UNIVERSITY OF CINCINNATI

November 21, 2001

I, _____Linda Nayif Nubani_____ **,**

hereby submit this as part of the requirements for the degree of:

_____Master of Science_____

in:

_____Architecture_____

It is entitled:

_____Delving into the Attributes that Made Luxury Hotels_____

_____

_____

Approved by:

___Wolfgang Preiser_____

___Aarati Kanekar _____

___Ann Black _____

DELVING INTO THE ATTRIBUTES THAT MADE LUXURY HOTELS

A thesis submitted to the

Division of Research and Advanced Studies
of the University of Cincinnati

in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

in the Department of Architecture and Interior Design
of the College of Design, Art, Architecture, and Planning

2001

by

Linda Nubani

B.F.A., The American University in Dubai, 1999

Committee Chair: Dr. Wolfgang Preiser

ABSTRACT

What attributes define a luxury hotel? What makes someone spend $1000 at the Ritz Paris, or $9,000 at the Burj Al Arab in Dubai?   For many, being utterly pampered in an extravagant environment with a distinguished and personalized service is what defines luxury. The new millennium has brought a whole new perspective on luxury hotels; who knows what trends will be next.

At luxury hotels, there are guests who return again to hotels that resemble their own opulent residences. Some stay to experience the luxury that others take for granted. There are business travelers who enjoy the residential setting with state-of-the-art technology, and there are others who don't feel comfortable staying in a traditional setting. Therefore, catering to the needs of returning guests or new guests, business or leisure travelers, and young or old travelers is challenging. There are certain factors, that if balanced, will influence the perception of luxury and will therefore satisfy travelers' various needs.

What creates the appealing atmosphere, what makes the stay memorable and what are the essential criteria of designing luxury hotels are explored in this thesis. The outcome of this research is intended to inform architects and planners about some of the evolving conditions they can control in order to provide guests with a satisfactory stay. An analysis of the evolving concept of luxury in hotels is presented. The thesis illuminates the guidelines used to rate luxury hotels around the world.

In brief, the thesis attempted to be an effort to link both quantifiable and non-quantifiable attributes through research, literature reviews, two case studies, observations, and guests' surveys.

The art of our necessities is strange, that can make vile things
precious.

--- William Shakespeare   King Lear, III:2

I dedicate this work to my father and my mother

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

LIST OF TABLES

People love to go to hotels, even more so than in earlier times when the Archbishop of Glasgow in the early 1600s recommended them as the best places to die and Samuel Johnson expressed his love for inns in the 1700s as "nothing else can produce such happiness".[1]

---

[1] Walter Rutes and Richard Penner, <u>Hotel Planning and Design</u> (New York, NY: Whitney Library of Design Watson Guptill Publications, 1985) 38.

Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

Any luxury hotel distinguishes itself from other hotel levels – upscale, budget, or economy – by surpassing them in the quality or the amenities it provides its guests. It also sells its rooms at higher rates. Why would someone spend $20,000 per night to stay at the Crystal Palace Nissau in the Bahamas, $1000 at the Ritz Paris, or $9,000 at the Burj Al Arab in Dubai? There are cheaper hotels. What is so attractive about a luxury hotel?

In luxury hotels, there are guests who return to hotels that resemble the opulence of their actual homes, but many stay to experience the luxury that others take for granted. There are business people who enjoy the residential setting with state-of-art technology. There are others who feel comfortable being surrounded by antiques. Therefore, catering to the needs of returning guests or new guests, business or leisure travelers, and young or old travelers is challenging. There are certain factors, that if balanced, will influence the perception of luxury. This thesis explores the factors that shaped this perception.

There has been little written about luxury hotels. The available material can be found in a chapter or two of books containing illustrations such as <u>Hotel Design</u>. Some books delve into the specifics of planning dimensional spaces, materials and finishes. For example, <u>Hotels and Resorts: Planning, Design and Refurbishment, Hotel Planning</u> and <u>Design and Architects' Room Design Data Handbook</u> are two of the books that illustrate this category. There are also books that describe the history of luxury hotels focusing on those of political importance like the <u>Grand Hotel: The Golden Age of Palace Hotels, An Architectural and Social History</u>. Journals like the <u>Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly</u>, and <u>International Journal of Hospitality Management</u>, as well as magazines like <u>Condé Nast</u>, <u>Gourmet</u> and <u>Departure</u> focus on understanding the needs of guests.

Many of the hotels built within the last two decades have promoted luxury without a sufficient understanding of what a luxury property really is.[2] A study on the theories behind the concept luxury is necessary. Is luxury a necessity? How is luxury different from physical comfort? Is it possible to quantify the notions of *needs* and *desires*? Giving a single unified definition to the concept is difficult; however, this study attempts to unify the theories and definitions that evolved around the concept of luxury.

Some of the research explored the factors that affected the perception of "luxury" in hotels from the past to the present. Some examined the attributes that affect guests' decisions of choosing a particular luxury hotel. The surveys used in this thesis helped to quantify guests' responses on defining "luxury hotels." Hotel advertisements in magazines and television, tour-guide books, travel magazines, as well as the Internet are the primary sources that aid guests in choosing their destination hotel. Such ads make the guests aware of the luxury they will be experiencing, and prepare them for the additional expense. Unfortunately, many fail to define luxury by providing a general description of their property. Consider the following advertisement as an example of how some hotels defined the luxury in their properties.

> Rising to the very height of elegance and hospitality, the Towers at The New York Palace offers the epitome in luxury and personal service. Reached by private lobby and elevators, our exquisitely appointed guest rooms, with your own multilingual Maitre d'Étage, room service prepared by Le Cirque 2000, and majestic views of Manhattan, will surround you with an ambience of beauty and refinement.[3]

In the above quoted advertisement, the hotel defined luxury by the following four features: personal service, private elevators, multilingual Maitre d'Etage, and the view of Manhattan. The hotel did not consider other factors such as technology, entertainment, restaurants, lounges, or spacious rooms, which all contribute to a luxurious environment. Therefore, there needs to be more awareness of what can lure and attract guests to such hotels; they need to understand what luxury is.

---

[2] Laurence Bernstein, "Luxury and the Hotel Brand," The Cornell Hotel And Restaurant Administration Quarterly (December 1998).
[3] The magazine is dedicated to providing information on luxury hotels, resorts, and destinations around the world. Source: Premier Hotels and Resorts Winter-spring 2000: 77.

In addition to providing guests with an abundance of amenities, hotels should constantly work to maintain their image. Industry consultant Harry Nobles believes that luxury hotels in the United States risk losing their status if they do not update their facilities annually. The case study on the Ritz Paris (see chapter four) clearly shows that the concept of luxury changes constantly. New design trends and evolving technology must be incorporated. Hotels should therefore renovate, upgrade or update their facilities to the current status of a standard luxury property.

Poor service can jeopardize hotel status. Many hotels offer a luxurious physical environment or distinctive features without providing a satisfactory service (see Figures 1.1, 1.2, 1.3). For example, hotels in Las Vegas are built around a memorable theme. The Paris Las Vegas, the Bellagio and the Venetian are three recognized luxury hotels in Las Vegas that offer luxurious amenities and design features at cheap prices.[4] However, when it comes to service, waiting lines can be as long as 20 minutes at the front desk.[5] In fact, in many cases, what separates a four-star hotel from a five-star hotel is the service. This is based on the luxury rating of both the AAA and the Mobil guidelines in the United States and Canada – two of the most stringent rating systems in the world.

Research into the luxury hotel ratings used by agencies in different countries not only revealed the differences in their methods, but it also showed the differences in how they interpret luxury in hotels. The findings illustrate that these guidelines have substantial impact on shaping the perception of luxury within the guest's perspective. Can luxury ratings be objective?[6] Should not there be separate rating systems dedicated to services and physical hotel amenities? And can there be a universal rating system?

Thesis Approach

First, it should be noted that this thesis does not intend to establish new ratings or scientifically prove a definition to luxury, nor does it cover luxury hotels in all parts of the world. It is only interested

---

[4] John Walker, <u>Introduction to Hospitality</u> (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1996) 74.
[5] Personal observation, June 01, 2001.
[6] Harry Nobles, "Are AAA Ratings Always Accurate and Objective?" March 21, 2001.
<Http://www.Hotelonline.Com/neo/news/pressreaaleases2000_7May00_AccurateRatingss.htm>

in understanding the attributes that characterize luxury hotels and why they evoke the sense of luxury. There are hotels that redefine the industry, and more interestingly, give new standards to luxury. How do the ratings relate to people's perception of luxury? The historical development of luxury in hotels will be illuminated by highlighting luxury hotels or pioneers that made major contributions to this field. The factors and the influences that shaped luxury hotels are discussed.

There are two case studies included. The first case study is on the Ritz Paris. This hotel was chosen because of its historical significance: opened in 1898, it was the first *true* luxury hotel, and has maintained this status for one hundred and two years. The second case study is on the Burj Al Arab hotel (also known as the Arabian Tower Hotel) located in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, which opened in December 2000. This hotel was chosen because it claims to be the most luxurious hotel in the world, and has exceeded guests' expectations earning themselves a seven star rating exceeding the rating criteria by two stars.[7]

The thesis proceeds to study different rating systems around the world. The AAA system is the standard bearer.[8] Although it is not the intention of the thesis to justify the cultural differences among guests in detail, however, factors such as cultural background, gender, age, and reason of travel must be considered. This in turn helps improve the hotel features to cater to the needs of their returning guests.

The data-gathering method of this thesis ranges from surveys, interviews, photo documentation,[9] and walk-through evaluations,[10] to special topically relevant courses. First, interviews included architects such as John Portman Jr.,[11] David Beer,[12] Thomas Huffsmith,[13] Ronald W. Wackrow,[14] Harry Nobles,[15] Marie Claude Metrot,[16] and management and staff of hotels visited for the purposes of the thesis.

---

[7] Mary McLaughlin, media relations manager at Burj al Arab, personal interview, July 2000.

[8] Gary Vallen and Jerome Vallen, <u>Check-in Check-out</u> (Upper Saddle, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2000).

[9] Photos and video taping captured building attributes of particular interest to this thesis.

[10] The walk-through evaluation covered the entire facility with the management, and photographed building attributes of particular attention.

[11] John Portman Jr. is an architect who made major contributions in the hotel industry. He is the son of John Portman who revolutionized the concept of atrium in hotels as this thesis will discuss later. They both operate from the Portman offices based in downtown Atlanta.

[12] Principal of Brennan Beer Gorman Monk Interiors. He has been designing hotels since the 1960s, with projects including St. Regis New York and W Hotel New York, as well as the Mandarin, the Peninsula, Hilton and Marriott.

Second, photo documentation can be defined as capturing particular pictures at the luxury hotels visited. The pictures served as visual aids in this research to further demonstrate a particular point. Additionally, the walk-through evaluation took the form of visiting particular luxury hotels, where guest relation representatives gave a tour of the hotel. The tour also included interviews with the management, the housekeeping division, as well as interacting with guests. Spending the night at some of these facilities, helped to gain a first hand experience of what guests and management previously illustrated, and it also helped to draw a comparison among hotels of different levels. The intensive walk-through evaluation included the Arabian Tower hotel, the Emirates Towers Hotel in Dubai, United Arab Emirates and the Ritz Hotel in Paris. But the photo documentation was taken in hotels of different status to help compare hotel quality levels. In Las Vegas, the Bellagio, the New York New York, the Luxor, the MGM Grand, the Monte Carlo, the Paris Las Vegas, the Venetian, and the Aladdin were all photo documented. In Atlanta, the hotels included the Marriott Marquis Atlanta, Ritz Carlton, Atlanta Hyatt, and Westin Atlanta. In Boston, the hotels included Sheraton Boston, Copley Plaza, and Marriott Copley. In New York, hotels included the Marriott Marquis, Doubletree Manhattan, and Holiday Inn Broadway. In Cincinnati, the Westin Downtown was included. In Jordan, Hotel Intercontinental Amman was documented. In the United Arab Emirates, the Arabian Tower Dubai, the Jumeirah Beach Dubai, the Emirates Towers Dubai, Ritz Carlton Dubai, Mirage Dubai, Hyatt Dubai, Crowne Plaza Dubai, Intercontinental Abu Dhabi, Le Meridien, Bustan Dubai, Bustan Al Ain, and Hilton Abu Dhabi were all photo documented. In France, the following hotels were photo documented: Ritz Paris, Concorde La Fayette, Intercontinental, George V Four Seasons, and Costes. In the Far East, the following hotels were documented: the Peninsula Bangkok, Intercontinental Taipei, and the Peninsula Hong Kong.

---

[13] Senior Vice President, Development and Investment, for Bass Hotels & Resorts in London, with direct responsibility for the three hotel brands: Inter-Continental, Crowne Plaza, and Holiday Inn in Europe, Africa, and the Middle East.

[14] Executive Vice President of Palladium Lodging New York, and formerly senior vice president and director of project coordination for the North America Division of ITT Sheraton, in coordinating construction and renovation of luxury, resort, business, and convention hotels.

[15] Former Head of AAA Lodging/Dining Ratings Program, a current independent consultant serving the hospitality industry, and a special training consultant to the Educational Institute, American Hotel/Motel Association.

[16] Consultant and resident at the Ritz Paris.

Also, the special event course *Hotel Design and Development: Planning for the Future* taken at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts had a great impact on some of the findings.[17] The course was 16 hours long and discussed recent projects on luxury hotels in terms of planning, design, development, and management. The attendees were 20 hotel designers and architects who practice in firms based in Atlanta, Boston, New York, Detroit, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Orlando, Brazil, Turkey, London, and Chicago. Another methodology that the thesis benefited from was the Internet. It was a useful tool in providing online forums and feedback on current issues published on a daily basis on the Web.

Surveys were another instruments used in the thesis. They were distributed at luxury hotels, to frequent travelers, and to residents at the One Lytle Place Building.[18] Only surveys of those who frequented hotels were analyzed; the remaining surveys were eliminated from the study sample. The respondents were asked to give a definition of luxury from their perspective, and what they would expect to see in the near future in luxury hotels. With a provided list of amenities, the respondents were asked to rank the importance of the amenities to the perception of luxury. The surveys ended by asking the respondents to provide personal information including their age, background, occupation, and reason for choosing a luxury hotel. The surveys were tabulated and responses were compared and analyzed according to age and gender.[19]

---

[17] The author of this thesis attended this course at Harvard University in June, 2000.

[18] The One Lytle Place is the only building that leases luxury apartments along the Ohio River in downtown Cincinnati. The respondents included were young, middle-aged and retired older professionals.

[19] A full study of the survey findings is dedicated within the following chapters. The appendix includes a sample of the two-page survey distributed.

