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A Weekend Fling At The Rittenhouse Hotel In Philadelphia

By Jane and Marius Rubin

The Rittenhouse hotel, located only a two hour drive from the GW Bridge, is an ideal place for a weekend getaway.

The Rittenhouse is a luxurious property on Rittenhouse Square within walking distance to shopping and minutes from some of Philadelphia's top attractions. A five-diamond hotel, part of the prestigious *Leading Hotels of the World* group, *The Rittenhouse* ranks among the best hotels in the world

Its spacious and beautifully appointed guest rooms, ranging from 450 to 600 sq. ft., are the largest in Philadelphia. The hotel's huge suites, equipped with full kitchens and large closets, have served as residences for Hollywood stars such as Bruce Willis and Tom Hanks. The Presidential Suite hosted George Bush Sr., Mikhail Gorbachev, and other politicians and celebrities.

But rooms and amenities are only part of what defines a great hotel. The staff is its heart and soul, and *The Rittenhouse* is blessed with a professional team of long



Guestroom.



Treasure Chest.



Lobby.





time employees, working under the able hand of general manager, David Benton, a jovial British import who treats the hotel as his home and the guests as his personal friends.

If you check in on a Friday or Saturday afternoon, chances are that David will be by the reception desk offering champagne, chocolate covered strawberries, and freshly baked cookies. Children are treated to toys from a packed "treasure chest."

Personal touches are prevalent throughout. The reception desk wall-clocks, for example, show the local time in the cities of overseas guests. Foreign guests receive a room key with their country's flag and a welcome letter from David in their language.

Take advantage of the hotel's *Adolf Biecker Spa and Salon*, a modern, 10,000 square foot oasis that attracts hotel guests and area residents. Swim in the large heated indoor pool, work out in the modern exercise room overlooking *Rittenhouse Square*, and indulge yourself with a rejuvenating massage, a blissful body treatment, or a soothing facial.

Dine at *Lacroix*, the hotel restaurant, rated one of the "top in the world" by *Conde Nast* and *Gourmet* magazine. Dinner at *Lacroix* is a gastronomic event highlighted by a creative, ever changing menu based on seasonal ingredients. Try the lobster entree, served with avocado and black truffle terrine and white sweet potatoes, or the venison with celery root and brussel sprouts. The desserts are sublime, the wines are perfectly matched by the sommelier, and the service is smooth, courteous, and friendly.

Make sure to experience the Sunday Brunch at *Lacroix*, a celebration to eye and palate. The lavish spreads feature artisti-

*Photos from Top:
Lobster entree at Lacroix
Sunday Brunch desserts
National Museum of American Jewish History
Paintings at the Barnes Foundation.*



cally presented gourmet dishes, hand crafted specifically for the brunch. In the dining room there are several stations with caviar, sushi, oysters, smoked fish, creative salads, croquettes, and foie gras mousse. Hot entrees, served in the kitchen, are cooked on the spot by an army of chefs. Choices include Wagyu beef, rack of lamb, duck confit, charcuterie items, and much more. The dessert table is laden with exquisite mini pastries, cakes, mousses, and mouthwatering chocolate truffles, created by the hotel's chocolatier.

If you want to leave the hotel for a few hours, the city of Philadelphia offers a multitude of attractions from historic colonial sites to world class museums.

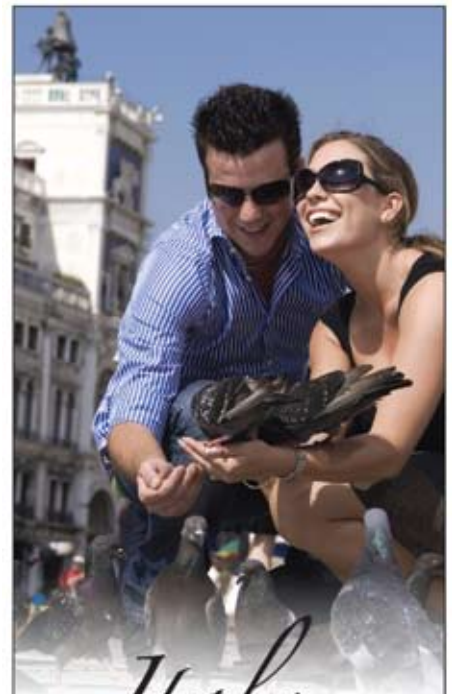
Make reservations at *The Barnes Foundation* in Merion, about a half hour drive from city center, home to one of the finest collections of nineteenth and twentieth-century French paintings in the world. Located in an elegant mansion, the collection showcases an extraordinary number of masterpieces by Renoir, Cézanne and Matisse. The galleries will close this year, and the collection will relocate to a new home on Benjamin Parkway, close to the city's main museums. (scheduled to open in the spring of 2012).

Don't miss the city's newest museum, the *National Museum of American Jewish History*, located in a 100,000-square-foot glass building in the heart of historic Philadelphia. The museum presents an in depth retrospective of Jewish life in America, from its first documented residents to today.

Also visit *The Philadelphia Museum of Art* (its stairs immortalized in the *Rocky* movie) and view their fine collection of paintings, sculpture, decorative arts, and architecture from around the world.

Complete your weekend fling with a stroll along Walnut St. where you can browse fine designer shops, and trendy boutiques.

For reservations call 215-546-9000, or visit www.rittenhousehotel.com. Δ



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