

# Exclusivity meets luxury at Florida's Royal Blues Hotel

*Boutique beachfront bijou provides epicurean dining, privacy for guests*



**ROCHELLE LASH**  
Checking In

Exclusive. Exquisite. Expensive. The Royal Blues Hotel in Deerfield Beach, just north of Fort Lauderdale, is Florida's first Relais & Châteaux. That's a lofty laurel in a region where hospitality has been an art for more than 100 years. This boutique bijou was custom designed to meet the exacting criteria of the global Relais & Châteaux hospitality group, with 12 luxurious accommodations, avant-garde artworks and epicurean dining and wining, all on an outstanding Atlantic Ocean beachfront.

Given Canadians' love affair with the prestigious Relais & Châteaux, Royal Blues already has been host to visitors from Montreal, Toronto and Ottawa almost every week since opening more than a year ago.

Just how boutique is this boutique hotel? Very.

Royal Blues doesn't have a lobby, only a podium for the reception manager. There are two to four accommodations on each floor, so privacy is paramount. The bar seats about 12. And, the rooftop pool is a modest 7 by 3 metres, ideal for dipping or lounging. It's all rather discreet and low-key, but if you want more action, Deerfield Beach's surf and sand are outside the door.

Imagine cocktails on your suite's terrace overlooking the landmark Deerfield Beach International Fishing Pier, which will present a dazzling U.S. Independence Day fireworks show on July 4. Or cappuccino on the patio, gazing at the sunrise over the Atlantic.

You will be in good company. I don't want to dish about the other guests at Royal Blues, but let's simply say owner Edward Walson, a cable-television mag-

nate, also is an award-winning TV, Broadway and film producer who is pals with countless A-list celebs. Walson produced Blue Jasmine, Magic in the Moonlight and theatre's Bullets over Broadway, all directed or written by Woody Allen.

Royal Blues is environmentally friendly, using mostly organic food and strictly green operating systems.

**Accommodations:** The Royal Blues' 12 gorgeous guest rooms and suites all have balconies and floor-to-ceiling patio doors with views of the Atlantic. Five categories range from a classic hotel room with a sofa bed for toddlers to a celeb-worthy suite with a tub-for-two that has an ocean view.

The look is contemporary classic with rich furnishings, marble floors and splashes of sunny yellow

*Royal Blues' dining room, Chanson, is the most gastronomic force ever to breeze into this casual beach town.*

low against a sand-hued palette. Royal Blues plays on a yacht theme with teak panelling and touches of leather.

It's a best-of-everything place so the bed linens (and beach towels) are by Frette of Italy, and the toiletries are all natural and aromatic, by Red Flower of New York.

Newly built, the rooms have the latest tech controls. If you are an habitu  of five-star hotels, you've seen push-button drapes and showers with touch screen thermostats, but Royal Blues has more. Wait till you see the loo. Kohler's Numi model has a control panel, so I went to Settings and programmed for automated



Royal Blues Hotel, north of Fort Lauderdale, is Florida's first Relais & Châteaux. PHOTOS: ROYAL BLUES HOTEL

welcome music, a heated seat, Bluetooth and eco-flush.

**Gourmet dining:** Royal Blues' dining room, Chanson, is the most gastronomic force ever to breeze into this casual beach town and it has taken dining and drinking to a new level of refinement.

Chef Bjoern Eicken has manned influential kitchens in Germany, England and the U.S., including a Michelin-starred establishment.

His cuisine is European-inspired with market-fresh ingredients, so Chanson features several dishes-of-the-moment, such as risotto, pasta, fish and crudo. Special starters include shrimp samosas, tuna tartare and foie gras, and some of his signature main courses are wagyu beef with braised short rib, herb-crusted lamb, veal with prosciutto, red snapper and sea scallops with fennel.

Walson has a keen interest in wine and has helped to choose Chanson's exceptional collection, which is on display in a glass wall. The list features fine Bordeaux and Burgundies, as well as outstanding examples of regional terroir, including Syrah from Gramercy Cellars of Columbia Valley, Washington, and a Pinot Nero by Joseph Hofstatter from Italy.

The lounge specializes in cocktails of premium tequila, vodka, rum and whisky, shaken and stirred with essences of Florida limes and oranges. Royal Blues wants to stay accessible — a little — so the bar offers two-for-one drinks on Wednesdays and Thursdays, and \$10 Veuve Clicquot Champagne on Fridays for women.

Even breakfast, served on the

## IF YOU GO

Royal Blues Hotel is 27 kilometres north of Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport and 37 km south of Palm Beach International Airport.