The three figures were taken at luxury hotels. Fig. 1.1. (left) At the Mandalay Bay Las Vegas, the food tray stayed on the floor for more than 2 hours indicating slow service. Fig. 1.2. (middle) At the Monte Carlo Hotel, the exposed trash in housekeeping cart visually reflect negatively on the perception of luxury. Fig. 1.3. (right) Also at the Monte Carlo, a six feet tall person may not be able to walk to the guestroom comfortably.

Source: personal photography.

Chapter Two

DEFINING LUXURY IN HOTELS

What is the meaning of "luxury"?

> Luxury…turns men into greedy brutes. — Lycurgus, according to Plutarch
> Luxury is the source of this female insurrection. — Cato, according to Livy
> Luxury is the abandonment of nature. — Seneca
> Luxury is as the thirst of a man who has a fever…which is in no degree like the thirst
> of a man who is in health. — Epictetus
> Luxury…the fount and origin of all evil. — Sallust
> Luxury is slavery. — Ambrose[20]

Throughout history, the word luxury has been associated with words like lust, greed, thirst, slavery, light, pleasure, excessiveness, illustration of something famous or worth imitation, or displacement from locality.[21] While investigating the concept, the present study must analyze the word "luxury" – to allow a broader understanding of what luxury hotels are.

In his book Luxury: The concept in Western Thought, Eden to Smollett, John Sekora found that the origin of the concept is still vague and is not susceptible to any ready definition. However, its early usage provides important insights for consideration. There have been various attempts to create a single meaning. But during the past 3000 years, the context has shifted many times in many ways. The concept of luxury grew more influential and became more complex and controversial. Today, it embraces a network of fluctuating, social, philosophical, and economical presuppositions. The changes in the meaning of luxury represent nothing less than the movement from the classical to the modern world.[22]

Luxury can be traced back to the story of Adam and Eve in Genesis 2-3. It contains the simplest definition of *luxury:* anything unneeded. Their archetypal luxury involved five elements. The first is the legislator, who defines the limits of necessity and the threshold of luxury. The second is the object of temptation, where the fruit of the forbidden tree is inessential to comfort. The third is the tempter, which

---

[20] John Sekora, Luxury: The Concept in Western Thought, Eden to Smollett (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1977).

[21] Ibid, and <http://www.consultsos.com/pandora/lust.htm>

[22] John Sekora, Luxury: The Concept in Western Thought, Eden to Smollett (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1977).

is either internal or external, that seeks to thwart the law. The fourth is imperfect human nature and the

victim of the tempter who was, in this case, the woman, Eve. The last element is the punishment because

of the pleasure the victim had experienced, and that is why Adam and Eve were banished from the

Garden of Eden for tasting the pleasing fruit.[23]

Luxury also appeared in the Latin and in the Roman languages, where *luxuria,* meaning *luxury*,

connotes a *vicious indulgence*. On the other hand, the Greek view of luxury complements that of the

Hebrew. With Plato and Aristotle, the temptation to *luxury* is described as a constant drive of man's

psychological nature. When Socrates speaks of luxurious man, he speaks of him as a mere appetite, as a

creature of passion and temptation who is not able to distinguish necessary from unnecessary desires.[24]

Luxury played a central and distinctive role in both Roman thought and practice, where the

distinction between luxury and necessity forms the ideas of social order and social identity. For the

Romans, luxury was a political question because it signified the presence of the potentially disruptive

power of human desire. It represented the use of wealth to serve private satisfaction in three interrelated

forms. The first form is *self-indulgence* and can express itself in buildings, banquets and furnishings.

The second form means *greed* and can express itself when the rich aristocrats rule in their own interest.

The third form could mean *ambitio*, which takes the form of personal wealth being used to establish a

body of dependent men. For example, soldiers are loyal to an individual rather than being loyal to Rome.

These forms will lead to the point that the commonality among them ranges between desire, need, and

political order in the Roman situation.[25]

There are other indications that luxury was one of the oldest negative principles in organizing

society used to explain God's plan for mankind and the movement of human destiny. Through politics

and laws, it evolved into expressing man's plan for man and the *desired* movement of everyday affairs.

Before the Hebrews, it was a deduction from religious dogma, a luxurious act construed as human

---

[23] Ibid.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Christopher Berry, <u>The Idea of Luxury: a Conceptual and Historical Investigation</u> (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

enjoyment of that which is intended as sacrifice to the gods, such as gold, animals, children, and even virgins. It was also believed that the crime of luxury was associated with justifications for slavery. During the American independence from European corruption, freedom from slavery was called luxury.[26]

The 18th century was a turning point in the perception of luxury inspired by English history. Henry Fielding, a notable English writer, wrote of luxury in his book Enquiry into the Cause of the late Increase of Robbers in 1751.[27] He found that the "vast Torrent of Luxury" altered all levels of society as it changed manners, customs, and habits of the people at all levels. It has also inspired in the poor the desire for things they may not have and cannot have.

In the book, The Invention of Comfort, the author discussed the evolution of the concept "comfort" in relation to "luxury." He noticed that prior to the 17th century, neither classical nor Christian philosophers could say anything good about "luxury", because it referred to behavior that violated a standard order. Luxury was considered an object of desire. What might be disapproved as luxury for commoners was for nobles a means to uphold rank and thereby the social order. For example, primitive artificial illumination such as beeswax candles was luxurious. Prior to the 18th century, a better lighting was desired but technologically unobtainable.[28] By the 18th century, the people's consumption of habits reflected those of the aristocracy. What was previously a luxury became a necessity. As comfort increasingly improved, it then required people to rethink both necessity and luxury. The author then concluded that the relativity of necessity and the acceptability became more apparent and neutral by the end of the 18th century.[29] Bernard Mandeville in his book The Fable of the Bees, in 1714, defended the use of luxury to show that all supposed necessities were social constructions and therefore luxuries. The distinction only appeared when applied to specific items in specific societies. Mandeville concluded that

---

[26]John Sekora, Luxury: The concept in Western Thought, Eden to Smollett (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1977).
[27] Ibid.
[28] John Crowley, The Invention of Comfort (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press) 113.
[29] Ibid. p.149.

luxury simply measured the extent to which thought, experience, and labor made life more comfortable than the previous animal-like primitive simplicity.[30]

The modern concept of luxury circa the end of the 19th century, was defined as that of a sumptuous enjoyment, and exquisite food or surroundings in addition to the necessities of life.[31] That flower from the fields that pleases the eyes may not be considered an object of luxury, but those expensive diamonds may serve as one. Those shirts of the Middle Ages that were considered objects of royal luxury are nowadays primary necessities.[32]

Maslow created the most influential theory in psychology concerning the modern concept of luxury.[33] In his book Motivation and Personality, Maslow proposed a hierarchy of needs ranging from survival – basic physiological needs, such as hunger and thirst – up to needs of self-actualization (see Fig.2.1). [34] According to Maslow, human needs are based on two groupings: deficiency needs and growth needs. One can only move to the next higher level once the lower needs were met. The first four needs were physiological, safety or security, belongingness and love, and esteem. Substituting the word luxury for self-actualization reveals that it cannot be attained until all the lower categories are met. In other words, the need to satisfy hunger and thirst, and safety proceed to the need to find love and companionship before spending the money and time on luxury. The theory then suggested a rationale to order different activities on a necessity-luxury continuum.

In contrast with Maslow's theory, King Lear's advice to "reason not the need," concentrated on the demand elasticity, which is behaviorally modified. King Lear's principle stated that the demand for some goods might be affected either by its price or by income changes. Therefore the distinction between luxuries and necessities were defined in terms of these elasticities. Simon Kemp, a psychologist at the University of Canterbury, explained that the proportion of a household budget spent on a luxury good

---

[30] Bernard Mandeville, The Fable of the Bees (Indianapolis: Library Classics, 1998) 107-8, 169, 183.

[31] John A. Simpson and Edmund Weiner, eds., The Oxford English Dictionary 2nd ed., vol. 9. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989) 127-129.

[32] Berthelot et Hartwig Derenbourg. La Grande encyclopedie, inventaire raisonne des sciences, des letters et des arts, par une societe de savants et de gens de letters. Vol. 26. Paris, Lamirault et cie, 1886-1902, pp. 794-796.

[33] Simon Kemp, "Perceiving Luxury and Necessity," Journal of Economic Psychology 19.5 (Oct 1998): 591-606.

[34] Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality (New York: Harper, 1954).

rises as the household income rises. [35] When the prices of necessities rise, the quantity purchased declines

relatively little. On the other hand, the number of luxuries purchased declines sharply as prices increased.

He emphasized however, that not all goods with high price elasticities are luxuries. If one applies this

theory in the luxury hotel market, one finds that different types of guests represent some degree of

elasticity. Business travelers are more likely not to cancel their trips because of high prices or make trips

because of low rates. Business travelers stay at a luxury hotel to demonstrate the company's prosperity or

personal wealth. On the other hand, leisure travelers are more likely to respond to changes in rates. Their

stay at a luxury hotel can be necessary or unnecessary. In both cases, business travelers represent the

inelastic market whereas leisure travelers represent the elastic market.

Berry in his book the Idea of Luxury analyzed luxury in terms of refinements of human needs. If

one considered that caviar is a luxury food, it will still be food that satisfies hunger if eaten in sufficient

quantity. But its status is determined by its *desirability,* not by its consumption. The fact that it is

expensive adds another dimension of luxury to its status. In other words, some goods that begin as

luxuries might lose their status as they become goods for mass consumption. Berry also shed a light on

buying an expensive car like a Rolls Royce. He argued that despite its high price, it could be an

instrumental necessity to demonstrate a personal dignity or a company's prosperity. [36]
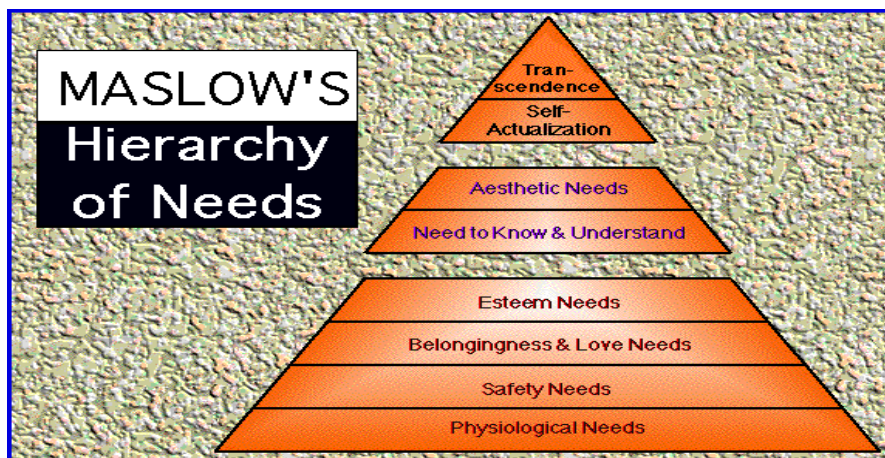
Fig. 2.1

Maslow's Theory

Source:

http://www.valdosta.edu/~whuitt/psy702/regsys/maslow.html

---

[35] Simon Kemp, "Perceiving Luxury and Necessity," Journal of Economic Psychology 19.5 (Oct 1998): 591-606.
[36] Ibid.

Who Stays at Luxury Hotels and Why?

In the past, the rich were the only people to stay at luxury hotels for maintaining social status and for political reasons. Paul Groth in his book <u>Living Downtown: The History of Residential Hotels in the United States</u>, argued that people in the U.S. loved the hotel life to the extent that they will live in hotels full-time. "Wealthy people loved hotel life because it eliminated the routine responsibilities of managing a large house," Groth argued. He also explained that luxury hotels promised perfected service 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, and offered a gregarious existence not possible in private houses. Guests at luxury hotels *bought* status. Many eminent business people, scientists, artists, writers, and editors relied on luxury hotel seclusion to meet deadlines in their work, Groth explained. Architectural luxury and geographic prominence of palace hotels contributed to the class distinction of expensive hotel life.[37]

The status of guests, however, changed in the last two decades. Luxury hotels are now catering to guests from various social classes traveling for one or more of the following reasons: relocating families or individuals, institution and special events visitors, business travelers, leisure travelers, convention and conferences travelers, newly-weds or weekend escapists (also including local residents).[38]

In spite of the importance of the location, the facilities, the services, the image and the price of the room in choosing a particular hotel, there remain other hidden motivations (special needs) that a guest might be or might not be aware of. First, guests might be looking for a hotel that fulfills their physiological, cultural, or psychological needs that vary and change according to background. For example, Japanese still prefer twin beds in guestrooms while Americans favor the doubles. Middle-Easterns prefer to have bidets in bathrooms, Japanese prefer bathtubs, and Americans like shower stalls. Coffee makers are considered important features for Americans and minibars are still required by Middle-Easterns, Asians and Western Europeans. Floor numbering is another system that concerns some guests from certain countries, for instance, Western hotels omit floor number 13 and some Asian hotels omit

---

[37] Paul Groth, "Palace Hotels and Social Opulence," <u>Living Downtown: The History of Residential Hotels in the United States</u> (L.A., CA: University of California Press, 1994).

[38] Philip Nailon, <u>Towards an Integrated Approach to Hotel Planning</u> (Aberdeen, United Kingdom: The Central Press, 1970) 34.

floor number 4.[39] *Feng Shui* is another concept that is deeply ingrained in the culture of many Asians, where many of the guests believe that to stay in a hotel, the feng shui should be applied in most of its aspects. The system is a "mystical combination of Chinese philosophical, religious, astrological, cosmological, mathematical and geographical concept".[40] It originated in China and is still practiced in China, Malaysia, Singapore, Philippines, Vietnam, Laos, Thailand and Korea. Briefly, people in these countries believe that they will live a good life by balancing the elements of nature. When considering the hotel industry, the feng shui is considered in all its aspects of location, design and construction.[41]

Secondly, guests might want to fulfill their acquired needs. They might be satisfied by the exterior image of the building. If the image creates a feeling of prestige, security, or sense of belonging, then it is more likely to fulfill the acquired need. Third, some guests might be looking for self-identification in such hotels. For example, guests stay at a certain hotel, simply because known public figures such as presidents stay there. Guests in this case are pleased because they were able to identify with men and women of great importance.[42] The fourth motivation is recognition. Being familiar at a hotel evokes a sense of belonging. Guests feel recognized when they are called by their names in public, which further enhances the guest's self-concept.[43]

The previous reasons emphasized the importance of the image of luxury hotels in the decisions taken by many guests. As defined in the book Towards an Integrated Approach to Hotel Planning, image is "the manner in which a hotel is seen to portray itself and is therefore strongly influenced by such things as appearance, mood, atmosphere, decor, type of service, the clientele, and so on. All these factors finally combine to create the overall image." The quality itself does not affect the price as much as the image does (see chapter three).

