



Quiet Posh

With its secluded garden setting and refined atmosphere it's easy to see why any business traveler would elect to stay at the Four Seasons Hotel Los Angeles at Beverly Hills.

BY BARBARA PERKINS

Well situated on the edge of Beverly Hills, beyond towering green hedges that line quiet Doheny Drive, the Four Seasons Los Angeles Hotel is an oasis of calm in a city that while enchanting, can also be hysterically paced.

The first thing that greets you in the gilded entrance are flowerers: an explosion of white lilies in the lobby during our visit, followed by another cascade of azaleas in the elevator foyer. Greenery abounds at the Four Seasons L.A., from the thick foliage that hides the hotel from pedestrians to the palms that shade the ground floor garden out back, with its petite fountains and Henry Moore statue.

The public spaces here are not huge. Rather they are elegant and richly appointed in European furnishings. The library room off the garden has a fireplace and French tapestries; the bar is a series of three rooms leading to the hotel's signature Gardens restaurant, with walls decorated by large lithographs of monkeys, its tables accented by vases of white orchids.

On the hotel's fourth floor is a sufficiently sized outdoor heated pool, surrounded by pint-sized lemon trees, flowering shrubbery, a Jacuzzi and private poolside cabanas. The feeling is miles away from busy L.A. Here too is the outdoor fitness center replete with canopy for that rare rainy day, as well as a world class-staffed spa complete with steam, sauna and California-inspired spa treatments - Margarita body scrub or airbrush tan anyone?

The hotel offers complimentary limousine service, available by request, for delivery to shops on nearby Rodeo Drive or in our case a quick drop-off for brunch at Toast, the happening breakfast spot on West Third. The Mercedes was pleasant, the Rolls superb. Conceivably more important to the business traveler are the com-

fortable and well-appointed guestrooms, each one featuring a private-balcony with spectacular hillside views. Rooms also include an ample sized executive work desk, high-speed Internet access, minibar, TVs - one in the bedroom and one in the marble bathroom (which also sports a separate dressing area) - iPod docking station and VCRs. The CD player comes with a few universal selections already waiting, in our case a Beatles collection.

Dining options are more than adequate. The Gardens restaurant, with indoor or outdoor seating, has an inventive African/Asian menu; entrees are seafood heavy, with such intriguing dishes as Chilean sea bass with Indian spiced cabbage, Moroccan spice roasted lobster and black cod with basmati rice and tamarind sauce. If you're committed to sticking with that healthy California lifestyle, nothing beats the massive café cobb salad, with chicken, bacon, swiss and blue cheese, tomato, egg, avocado and buttermilk ranch dressing.

And finally, we must confess, that although seriously pressed for time, we did manage to make an appearance at the hotel bar, having been tipped off that it is the hush-hush favorite of Hollywood's hippest. It was standing room only at this lobby-level hotspot, so we were instantly elbow-to-elbow with celebrities, soon-to-be stars and other assorted movers and shakers. The only trouble was... we didn't recognize anyone. A minor disappointment that a perfectly chilled vodka Martini with three stubby olives helped us quickly forget. ■

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