**Royal Blues Hotel:** 954-857-2929, royalblueshotel.com; 45 N.E. 21st Ave., Deerfield Beach, Fla.

**Price:** five styles, all oceanfront: \$459-\$549-\$559-\$1,029-\$1,329 US per night until Sept. 30,

including in-room coffee, pool, beach setups, fitness room, Wi-Fi, evening turndown, parking. (From Oct. 1-March 31, 2017, it's \$499-\$589-\$599-\$1,079-\$1,399 US)

**Greater Fort Lauderdale Convention and Visitors Bureau:** 800-356-1662 or 800-22-SUN-NY/800-227-8669, sunny.org; Visit Florida: 888-735-2872, www.visitflorida.com.



The 12 luxurious rooms and suites at the new Royal Blues Hotel in Deerfield Beach all face the Atlantic Ocean.

oceanfront patio, is divine. The morning chef does flaky, sweet pastries and cranberry nut bread, kiwi-kale-apple smoothies, and creative dishes such as eggs over kale and shiitake mushrooms. The yogurt, honey and fruit all are organic.

**The neighbourhood:** Deerfield Beach is Blue Wave certified by the Clean Beaches Coalition, a national environmental organization. The designation refers to high standards of clean water, safety and conservation of sea life.

Royal Blues is one block from Deerfield Beach's "S" curve on Route A1A, a cute walkable district with bike rentals, T-shirt shops, pubs and ice cream parlours. Island Water Sports organizes surfing and paddle boarding (islandwatersports.com).

The hotel is considering transforming a small adjacent property into a spa. Another sublime indulgence for its highly indulged guests.

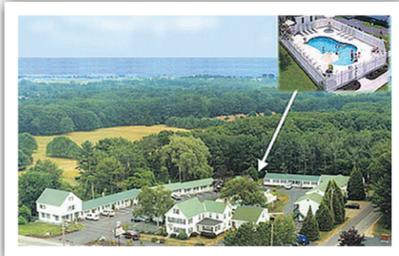
Rochelle@rochellelash  
twitter.com/rochellelash

# WHERE TO STAY

TO ADVERTISE  
PLEASE CALL  
514-987-2279



## MAINE



### NE'R BEACH

395 Post Road, Wells, ME 04090  
www.nerbeach.com  
1-877-646-2636 vacations@nerbeach.com

Kick off Maine's 2016 season with a free night! Relaxing motel property conveniently located between picturesque villages of Ogunquit and Kennebunkport. Clean, comfortable rooms and efficiencies. Beautiful gardens, outdoor pool, BBQ and picnic area. Scenic 1/2 mile walk to beautiful Moody Beach. Mention this ad, or use online code 'Gazette' and when you book 2 nights, stay the 3rd free! Offer valid for reservations between May 1 - June 16, 2016. Offer excludes Victoria Day and Memorial Day weekends.



## NEW YORK



### AMERICA'S BEST VALUE INN

www.plattsburghbestvalueinn.com  
19 Booth Drive, Plattsburgh, New York  
518-563-0222 Toll free 1-800-358-2137

In wonderful Plattsburgh. Only \$70 CDN (tax incl.) per room per night. 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.



## VERMONT



### SMART SUITES

www.smartsuitesburlington.com  
1700 Shelburne Rd., So. Burlington, Vt.  
Toll free 877-862-6800

Come and enjoy our hospitality in either a studio efficiency at US \$92.00 or a more spacious one bedroom suite at US \$112.00/night including a deluxe continental breakfast and free WiFi. Mention the Gazette special. Not valid with other discounts and always subject to availability. Rates in effect May 1 - October 31, 2016.

Take Exit 13 off I-89, left on Rt 7 (Shelburne Rd) for 1.5 miles. Same entrance as Holiday Inn Express.



### HOLIDAY INN : BURLINGTON

www.hiburlington.ca/  
3063 South Service Rd  
Toll free (888) 987-4888

The Holiday Inn Burlington is located at the heart of all of the recreational opportunities that summer in Vermont has to offer. Just minutes away from Lake Champlain, Downtown Burlington and the Waterfront, guests may take a leisurely stroll along the water's edge, rent a boat and explore the bays and coves of Lake Champlain, or enjoy al fresco dinner on the Marketplace. Take advantage of a special Montreal Gazette rate of \$99.00 USD per night plus tax anytime between April 20th, 2016 through May 5th, 2016.



### HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS : SOUTH BURLINGTON

1720 Shelburne Rd., South Burlington,  
Toll Free 1 877 660 8550

The Holiday Inn Express South Burlington hotel is 100% non-smoking establishment and is four miles away from the Burlington International Airport. Amenities include indoor heated pool, hot tub, saunas, and Fitness Center. A Business Center is available 24hrs and WiFi is complimentary throughout the hotel. Relax with us at the Montreal Gazette rate of \$79.00 USD a night plus tax anytime between April 20th, 2016 through May 5th, 2016.