---

[39] Gary Vallen and Jerome Vallen, Check-in Check-out (Upper Saddle, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2000) 99.

[40] Chuen-Yan David, "A Feng Shui Model as a Location Index," Annals of the Association of American Geographers 64 (1963):23-45.

[41] Hobson, J,S., "Feng Shui: Its Impacts on the Asian Hospitality Industry," International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management 6.6 (1994): 21-26.

[42] Philip Nailon, Towards an Integrated Approach to Hotel Planning (Aberdeen, United Kingdom: The Central Press, 1970) 47.

[43] Ibid. p. 48.

How Is Luxury Perceived In Hotels?

Luxury hotels are not limited to a certain location. In other words, it can be present in downtown hotels, convention hotels, resort hotels, grand hotels, casino hotels, or boutique hotels if they meet the standard requirements of luxury. Based on the historical approach of studying the concept luxury in general, how would the concept be applied to hotels in particular?

William Tabler, the most influential architect in the development of American hotels, once spoke of luxury as "that which is simply not necessary at any level."[44] In other words, it transcends functionality and surpasses the standards. Berry, in the *Idea of Luxury*, spoke of "luxury" in terms of "needs" and "desires/wants." To make this distinction between "needs" and "desires", he stated that "wants" are privileges other people cannot declare otherwise, whereas human "needs" are not privileges. Others can know better what one's needs really are. From this perspective, human desires are subjective and human needs are more objective and universal.[45] It is important to fulfill both guests' needs and desires to maintain the status of "luxury." If, for instance, the hotel provided guests with desirable and rare goods, services, or facilities and did not provide them with their essential needs, this might not satisfy the requirements of luxury (see chapters three and five). A good example of a luxury hotel that define its properties in these terms is the Ritz Carlton. The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Corporation was the first luxury hotel company to achieve excellence through adherence to quality improvement programs.[46] Their philosophy emphasizes the importance of fulfilling the guests' needs with their unexpected wishes.[47]

Laurence Bernstein proposed another theory in comprehending the perception of luxury in hotels. He contended in the article "Luxury and the Hotel Brand," that there are four categories that evoke a

---

[44] Laurence Bernstein, "Luxury and the Hotel Brand,"The Cornell Hotel And Restaurant Administration Quarterly (December 1998): 48.

[45] Christopher Berry, The Idea of Luxury: a Conceptual and Historical Investigation (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994) 12.

[46] Charles Partlow, "How Ritz-Carlton applies 'TQM'," The Cornell Hotel Restaurant Administration Quarterly 34.4 (1993): 16-24.

[47] "The Ritz Carlton is a place where the genuine care and comfort of our guests is our highest mission…. The Ritz-Carlton experience enlivens these senses, instills well-being and fulfills even the unexpressed wishes and needs of our guests." King Carol, "What is Hospitality?" International Journal of Hospitality Management 14.3-4 (1995): 221.

sense of "luxury" in hotels today.[48] First is cost. An item is considered luxurious if it is expensive, but the more often one experiences a luxury event, the less one considers the experience luxurious. Second is time. The author showed that "time-based luxury experiences are intrinsic and cannot be provided by an external source, except a hotel." For example, delivering the morning newspaper saves the guest 15 minutes because the guest is not required to go purchase it from a newsstand. Third is prestige. Staying at a luxury hotel adds more prestige to the guest in society. Finally, providing many extras, which is an aggregation of a number of small extras, each of which may not be significant alone, is the "wow" factor that is receiving the most attention at many luxury hotel properties. For example, finding a French cognac next to the bed at bedtime is indicative of a luxury experience.

Creating a luxury experience remains important for both returning and new guests. "There are those guests who return again and again to their favorite grand hotel," said David Beer. "But also there are people who stay at the grand hotel to experience the luxury that the others take for granted… these new clients are important in establishing a future client base."[49] Both types of guests or travelers give dimensions to luxury when they travel to a luxury hotel. The end result of the experience will be mutually satisfactory if their definitions of luxury and the hotels' definitions of luxury were met.

Surveying Guests

Interestingly, people were found to attribute characteristics to luxury differently. One may argue that the subjectiveness of this matter should be dismissed from the realm of this investigation since it remains difficult to measure. However, studying the qualities such as color, beauty, or texture, are of great importance. Making a qualitative search enhances the understanding of what luxury hotels are, and help anticipate what will guests be looking for in their next trip. For example, some business travelers demand the latest in technological equipment while enjoying the comfort of a luxurious residential

---

[48] Laurence Bernstein, "Luxury and the Hotel Brand," The Cornell Hotel And Restaurant Administration Quarterly (December 1998): 50.
[49] David Beer, "Hotel Design and Development: Planning for the Future," Harvard University, Boston, 29 June 2000.

setting. Older people might prefer the traditional way of seeing the concierge and/or a private butler to handle their "needs" during their stay.   Surveys conducted by the Metropolitan Hotels' managers and Laurence Bernstein[50] showed that younger respondents gave higher importance ratings to the luxury amenities in luxury hotels than did the older respondents. This means that a young traveler will be more willing to appreciate luxury features than an older traveler. Business travelers were also found to be mostly men while leisure travelers were families and couples. Leisure travelers were more likely to use recreational facilities than the business travelers. Business travelers were more concerned office amenities. Their in-room activities range from using telephones, computers, internet, while leisure travelers were more likely to use pay movies, TV games, and in-room spa facilities. Additionally, business travelers often requested two double beds in their rooms: one for sleeping and one for spreading papers. [51] Therefore knowing the guest is the starting point to servicing them.

In the article "Creating Visible Customer Value," the authors of the article stated that depending on the purpose of travel, guests give value differently than others. For this purpose, 469 hotel guests were surveyed to assess their perspective toward the best exemplary hotel. Guests were then divided into three segments based on the reason of travel: 187 leisure travelers, 168 business travelers and 114 meeting and convention travelers. Results of the survey found that guests show loyalty to a hotel if they experience a visible value every day during their stay. The respondents gave 1,275 hotel attributes that drove their final decision. Each respondent had an average of 3 attributes. These attributes were then categorized broadly as follow:[52]

1. Location: Convenient.

2. Value for money.

3. Brand name or reputation: Familiarity with brand, image of brand (5-star), or recommendation.

4. Physical property: Cleanliness, aesthetics, landscaping, size, architecture and public spaces.

[50] Laurence Bernstein, "Luxury and the Hotel Brand," The Cornell Hotel And Restaurant Administration Quarterly (December 1998): 47-53.
[51]Gary Vallen and Jerome Vallen, Check-in Check-out (Upper Saddle, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2000) 41,42.
[52] Laurette Dubé and Leo Renagham, "Creating Visible Customer Value," Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly (Feb 2000): 61-72.

5. Guestroom design and amenities: Overall image, size, cleanliness, comfort, aesthetics, entertainment, HVAC, work equipment and kitchenette.

6. Meeting room design and amenities: overall image, size, work equipment, furniture, and cleanliness.

7. Bathroom furniture and amenities: Toiletries, size, furniture, image, and cleanliness.

8. Service: Image, speed, and efficiency.

9. Service (interpersonal): friendliness, attentiveness, professionalism, customization, and personal recognition.

10. Food and beverages: image, quality, atmosphere, room service, variety, and prices.

11. Quality standard (in-stay services): Health club, security, housekeeping, executive floor, business center, and indoor pool.

12. Marketing: room availability, frequent guest programs, and discounts.

13. Others: Events.

The study asked the respondents to give the top-ten property attributes that drive the booking decision, and the top-ten attributes that create value during the guest's stay. Based on the responses gathered from this study, researchers found that there were real differences between leisure travelers, business travelers and meeting/convention travelers. For example, location was the primary determinant for choosing a hotel followed by brand name and reputation, physical property, guestroom design, value for money, service, marketing, food and beverages and quality standards. When the same information was tabulated according to reason of travel, the study found that both leisure and business travelers rated location as the number one factor, while convention and meeting travelers regarded location as the seventh most important factor. They rated physical property as the primary factor. Brand name, physical property, price, and guestroom design were the four attributes that followed location for both leisure and business travelers while convention and meeting travelers followed their primary attribute by guestroom design, functional service, brand name and reputation as well as interpersonal service. The article then concluded by correlating the primary value to each of the three segments: leisure travelers placed the most

value on hotel's exterior and public spaces. Business and convention travelers valued the various aspects of guestroom design and amenities. The second place value driver to all three segments was the interpersonal service aspect.

Based on the findings of both Laurence Bernstein and the study that appeared in the Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly, there grew an interest to examine the effect of gender and age on perceiving luxury in hotels. To serve this end, a sample of 150 frequent travelers was given two-page surveys (see Appendix A). The results were intended to bring to attention the attributes that people perceive differently than others.

The three open-ended questions in the surveys asked the study sample to define luxury in hotels, to describe what expectations they had for future luxury hotels and to describe the activities they like to do in hotel guestrooms, lobby, and other spaces that they expect luxury hotels to accommodate. The third question showed the importance of supporting guests' common activities that occur in guestrooms and public spaces within the hotel. The survey also contained two close-ended questions. The first question asked the respondents to rank the level of importance of certain features that a luxury hotel should have. This question was also divided according to gender and age to find a common trait among each group. The second question hypothesized that the "atrium" in hotels evokes the feeling of luxury in hotels, and therefore discussed whether or not guests perceive the "atrium" feature as a luxury feature.

When the study sample was asked to define luxury in hotels, the majority defined it as follows: the hotel provides guests with twice the amenities they have at home and it exceeds their expectations for high quality materials, finishes, linens, towels, and furnishings. Luxury hotels add comfort for guests with spacious rooms, large bathrooms, superior dining services, pampering, quiet atmosphere, discreet and personalized service, and an outstanding concierge. Luxury is also recognized as giving attention to little details, such as folding linens, preparing beds, and offering distinct food presentation. Many of the surveyed people defined luxury in hotels as follows: the hotel with adequate staff: doorman, bellman, reception, concierge, chamber maids, evening turn down service, replacement of towels, complimentary newspaper or coffee, fruit tray or wine upon arrival, fresh flowers, artwork, warm color schemes, fast

26

check-in and -out, strategic location, view out from all guestrooms and calling guests by their names. Few people defined a luxury hotel as the "oh wow" property while others defined it by calling it the Ritz.

The following question asked the respondents to rate the level of importance of the following features: location, exterior architecture, interior design, quality of furnishing, shopping, guest services, restaurants/cafes, corridor widths and character, room size, parking, office space in rooms, view out of guestrooms, view out of guest bathroom, entertaining facilities in bathrooms, ease of check in and out, pricing, color scheme, security, storage, wayfinding, relationship of spaces, and technology.

After the results were analyzed (see Appendix A), the study found that all groups indicated that *location* and *view out of guestrooms* were the most important features. *Security* was the second important attribute. People over the age of 50 regarded it as a very important feature. Also, female respondents were found to be more concerned with security features in luxury hotels than male respondents. Easiness of *checking-in and -out* was found to be important to all respondents, as long lines indicate bad service. Interestingly, *parking* facilities were highly correlated with the luxury status in hotels. However, female guests were more likely to correlate parking facilities in the hotel than male guests, because they feel safer parking their cars on premises. *Wayfinding* and the *relationship of spaces* were of top concerns for people over the age of 50 when compared to other groups.

As expected, *technology* was more appreciated by younger generation. The most reasonable interpretation is that they were born in a society firmly embedded with technology. Technologically controlled environment became an important feature for them.

While *room sizes* seemed to be more important to young males than other groups, *corridor widths and character*, *interior design*, *exterior architecture,* and *furniture quality* were equally important to all groups.

The importance of *shopping* varied significantly among all groups. Interestingly, the figures of the data showed that male guests showed more importance to shopping than female guests. One hypothesis is that unlike women, men do not have time to shop outside the hotel. *Restaurants, bars and*

cafes, and *color scheme* were also found to be more important for males. There is room to investigate further the cause of this observation.

Office space in rooms varied significantly from one group to another depending on the reason of travel. Therefore, not all guests require an office space in their rooms. However, the data showed that younger people – particularly male travelers – were more likely to give importance to office space than older travelers.

While a *view out of bathroom* does not impact guest's definition of luxury experience, *entertaining facilities* such a TV or music inside bathrooms are more anticipated by younger travelers.

Finally and most importantly, *guest services* remained one of the most essential parts of the luxury experience. *Room rates* did not seem to affect the final decisions, particularly the older travelers.

The third question was more concerned with guests' expectations of future luxury hotels. The surveys showed that most guests expect to have in-room spa facilities, massaging chairs in guestrooms, and a Jacuzzi in the bathrooms. Many guests also expect to see state-of-the-art technology in guestrooms, interesting architecture or nicely appointed older buildings. Providing entertaining facilities for children is an advantage to families. Additionally, some guests expect luxury hotels to be appropriate to all ages and nationalities. They feel that hotel décor should reflect the character of the local environment.

The fourth question asked the respondents to list the activities they usually engage in spaces such as guestrooms, lobbies and other spaces. The importance of this question lies in creating an environment that supports these habits. The findings of the survey showed that besides sleeping in guestrooms, approximately 95% of guests over the age of 50 were found to use guestrooms to read, relax, watch TV and use spa facilities in bathrooms while guests under the age of 50 use guestrooms to rest, read, use pay-per-movie and games, in room dining service, chat on the phone, use the internet and use the music and other entertaining facilities. In the lobby area, most of the guests socialize, meet people and friends, chat, watch people, read, enjoy design features, have a drink or pick up a date.

The study subjects were then asked if hotel atriums add to the sense of luxury in hotels. While younger guests attributed atrium-lobbies[53] to luxury, older generations preferred ceilinged-lobbies. It is difficult to determine the reason behind this difference, but it is possible that those who were born after the atriums became fashionable would rather see it than those who were used to the traditional, palatial style luxury hotels.

Surveying guests on luxury hotels was a good data gathering technique. It served as valuable feedback to measure the strengths and weaknesses of current and future luxury hotel projects. It also raised some issues that

Guests' common features

Unique characteristics

need to be considered before initiating any project on luxury hotels. Although each guest had a unique perspective on looking at hotels, there were common characteristics among guests that must be studied. It was the shared attributes that the study was interested in.

---
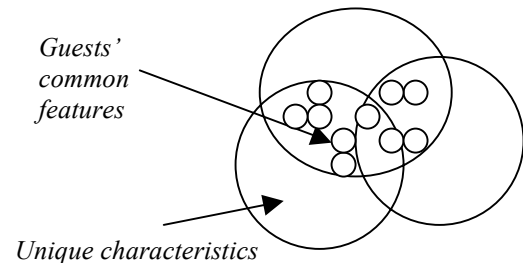
[53] Atrium lobbies are those guestrooms arranged along single-loaded corridors, much like open balconies overlooking the lobby space.

