



Eau Palm Beach Resort & Spa is a five-star example of the new young style of luxury. *EAU PALM BEACH RESORT & SPA*

Eau is new star of Palm Beach

Multiple reviewers name resort among top locations in Florida



ROCHELLE LASH
Checking-In

Eau? Oui, merci.

The French accent on Eau Palm Beach Resort & Spa is a natural and irresistible draw for Canadians, n'est ce pas?

Sparkling Eau, the new star of The Palm Beaches, is an AAA Five-Diamond resort on the Atlantic Ocean, about 12 kilometres south of Worth Ave. This luxurious oceanfront retreat started out as a private beach club in the 1950s and later operated as a Ritz-Carlton until last year. Today it is a symbol of the new luxury: young in spirit, fashionable and dynamic.

Eau still personifies the best in resort life: the sweeping private beachfront, two heated swimming pools (one reserved for adults), the divine Eau Spa, excellent cuisine and inspired amusement for children and teens.

The pièce de résistance for 2014-2015 is the ravishing new seaside-chic decor of the guest rooms created by celebrity designer Jonathan Adler. The

transformation has paid off: Eau has been named among the top resorts in Florida by travel bibles Condé Nast Traveler, Travel & Leisure and Forbes.

A significant part of this reputation is Eau's keen service. The staff — concierges, bellmen, pool attendants, car valets — are alert, engaged and courteous, just as they should be.

A lot of Montrealers already are in-the-know. I met many hometown people visiting Eau for the glamorous wedding in December of entrepreneur Jason Ditkofsky of Westmount and lawyer Michelle Zeiger of Boca Raton.

LIFE OF LUXURY

Eau encompasses a series of Mediterranean-style villas, all warm saffron stucco with red-tiled roofs, terrazzo floors and wrought-iron details. The ornate lobby dazzles with mirrored furnishings, rich cream-coloured fabrics, crystal chandeliers and important European antique pieces.

Champagne sets the mood. Guests are offered a tulip of bubbly when they check in, the Stir Bar has a Saturday special with live music, and the general manager maintains Palm Beach's social traditions with a convivial Friday reception.

The 309 five-star guest rooms

and suites are spread across three oceanfront buildings and they all have private balconies, ritzy marble bathrooms, user-friendly “pamper-panels” to control lights and air conditioning as well as organic Red Flower toiletries made from botanicals. Eau also remembers to make a personal gesture. Each room is equipped with a welcome gift of Florida essentials: a beach bag and flip-flops.

Eau has many room choices at many price points, all luxurious and all decked out in the delightful new Jonathan Adler decor, but with different views: the Atlantic Ocean, the pool and gardens or the town of Manalapan.

Designer Adler has imported the gorgeous Florida climate with lively fabrics in deep sky-blue, sea-aqua and glowing sun-yellow, all popping from pure white walls. Adler accessorized with silvery tables and a playful mélange of vintage photos, modern art and clubby patterns of classic Palm Beach. The design is whimsical and uplifting. The message is: “It’s fabulous to be here.”

FOOD AND DRINK

Eau has excellent cuisine with festive drink pairings at all meals. Yes, even at breakfast and the beachfront bistro, Breeze.

The indoor-outdoor restaurant Temple Orange cooks up terrific all-day casual fare. The breakfast buffets are truly superlative, and you can start your

day with the Thai Me Up Mary, a customized Bloody Mary with Florida shrimp and exotic spices. Lunch goes perky with a watermelon-feta salad and a secret-recipe sparkling sangria. Dinner is comfortable — tasty dishes such as truffle pasta, Florida fish, glazed ribs, lemon chicken and roast beef — along with the signature Killer Bee cocktail, Jack Daniels infused with honey and Florida citrus.

The formal dining room Angle serves contemporary American cuisine in opulent surroundings of chocolate velvet walls and cream brocade booths. The menu is strong on grilled steaks and fish, plus specialties such as snapper Provençale, pan-seared scallops and braised lamb shank. A sommelier will start you off with whisky flights and then guide you through vintages from Napa to Burgundy.

FOR THE KIDS

Eau sounds so grown-up and sophisticated — and it is — but it also has two outstanding programs for the young and restless. COAST entertains teens with cool courses in DJ-spinning, surfing lessons, makeup and videography, plus the kids have their own club where they can hang out and play music. For the five-to-12 age group, Aquanuts organizes play dates, game nights and water adventures (aquanutskids.com).

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Air Canada flies to West Palm Beach during winter from Montreal and Toronto; to Fort Lauderdale from Montreal and Toronto year-round; and seasonally to Fort Lauderdale from Ottawa and Halifax; aircanada.com.

Eau Palm Beach Resort & Spa: 800-328-0170, 561-533-6000, www.eaupalmbeach.com; 100 S. Ocean Blvd., Manalapan, Fla. Pet-friendly, \$250 U.S. per visit includes donation to animal rescue.

Price: Effortless Escape Package, Jan.-March, offers a \$200 resort credit on a three-night stay; a \$400 credit for five nights; a \$600 credit for seven nights or more. Sample rate in January, mid-week, for hotel rooms, \$579-\$650; incl. Wi-Fi, two pools, beach chairs, newspapers, 24-hour business lounge. There is no resort fee.

Extra: parking (\$28), Eau Spa, water sports, meals, babysitting, Aquanuts program (5-12); teenagers' COAST program, 24-hour room service, Har-Tru tennis courts, \$10.

Eau Spa, Boutique & Salon: eauspa.com; spa treatments include access to spa baths, the meditative Self-Centred Garden, fitness classes; without spa treatments, access costs \$35-\$50.

Dining: Angle: from 6 p.m., Wed.-Sat., anglepalmbeach.com. Temple Orange: breakfast, lunch, dinner; templeorangepalmbeach.com; Stir Bar: noon to midnight; Breeze: 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Children 5-12 pay half at Temple Orange.

More info: Discover The Palm Beaches: 800-833-5733, 561-233-3000, palmbeachfl.com; Visit Florida: 888-735-2872, visitflorida.com.

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