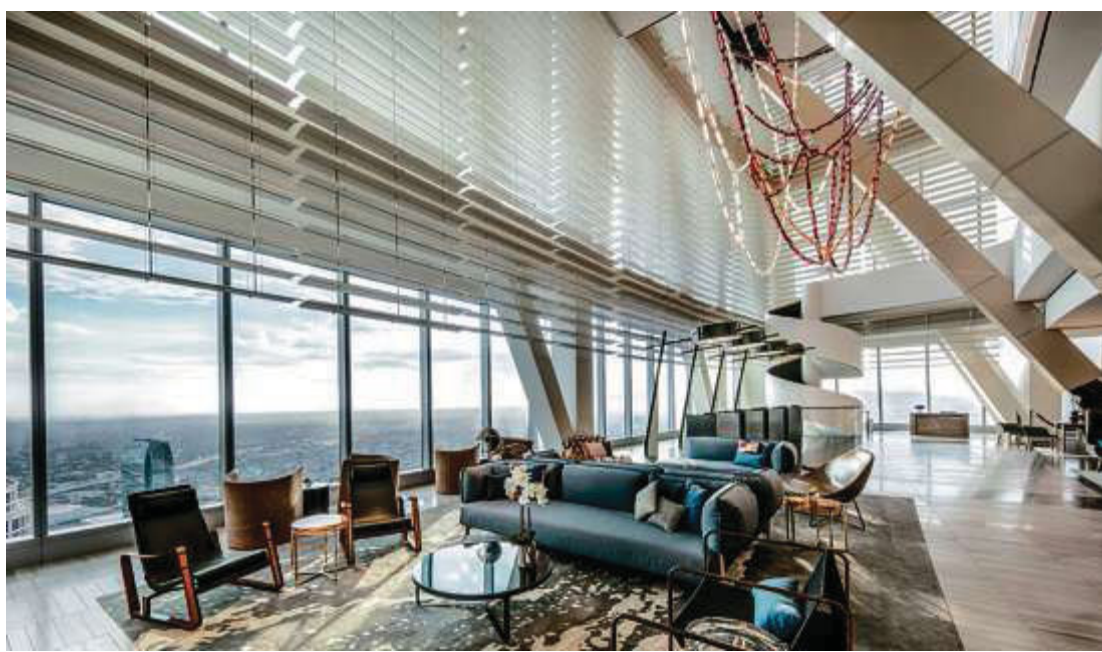
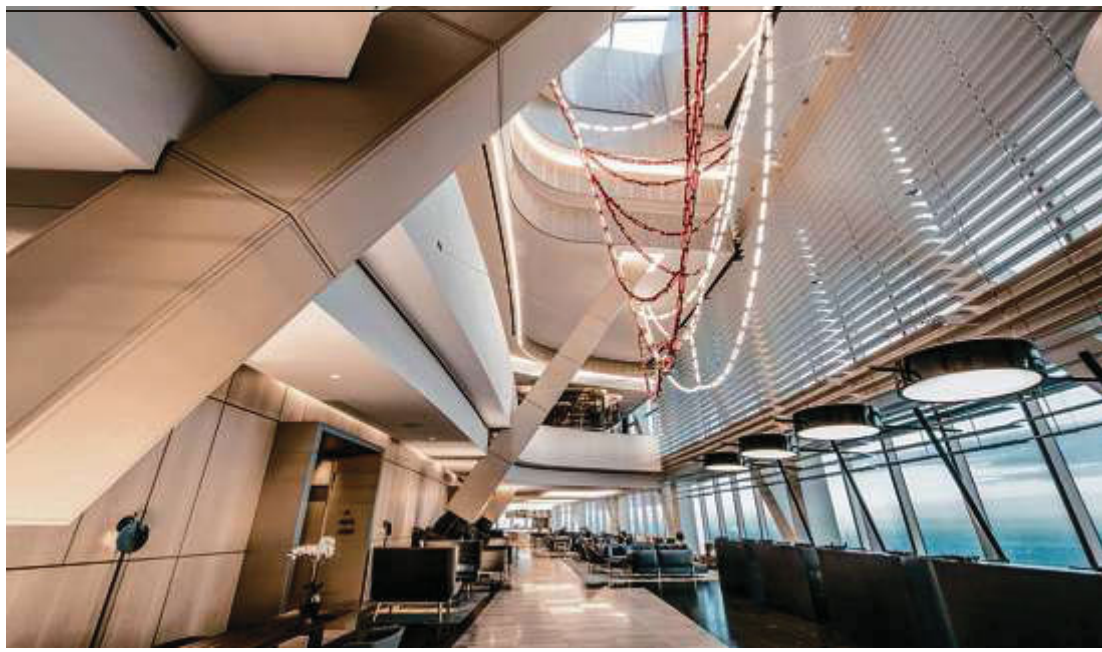


# The Concierge

TIPS FOR TOURING HERE AND ABROAD



INTERCONTINENTAL LOS ANGELES

The InterContinental Downtown boasts the Sky Lobby on the 70th floor (above left and top left), a rooftop bar called Spire (top right), and sleek guest rooms (above right).