Chapter Three

LUXURY HOTELS FROM THE PAST TO THE PRESENT

An Overview of the Evolution of Luxury

This chapter shows that luxury hotels have always existed in history. Technology has been a

significant determinant in perceiving "luxury" in hotels, and contributed to the image of strength,

innovation, wealth, and modernity.[54] Numerous other factors have influenced the prevalence of those

hotels, such as increasing population, availability of physical resources, development of transportation,

availability of funds, social behavior and tradition, and education, as well as the creativity of designers

and builders.[55]

The available literature indicates that hotels started as inns. They were built as shelters from

danger during travel for a specified fee. This defines lodging in our current terms.[56] The existence of

such primitive lodging was luxury to travelers in a time accommodation was never available. It was only

in the 18th century that the concept of luxury in hotels became synonymous with "hotels designed as

palaces or stately homes, with pillared frontages and marble entrance halls adorned with elegant

chandeliers and wide, winding staircases that exuded opulence and luxury."[57] However, luxury was only

a façade, present in the grandness of their lobbies and entrance areas, but not in their actual guestrooms.

Towards the end of the 19th century, César Ritz introduced new definitions to luxury by opening a hotel

that bears his name, the Ritz (see chapter four).   Hotels like the Ritz became palaces of people.[58] By the

1950s, all essential design features that one finds in today's two- or three-star hotels such as rooms with

plumbing and in-room bathrooms, became standard. More changes occurred in 1960s with the initiation

of atriums in hotels. The atrium was perceived as a luxury feature and had added more opulence to the

---

[54] Paul Johnson, The Birth of the Modern: World Society 1815-1830 (New York: Harper Collins, 1991).

[55] William Zuk and Thomas Zuk, New Technologies: New Architecture (WordCrafters Editorial Services, Inc.: Sterling, Virginia, 1994).

[56] John Walker, Introduction to Hospitality (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1996).

[57] Joseph Ransley and Hadyn Ingram, Developing Hospitality Properties and Facilities (Woburn, MA: Butterworth-Heinmann, 2000) 200.

[58] Daniel Boorstin, Palaces of the People, (New York: Random House, 1967).

ambiance of the hotel. The 1980s were called the years of "luxury amenities creep,"[59] where luxury

hotels started outdoing each other: stocking the bathrooms with different soaps or placing free chocolates

on beds, thinking that the excessive use of things will satisfy the perception of luxury. Since the 1980s,

hotel design diversified to meet the needs of frequent travel, to attract their target market, and most

importantly to meet the needs of globalization. Technology merged with the design concept of hotels and

is now regarded an essential element. In brief, the notion of luxury developed to keep up with the needs

of the time.

The following pages discuss the attributes and factors that evoked the perception of luxury in

hotels. It was necessary to divide the history of luxury hotels into specific periods. Each period is

marked by a change in the standards of luxury due to factors that affected that specific period.

---

[59] Laurence Bernstein, "Luxury and the Hotel Brand," The Cornell Hotel And Restaurant Administration Quarterly
(December 1998): 47-54.

Before 1800

Most literature indicated that hotels started in what was known as taverns or inns dating back to ancient Greece and Rome. Travel conditions were dangerous. Before patronizing taverns, travelers used private citizens' houses as a place to rest or sleep. Taverns and inns also flourished during the Greek and Roman empires due to an increase in wars of conquest, travel and commerce;[60] however, they were not erected to serve the general public. Only officials and couriers of the Roman government were allowed to stay at such taverns. They were even required to have special documents granting this permission.

From 40 B.C. until the 13th century, few changes and ideas occurred in the hospitality business. For example, the idea of "businessman's lunch" was first initiated in 40 B.C. by a Roman innkeeper called Sequis Locates. He wanted to serve ship's brokers who never had time to go home for their lunch meals. The idea of offering meals to the elites of the society at the time influenced cooks and chefs to specialize in this domain and subsequently established their own elite academy for cooking called the Palatine Hill in Rome during the reign of Hadrian (A.D. 117-138).[61] Luxury was present in providing such amenities to the local community, which centuries later became a necessary trait in hotels.

In A.D. 37, Roman public baths bloomed near the inns and wine flowed freely. Inns were used by the upper class of the society. Eventually, public and private banquets in inns became available for parties. To Romans, luxury was a form of sumptuous dining and physical enjoyment. After the fall of the Roman Empire, taverns and inns were no longer limited to the elites of the government, and soon catered to the general public, including drinkers. This rule was a religious order; however, priests traveling to holy places started to regard those accommodations as primitive and unable to cater to their needs. In the eighth century, inns took the form of rest houses with an enhanced type of hospitality for the purpose of serving priests. Priests were treated with warm welcome and free bread. A barber and cobbler, as well as cellars full of fruits and almonds, were considered parts of their amenities. The rest

---

[60] Firebaugh, W.C, The Inns of Greece and Rome: And a History of Hospitality from the Dawn of Time to the Middle Ages (Chicago: W.F. Hall Printing Company, 1923).

[61] John Walker, Introduction to Hospitality (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1996) 6.

house also offered two hospices for the sick with beds and, sometimes, a burial ground located within the property.

The elites of society were not encouraged to travel until the beginning of the 13th century. By the year 1282, travelers and guests were sleeping on mattresses left on the main floor of the rest houses or inns, in what today would be called a lobby. Therefore, the need to upgrade the quality of those inns increased to reach the standard of living of the upper class.

In the late 16th century, inns began to become hotel-size due to the great number of VIP travelers. Huge gables crowned the facades of many luxury hotels – particularly in Germany – and they contained coaching yards surrounded by galleries that gave access to bedrooms patterned after English hotels.

In the New World, hospitality was first delivered by the Dutch in Nieuw Amsterdam – now New York – in 1642. It then spread around with the growth of colonies and took different names such as *inns* in Pennsylvania, *taverns* in New York and *ordinaries* in the South. Those accommodations had soon become a gathering place for residents to hold meetings, conduct business, or to socialize. By the end of the 17th century, monumental staircases were designed and ballrooms were added to attract the aristocrats. Such features were the first step toward the attainment of a hotel enclosing several functions for guests.[62] In the United States, hotels flourished in the 18th century, with an almost "immediate emphasis on size and a willingness to incorporate the latest technology as it became available."[63] The only effect the Revolutionary War had on the lodging standard was to adopt the name *hotel* from the French. Hotels in the United Stats resembled the large and lavish hotels of Europe. The first building to adapt the name "hotel" was called the City Hotel in New York (1794-1796).

---

[62] The first hotel to include all those features was not established until the end of the 18th century at Hotel de Henry IV. It was built in Nantes in 1788 at a cost of $17,000 for only 60 beds. Although it set a new dimension to luxury, sanitation was still a problem, and refrigerating was not known at the time. Today these accommodations are known as *hotels*, which reflect the growth of the French influence in the world.

[63] Elaine Denby, Size and Grandeur in The United States, in Grand Hotels (London: Reaktion Books Ltd., 1998).

1800-1899

In her book His and Hers: Gender, Consumption, and Technology, Molly Berger argues that
luxury hotels of the 19th century were examples of categories of consumption, gender, and technology that
are part of the larger historical process. Berger points out that, first, hotel technology was developed by
men seeking to apply the ideology of progress to their commercial and civic enterprises. Second, its
spatial arrangement reflects the male dominance of spaces that accommodated both sexes. Third, its
luxurious accommodations and lavish decorations were a response to the presence of women at a time
that necessitated creating different zones in hotels according to gender. Finally, the hotel became a
gateway to the city. It became part of the public life of women at a time where the woman's role was to
remain at home. Additionally, the number of luxury hotels in the United States in particular, increased
radically in the first quarter of the 19th century due to urban growth, the accelerating change in
technology, a new redefined concept of luxury, and the belief that luxury goods contribute to the
economic health of a nation. Improvement on transportation was of a significance importance too,
especially after the invention of the passenger railway in 1825 and the beginning of the motor industry in
1888.[64] Therefore, luxury hotels were created to acknowledge the needs of travelers and contributed to an
enriched cultural life, with dancing assemblies, balls, and grand dinners.[65]

John Walker in the book Introduction to Hospitality argues that during this period, the French
influenced the hotel industry in general and hotels in the United States in particular. French cuisine, for
example, became so famous in the first quarter of the 1800s, that any first-class American hotel must have
a French restaurant. The French also influenced the American hotel by adapting the French plan of the
guest payment system. The plan enabled guests to pay for their rooms separate from their meals, a
tradition that is known today as à la carte.

There are notable examples. As the idea of palace hotels spread enormously in the United States
as luxurious properties to serve the elites of the society, hotels became part of public life. The Palmer

---

[64] Roger Bray and Vladimir Raitz, Flight to the Sun (New York: Continuum, 2001) 175.
[65] Roger Horowitz and Arwen Mohun, eds., "A House Divided: The Culture of the American Luxury Hotel, 1825-1860," His and Hers: Gender, Consumption and Technology (Virginia: The University Press of Virginia, 1998) 39.

House in Chicago, the St. Charles in New Orleans, and the Hotel Del Coronado in San Diego are just a few examples.[66] The Exchange Coffee House at Boston followed the City Hotel, which was designed by Asher Benjamin between 1806-1809. Benjamin introduced a domed atrium with fluted Ionic columns and a curving staircase. These features of classical architecture created an impression of grandeur and set a new model to luxury hotels.

The Tremont House in Boston, a landmark in luxury hotel design, was influenced by creativity and technology. It was designed in 1827-1830 by Isaiah Rogers.[67] The Tremont house, with its 170 rooms, and eight bathrooms, was the first modern hotel in America designed to represent the social status and power of its sponsors.[68] It made a break from the traditional traveler's inn with a plan marked by its domed central lobby and lateral corridor, with its distinction between single and double rooms. There were numerous handsomely furnished public rooms. The stables were completely isolated. It was conspicuous by its lack of a signboard outside the front entrance. This idea of a central lobby initiated a new attitude toward separating spaces for specific functions such as receiving, baggage handling, and accounting. The Tremont was demolished in 1894. In the years 1832-1836, John Jacob Astor in New York City wanted to surpass the size and the amenities of the Tremont House. Astor hired Isaiah Rogers to design the Astor House, which contained 309 rooms and 17 bathrooms, and achieved greater grandeur and monumentality than the Tremont.[69] The Astor House of New York introduced several innovations in one building. First, plumbing with hot and cold water and water closets extended throughout the hotel. Second, the steam engine provided power for the plumbing and the laundry system, as well as the kitchen equipment. Third, the hotel generated its own gas plant to supply gas for lighting. Finally, the hotel included a printing press for their daily menus, as well as a bell system and patent locks, which made its

---

[66] John Walker, Introduction to Hospitality (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1996) 15.

[67] Isaiah Rogers was the first American architect to specialize in hotels as a building type. He became famous for designing luxury hotels in the US including the Burnet House in Cincinnati, the Galt House in Louisville, and the Capitol Hotel in Frankfort, KY. His hotels included services not previously available, such as shops, stores, barbershops, and tailoring establishments.

[68] Roger Horowitz and Arwen Mohun, eds., "A House Divided: The Culture of the American Luxury Hotel, 1825-1860," His and Hers: Gender, Consumption and Technology (Virginia: The University Press of Virginia, 1998) 43.

[69] Elaine Denby, Size and Grandeur in The United States, in Grand Hotels (London: Reaktion Books Ltd, 1998).

guests call the hotel "the greatest establishment of the kind in the world."[70] Judge Jacob Burnet also called

Isaiah Rogers to build the Burnet House in Cincinnati. The Burnet House was opened in 1850 and stood

on the northwest corner of Third and Vine streets. The Illustrated London News hailed the Burnet House

as a hotel of unparalleled luxury. The hotel had 342 rooms. Every floor had a fire hydrant, gas light, and

call bells. Every guestroom on the third and fourth level had a private water-closet and a bathroom

attached to it. The hotel had a large central courtyard that was spanned by an iron lattice bridge. The

ground floor included a barbershop, a cigar store, and passages ornamented with thirty cast-iron Doric

columns. The main floor contained a large marble-paved entrance hall, ladies and gentlemen public

rooms, a 110-by-50-foot dining room, a spacious ladies' dining room and a children's dining room. In

1926, the Burnet House was replaced by the Union Central Building.[71]

Innovations in luxury hotels transcended radically during the mid-19th century. For example, in

1853 the Metropolitan Hotel in New York, constructed a boiler system that radiated heat from pipes in the

walls for all its public rooms and passages. For the first time, laundry processed 4000 articles per day.

This meant they had the ability to wash, dry, iron, and deliver a piece of laundry within 15 minutes to the

guests, the epitome of luxury at that time. In the same year, the St. Nicholas Hotel opened featuring gas

and croton water from the city's new water system. It also acquired the new electromagnetic enunciator

instead of the old mechanical calling bell.

Luxury reached its optimum with the invention of the passenger elevator by the Boston engineer

Otis Tufts. Elevators eventually "distinguished the more luxurious hotels from those of a lower stature."[72]

In 1859, the Fifth Avenue Hotel in New York introduced the first passenger elevator. It had a great

impact on the floor's status as a hotel. Before the introduction of elevators, the lower floors – especially

the ground level – were considered more luxurious than the upper levels – although more dusty and noisy

– and were therefore reserved for families and women. The upper levels – especially the top level – were

---

[70] Roger Horowitz and Arwen Mohun, eds., "A House Divided: The Culture of the American Luxury Hotel, 1825-1860," His and Hers: Gender, Consumption and Technology (Virginia: The University Press of Virginia, 1998) 46.
[71] <http://www.nbm.org/blueprints/80s/winter86/page2/page2.htm>
[72] Cecil Elliott, Technics and Architecture: The Development of Materials and systems for Buildings (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992).

reserved for bachelor men. Once the elevator was introduced, the status of luxury in these levels

reversed. The upper levels – especially the top level – were the most luxurious, as one had the longer

elevator ride than someone on a lower floor. Riding the elevator was itself the major attraction at the

time. One has to note, though, that this had lost its status after the middle half of the 20th century with the

development of fast and panoramic elevators. In other words, features like elevators, boiler systems,

enhanced plumbing and thereafter set a luxury standard during the mid-19th that hotel advertising

emphasized plumbing, steam heat, and annunciator systems. Therefore, technological progress "created a

new definition of luxury, one embedded in the modern age. Because technology fit into the ideology of

progress, it differed from its decorative counterpart."[73]

Locks were another example of significant technological progress. The concept of locking

guestroom doors was introduced in the mid-1800s. Although keylocks were known to ancient Egyptians

around 2000 B.C., [74] they were never used in lodgings. Keys were large wooden, hockey sticked-shaped

tools. The Greeks developed this idea centuries later. Keys resembled a sickle this time and represented

the social status of the wealth of the owner. Bolts were hidden and keys were so elaborately decorated

that they were too heavy to open a normal door. The Romans possessed lighter keys, the size of the palm

of the hand that could be inserted into the keyhole and turned sideways until the bolt was released.

