

Sleeping in Seattle

From Pike Place to Queen Anne, there are plenty of good options

By John Gottberg Anderson / *For the Bulletin*

Last modified: January 02, 2011 2:43PM PST

SEATTLE — A vivid mural of jazz musicians and dancers performing beneath the Space Needle dominates one wall of the spacious Maxwell Hotel lobby at the foot of Seattle's Queen Anne Hill.

The colorful painting, by noted artist Victor Ostrovsky, makes an immediate statement about the newly renovated boutique hotel and its location just a shout away from Seattle Center.

Bright and showy, the 139-room Maxwell opened 10 months ago within the walls of a former apartment block. Each floor has been redecorated with a different artistic theme — theater, dance and various genres of music — while a bold and daring color scheme is sustained throughout the hotel.

The motif is appropriate, as this is the nearest inn to the north entrance of the flamboyant Seattle Center. The Intiman Theatre, Pacific Northwest Ballet, Seattle Repertory Theatre and other performing-arts facilities are within two blocks of the Maxwell. The intense colors speak the word "fun."

In Seattle, as in many cities, contemporary hotels strive to convey a first impression that appeals to the primary clientele they hope to attract. Arts aficionados may look for a completely different atmosphere than business people. Food and wine lovers, wide-eyed tourists and serious shoppers all may have different lodging desires. Well-to-do travelers may place a higher premium on luxury than budget-oriented visitors.

The metropolitan center of the Pacific Northwest has something for all of them. From the bustling waterfront to Pike Place Market, from Westlake Center to Seattle Center, there are well over 100 hotels in all corners of the downtown area.

I have visited each of the two dozen hotels in my following recommendation list. Every one of them has high-speed Internet service; many also make provisions for pets.

Westlake Center area

Downtown Seattle's primary shopping area is Westlake Center, located between Fourth and Fifth Avenues, Pine Street and Olive Way.

Flanked to the east by Nordstrom's flagship store, to the west by Macy's, directly connected to Seattle Center by the city's monorail line, this is a mecca for serious shoppers and bargain hunters.

Mayflower Park Hotel Seasonal rates begin at \$135; 405 Olive Way (at Fourth Avenue), Seattle; 206-623-8700, 800-426-5100; www.mayflowerpark.com

Only one hostelry has a direct indoor connection to Westlake Center, and that is the historic Mayflower Park Hotel. Like a more intimate version of the Fairmont Olympic, the 161-room Mayflower Park exudes old-time class and elegance. Built in 1927, it has retained its fine architectural details and added beautiful antique furnishings to the gracious lobby area. Guest rooms reflect a similar spirit, as do Oliver's Lounge — which could almost have been named after Dickens' *Oliver Twist* — and the esteemed, Mediterranean-style Andaluca restaurant.

Hotel Andra Winter prices that start at \$159; 2000 Fourth Ave. (at Virginia Street), Seattle; 206-694-7260, 877-448-8600; www.hotelandra.com

Just north on Fourth Avenue, Hotel Andra is "Tom Douglas Central." Seattle's noted restaurateur has his original cafe, the Dahlia Lounge, directly across the street, and a second cafe, Lola — one of his five Seattle restaurants — is directly linked to the hotel lobby. Although the Andra occupies a historic building, its look is contemporary Scandinavian, with clean design lines, strong pastel colors, hardwood floors and track lighting. It has 119 rooms.

Warwick Seattle Hotel Off-season prices start at \$99; 401 Lenora St. (at Fourth Avenue), Seattle; 206-443-4300, 800-203-3232; www.warwickwa.com.

A block further is the European-style Warwick Seattle Hotel, a bright and tidy property now in the midst of an upgrade. Ask for a room on the 14th to 18th floors, to get northward views of the Space Needle across the monorail line. Although it feels small, the Warwick's 230 rooms make it larger than many Seattle hotels; amenities include a restaurant, bar, indoor pool, sauna and fitness center.

Hotel Max Rates start at \$116; 620 Stewart St. (at Seventh Avenue), Seattle; 206-728-6299, 866-833-6299; www.hotelmaxseattle.com

The Hotel Max might be regarded as a "rock 'n' roll" hotel. The sound and rhythm of rock music runs through the lobby to the 163 guest rooms, while the paintings and photographs of Northwest artists — 39 in all — are displayed in every hallway. Bold colors accent decor that has been honored with multiple interior-design awards, carrying into a hip Asian fusion restaurant and sushi bar, the Red Fin. The Max is a Provenance Hotel, a group that includes the Lucia and Deluxe in Portland and the Murano in Tacoma.

Pan Pacific Hotel Seattle Pets are welcome; seasonal rates range upward from \$187; 2125 Terry Ave. (at Denny Way), Seattle; 206-264-8111, 877-324-4856; www.panpacific.com/seattle

Slightly off the grid, but nearer to Westlake Center than it is to any other downtown precinct, is the Pan Pacific Hotel Seattle, the Northwest's only entry in an internationally renowned hotel group. What the Pan Pacific offers is affordable luxury. Each of the 160 guest rooms is lavishly furnished, and the hotel complex includes both a top-notch spa, Vida, and an award-winning seafood eatery, Seastar Restaurant & Raw Bar.