



NEWS

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Robb Recommends: Hotel El Palace Barcelona

More than a century on the scene, and this hospitality gem in the Catalan capital has an irresistible allure, finds Lauren Ho.

By NSCOTT@ROBBREPORT.COM 



@Carlos Garralaga

With a prime address along the upscale strip of Gran Via de les Corts Catalanes, it's hard to mention its heritage and pedigree, the unashamedly opulent Hotel el Palace

Barcelona certainly lives up to its regal moniker.

Opened in 1919 as the Ritz of Barcelona, the fourth in the stable of the celebrated hotelier César Ritz, the Baroque pile was, for a century, a honeypot for the glitterati, who came to stay or celebrate some milestone amidst the hotel's gilded furnishings, ornate flourishes and floral fabrics.

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What's remarkable is that El Palace still very much retains its lustre as a new generation of discerning travellers join locals at the high-ceilinged, mirror-walled reception—no one able, it seems, to get enough of the hotel's unique brand of old world luxury.

It doesn't hurt, of course, that the hotel has cannily updated key USPs, among them, a Mayan-themed sauna specialising in volcanic stone treatments and the sprawling seventh-floor rooftop garden and pool where events like the Thursday Rumba nights are held with wraparound views of the Mediterranean and Sagrada Familia.





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Downstairs in restaurant Amar (pictured above)—where guests can repair to following preprandials at the Bluesman Cocktail Bar at chef Rafa Zafra (pictured below above sea urchin and prawn tartare with-caviar, a signature dish) delivers a luxurious but modern paean to seafood. Modern interiors of bold navy walls and grand chandeliers are paired with an indulgent menu of tiger oysters, caviar bikinis, spider crab cannelloni served with sea urchins and crispy chicken skin and, in a nod to the hotel’s Ritz days, fillet steak Rossini.

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Compared to the public spaces, the guest rooms, meanwhile, are timeless and classic, serenely dressed in ivory and cream with original fireplaces and plush

fabrics. The six 150 square metre Art Suites are particularly fun for their unabashed homages to past VIPs such as Rolling Stone's Ronnie Wood and songbird Josephine Baker. If available, the Salvador Dalí Suite—the same one the artist would stay in for extended periods whenever he was in town—is an opulent, eccentric and extravagantly dazzling bolthole, where rumour has it, he had a taxidermied white horse sent up as a present to his wife, Gala.

From €6,000 per night for the Josephine Baker Art Suite and El Palace Suite by Ronnie Wood

See below for more pictures of Hotel El Palace Barcelona



Zafra-Amar-Barcelona
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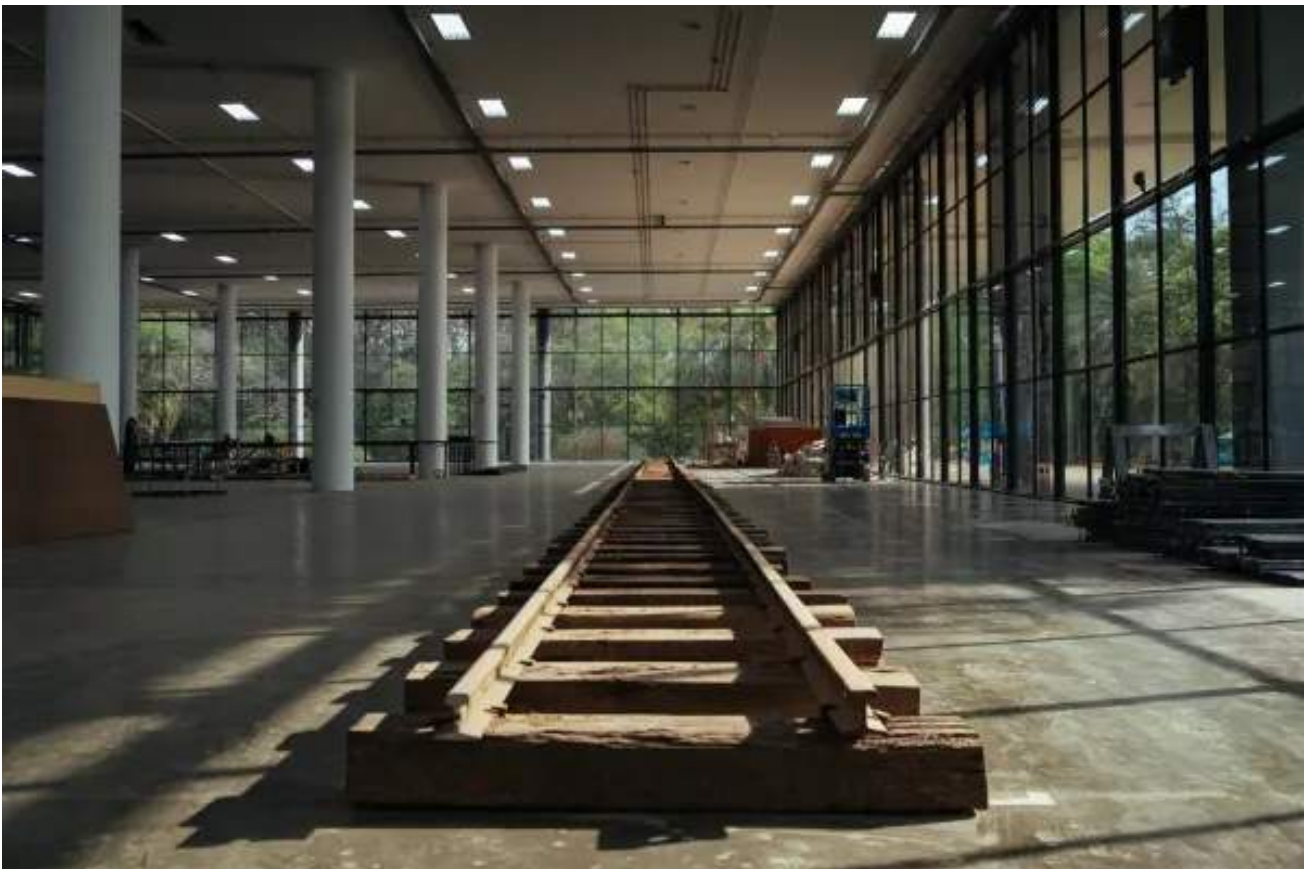
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