Blacksmiths in the Middle Ages invented the unique system of having a different key for each lock. They

used padlocks rather than bulky bolts. These padlocks could be concealed to confuse the thief.[75] Keys

were also ornamented to reflect the status of the owner of the house. This system was used from the

Middle Ages until the 18th century. The late 18th century brought the invention of the lever-lock, where a

rectangular piece of iron, steel, or brass was attached to the latch side of the door, and inserted into or

released from the recessed area of the doorjamb.

---

[73] Roger Horowitz and Arwen Mohun, eds., "A House Divided: The Culture of the American Luxury Hotel, 1825-1860," His and Hers: Gender, Consumption and Technology (Virginia: The University Press of Virginia, 1998) 47.
[74] Stephen Rushmore and Carolyn Malone, "Keys and Hotel Security," Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly (Dec 1998) 91.
[75] Stephen Tchudi, The Secrets of Locking Things Up, In, and Out (New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1993) 16.

Keys and locks were not used by the hotel industry until 1829, when the proprietor of the

Tremont House in Boston began the concept of offering private guestrooms with private locks for the

privacy and security of its wealthy guests. Prior to that date, guests shared rooms with strangers.

Therefore, having private metal keys for private rooms was a state of luxury that started to become a hotel

standard in 1840. In that year, the artist Linus Yale invented the famous Yale Cylinder lock, based upon

the old Egyptian system of keys. The key is inserted into a cylindrical plug and pushed each tumbler and

driver in line. When the key's teeth contacted the correct tumblers, the cylindrical plug rotated to release

the lever and then unlocked the door.[76] By the mid-18th century, key locks became standard in most

hotels.

In spite of the fact that comfort was a controversial issue before the 18th century, its relationship

with luxury became clearer. Comfort in services and amenities were gaining ground in the new hotels of

the 19th century. In the 1890s, the managers of large hotels began to go beyond guests' needs by

installing kindergartens, playrooms, special classes, and other programs for guests' children.[77] Single and

double rooms were also offered to provide individual privacy; the rooms were lockable, with a jug, bowl,

and soap being supplied in the guest rooms. Sprung mattresses resulted from the invention of bedsprings

in 1831 by J. French of Massachusetts, but they were not found in hotels until forty years later, when they

were mass-produced. In 1840s, the New York Hotel was the first to include private baths. During that

decade, the idea of luxury hotels flourished all over the world. For example, in the Middle East, the

Shepherds in Cairo got established.

In 1870s, the Palmer House opened in Chicago and was, at the time, the largest and the first built

with a fireproof structure; other hotels soon followed it. In the 1880s, partial electric light was first used

in Hotel Everett in New York City, and was fully used in Sagamore Hotel at Lake George in New York –

electricity reached all rooms of the hotel. During those years, concrete was first used in Ponce De Leon

---

[76] Walter Buehr, The Story of Locks (New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953) 31.
[77] Paul Groth, LIVING DOWNTOWN: The History of Residential Hotels in the United States (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1994).

Hotel in St. Augustine, Florida. Finally, the idea of a resort reached its optimum with the opening of the Hotel Del Coronado in San Diego, California, the largest of its time.

In 1898, Cesar Ritz gave a new definition to luxury with the opening of the Ritz Paris. He introduced new design features, innovated circulation planning, initiated a personalized service, and incorporated the latest technology, which will be discussed with further details later in chapter four.

In brief, this period originated fundamental standards to the understanding of luxury. Some of the hotels that marked this period set the design base of hotels of the 20th century.

1900- 1919

Overall, the 1914 World War I marked the beginning of a new era where new inventions developed rapidly.[78] Concrete strengths have tripled as compared to 19th century strengths. Wood and steel technology advanced radically and the use of aluminum and glass flourished in hotels. Advances in technology included the invention of automatic fire control devices, smoke and heat detectors, enhanced air-cooling system water sprinklers, detergent foam ejectors, and halon gas emitters.[79] Fire precautions were taken into consideration as electric fire alarms were introduced in the 20th century. All stairs were made of hard stone construction with circulation areas supported by arched brickwork vaulting confined between either cast-iron or plated steel girders.

Around 1900, luxury hotels developed rapidly to become giant in scale and innovative in construction throughout Europe and the United States. However, hotel designers did not feel free to change the gilded palatial style before the First World War.[80] The Imperial Palace Hotel at Nice, for example, was the first to be constructed in reinforced concrete, and it became the largest hotel in the world at the time. The reinforced concrete was then used by the enormous Marlborough-Blenheim Hotel in Atlantic City, and other hotels to follow.

---

[78] Roger Bray and Vladimir Raitz, Flight to the Sun (New York: Continuum, 2001) 194.
[79] William Zuk and Thomas Zuk, New Technologies: New Architecture (WordCrafters Editorial Services, Inc. Virginia, 1994) 27-37.
[80] David Watkin, The Grand Hotel: The Golden Age of Palace Hotels: An Architectural and Social History (New York: Vendome Press) 24.

"Luxury hotels were now popping up like mushrooms everywhere in London. That meant there was a need for them."[81] For example, César Ritz agreed to help some British entrepreneurs establish in London a hotel of a similar status of the Paris Ritz. The Carlton in London was the first to have private baths in each apartment and to have telephones installed in every bathroom. Ritz, again with his architect Mewés, revised the plans of the hotel and gave approval on them and altered some of the spaces in order to meet the standards of luxury at that time. The London Ritz rests on a very strategic location around Cesar's palm courts, with Louis XVI style in the interiors. The hotel had a visual coherence lacking in other hotels. The façade of the hotel reflected a variety of Parisian structures by using steel frame construction.[82] In 1907, New York witnessed the establishment of the first Ritz Carlton hotel, operating under the management of the Ritz Hotels Development Company of England. The hotel was at the corner of Madison Avenue and 46th Street. At that time, the United States had already enjoyed luxury hotels such as the Tremont House in Boston, the Palmer in Chicago, or the St. Charles in New Orleans. But the Ritz-Carlton New York had two more things to offer: Continental dining and a classic restraint in service that had never been conceived in public hospitality. These features brought the most distinguished clientele ever attracted to any hotel erected at that time.[83]

1920-1979

This period witnessed the birth of International airlines and a radical progress in aviation. It was a determinant factor in changing the image of hotel design around the world.[84] The palatial grand style of hotels finally changed in the 1920s, but the interior quality remained the same. Hotel designers decided to adopt the skyscraper form developed for office buildings. However, the skyscraper towers offered smaller guestrooms than the previous luxury (or palatial) hotels.[85] The Stevens (now Conrad Hilton) was

[81] Marie Louise Ritz, Cesar Ritz: Host to the World (New York: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1938) 287.
[82] Ibid., p. 23
[83] Lucius Beebe, The Ritz Idea: The Story of a Great Hotel (New York: Ritz-Carlton Hotel Corporation, 1936).
[84] Roger Bray and Vladimir Raitz, Flight to the Sun (New York: Continuum, 2001) 203.
[85] Paul Groth, "Palace Hotels and Social Opulence," Living Downtown: The History of Residential Hotels in the United States (L.A., CA: University of California Press, 1994).

opened in 1927 in Chicago. The hotel was the tallest of its kind. It was then followed by the famous

Waldorf-Astoria in New York, which "like so many hotels before it, was intended to be the last word of

luxury."[86] The 2,253 rooms wired for radio and television, the four ballrooms, and the extensive roof

gardens were housed within the 46-story high building. As a result of skyscrapers, the 1920s saw the

addition of parking garages.

In the 1930s, Las Vegas introduced thematic hotels. Four factors contributed to the success of

Las Vegas. The Great Depression of 1929 influenced the legalization of gambling in Las Vegas in 1931.

The Hoover Dam construction provided electricity and

wealth to the city. The city established new laws to make

both marriage and divorce easy.   And the class of visitors

to the city changed as automobiles became widely used.

These reasons accelerated the development of both

population and tourism in Las Vegas.

Las Vegas was the first to attract celebrities. This

specific clientele necessitated the establishment of high-

Fig. 3.1 The Venetian Hotel, a themed hotel in Las Vegas. Source: personal photography.

quality hotels with a theme concept, different than the known image of motels and other hotels of lower

quality. Hotels of all types flourished rapidly in downtown. By the end of 1940s and by early 1950s,

they spread along what is known as the Las Vegas Strip. In 1966, Las Vegas introduced the first luxury

hotel in what is known as a themed hotel. Caesars Palace opened with an ancient Roman theme. The

hotel produced a high-class atmosphere and first-class service to attract specific clientele to their

properties who are accustomed to a luxury stay. Caesars Palace exemplified the way a luxurious hotel

should be in Las Vegas. For this reason they avoided the flashy neon signs that decorated lower-class

---

[86] David Watkin, The Grand Hotel: The Golden Age of Palace Hotels: An Architectural and Social History (New York: Vendome Press) 24

hotels. The hotel included monumental statues, corridors, high-quality service, and many entertainment

facilities.[87] Las Vegas thematic hotels inspired many hotels to follow (Fig.3.1).

A new concept in hotel architecture commenced when John Portman reintroduced the atrium at

Hyatt Regency Atlanta in 1967. Portman based his idea on the human hotel experience. He used his

understanding of how guests approach their rooms from the entrance, passing through check-in and then

on to their rooms. Portman thought that a more open space within a hotel, would encourage guest

interaction with the architecture, increase the level of socialization within a space, and, especially

alleviate the sense of congestion, particularly in congested cities.[88] The original guest experience was like

going to a cell-like room, after passing through a dimly lit corridor, and traveling in a closed-in elevator.[89]

> If you analyze what existed during the early 1960's in terms of hotel design, you would
> find a slab building in the middle of a high-density city block or on the corner. You went
> in the hotel and found a low-ceilinged lobby, a registration desk, a newsstand, and
> possibly a bar with a few club chairs.[90,91] – John Portman

Thinking with human psychological terms rather than physical terms, the atrium created an

interior park. The guest left the city with its noisy and smog-polluted streets and entered an enclosed

space that creates fun, dynamic, and visible activity. "Architecture has suffered from a concentration on

things and not on the innate reactions of people to environmental circumstances," Portman said.

"Therefore, we have attempted to focus on people – to create spaces for human enjoyment".[92] Portman's

main thinking of the spaces he creates in hotels is to provide an ideal space for resting, studying, loving,

eating, and meeting friends.[93] His projects interact with their urban setting.

The decongestive idea of the atrium in the 1960s offered a more, relaxing and comfortable

ambiance and atmosphere. The Hyatt Regency in Atlanta was at once considered a luxurious hotel

---

[87] Shoichi Muto, "History of Las Vegas," <u>Las Vegas: 16 Hotels & Casinos, 5 Themed Restaurants</u> (Tokyo: Shoten Ken Chi Ku-Sha, 1997) 175, 176.
[88] Ibid., p.29.
[89] Laura Dishman, "Architect brings sunshine to hotel lobbies," <u>Tallahassee Democrat</u> 7 June 1987.
[90] John Portman III. Personal interview. 17 November 2000.
[91] Paolo Riani, <u>John Portman</u> (Washington, DC: American Institute of Architects Press, 1990) 30.
[92] Ibid. p.22.
[93] Ibid. p.19.

because it offered a new experience that was never available in any other hotel. Before the hotel opened

in Atlanta, the bankers had no confidence about financing the hotel for $19.00 a night, a relatively high

price for Atlanta at that time. The Hyatt's main doors were known as the "Jesus Christ Doors", because it

seemed that it opened into another world.[94] Unfortunately, the hotel lost its luxury status by never

updating essential services, finishes, materials, or lighting.[95] Then came the idea of responding to guests'

psychological needs. The designers felt the atrium added more "comfort" and linked a harmonious

transition between the interior and the exterior of the hotel. Portman once said:

> I think the atrium has been misunderstood because not since the great religious spaces of
> the Gothic and Renaissance periods have people experienced such space, and it became
> an 'oh, wow' thing. Some architects forgot about the why's of the oh-wow and, because
> of its success and public acceptance, just started repeating the oh-wow. And that's where
> it got off track.[96]

Toward the end of the 1960s, the Hyatt Hotels Corporation, which was founded in 1957, had been

recognized for innovative atriums, glass elevators, high-quality service, and creating the club floor

concept.[97] In the same year, there had been several attempts to incorporate information technology (IT)

applications in hotels to provide efficiency in the operation of the hotel.   Such operations ranged from

payroll, accounting, reservations, inventory control, guest profiling, to the control of large data

quantities.[98] By the end of 1970s, three concepts became synonyms to luxury: the concept of atrium, the

concept of private club floors, and the concept of themed hotels. All exemplify a fantasy world isolated

from reality.

---

[94] Kaye Whitten, "The Victorious Atrium," OAG Frequent Flyer May 1987.

[95] Pilot survey at the Hyatt Regency Lobby.

[96] Paolo Riani, John Portman (Washington, DC: American Institute of Architects Press, 1990) 31.

[97] Jay Spechler, "Hyatt Hotels and Resort: Achieving Quality through Employee and Guest Feedback Mechanisms," Managing Quality in America's Most Admired Companies (San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 1993) 251.

[98] Desinano, P. and Vigo, C. "Developing information technology options in the hotel industry: the value chain approach," Seaton, A.V., Ed., Tourism: The state of the Art (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1994) 275.

1980-2001

With the increasing emphasis on design in society and in people's private lives, the role of design in the 21st century has, perhaps unconsciously, become increasingly important. People no longer want to see the traditional room in a box. Guests are looking for creative design features in rooms that cater to the current trends. Joseph Ransley and Hadyn Ingram emphasized in their book <u>Developing Hospitality Properties and Facilities</u>, that " levels of income and leisure time continue to rise in developed places. In addition to an increased and improved level of education, customers are more aware of design trends and features and are more appreciative of luxury in chosen hotels."[99] This period is marked with more awareness of how good design, advanced technology, and personalized service create the atmosphere and ambiance that influence customers and staff alike, and create accommodations to which customers want to return. Nevertheless, the issue of hotel design has also become more complex and controversial.

From the previous chapters, it was evident that luxury was perceived in certain features that gave the assumptions that the whole experience of the hotel would certainly be luxurious. Rather than concentrating on comfort, in many cases, hotels were driven by technology. Technology has to be in harmony with comfort. One of the features that propelled the Ritz above the competition, was the balance between technology, design, planning, and architecture. Before the Ritz, kindergartens, playrooms, and other conveniences dominated the luxury market. Other hotels discounted these features to concentrate on technology.

