



A Luxurious Weekend at

The Ritz-Carlton Portland, OR

| BY TRACY BEARD

Portland, Oregon, is seeing a resurgence. Covid-19 was the catalyst that began the downfall of the city, followed by crime, drugs, and homelessness, and the town became a very dark place to visit. After staying away for two years, I recently spent a weekend in the downtown area and saw the town coming alive again. The Ritz-Carlton, Portland, is new and stands tall, marking a stunning change in the city skyline. It brings a new sense of prosperity and luxury to this once-thriving

metropolis. Today, the culinary scene that struggled over the last few years is now budding like a spring flower, ready to paint the city with color and make it a desired destination once again.

Construction began in 2020, and on October 31, 2023, the five-star hotel, The Ritz-Carlton, Portland, opened in the heart of downtown Portland. Designers successfully brought the natural beauty of the Pacific Northwest into the hotel. The lobby, nicknamed Forest Hall, sets the tone with drapes

resembling trees, lush plants, birds, various trees, and twinkling lights. The décor in the rooms and suites celebrates the evergreen landscape of the region. For years, The Ritz-Carlton brand had a particular style for its hotel décor; it was beautiful and luxurious and had a consistent and unchanging design. Today, Ritz-Carlton designers are taking elements from the local area and designing new hotels to reflect the local region. The Ritz-Carlton New York, NoMad, and the Ritz-Carlton, Port-



land, are the first to showcase this new design.

HOTEL OVERVIEW

Shortly after I arrived for my weekend stay, Eliana Onsalo, Director of Sales, gave me a grand tour of the hotel. The 35-story building boasts 251 rooms, 41 of which are executive suites. Floors 1-20 comprise the hotel, and floors 21-35 are residences. The first floor is the lobby, and the second is for events featuring 17,900 square feet divided between nine rooms. The specially designed meeting room carpet, a stunning blue and white topographical aerial map of Mt. Hood. Local businesses rent floors 3 – 7, and upscale hotel rooms and blissful suites comprise floors 8 - 18. The wellness/spa is on floor 19, and The Ritz-Carlton Club Lounge and the Bellpine restaurant are on the 20th floor.

ROOMS AND SUITES

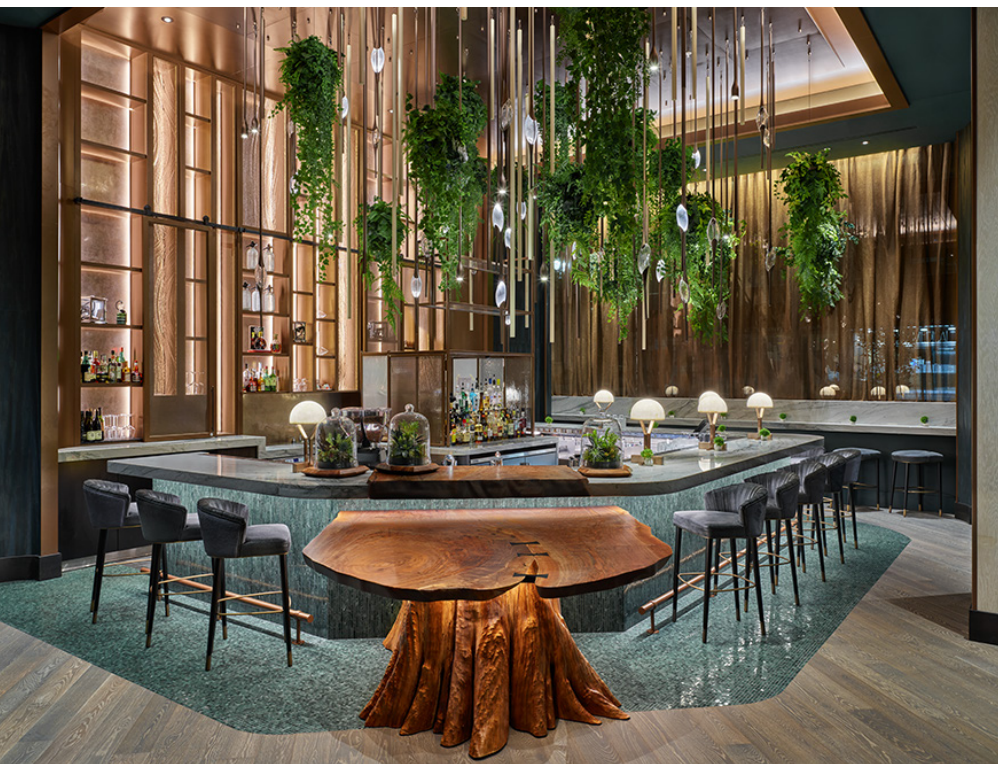
The Ritz-Carlton, Portland hallway floors showcase the Lewis and Clark trail. Artwork from talented local artists decorates the walls, and champagne copper picture lights illuminate the art. Soft-toned wood accents evoke images of the Oregon wilderness's presence, and the back wall of each elevator resembles rain racing down the outside of a windowpane. Leather goods, mirrors, and alluring fabrics continue to bring the feel of the forest into the hotel.

