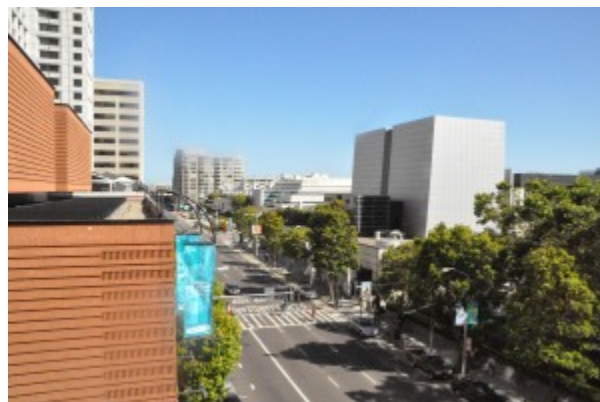

St. Regis Hotel, San Francisco Review

Art + Hotel. That would be my recommended advertising slogan for the St. Regis in San Francisco. The connection between art and hotel has been noted in these pages before (most recently in our reviews of the [21C Museum Hotel](#) and the [Four Seasons](#) in Seattle) and the St. Regis is an excellent example of an establishment that's not only proximate to multiple art museums but one that integrates art into the very fabric of its existence.



Enter the light and airy St. Regis – this is not your father's dark and formal New York St. Regis – and you will immediately feel welcomed by the very accommodating and helpful staff.

Dominating the lobby on opposing sides are two 244x448 cm works by Andrew Morrow, “War” and “Love” (see the first two slides in the first slide show). Throughout the hotel one will find other equally compelling works of art (also included in the slide show). Nothing, not even the façade of the building, is exempt from having art displayed on it.

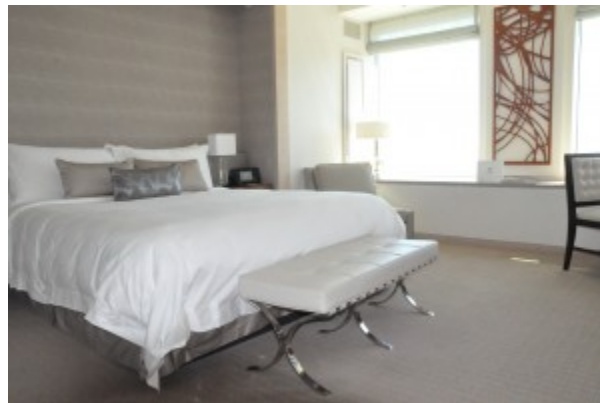


WHERE IS IT?

South of Market Street and adjacent to the Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA), the St. Regis is in the Yerba Buena Arts District, an area once associated far more with a Skid Row aesthetic than with museums and culture. Today, in addition to SFMOMA, the area features the Contemporary Jewish Museum, the Museum of the African Diaspora, and the Yerba Buena Gardens (which houses outdoor art installations).

THE ROOM

The St. Regis guest doesn't leave art behind when he goes to his room, a soothing white, grey, and black sanctuary. From the wooden sculpture in my room's entryway to the carved wooden artwork on the wall between the windows, art was an integrated part of the environment.



Technology is equally well integrated, I should add. My room had one of the finest room control systems I'd ever seen. Not only could I raise and lower two sets of blinds (the room darkening blinds completely blacked out the room!) from the touchscreen display, but I was able to adjust the room temperature and lighting, place phone calls (with convenient speed dial buttons to room service and the butler), turn on and off the do-not-disturb sign, and request maid service (see the slide show for examples). This is not technology for technology's sake; it's a truly useful and guest-friendly implementation that others in the industry should make note of.

The bath (quite literally) was also integrated into the room. Folding doors opened up the capacious bath area to the bedroom and its wonderful light and views.



Given the expansiveness of what I thought was the wall unit, I was shocked, shocked to discover how little closet space there actually was. I had packed fairly lightly (one 22" roll aboard and a smaller checkpoint-friendly bag for my laptop, camera, and other miscellaneous items) and was out of space by the time I had hung up several pairs of pants, a suit and blazer, and four shirts. One of the St. Regis butlers told me that their way around this is for them to bring up an extra clothing rack, but that would kill the aesthetic of the room, to put it mildly.

ROAD WARRIOR SUPPORT

The generously-sized desk was equipped with a leather container with useful things such as paper clips (who thinks to bring paper clips on a trip?) and a comfortable desk chair (although a more ergonomic chair would be desirable for longer stints in front of the computer). Reasonably priced Internet access (\$14.95 for 24 hours) was also quite fast.

DINING

Breakfast and lunch are served in the Vitrine restaurant and dining on the Yerba Buena Terrace is an option most days. The day I was leaving, having run out of time to both pack and have lunch, I enjoyed a wonderful in-room meal consisting of a perfectly-prepared hamburger, French fries, and salad.

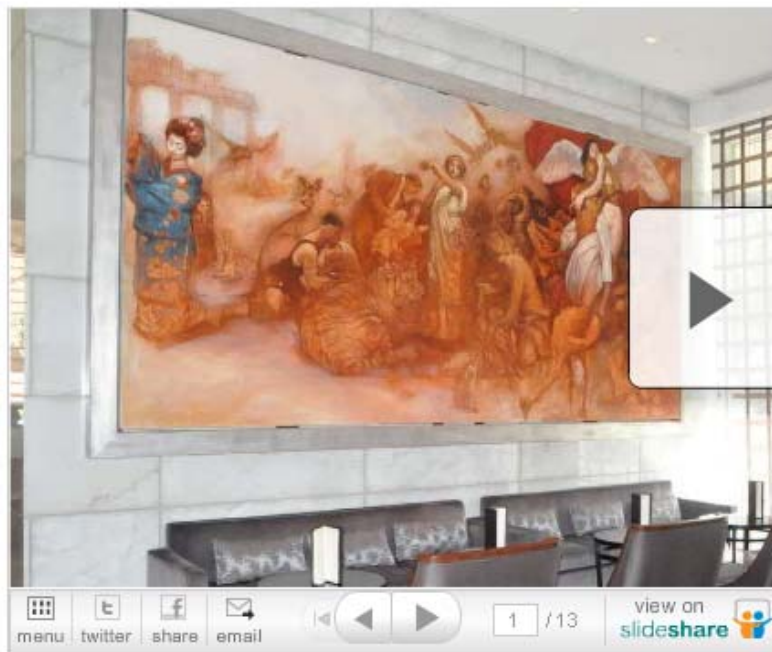


Dinner is served in ame, a restaurant run by Hiro Sone and Lissa Doumani, who also operate the well-known Terra Restaurant in St. Helena, and dining at ame was one of the highlights of my visit. A separate review will be published shortly.

BOTTOM LINE

The St. Regis enjoyed one other characteristic that one would typically also attribute to a museum, namely serenity. The hustle and bustle of SOMA disappears as soon as one enters its portals.

“Art is the signature of civilizations” is a quote attributed both to Jean Sibelius and Beverly Sills. Regardless as to who actually said it first, art is also the signature of the St. Regis San Francisco and those lucky enough to stay there get to be part of the exhibition.



St. Regis Hotel
125 Third Street
San Francisco, California 94103
www.stregissanfrancisco.com