The period between 1980-2001 can be summarized by the following five characteristics. First, the influence of work in Southeast Asia on hotel designers throughout the world gave a new definition to *hospitality*[100] such as personalized services, spaciousness in both guestrooms and bathrooms, in-room spa facilities, simple ornamented design finishes, grandeur in lobby, and so on. Of the world's 200 largest hotel companies, 17 are based in central Asia and 11 are headquartered in Japan. Three of these

---

[99]Joseph Ransley and Hadyn Ingram, <u>Developing Hospitality Properties and Facilities</u> (Woburn, MA: Butterworth-Heinmann, 2000) 281

[100] David Beer, "Hotel Design and Development: Planning for the Future," Harvard University, Boston. 29 June 2000.

companies rank among the top six in the world for quality standards and guest satisfaction. Second, the

Eighties witnessed the birth of the first comprehensive book on hotel planning published by the Whitney

Library of Design,[101] which yielded more awareness of the field of hotel design and of development in

general. Third, social behavior influenced the elimination of traditional spaces known to palace or luxury

hotels of the past. Reading rooms, writing rooms, bridge rooms, and conversation and intimate reception

rooms have been replaced by one large space that includes all the previous activities. This change in

design responded to the social changes in the middle of the 20th century where the desire for sociability in

large interiors became essential.[102] This can be attributed to a change in clientele; grand hotels in the past

were established for the idle rich. After the middle of the 20th century, hotels catered to business and

leisure travelers of a variety of social classes.[103] Fourth, globalization required hotels to consider the

various different needs required by international guests. Fifth, luxury is now defined through the

ambiance and the atmosphere of the facility.

How is Ambiance and Atmosphere defined in this period?

> [D]etails begin with appearance and image. A well fitting uniform with name tag,
> properly worn by a neatly groomed employee creates a professional image and sends a
> very positive message to arriving guests.[104]

Toward the 21st century, luxury as defined in terms of atmosphere, reveals the quality of interiors,

architecture, and services in an intangible sense.[105] What is this atmosphere? A property has "a mental or

moral environment" described by intangible attributes. For example, physical features, such as the

architecture, décor, and furnishings, are all tangible features of the property that can only be enhanced by

intangible components. Only an innovative design can evoke such atmosphere.[106] This is what makes the

difference between a finely designed hotel with superior physical facilities and another that reveals a

---

[101] Walter Rutes and Richard Penner, <u>Hotel Planning and Design</u> (New York: Whitney Library of Design, 1985) 36.
[102] Herbet Weisskamp, <u>Hotels: An International Survey</u> (New York, NY: Praeger, 1998) 9.
[103] Jeanne Davern, <u>Places for People</u> (New York, NY: McGraw Hill, 1976) x.
[104] Harry Nobles, "Creating Atmosphere," <u>Hotel Online</u> (Jan 2000) 1.
[105] Ibid.
[106] Ibid.

greater sense of graciousness and genuine hospitality.[107] Therefore, the experience of a luxury atmosphere begins at the door. The sense of arrival is a very critical element. Other important factors are location, image, public spaces, security, guestrooms, wayfinding, and information technology. To balance these factors will always remain a challenge to designers and developers alike.

Location

"Location, location, location" – Ellsworth Statler.[108]

Historically, luxury hotels have always been located in prime sites in major cities that satisfy the need of the intended market, whether for business purposes or leisure. Accessibility, visibility and adaptability of the site should be considered before initiating such a project.[109] Architect David Beer in his lecture at Harvard University,[110] argued that location is the first consideration when defining "luxury" in a hotel. "The Ritz in London, the Gritti Palace in Venice, and the Palace in Madrid are all in the best locations possible," David Beer said. "But the challenge comes when designing a new luxurious hotel, because in most cases, their prime city sites are taken and the creators of new properties must take a less central location." Today, the site should be located near attractions such as beach frontage, recreational interests, fashionable shopping; near vantage positions such as river views, historic buildings, parks, recreational activities; near major highways or roads; or near suitable environment such as attractive surroundings, parks, and quality buildings.[111] Architect John Portman explained that locating a hotel away from an existing development could be successful only if the location is large and diverse.[112]

---

[107] Harry Nobles, "What is Atmosphere?" Hotel Online (Nov 1999) 1.

[108] Gary Vallen and Jerome Vallen, Check-in Check-out (Upper Saddle, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2000) 11

[109] Joseph Ransley and Hadyn Ingram, Developing Hospitality Properties and Facilities (Woburn, MA: Butterworth-Heinmann, 2000) 201

[110] David Beer, "Hotel Design and Development: Planning for the Future," Harvard University, Boston. 29 June 2000.

[111] Fred Lawson, Hotels and Resorts: Planning, Design and Refurbishment (Woburn, MA: Architectural Press, 1999) 108

[112] John Portman and Jonathan Barnett, "How Architecture improves real estate and the other way around," The Architect as Developer (New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1976) 149.

Sense of Arrival

The arriving experience was the second major point that architect David Beer emphasized on when defining "luxury" in hotels. The experience starts from approaching the hotel and ends at the guestroom, where another dimension of tangible and intangible components start. The transition from leaving the vehicle (whether a car, boat, or helicopter), entering the hotel, approaching the front desk, and arriving at the guestroom should feel seamless by combining both visually attractive physical features and attentive professional personnel.[113]

Hotel's Name and Logo

The author Philip Nailon in his book Towards an Integrated Approach to Hotel Planning emphasized that the name of the hotel is related specifically to the image factor and must therefore be consistent with it. Many guests consider the hotel name before making their reservations. There were several cases in which people avoided certain hotels simply because of the name and the brand. It is important to consider four assumptions guests make of hotel names: [114]

1. The name might disassociate the hotel from the city in which it is located. For example, the hotel Paris in Las Vegas will certainly disassociate the hotel from the city. If guests have no information on the quality of the hotel, they may have two assumptions: First, they may expect that the hotel will reflect a Parisian atmosphere and French services. Nothing is specified to indicate superior or poor standards, however, when people think of Paris, they think of the Ritz. Second, they may expect that the hotelier wanted to lure guests by calling it Paris.

2. The name immediately denotes a certain type and standard of market package. This point is apparent in chained hotels. The name Ritz, for example, immediately reflects a certain image to international travelers in various locations.

---

[113] David Beer, "Hotel Design and Development: Planning for the Future," Harvard University, Boston. 29 June 2000.

[114] Philip Nailon, Towards an Integrated Approach to Hotel Planning (Aberdeen, United Kingdom: The Central Press, 1970) 59, 60.

3. The name must be legally registered to avoid misuse for promotional purposes such as calling a one-star hotel the *Ritz*.

4. The name must be free from unpleasant associations, easy to pronounce and remember, and consistent with the image of the hotel. *Ritz* is short, easy and relates to a great hotelier.

Parking and Entry

Arriving at the hotel has to be visually attractive. A canopy or port-cochère is the most desired feature a luxury hotel should have today (Fig. 3.2, and Fig.3.3). The sense of welcome starts at the entrance. The door attendant greets the guests and safely unloads their luggage, which will then be taken by the luggage attendant. The car valet will then park guests' cars in a principled manner. The door attendant eases the vehicular traffic at the entrance while the luggage attendant escorts the luggage to the guests' rooms. The bell captain, who is stationed in the lobby in most hotels, maintains the log of luggage movement in and out and can manage luggage in the storerooms. [115]

Parking the car is a primary concern to many guests (see Chapter two for survey results). Depending on the size of the hotel site, there should be a minimum of one parking spot provided per room. The guest's sense of security also starts at the parking lot. There must be an obvious and distinct design transition to enter the property from the public street. Solid deterrent cues should include physical barriers such as perimeter walls, decorative fencing, landscaped terraces, and a well-defined driveway and main entrance. [116] Screens and gates discourage unauthorized people from entering.[117] Good exterior lighting fills the gap between the property boundary and the hotel entrance and is the most important night-time security feature. Exterior lighting must be even and balanced; balanced lighting appears warm and comfortable and makes a property *feel* safe. [118] Parking lot surveillance cameras are a

---

[115] Harry Smith, Hotel Security (Springfield, Illinois: Charles Thomas Publisher, 1993) 140, 141.

[116] McGoey,C. "Hotel Security as an Amenity," <http:// www.crimedoctor.com/bio.htm>.

[117] Je'Anna Abbott and Gil Fried, "Asphalt Jungle: Providing Parking-area Security through Design and Common Sense," Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly (April 1999): 51.

[118] Robert Kohr, "Designing for Safety and Security," Accident prevention for hotels, motels, and restaurants (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1991) 169

must. A uniformed security patrol should be available on-site to take immediate action if there is no charge for the parking.[119] Signage or directional signs should be consistent with the image of the property. A covered walkway from the parking facility to the hotel is essential to protect guests from the weather. Designated crossing areas should be provided for pedestrian safety. Finally, a thoughtful design for people with disabilities should be applied to walkways such as adding ramps and tactile warnings and by eliminating coarse surfaces.

Since the hotel includes public spaces that serve both guests and outsiders, there should be more than one entrance to the hotel. The main entrance serves the guests and visitors. A separate entrance serves the staff of the hotel. Third, there should be a private entrance that serves VIP guests. Fourth, a separate entrance should serve facilities such as the banquet room, ballroom, or the convention halls. Finally, if guests arrive by helicopter, the transition from the helipad to the lobby should be as important as the transition from the hotel's main entry to the lobby.

---

[119] Je'Anna Abbott and Gil Fried, "Asphalt Jungle: Providing Parking-area Security through Design and Common Sense," Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly (April 1999): 51.

Fig. 3.2 Porte Cochère at Paris Hotel in Las Vegas
Source: personal photography

Fig. 3.3 Port Cochère at the Venetian Hotel Las Vegas. Source: personal photography

The Concierge

While the physical facilities of the property play a significant role in the overall rating, the staff service can sometimes influence the final rating decision.[120] Since the 19th century, the concierge remains the most powerful figure in luxury hotels to deliver the ultimate service. The concept is a European tradition, and was known exclusively to the world in the 1980s. The book Ultimate Service: The Complete Handbook to the World of the Concierge, was the first comprehensive book written on the position. The authors[121] of the book assert that it is the work of the concierge to maintain guests' satisfaction and motivate them to return to the hotel. Although the concierge supervises the door attendants, bell captain, luggage attendants, limousine drivers, and car valets in an efficient manner, [122] the job remains extremely personal by answering the guests' *personal* needs. The concierge desk is usually located next to the front desk to help handle the needs of the arriving guests during their check-in procedures.

The real value of concierges lies in the ability to interact individually with guests to solve their problems, and to provide them with personal and memorable service. It is their spirit that increases the value of the hotel and helps deliver the job in a satisfactory manner. If *I don't know* is half the sentence for a concierge, the other half is *but I'll find out*. Their profession demands a high level of commitment and may require getting unglamorous jobs done in an ethical manner. The job should also involve a sense of humor, a balance in making independent choices, flexibility, and patience while under pressure.

Concierges are a curious combination of idealism and realism that equates to true hospitality.[123] Their image and their attire should be dignified and should appropriately reflect the image of the hotel. Concierges provided with a list of the arriving guests are expected to greet the guests by names with

---

[120] Harry Nobles, "Specific services that AAA Deems Critical at the 4 and 5 Diamond level," Hotel Online March 1999.

[121] Holly Stiel, the main author of the book, was the first female concierge. She served as Chief Concierge for 16 years at the Grand Hyatt San Francisco.

[122] Holly Stiel and Delta Collins, Ultimate Service: The Complete Handbook to the World of the Concierge (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall/Career & Technology, 1994) 140.

[123] Ibid., p.1.

direct eye contact.[124] Today, some companies manufacture computer and high-tech equipment that handle certain concierge responsibilities. Although computers and other high-tech equipment can never replace the person, they are valuable tools to enhance the concierge's job.[125]

Services

Generally, the more employees a hotel has, the better the service. A desired ratio of one employee for every room is acceptable. Luxury Asian properties such as the Bangkok Shangri-La has a ratio of 1.5:1, where 1,073 of staff members handle 697 rooms exceeding the satisfactory requirements by one half. The Peninsula Hotel in Hong Kong has a ratio of 2:1, where 655 of its staff handle 300 rooms.[126]

Front Desk and the Lobby

"More than any other element, the lobby quickly sets the hotel's tone and ambiance."[127] In a luxury hotel, one is poised between the public and the private realms. The lobby is the people's palace or the people's place. It brings forth another world within itself. It opens wide opportunities for people to socialize, interact, and exchange business, culture, or knowledge. It opens opportunities for people to establish new friendships, relations, and bonds. Paul Goldberger described walking into any of the hotel's public spaces as not just entering a room but stepping into an urban square where one feels as comfortable as one does at home and as exalted as one does in the greatest public space. [128]

---

[124] Ibid., p.25.
[125] Ibid., p.132.
[126] Gary Vallen and Jerome Vallen, Check-in Check-out, (Upper Saddle, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2000) 17.
[127] Walter Rutes and Richard Penner, Hotel Planning and Design (New York: Whitney Library of Design, Watson Guptill Publications, 1985) 44.
[128] Paul Goldberger, "Public Places: The Secret Life of Lobbies," Gourmet May 2000: 187.

"Atrium lobbies, and gilded or coffered ceilings can be signals of luxury to come."[129] While

vertical atriums became the major attraction in luxury hotels toward the end of the 20th century, some

guests still prefer the traditional lobby with a high ceiling because it provides more tranquility and privacy

to the guest (see Appendix A). However, some hotels succeeded in solving the privacy problem in

atriums by having it limited in size, enhancing the acoustical system, and using creativity in designing the

form of the building. The atrium can also be used to control access for public access through the vertical

separation.[130] For example, the Marriott Marquis Atlanta, completed in 1985, has for years been a

landmark for its dramatic 50-story, 9.5-cubic-foot atrium (Fig. 3.4). The hotel operation is successful; it

sets an ideal example in hotel construction. Its atrium became the major attraction for many guests by

adding opulence and luxury to the structure. "People experience the hotel's spaces as unfolding toward

the final explosion of this huge space," said John Portman, who designed the hotel. Exploding the lobby

space and opening the structure allowed a variety of functions to exist within. The vertical organization

of the hotel helped divide the public and the private spaces.[131] The curved shape of the building with the

short sides at the east and west of the building helped reduce the solar heat gain through the walls, cast

shade to the full-length glass of the guestrooms, and created an interesting interplay of light and shadow.