Every room offers signature amenities, including luxurious Frette linens, cozy slippers, and plush robes. The marvelous suites boast a trunk-style bar adorned with stitched leather, champagne copper, and wood detailing. All suites feature bars with stitched leather, champagne copper, and wood detailing. The trunks are a modern interpretation of the one's pioneers used

when traveling and eventually settling in Oregon in the 1800s.

I stayed in one of the stunning executive suites, each one perfectly placed in a corner of the hotel. I arose early in the morning and relished sipping a cup of hot Nespresso while gazing at the city lights. I watched the sun rise behind Mt. Hood and cherished the moment when the dark sky transformed into hues of pink, and the rays of light brought with it the stirrings of urban life after only a few hours of reprieve.

Guests interested in stepping up their experience another notch will love The Ritz-Carlton Club Level. The Club provides personalized service and extra attention to detail. Located on the 20th floor, displaying spectacular views of Forest Park and the West Portland hills, guests can enjoy multiple gastronomic presentations throughout the day.



RESTAURANTS

Michelin-recognized Chef Pedro Almeida sits at the helm of the culinary program at the hotel, and he uses ingredients from local fishermen, farmers, and foragers for his culinary inspiration.

BELLPINE

Bellpine is the hotel's fine dining restaurant, featuring gorgeous panoramic views, tableside experiences, and professional and warm service. With the bounty of exceptional ingredients available in the area, Chef Almeida and his team create astounding dishes. The masterful mixologists use local ingredients to craft exciting cocktails to sample. Bellpine is open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, and the wine cellar stores a first-class wine selection to pair with its incredible cuisine. During my visit, I enjoyed a flavorful avocado toast topped with arugula and a poached egg for breakfast. The dish was tasty, healthy, and a fabulous way to start the day.

MEADOWRUE

The Lobby Bar Meadowrue is like a secret garden in a lush Pacific Northwest Forest. Open from 7 am to 11 pm, guests in the city can begin the day with delicious coffee, pastries, and other breakfast options. Later in the day, the space becomes one of the top classy bars in Portland, featuring artisan cocktails, small plates, and a formidable assortment of wine and beers. I listened to one of the local musicians play one evening and enjoyed a Sweet Pea Vesper made

with Monkey 47, sweet pea-infused Absolut 80, Lillet Blanc, and a sugar snap pea. The cocktail was unique, tasty, and refreshing.

In the afternoon, I sat in the lounge area of Meadowrue and had a decadent bowl of butternut squash soup with pumpkin seeds and a cheese platter with crackers. It was the perfect afternoon meal on a rainy Portland day.

THE RITZ-CARLTON, SPA, PORTLAND

Located on the nineteenth floor is Portland's first luxury spa with an infinity-edge pool and windows showcasing the Cascade mountains. The 4,400-square-foot fitness facility includes a yoga studio, sauna and steam rooms, a time capsule chair, and a snow shower for cold therapy. Guests of the hotel and people coming to or living in the city can book massages, facials, and body treatments.

TIMELESS CAPSULE CHAIR

One session in the timeless capsule chair was mind-blowing. The doctor who designed the chair found that these sessions help people with PTSD, insomnia, migraines, and anxiety, often triggering a complete emotional reset. Clients choose a recording for whatever emotional reset they would like. While sitting, the chair vibrates in a specific section and at a certain intensity based on the selected recording. Clients have a warm, weighted blanket laid over their body, and an eye pillow covers their eyes.

The Stress Relief recording provides a guided

meditation; the chair vibrates in the lower back region, and most clients relax but do not fall asleep. The Delta Dreams is 60 minutes long with only magnetic sounds. The sound changes between the left and right sides of the headphones and is perceived as waves, while the chair vibrates from side to side as if someone is trying to put you to sleep. The Neo Nap is like Delta Dreams but only lasts 20 minutes. Soul Sock starts with complex magnetic sounds and creates a feeling of agitation. The vibration intensity of the chair shifts from gentle to intense and back again. This session is supposed to help clients feel more grounded and energized. Emotional Reset begins with a guided meditation recommending specific breathing patterns. The sound of rain is in the background, along with the noise of birds. The chair vibrates according to the sounds of nature, making the client feel safe and think about positive things in their lives. I listened to the Nature's Journey recording, which featured the sound of rain and fire and relaxed me, but I did not fall asleep. It was a fabulous, relaxing experience, and I highly recommend it.

Although the city is not yet back to its former glory, the glitz and glamour of The Ritz-Carlton, Portland, and the exceptional dining found within two miles, including Langbaan and Kann, should entice visitors to dine and sleep in the City of Roses once again. ❖