

A Sleek San Diego Hotel With a Focus on Food

At the Pendry, the tostadas and salmon are excellent. The views are nice, too.

The Pendry San Diego.

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Rates

From \$325.

Basics

The Pendry San Diego occupies half a city block that was cleared to make way for a Marriott hotel that never materialized. The 317-room hotel, opened in February 2017, was the first in Montage International's new hospitality brand.

With the Pendry, the group hopes to attract younger luxury guests than its Montage Hotels & Resorts. As much a destination for drinking and dining as for sleeping, the contemporary brick and plaster building houses six bars and restaurants including a rooftop lounge and a sustainable-seafood restaurant. The interior design's disparate influences include New York City and California surf culture. The black and white entryway, with a white chesterfield sofa and mosaic tile floor, might be at home on the Upper East Side of Manhattan. The check-in area recalls a turn-of-the-century train depot while surf photography can be found in guest rooms and common spaces.

Location

Located on the corner of J Street and Fifth Avenue, the Gaslamp Quarter's main drag, the hotel is two blocks from the Convention Center and one block from Petco Park, where baseball's Padres play.



The Room

I stayed at the Pendry with my husband and 11-month-old son, and a crib had already been set up when we arrived. Our eighth-floor "superior room," the entry-level category, had a floor-to-ceiling window with a view of the downtown skyline. A wooden desk and chair sat beneath a large flat-screen TV, and a black armoire with crystal handles was topped with goodies available for purchase like Kind Bars and chocolate chip cookies. The king-size bed featured crisp white linens, and the blue and cream wallpaper incorporating surfers, rabbits and palm trees imbued the space with some whimsy. Charging outlets were conveniently located in a table lamp and alarm clock on either side of the bed.

The Bathroom

Our room included a glass-walled bathroom with a white subway-tile shower that was fully visible from the bed. A white drape could be drawn around the outside of the shower for privacy. Within the bathroom, a separate water closet was concealed behind a sliding door. The shower had both a standard wall-mount showerhead and a rainfall showerhead, but neither had particularly strong water pressure, the only disappointment with our stay. Custom bath products are from MiN, a New York-based perfumery and apothecary.



Amenities

A clerk in a plaid dress greeted us at check-in. She produced a black teddy bear for my son and urged us to pour ourselves a welcome drink of orange, pineapple, ginger and tamarind juice from a glass beverage dispenser. If we took it to the bar and said "shiver me timbers," the bartender would give us a glug of the well spirit of our choice, she said. Guests receive complimentary Vittoria Coffee, a premium Australian roaster, each morning in a soaring wine bar and cafe space with Art Deco chandeliers. The Pendry has a swimming pool, a gym, a spa and free Wi-Fi. Valet parking costs \$49 a day.



Dining

At the poolside Lionfish Rooftop, we tucked into happy hour (5 to 7 p.m. Monday to Friday) while lounging on a large white daybed, with briny dollar oysters from Baja, duck confit tostadas and a selection of wines for \$7 a glass. Dinner at the restaurant's street-level location included lobster carpaccio in a sherry ponzu sauce (\$23) and buttery New Zealand king salmon nigiri (\$17). Everything we sampled, from the pretzel sweetened with maple syrup at Nason's Beer Hall to a whiskey sour with St-Germain liqueur at the cocktail bar Fifth & Rose, was delicious.

Bottom Line

The Pendry's excellent food and drink and well-considered décor bring refinement to the tourist-trodden Gaslamp.