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Minimalist hotel to the Max

Seattle has a new haven for the stylish

By Gene Sloan
USA TODAY

What's new: Hotel Max, Seattle
Claim to fame: The city's newest hotel, opened Oct. 15

The scene: It's sleek and contemporary, with an artsy vibe. The hotel commissioned local artists to

Checking in

An occasional review
of a hot new hotel

create more than 350 pieces that adorn the minimalist-chic lobby and guestroom walls. It also tapped Seattle-area photographers for big black-and-white photos that cover the outside of each guest room door. Even the elevator is art, with a vibrant red leather interior designed by artist Denise Corso. As much art gallery as hotel, it's the latest boutique from Portland-Ore., based Aspen Hotel Group.

Who'll like it: Style-conscious hipsters, art lovers.

Who won't: Penny-pinching business travelers. (Wireless Web access is \$11.95 a day, not including Seattle's 9% tax, and there's a \$1 charge for toll-free and local calls.)

Bedding down: Luscious white-on-white duvets top white sheets for a crisp, contemporary look. A delicious coffee color covers the walls, and the furniture is minimalist. Also minimalist, alas, are the room sizes, which are New York-tight, although they do have all the latest amenities, including flat-screen TVs. Bathrooms ooze style with marble floors, textured reddish-orange walls, stainless steel "floating" sinks and soothing Aveda soaps and shampoo.

Wining and dining: Red Fin Restaurant, just off the lobby, offers Asian fusion fare, including sushi, in a hip urban setting and also serves as the hotel bar. Open for breakfast, lunch and dinner (entrees, \$20-\$28), it comes from the same owner as Seattle's popular Wasabi Bistro. Typical: Red curry, coconut-braised lamb shank on lemongrass risotto cakes with mango caponata and Thai gremolata (\$24).



By Guy Cross

Pretty as a picture: Hotel Max guests shouldn't have any trouble remembering which room is theirs with the huge black-and-white photos by Seattle-area photographers.



By David Phelps

Indulgences: The hotel offers a pillow menu, as well as 24-hour "You Want It, You Got It" concierge service: Hit the "You Got It" button on room phones and ask away. Food also is available around-the-clock, and a small fitness center is

under construction.

Vital statistics: 163 rooms.

The deal: Introductory rates start at \$129; after Jan. 1, rates start at \$179.

Information: 866-833-6299; hotelmaxseattle.com.

Small space, big amenities: Rooms are tight but chic.

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