## A NEW HIGH IN LOS ANGELES

BY CHRISTOPHER MUTHER | GLOBE STAFF

LOS ANGELES

Is there any way that Los Angeles traffic can be considered beautiful or relaxing?

It's certainly not lovely when you're in the thick of it on a Friday afternoon, unless you're living in a scene from "La La Land" (and if you are, please send Ryan Gosling my best). But there's something therapeutic about watching bumper-to-bumper humanity from 70 stories up in a gorgeous and glamorous hotel lobby.

It's an oddly hypnotic sight. As dusk creeps into the Sky Lobby at the InterContinental Downtown, those distant cars are captivating to behold and best enjoyed with a glass of wine. The traffic even inspired a piece of grand artwork that hangs in the lobby.

The InterContinental and its views are noteworthy because the hotel is housed in the tallest building west of the Mississippi River. The open-air rooftop bar, called Spire, is located on the 73rd floor and at 1,100 feet above street level currently holds the distinction of being the tallest rooftop bar in the Northern Hemisphere. Even if you're

not staying at the hotel, these are attractions worth seeking out, particularly the buzzy Spire and its views and cocktails. Those with a weak constitution and a fear of heights are probably better off at one of the nearby ground-level bars or restaurants.

The InterContinental, which opened last year, still has that delicious new hotel smell and its rooms are tasteful and sleek with all the necessary technological doodads, which you'll notice once you've peeled your eyes away from the floor-to-ceiling windows and views of Santa Monica, Beverly Hills, the San Gabriel Mountains, and Hollywood.

The 889 guest rooms and restaurants are located between the 31st to the 73rd floors. The better the view, the higher the room price, with floors 59 to 66 allowing access to the Club Lounge, which offers free snacks and drinks much of the day.

First the basics: My room was comfortable and quiet. The bathroom was large with a rain shower, double vanity, and a separate deep bathtub. I was won over because the hotel stocks Le Labo, one of my favorite toiletry brands. There is an outdoor pool with chairs and cabanas for sunning. The InterContinental's gym is mammoth by hotel gym standards.

There are four restaurants. The most upscale of the bunch is an American steakhouse with a French twist called La Boucherie, which includes important Los Angeles amenities such as VIP booths with privacy screens. There's also a charcuterie cave (!) and 1,200 kinds of wine. As if choosing a bottle of wine from a list of 1,200 wasn't challenging enough, there's even a knife menu, allowing you to pick the perfect blade for slicing into your pricey steak.

Two floors below is Dekkadance, a marketplace and restaurant for grabbing a snack or a meal. There's also a Japanese restaurant called Sora. The Lobby Bar serves snacks, sandwiches, and an impressive selection of vodka.

Based on its proximity to the Staples Center, I thought the hotel's clientele would primarily consist of conventioners and business types, but it was a diverse mix of tourists and suits. It seems as though every demographic can appreciate a good view.

900 Wilshire Blvd., 1-213-688-777, [dtdl.intercontinental.com](http://dtdl.intercontinental.com). Rooms start at \$379 a night.

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## HERE

### BOUTIQUE HOTEL DEBUTS IN NANTUCKET

There's a new hotel on the block in Nantucket town. Just in time for summer, Hotel Pippa makes its stylish debut steps from the town's galleries, cocktail lounges, restaurants, boutiques, and showrooms. Aiming to add downtown chic to the island's historic cobblestones, the 17-room boutique property combines midcentury modern design with contemporary island charm. Hoteliers Christopher and Asta Skehel enlisted designer Giovanna Lucy to transform each light-filled room and suite into a calming retreat enlivened with pops of vibrant color, including works by local artists. Complimentary continental breakfast is available every morning. At night, sip a glass of wine at Petrichor Wine Bar — located off the front lobby — from a selection curated by sommelier and proprietor Jill Viselli. Rates from \$299. 508-228-5300, [www.hotelpippa.com](http://www.hotelpippa.com)