Concrete was used in its structure to make it blend with the surrounding buildings. Nature was expressed

through the use of greenery, fountains, movement, and curves. "People require order in their lives, but

they also crave variety," said Portman. "The Atlanta Marriott Marquis will set a new standard of luxury

and efficiency for convention-goers, meeting planners, and business visitors to Atlanta."[132]

Another example that changed the conventional way of using atriums in hotels can be found in

the Kyoto Brighton Hotel in Japan. The hotel used what is called a "shotgun" plan, where living and

---

[129] Laurence Bernstein, "Luxury and the Hotel Brand," Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly (Feb 1999): 51.
[130] Michael Bednar, The New Atrium (New York: McGraw Hill, 1986) 44.
[131] John Portman, "Atlanta Marriott Marquis," The Portman Office November 2000.
[132] John Portman, Jr., "Architectural Concept for the Atlanta Marriott Marquis," The Portman Office May 1985.

bedroom spaces are behind each other. The bathroom in this case divides the sitting and sleeping

elements. The sitting room is lit from the atrium with sheer drapes or shoji screens for privacy.[133]

In conclusion, if the atrium is wisely and creatively built, it will remain synonymous of luxury. "At first

sight it looks like a luxury, an attention-gaining gimmick, that can be afforded only in high-value

development." Atriums also respond to guests' cultural needs. "They put people at the center of things in

a way lost in recent architecture. They encourage play: People watching and promenading, movement

through space, enjoyment of nature and social life. They provide a visual antidote to the oppressive

interiors and the formless external spaces of today."[134]

---

[133] Richard Saxon, <u>The Atrium Comes of Age</u> (Essex, England: Longman Group, 1993) 13.
[134] Richard Saxon, "Why Atria?" <u>Atrium Buildings: Development and Design</u> (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1987) 5.
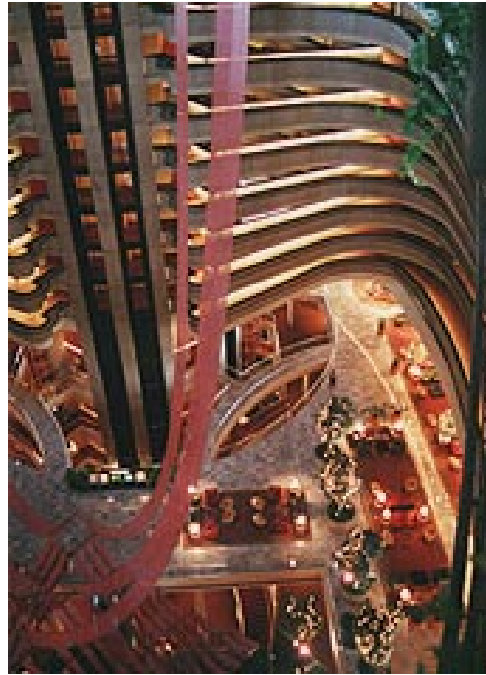
Fig. 3.4.a, Fig. 3.4.b, Fig. 3.4.c. Marriott Marquis in Atlanta. Source:
<http://www.gate.net/~roblin3/Georgia/Atlanta/Downtown/marriott.html>

Checking-in

Once the guest reaches the front desk, an efficient procedure of checking-in is expected. Long lines equal poor service.[135] Ultra luxurious properties offer a separate check-in desk in every floor. Other hotels were creative in designing the front desk to make waiting lines feel seamless (Fig. 3.5). The Mirage Hotel Las Vegas has a 20,000-gallon saltwater aquarium behind its desk, and the MGM Grand Las Vegas has monitors behind the front desk showing entertaining video clips (Fig. 3.7). Although a person-to-person check-in is expected in luxury hotels, some hotels implement design or technological solutions to make this procedure smooth and easy. Technological features include the check-in kiosk, wireless phone check-in, and Palm check-in. However, guests will still want to interact with employees. "You lose the personality of the property if you just have a kiosk for check-in," said Marguarite Clark, spokeswoman at the Phoenician Resort in Scottsdale, Arizona. "You need to balance the technology with the service needs of your guest."[136]

The check-in kiosk can be seen today in many of the finest hotels. The system allows the guests to self-check into the hotel, allowing them choose the preferred room type available in the hotel. The system needs only a prior registration confirmation code and a major credit card.

The personal digital assistant, such as a Palm, has features to check people in, assign room numbers, encode room magnetic key cards, and swipe the guest's credit card (Fig. 3.11). It enables hotel employees to register guests into the hotel upon their arrival to the hotel and not have them wait or go through lines.[137] Such devices have advantages over the traditional check-in by adding speed to the process. They save time. Some include a guest's profiles and preferences. Their enhanced graphics can be advantageous to people with disabilities.

Checking-in via cell phones is a feature that specifically caters to business travelers. The Atlanta based TESA Entry Systems and Registry Magic, based in Boca Raton, have utilized state-of-the-art WAP

---

[135] Gary Vallen and Jerome Vallen, Check-in Check-out (Upper Saddle, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2000) 241.
[136] Melanie Goldman, "Calling All Cards!"Lodging Magazine March 2001.
<http://www.lodgingnews.com/lodgingmag/2001_03/2001_03_38.asp>
[137] "Pertlink Launches HOTELINMYHAND: A Unique Handheld PC Application Designed Specifically to Improve Service Delivery in the Hospitality Industry," <http// www.hotel-online.com.>

Bluetooth enabled-cell phones provided by Ericsson and Motorola to provide complete access to guestrooms (Fig. 3.8). This technology utilizes short range radio signals to transmit information between devices ranging from cellular phones to electronic locks. In other words, guests with such cell phones will enter the hotel and will instantly be recognized by the property management system (PMS). The guest's reservation is then confirmed, sending the guest the assigned room number. The guest will then go directly to the room assigned, point the cell phone towards the door. The phone sends radio signals to unlock the door. Checking-out will be as simple as checking-in. The cell phone can also send signals to purchase items from vending machines.[138] Such products have the advantages of cutting down manufacturing key cards that range from 10 cents to five dollars per card. Guests have the ability to send their preferences prior to their arrival to the hotel. Finally, they eliminate waiting lines.

---

[138] "A Technological Breakthrough; TESA Entry Systems Opens Doors with Bluetooth Technology," <http://www.hotel-online.com>

Fig. 3.5
Checking- in at
the Monte Carlo
Hotel in Las
Vegas. The
view behind the
front desk
engages waiting
guests.

Source:
personal
photography.

Fig. 3.6
Checking-in at
the Venetian
Hotel in Las
Vegas. The map
behind the front
desk engages
waiting guests.

Source:
personal
photography.

Fig. 3.7
Checking-in at
the MGM
Grand Hotel in
Las Vegas. The
large TV
screens behind
the front desk
engages waiting
guests.

Source:
personal
photography.

Elevators

After the checking-in procedure, guests proceed to the elevators on their way to their guestrooms. When elevators were first introduced at the Fifth Avenue Hotel in New York, they distinguished the most luxurious hotels. By the first quarter of the 19th century, elevators at luxury hotels incorporated the latest technology. Their ride became more comfortable, faster, and more pleasant.

The following are some of the considerations that luxury hotels should not neglect: First, an adequate number of elevators should be provided to accommodate guests and staff during peak hours. There is nothing more frustrating than waiting. Second, elevators in high-rise towers should go as fast as three meters per second, in other words, one floor per second. It was interesting to compare the upscale Westin Cincinnati to the standards set by luxury hotels. The hotel could not accommodate a large group's arrival such as a football team. Guests had to sit on the floor forming a long waiting line in front of the three elevators that serve the hotel's 468 rooms.[139] Third, if possible, at least one panoramic elevator should be provided. Panoramic elevators increase the level of enjoyment for guests. Fourth, non-panoramic elevators should be finished with high-quality materials such as mahogany or marble. A mirror gives the feeling of increased space in the elevator. Pictures or framed advertising should be consistent, and should not overcrowd the elevator. Fifth, the floor numbering in the panel should be easy to understand. Numbering the levels with mezzanine, upper-ground floor, meeting floor, shopping level, and health club level is confusing. Numbering the levels with M (for mezzanine), MM (for second mezzanine), and SB (for sub basement) is even more confusing. The American system numbers the first guestroom floor as number one, whereas the rest of the world counts the ground floor as number one which is more convenient.[140]

---

[139] Personal observation. Oct 13th, 2001.
[140] Gary Vallen and Jerome Vallen, <u>Check-in Check-out</u> (Upper Saddle, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2000) 99.

Guestroom Access

The sense of arrival ends with accessing the guestroom, the guest's private realm. Accessing the room remains an important feature that a luxury hotel should *not* neglect. Since the 1980s, there has been a great focus in creating a better access system that adds security and enhances the property's image. This adds a competitive advantage to luxury properties.

Electronic keys gradually replaced the metal keys of the 1970s, and became standardized in luxury and upscale hotels by the end of the 1980s. Metal keys used to generate traffic at the front desk by dropping it off and retrieving it later. Key cards have the capability of being randomly coded at the point of registration, which re-emphasizes the guest perception of security. Regardless of the different brands of such locks or whether they are battery-operated or hard-wire operated, they all provide automatic re-keying, and restricted access.

It has to be noted though that three types of electronic locks have developed since the 1980s. First, optical key cards were used in the 1980s. They initially replaced the metal keys. Optical key cards have series of holes punched in them that represent the coded information. Second, mag-stripe keys developed to replace the optical key-cards as a more secured access to guestrooms. The information on the optical keys can be duplicated by tracing the series of the holes punched onto the card, whereas the information encoded into the mag stripe keys cannot be traced.[141] The mag-stripe cards have more advantages than any other key system such as the ability to interrogate each door lock and get a record of the last 100 entries. In addition to this feature, mag-stripe cards can also be reused and therefore reduce the cost of issuing new cards that range from five cents to one dollar for each card, depending on the features they carry. If a mag-stripe key was stolen, the front desk can automatically cancel the information encoded on the card and issue another one. Other security advantages include allowing employees, such as housekeeping staff, to carry mag-stripe keys that are programmed to access guestrooms at certain times during the day.

---

[141] Harry Smith, <u>Hotel Security</u> (Springfield, Illinois: Charles Thomas, 1993)117-121.

Although the mag-stripe key cards are popular in the hotel industry, many hotels forget that the key-card itself is a communication tool. The amount of information on the card should be limited to instructions on card usage and hotel logo. The card must implement graphics as well as text. Text should be written in different languages. Hotels should not accept advertising for other companies (see Fig. 3.18).

In the 1990s, the mag-stripe cards evolved into what were called, smart-card. The Hilton New York was the first to use such technology in 1998, by Cisa. Although the mag-stripe card and the smart-card are very similar from the outside, comparing the two is like comparing a typewriter and a keyboard. Smart cards store guests' personal preferences – from bed size and pillow type, to water temperature and room location. In terms of security, the smart-card locks reliably provide information on who opened each door and when. The front desk can read the employees' cards to see where they were during the day. If a smart card were inserted in the wrong room, the front desk will be immediately notified. And if there were an emergency situation in the hotel, a security staff will be capable of opening all the doors from one place.[142] There is a current research that gives these cards the feature to bypass the front desk and to make purchases on the card even at a store across the street from the hotel.[143]

Proximity card readers such as the 3-D Plastic Encoded Keys featured at the Emirates Towers Hotel in Dubai surpassed other key system in technology. The registration encodes the door number on the key. The guest points the key toward the door, which sends radio signals to activate the door. The key, which is designed in the shape of the hotel, becomes a souvenir at the end of the guest's stay (Fig. 3.9, Fig.3.10).

---

[142] Vicki Meade, "It's in the Cards," <u>Lodging Magazines</u> March 2000.
[143] Melanie Goldman, "Calling All Cards!" <u>Lodging Magazines</u> March 2001

Fig. 3.8 The progress of Keys. Source: Tesa Entry System Website.
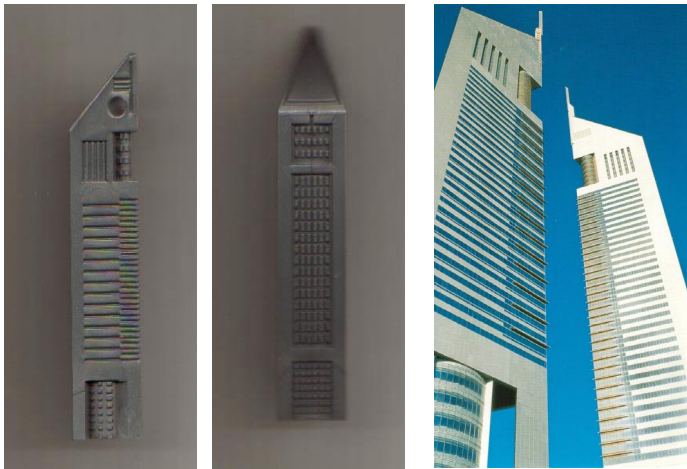
Fig. 3.9 (left) 3-D plastic proximity key that resembles the real building pictured at right. Fig.3.10 (right) the Emirates Towers Hotel. Source: personal photography

Fig. 3.11 Handheld Palm
Source: www.pertlink.net

Additional technology uses biometrics, or fingerprint security systems to access guestrooms. Locks that use this technology require a key and a fingerprint as backup. The fingerprint backup increases the security and decreases the chance that a lost card will cause a security breach. The key card would be useless without the matching fingerprint. Meeting rooms filled with computers and other valuable equipment are safer with only one key-holder, and it means a planner doesn't need to hire a security officer to watch the room.

Montreal-based Ilco Unican has launched a new product, the Oracode 610, which is a code-operated lock. Each lock has a keypad, and the code can be generated remotely – from the front desk or from the guest's personal computer prior to arrival. "You can generate a code for a specific hour, day, week, month, and year," says Russell Dagenais, product manager for Ilco Unican. "You don't have to worry about anyone stealing your keys or going in the room at the wrong time." [144]

Color Scheme and Lighting

> [C]olors have electromagnetic energy that will produce healing effects similar to those of sunlight. When used to supplement daylight or other light in interior spaces, color can contribute to our health and well-being.[145]

Color scheme sets the guest's mood. Many hoteliers believe that some features can be eliminated and compensated by creating an intelligent scheme. César Ritz was the first to conduct primitive experiments on the effect of color under certain lighting type on human skin in the luxury hotel industry. Although he was inexpert in the field, many applied his concepts to the interiors of their spaces. Scientifically, the analysis of light, color, and form in nature began in 1919 at the Bauhaus School of Design in Wiemar, Germany. After 40 years, Itten published his most famous work, The Elements of Color. The book was an essential tool that offered principles in color theory. Research on the principles of colors gained more importance through the years until designers became more aware of the effect of

---

[144] Ibid.

