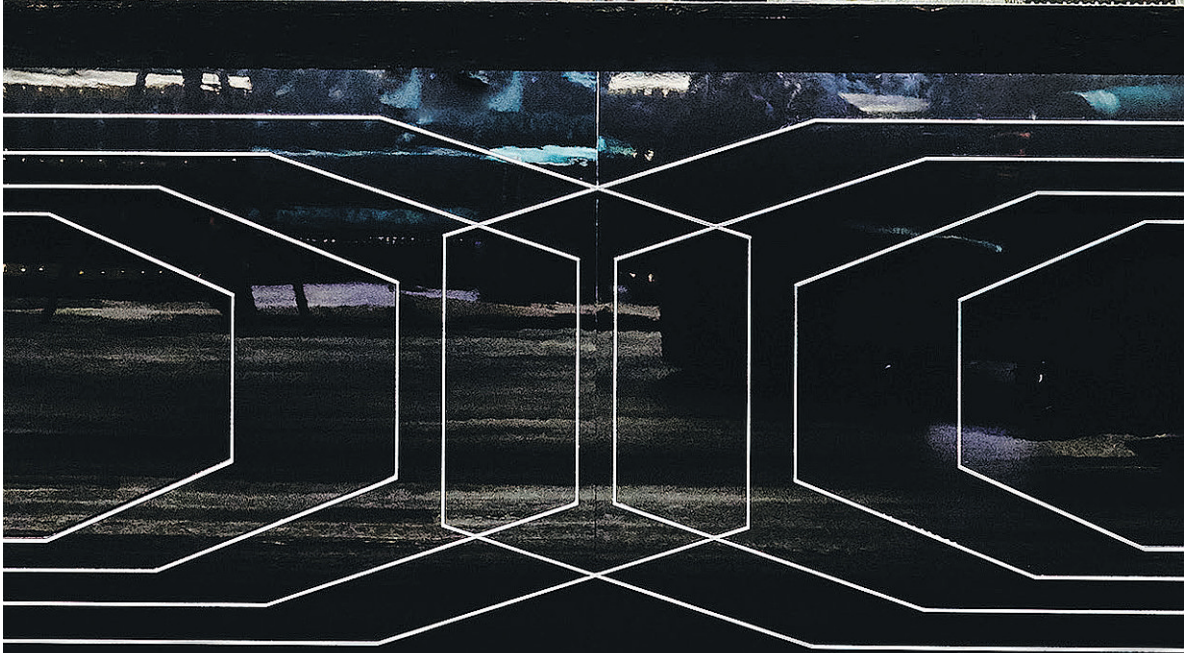
**Hawksworth Restaurant:** 604-673-7000, hawksworthrestaurant.com

**Tourism Vancouver:** 604-683-2000, tourismvancouver.com; British Columbia: hellobc.com

Matthew Wu has organized a whale-watching tour to Tofino and a recreation of the movie The Great Gatsby (alas, without Robert Redford). Valets ferry guests around town in a limited-edition white Bentley, and the bartender is savvy about cocktails inspired by the 1920s and such rare whiskeys such as 40-year-old Glenfiddich, which costs a lofty \$900 for two ounces.

Little things count, too. The bellman who handled my luggage remembered my name throughout my visit. And the front desk has a fragrance selection, so guests can sample perfumes by Dior or Chanel.

**Experience:** The Georgia's manag-



The Prohibition Bar is a sophisticated club with an absinthe fountain and rare whiskeys. ROSEWOOD HOTEL

ers, housekeepers, valets and servers have carefully tended to a coterie of 20th-century celebs including Elvis, Katharine Hepburn, Frank Sinatra and Mick Jagger.

The hotel is intertwined with the heritage of Vancouver, having evolved in a genteel downtown district that includes such stately landmarks as the B.C. Provincial Courthouse, the Vancouver Public Library and the Vancouver Art Gallery.

**Relevance:** The Georgian Revival treasure was fully restored four years ago with sumptuous furnishings and careful craftsmanship on gilded cornices, carved columns, wood-burning fireplaces and marble floors.

An important collection of contemporary Canadian art and sculpture blends with the hotel's fine historic architectural features.

The latest in-room technology, discreet but efficient, includes a hidden bedside control panel for lighting and room privacy.

**Luxury:** Interior designer Alessandro Munge of Studio Munge bedecked The Georgia's rooms and suites in luxe velvets and leathers and soft hues of pearl and sapphire. The beds are draped in linens by the exclusive Italian company Rivolta Carmignani, with a choice of pillows.

The bathrooms — they're as big as car washes! — have heated marble floors, his 'n' hers vanities on either side of the room, glass rain showers and two-person soaking tubs. The custom toilettries, Georgian Private Blend 1927, are made from Pacific seaweed and north-coast glacial clay by Ancient Secrets, a Vancouver company.

The largest and most lavish suites, Rosewood Royal and Lord Stanley, add silken carpets, powder rooms, fireplaces and huge private terraces with plunge pools.

**Hawksworth:** With such shimmering materials as onyx and crystal, and a gourmet menu, Hawksworth has stunning decor

and cuisine to match.

Arguably Vancouver's foremost chef, David Hawksworth creates sublime Canadian-inspired cuisine with artistic presentations, brilliant fusions, a focus on Pacific produce and Asian accents.

Starters include hoisin-glazed duck spring roll, seared Japanese squid with peanuts and crispy pork chilli vinaigrette and hamachi ceviche, and enticing main courses are char-grilled lamb, sablefish, wild boar ragu, Pacific cod with curry and tuna confit with daikon. Hawksworth hits stride with his tasting menu (\$118 p.p.) of delicacies, such as crab with chilli, prawns, squab and lamb.

Hawksworth recently opened a new restaurant, Nightingale, where the food quality and attention to detail are just as pointed, but the menu is more casual and the prices more accessible.

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