### NEW WHEELCHAIR RAMPS OFFER MAINE MOUNTAIN VIEWS

Quill Hill and Ira Mountain, both located near Sugarloaf, have added wheelchair ramps so that people with disabilities can reach their summits. Created with a backhoe by the mountains' owner Adrian Brochu, the ramps fulfill his wish to share stunning views with everyone. Brochu, 71, toiled countless hours — moving rocks and shaping the earth — to build the ramps. At an elevation of 2,848 feet, Quill Hill visitors enjoy a 360-degree view of Tim Pond, Rangeley Lakes,



Saddleback, Saddleback Lake, Kennebago, Flagstaff, and the Kibby Wind Power project. [www.quillhill-maine.com](http://www.quillhill-maine.com). Ira Mountain, with an elevation of 1,950 feet, offers a 200-degree view of Mt. Abraham, Sugarloaf, the Canadian Mountains, Big and small Bigelow range, and Poplar and Claybrook mountains. An apothecary has tables for impromptu picnicking. [www.iramountain.com](http://www.iramountain.com). \$10 automobile; \$5 ATV, motorcycle and bike; free to hike.

## THERE

### ADULT-ONLY COLORADO VACATIONS

Colorado is touting a series of adult-only escapes. Perfect for those with no kids, or parents who need a break. Simply pack a bag and head to these participating resorts, B&Bs, and more for some blissfully child-free R&R. Special adult-only weeks are available at some places, such as at The Home Ranch, Colorado's only Relais & Chateaux dude ranch, and at Smith Fork Ranch,

located within the secluded Gunnison National Forest. Sanctuaries that welcome mature audiences year-round include Denver's Queen Anne Bed & Breakfast, with in-room whirlpool tubs, and Stonebrook Resort on Fall River, with secluded outdoor hot tubs overlooking private hiking trails. Enjoy grown up experiences such as the 8th annual Burlesque Festival (July 12-15); couples cooking classes at Uncorked in Centennial; or take a gondola ride to the top of Telluride for a five-star meal at Allred's. [www.colorado.com/articles/adults-only-escapes-colorado](http://www.colorado.com/articles/adults-only-escapes-colorado)

### CAYMAN ISLANDS HURRICANE REFUNDS

Love the Caribbean but worry about hurricanes derailing your vacation? With an unpredictable hurricane season around the corner, the Cayman Islands Department of Tourism has launched a Worry Free Hurricane Guarantee. Includes a full refund of accommodation fees at more than 25 participating hotels, condos, and villas island-wide, with a maximum one-night penalty at most for cancellations

made up to 48 hours prior to check-in. The deal goes into effect once an official hurricane watch has been issued by the Hazard Management of the Cayman Islands. Additionally, many properties are offering a free replacement stay throughout the summer months, allowing guests to rebook for the same duration as the initially-booked stay, regardless of how many days were affected by a storm. Covers travel through Nov. 30. Participating properties are listed on official website; for detailed guarantees, visit individual property websites. [www.visitcaymanislands.com/en-us/about-cayman/weather/hurricane-guarantee](http://www.visitcaymanislands.com/en-us/about-cayman/weather/hurricane-guarantee)

## EVERYWHERE

### MONITOR HOME WHILE TRAVELING

Whether taking a day trip or extended overseas vacation, keep an eye on home from afar with SkylinkNet Alarm System Starter Kit, a self-monitored security system that allows users to arm and disarm their alarm systems from

anywhere. The kit is controlled by Skylink's Internet Hub, and includes a motion sensor, keychain remote, and two door/window sensors. By connecting the hub to a wireless Internet router, the security system coordinates the activities of all receivers and sensors with the help of a smartphone app. If a sensor detects motion, the Internet hub will send a push notification through the app. The app also allows users to view events that set off alarms through live video monitoring that can be observed through a smartphone or tablet. Ten additional cameras and up to 100 sensors can be added to the system. No monthly fees or contract required. \$212.99. [www.skylinkstore.com/store/us-us-alarm-system/skylinknet-alarm-system/starter-kit/skylinknet-alarm-system-starter-kit-2.html](http://www.skylinkstore.com/store/us-us-alarm-system/skylinknet-alarm-system/starter-kit/skylinknet-alarm-system-starter-kit-2.html)

### PROTECT TOTS FROM BURNS AND BITES

Keep your tots safe from the sun's rays, wind, sand, and pesky mosquitos while at the beach, camping trips or any family outings with the new pop-up tent by bbluv. The lightweight and portable Sunkitō Sun and Mosquito Play Tent provides SPF 50+ sun protection, and mosquito netting that can be tucked into an integrated pocket when not in use. Folds flat to easily slip into its carry bag. Three tent poles included. \$89.99 [bbluvgroup.com/product/sunkitito/](http://bbluvgroup.com/product/sunkitito/) NECEE REGIS

