

HOTEL INTEL

HYATT PLACE
ADDS TO OTTAWA'S
GREEN FOOTPRINT

ROCHELLE LASH

Pandemic protocol: As of Sept. 22, Ontario will require a vaccine passport for many public venues, including indoor restaurants (ontario.ca). Hyatt hotels follow the brand's Global Care and Cleanliness Commitment (hyatt.com).

Going green is not a fashion or a fad at the Hyatt Place Ottawa West. It is a mission.

The contemporary newbie opened in the spring and immediately earned a top rating from Green Key International, an eco-label for hotels that excel in sustainable practices.

Hyatt Place is about 11 kilometres west of Parliament Hill in the busy suburb of Bells Corners (part of what used to be Nepean), and although it carries an international banner, it is part of the community.

"The owners are local business people who care very much about our environment," said general manager Alison Hunter. "We are also very much a 'people' hotel. We get to know our guests and their needs, and we have a raffle for a free night for those who contribute to our food collection program."

Convenience: The property has 125 extra-spacious rooms that accommodate up to three people, all with sitting areas and single sofa beds. There are 15 suites that are almost double the size,

sleeping up to five and configured with living rooms and two 55-inch TVs.

"Weekdays are all about business people and weekends are family time," said director of sales Andrew Horsfield. "Hyatt Place is convenient for both — we offer parking, Wi-Fi, guest computers and a light breakfast, plus an indoor pool, a 24-hour fitness centre, Chromecast on TV and a bar-lounge.

"It's also easy access — a 15-minute drive — to downtown Ottawa."

What impressed me is that the rooms are so fresh and polished. The beds are layered with pristine white piqué coverlets over duvets and triple sheeting, all atop the Hyatt Luxury Pillowtop Mattress. The bathrooms have shiny glass showers with rain fixtures. Features that I really appreciated include good lighting and trim shades — no ruffled curtains or heavy fabric drapes.

Hyatt Place does not have a full-service restaurant, but the Placery lobby lounge is a handy alternative. It serves drinks, Starbucks barista coffee and a casual menu of basics all day and all evening, including Caesar salad, turkey clubs, tomato basil soup, Thai chicken curry, burgers and wings.

Green scene: Hyatt Place is serious about sustainability. It draws energy from 225 rooftop solar panels, whose carbon offsets are roughly equivalent to the value of planting 38,225 trees per year.

The hotel also operates with geothermal heating, environmentally friendly products for cleaning and motion-activated



A repurposed canoe welcomes visitors to the Hyatt Place Ottawa West, a hotel dedicated to eco-friendly practices. Opened in spring, it has earned a top rating from Green Key International. PHOTOS: HYATT PLACE OTTAWA WEST



Hyatt Place Ottawa West's rooms and suites have contemporary decor.

lighting in the corridors. It nurtures beehives to help boost Canada's endangered population of pollinators, and its first harvest of honey is coming soon.

Hyatt Place also has been decorated with natural influences. A striking mural by resin artist Helen Wright reflects the sparkling, bright blue Ottawa River superimposed on a topographical map.

The corridors are a photo gallery of evocative black-and-white

images of honeycombs and flora, with titles like Flower Power and Mother Earth.

Interior designer Susan Burnside has fashioned a comfy, stylish lobby with leather wing chairs and high-top communal tables made of reclaimed Ontario wood.

Nature: Bells Corners is a commercial community, but it has some green here and there.

Two blocks from the hotel is an entrance to the glorious Trans

IF YOU GO

Hyatt Place Ottawa West: 613-702-9800, 800-233-1234; hyatt.com; 300 Moodie Drive, Ottawa. World of Hyatt loyalty plan valid at Hyatt brands including Thompson, Andaz and Miraval. The app works for remote check-in, digital room key, accounts and Headspace online guided meditation. Pet-friendly, \$50 per stay. Accessible features available.

Prices fluctuate. Rooms, all with single sofa beds and kings or double queens, from approximately \$135; suites start at \$155.

Ottawa tourism: 613-237-5150, 833-864-7839; ottawatourism.ca

Canada Trail, a car-free cycling and walking path. It's a former railway line that connects with the Capital Pathway system, meandering through forests and along rivers and canals to downtown Ottawa.

Nearby outdoorsy pursuits include the Britannia Conservation Area (a must-see for birders), the Dominion Arboretum and Wesley Clover Parks, often used for equestrian events and soccer.

Hyatt Place's hiking package includes breakfast, a 1 p.m. checkout on availability, and a take-away pack of coconut water and energy bars. The Sarsaparilla Trail is very close to Hyatt Place, and within a 15-minute drive hikers can tackle the Stony Swamp Trail, Old Quarry Trail, Pinhey Forest and Jack Pine Trail.

It's harvest time, and farmers' markets are hopping. You can choose from the Carp Farmers' Market or the Barrhaven Farmers' Market (a.k.a. Log Farm market), both on Saturdays through October; or the Stittsville Market, Thursdays and Sundays until Oct. 24.

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