

New Hotels and Restaurants Around the World/10-01-07



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Sexy Digs in San Diego

The Keating Hotel. The exterior of this 116-year-old [San Diego](#) building looks nothing like its sexy, modern interior. Guests are greeted with a sports car-red lobby that leads to 35 rooms designed by Pininfarina, the Italian company that makes Ferraris and Maseratis. The contemporary set will appreciate the room's minimalist open floor plan, which showcases stainless-steel bath fixtures, a blue resin walk-through shower, and a personalized "sip and crave" beverage and snack bar. Upon check-in, you're given a 15-minute lesson on how to use all the room's gadgets, which include a Bang & Olufsen sound system, plasma TV, and personal espresso maker. For dining and cocktails, head downstairs to the Lounge. Here, hosts shake martinis tableside and down-tempo tunes play backdrop for conversation. A historic redbrick bank vault, part of the San Diego Trust & Savings Bank that once occupied the building, now holds a selection of wines from Italy. 432 F Street. 619/814-5700. [www.thekeating.com](#). 35 rooms. In-room: safe, DVD, Wi-Fi. In-hotel: bar, laundry service, concierge, parking (fee), no-smoking rooms. AE, D, DC, MC, V.



Uptown Food in Downtown Chicago>

Tavern at the Park. With its unique take on American classics and its splendid view of [Chicago's Millennium Park](#), it would be a mistake to pass up this near-Michigan Avenue gem. Noise from the bar carries up to the second floor, giving this spacious restaurant a lively feel. The prime rib sliders and sticky fried shrimp are perfect starters before moving on to the blackened sea scallops and fettuccine, or the rotisserie-roasted prime rib. Though many favor the warm blueberry apple-bread pudding for dessert, the fried banana split shouldn't be missed. Don't plan on lunch without a reservation — local business people have already made this their new hangout. 130 E. Randolph Street. 312/552-0070. Casual dress. AE, D, DC, MC, V. Closed Sunday.

A Bistro Bargain in New Orleans

Lüke. Tourists and businessmen alike flock to this chic [New Orleans](#) bistro for a five-star meal without the five-star bill. *Iron Chef* alum John Besh describes Lüke as "Alsace meets New Orleans," an eclectic ethos reflected in the look of the restaurant (cherry paneling, stained glass windows, and charming pulley-and-belt driven ceiling

fans) as well as its menu (slow-cooked Berkshire pork belly, crab-meat ravioli, steak au poivre, and even matzo ball soup). Don't miss the beer, brewed specifically for Lüke, and the elegantly served fresh oysters, which are only pennies more apiece than they are at slurp-'em, stand-up bars. *333 St. Charles Avenue. 504/378-2840. AE, D, MC, V.*

Boston Goes Ga-Ga Over Wagamama

Wagamama. Students and young families who populate [Boston's](#) Harvard Square give this popular London-based noodle chain high marks for its cheap bowls of noodles and broth. Customers rotate quickly through the airy, communal-style dining room as spiky-haired servers take orders on handheld electronic devices. The easy-to-read menu includes a glossary of terms and dish names. Vegetarian curry arrives with hearty fried slices of sweet potato, eggplant, and squash while the teriyaki steak soba is a flavorful combo of beef, pan-fried soba noodles, and bok choy. A short list of domestic wines and Japanese and American beers rounds out the list. *57 JFK Street, Harvard Square. 617/499-0930. AE, D, DC, MC, V.*

In Atlanta, Steak Reigns Supreme

Kevin Rathbun Steak. Young urban professionals from all over [Atlanta](#) swarm to this post-industrial warehouse for sumptuous steak, generous portions, and dazzling seafood alternatives. The lobster fritters and ceviches pop with flavor, but the dry-aged steak, which comes with five unconventional sauce options, is the marquee dish. Heavy drapes shield all light from the outside world, as soft jazz undercurrents weave through lively chatter. Each space indulges an intimate feel with hand-made black walnut planks, exposed brick, dark-chocolate leather, and myriad seductive candles. Watch the tab; everything is a la carte. *154 Krog Street. 404/524-5600. Business Casual. AE, D, DC, MC, V. Closed Sunday.*

Minimalist in Montréal

Hôtel Opus. When the Vancouver-based Opus Group took over [Montréal's](#) Hôtel Godin in 2007, it was already one of the chicest and sleekest hotels on the St-Laurent nightclub strip. Opus has stuck with the uncompromisingly modern interior — exposed concrete ceilings, tile floors, stainless steel furnishings — but has added some splashes of vibrant reds, greens, and oranges. The result could be called minimalist-plus. The exterior is just as striking: one half art-nouveau, and the other contemporary brick and concrete. In the evening, the mirrored breakfast room becomes a popular lounge dispensing cocktails and tapas. *10 Sherbrooke Ouest, H2X 4C9. 514/843-6000. www.opusmontreal.com. 122 rooms, 14 suites. In-room: minibars, broadband, Web TV. In hotel: gym, hair salon, sauna, bar, dry cleaning, laundry service, concierge, meeting rooms, parking (fee), some pets allowed, no-smoking rooms. AE, DC, MC, V, CP.*

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Photo credit: Courtesy of The Keating Hotel.