[145] Sara Marberry and Laurie Zagon, The Power of Color: Creating Healthy Interior Spaces (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc, 1995) 17.

color on the interior of spaces in creating forms rather than being a mere decoration.[146] They also became

aware of the effect of color[147] on people psychologically. [148] Color adds an aesthetic effect to the design

of buildings. The author of the book Architecture and Color stated seven aesthetic purposes on the effect

of color on buildings:[149] 1) It creates an atmosphere;[150] 2) It suggests either unity (uniform color scheme)

or diversity (varied color scheme); 3) It expresses the character of materials; 4) It defines form; 5) It

affects proportions; 6) It brings out scale; and 7) It gives a sense of weight.[151]

Generally, color treatment should be applied carefully to interior spaces of hotels considering the

color reflected from lighting, and the colors reflected from surfaces. People from various backgrounds

are the users of these rooms. Overuse of white or pastels causes glare because they reflect light, and

overuse of black or darker colors reduces contrast as they absorb light. A balanced use of such full-

spectrum of color is advised. Whether produced by light fixtures or color reflected off materials, finishes,

and surfaces, achieving a full spectrum of color is beneficial to our health and well-being.[152] In the

hospitality industry, the use of stronger, brighter colors, and greater contrast, provides an uplifting,

spirited atmosphere for guests and patrons. The Ramada Renaissance Hotel in New York contrasts colors

such as light and dark, and warm and cool. In a typical guestroom, the designer used red mahogany

cabinetry with soft rose and ivory wall-coverings, and a pale blue and mauve carpet. Other hues from the

palette can be found in dark pottery and abstract art.[153]

Interior Designer Deborah Lloyd Forrest believes that warm sources of lighting and color instill

more of a sense of well-being and luxury because people have grown up with 2,700K incandescent

---

[146] Ibid., p.9.
[147] Researches found that the color red has the ability to excite and raise blood pressure, orange encourages verbal expression of emotions, bright yellow enhances the mood but may connote aging in some cases, green is thought of as the healer of blood, blue is good for relieving headaches or nervous disorders, indigo has meditation qualities, and violet is a stress reducer.
[148] Sara Marberry and Laurie Zagon, The Power of Color: Creating Healthy Interior Spaces (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1995) 16.
[149] Waldron Faulkner, Architecture and Color (New York: Wiley-Interscience, 1972) 5.
[150] A bright scheme expresses excitement and a quiet scheme expresses dignity.
[151] Dark colors look heavy and light colors look lighter in weight.
[152] Sara Marberry and Laurie Zagon, The Power of Color: Creating Healthy Interior Spaces (New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons, Inc, 1995) 23.
[153] Ibid., p.27.

lighting in their homes. Therefore, warm colors are the best applicable choices for the hospitality

industry, especially in guestrooms. Cool colors can be used to enliven spaces and reinforce the outdoor

feeling of the space and are suitable for lobbies, art galleries, and restaurants.[154]

Security

> Better hotels are expected to provide better security. In other words, the quality of the
> security service should be commensurate with the other services provided by the hotel.
> Guests staying at a four-star hotel deserve a four-star security.[155]

Hotel security sometimes determines the choice of the hotel. The ultimate in security is expected

in luxury hotels. Surveys indicated that a high percentage of guests related "luxury" to "hotel

security"(see Appendix A). From the above quote, the author stated clearly that better hotels are *expected*

to provide better security.   For some, it's the security features that might determine the continued loyalty

of a guest. Security in a luxury hotel depends on security hardware, technology, and modern management

techniques. This should not eliminate the need for qualified security officers who can take immediate

actions. Guests expect to be secured from thefts, fire hazards, injuries, and the like. Promoting security

includes providing adequate lighting in all the hotel areas. Security in parking might take the form of

providing signage, closed-circuit cameras, uninterrupted lighting, and a security guard on-site. Security

in guestrooms means using non-hazardous materials, enhanced key locks, in-room safes, peepholes in

doors, and surveillance cameras, as explained in more detail under the guestroom section.

Hallways

There is nothing more frustrating than walking to guestrooms through long, dimly lit hallways.

The hallway design influences the guests' mood. In newer buildings, hallways became curved, or divided

by changes in lighting, door recesses, or suspended ceiling panels in order to eliminate the feeling of

---

[154] Lois Burgner, "Applying Light and Color: Warmth and Luxury,"
<http://www.lightforum.com/techniques/lightcolor2.html>
[155] Harry Smith, Hotel Security (Springfield, Illinois: Charles Thomas, 1993) 5.

excessive length. There are seven basic design layouts that shape hallways, the guestroom tower, and the building itself. The layouts can be categorized as follows: single-loaded slab, double-loaded slab, offset slab, rectangular tower, circular tower, triangular tower and the atrium.[156] Hallways in atrium-shaped slabs became the dominant features in new luxury properties.

Wayfinding

The issue of wayfinding is controversial. Directional and instructional signs should be consistent with the image of the hotel and of high quality. The text should be simple and to the point. Cognitive psychologist and industrial design critic Donald Norman indicated that "a rule of thumb for spotting bad design: Look for posted instructions."[157] And in the book The Experience Economy, the authors affirmed that guests find such signs distracting and contradicting with the standard of the place.[158] Directional signs should be clear and easy to read and understand.

---

[156] Walter Rutes and Richard Penner, Hotel Planning and Design (New York, NY: Whitney Library of Design, Watson Guptill Publications, 1985) 162,163.
[157] Donald Norman, Turn Signals Are the Facial Expressions of Automobiles (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1992) 19.
[158] Joseph Pine and James Gilmore, The Experience Economy (Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 1999) 55.

Guestrooms

> The rediscovered credo of giving customers what they want is pushing hoteliers, architects and interior designers to scrap the traditional bed-in-a-box and rethink how the space will be used and by whom.[159]

Guestrooms – including in-bathrooms – are the most integral part of any luxury hotel complex. They occupy 65 percent of the total area. The space layout and design of a guestroom is an interior designer responsibility rather than the architect's.[160] The desire to create guestrooms that are mere sleeping boxes changed with appreciation of the activities and habits of guests inside their rooms. For example, there is a sense of separation between the sleeping and living areas due to relocated bathrooms. A sitting space is added to enjoy the view.[161] Floor-to-ceiling windows are popular. Guests are given the choice of double, twin, queen, or king beds in their rooms. The sofa bed is popular in some hotels, which reduces the amount of space needed in a room to accommodate an extra person. Philip Starck believes that combining various styles and periods invites guests to experience and explore. "No two rooms, no two spaces are exactly the same. Guests can return again and again and still discover something new in the design – which is exactly the point. Beyond the 21st century mantra that different is definitely better, new subcurrents are beginning to define design expectations."[162]

Non-architectural bonuses such as hair dryers, second televisions, free breakfast, and cocktail hours lure guests. The staff opens the bed in the evening, place mints on the pillow, and folds a point onto the end of the toilet tissue. This is attention to details. Some *invisible* improvements include the use of fire-resistant materials in beds, chairs, and draperies that lack the fashionable look of other non-fire-resistant furnishings.[163] And to meet the needs of the increasing number of business travelers, most hoteliers are using today's technology to design guest rooms. For example, Marriott has the "Room That

---

[159] Mary Scoviak, <u>Interior Design</u> June 1996.

[160] Walter Rutes and Richard Penner, <u>Hotel Planning and Design</u> (New York: Whitney Library of Design, Watson Guptill Publications, 1985) 169.

[161] Herbert Weisskamp, <u>Hotels: An International Survey</u> (New York, NY: Praeger, 1998) 9.

[162] Mary Scoviak, <u>Design Trends</u> January 2001. <www.hotelsmag.com/0101/0101des.html>

[163] Vernon Mays, "The Hotel Guest Room," <u>Progressive Architecture</u> June 1988: 108-113.

Works", Westin has the "Guest Office" and "Room 2000," Hyatt has "The Business Plan", and Hilton has "The Smart Desk."[164]

In the last two centuries, guestrooms evolved greatly. The Tremont House in Boston in 1829 was the first hotel to offer private rooms for guests rather than shared ones. Hotel Statler in 1908 became the first luxury hotel to offer private bathrooms. Today, a luxury guestroom combines innovative features with the traditional requirements of guestrooms. A standard guestroom in a luxury hotel should include most, if not all, the following features: HVAC system, thermostat, cordless phone, built-in radio or CD player, plasma wide-screen TV, infrared cordless computer keyboard, Web TV, surveillance camera monitoring, one-touch button for door-entry permission, minibar, ironing board, full mirror, dressing area, living area, office space, make-up area, one-touch-button to set the *DO NOT DISTURB* sign on (Fig. 3.15), keyless door entry, dimmer, variety of light sources, daylight, acoustical drapes, carpeted or tiled floor, Feng Shui products, and automatic draperies.

The following issues became very important criteria to guestrooms during this period:[165]

Size: Generally, luxury hotels should allocate enough space for the guestrooms that perfectly fits all the furniture required without causing any crowding in the room. This allows for flexibility. "Today, luxury is space", believes the Ritz Paris.[166] The dimensions in rooms should exceed 14'x 18' or 16'x18'.[167,168]

TV and TV Placement: Many guests have different requirements in terms of the replacement of the TV depending on their habits. Some enjoy watching TVs from their beds. Others enjoy watching them from the living area provided within the room. In either case, John Morford, the designer of Grand Hyatt Tokyo, had placed the television on a rotating pedestal near the window, facing into the room to

---

[164] Howard Wolff, "The Future of Hospitality: Design and Development," Urban Land Aug. 1997.

[165] David Baird, BBG/BBGM, "Renovations," Harvard. June 2000.

[166] <http://www.ritzparis.com>.

[167] Fred Stitt, *"Hotels,"* Architects' Room Design Data Handbook (New York: Von Nostrand Reinhold, 1992).

[168] The minimum clearance of aisles at beds should be at least 36", at the dresser 40" and at the closet 42". The ceiling height depends on the structural system, HVAC and the light coves (if any), but it should be at least 8' to 10' high.

minimize the glare of daylight on the screen.[169] The flexibility of rotating the television allowed the guest the freedom to watch TV from the bed or from the living room. The Peninsula is also changing their TV sets to the new ultra thin plasma TVs, which eliminates the TV armoire.[170] Architect David Beer noticed that the TV armoire is disappearing from luxury hotels as it distracted from the residential setting. "At the restored rooms at the Ritz London it is just there, exposed as it would be in someone's home," David Beer said.[171]

Bed: Guests comfort is important. Presenting the bed is visually important to guests (Fig. 3.16). Boykin recommends the use of a bedspread fabric that is printed on a 100 percent Egyptian warped cotton sateen.[172] "People are more sophisticated" and want "absolute luxury," says hotelier Ian Schrager, known for lodgings on the cutting edge of design. The luxury Ritz-Carlton chain is replacing the cotton/polyester sheets with 180 threads per square inch with 100% Egyptian cotton bedding with a 300-thread count.[173]

Stationery: This includes providing the guest with essential stationery: pens, papers, notebook, envelopes, hotel business cards and postcards. All stationery should be of high quality and should clearly display the logo and the name of the hotel (Fig. 3.18).

Office Space: To maximize work surfaces, desks should be equipped with permanent computer keyboards and ledges. Fax machines, directories, and other guest materials should be stored in a cabinet within the office space. Electrical outlets for recharging mobile phones and other electrical equipments should be both provided and hidden within the desk area (Fig. 3.19).

Closet and Dressing Area: Luxury Asian hotels influenced the hotel industry by adding a separate dressing area such as the Peninsula Bangkok. Dressing area can be adjacent and located between the bed area and the bathroom. There should be a divider between the two areas for more privacy.

---

[169] Press release, March 1999: "Grand Hyatt, a guestroom redefined."

[170] "Key to Successful In-Room Technology is Simplicity and Discretion."
<http://www.HotelOnline.com/neo/new…1999_1st/Mar99_TechSimplicity.html>.

[171] David Beer, "Hotel Design and Development: Planning for the Future," Harvard University, Boston. 29 June 2000.

[172] Paula Boykin, <u>Hotel Guestroom Design</u> (Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt, 1991) 13.

[173] Kitty B.Yancey, "Hotel guests cotton to a high thread count," <u>USA TODAY</u> 7 Jul. 2000.

Storage: "The best feature to be included in a room would be a storage to hide all the guests' luggage and shopping bags. [The guest] doesn't usually like to be reminded of being a transient guest."[174] The storage is best located near the entrance or the closet and dressing area. Added shelves of varied heights are of an advantage.

Draperies: They should run beyond the actual window size. For a more residential feeling, a full-over drapery with a center draw is advised. A blackout curtain should also be added in order to prevent the penetration of daylight inside the bedroom. This insulated fabric will give the guests the flexibility to use the blackout instead of the draperies. Another layer of sheer drapery should be added between the blackout and the overdrape. Interior design criteria specifies that the blackout should be at least one half inch shorter than the overdrape.[175]

Carpeted floor: According to Paula Boykin's specifications on the type of carpet used in guestrooms, there are different types of carpets to be chosen from: according to texture, ranging from level loop, multi-level, and plush; according to the type of the yarn, such as wool, nylon, acrylic, and olefin; and according to traffic patterns, from light, medium, or heavy.[176] Generally, carpets should be padded, non-static, and stain resistant, with a dark tone to hide stains.[177]

Tiled Floor: Ceramic, marble, or granite are standard in the luxury hotel industry.

Walls: Walls can be decorated using wallpapers; however, they are not easy to maintain. Paint seems to be the best choice because it is easier to clean and collect less dust. Artwork adds luxurious setting to the atmosphere (see chapter two for survey results).

Lighting: Under all circumstances, guests expect to have a variety of lighting[178] that satisfy their different needs from reading and watching TV, to socializing and other simple tasks. For instance, incandescent or halogen lamps can be provided at entry hall, bedsides, the dressing area, the desk and the

---

[174] Marie-Claude Metrot. Personal Interview. 1st September 2000.
[175] Paul Boykin, Hotel Guestroom Design (Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt, 1991) 14.
[176] Ibid., p.15.
[177] Fred Stitt, *"Hotels,"* Architects' Room Design Data Handbook (New York: Von Nostrand Reinhold, 1992).
[178] Lighting level requirements: 10 lumens for every square foot is the minimum standard for guestrooms, and 20 lumens for every square foot is advisable near the bedhead and the desk area for a higher efficacy.

seating area. Enhanced lighting is also important for older people with aging eyes, as they tend to see

objects with a yellow tint, which makes things appear darker.[179] Room and hall light switches should be

easily accessed from various points within the guestroom, such as the entry and the bedside.

      Ventilation: HVAC and natural ventilation are important features in luxury hotels. In hotels that

have no balconies, and in high-rise hotels, windows are the only means of natural ventilation. However,

safety codes require that such hotels restrict the operation of windows for safety reasons (Fig. 3.20).

HVACs are standard in all luxury hotels and should be easily operated. Some hotels can store the guest's

room temperature preferences in their data and can preset them prior to arrival.[180]

      Electrical: Electrical outlets should be located in different places to accommodate guests' various

needs, as well as the cleaning services. The ideal locations of these outlets would be at the nightstands,

the TV, the make-up mirror, the dressing table, each side of the bed, next to the coffee maker, the

minibar, and around the desk.

      Acoustics: Unlike residential buildings, hotel rooms are the equivalent of apartments in residential

buildings. Each room is the guests' private space. It encloses various activities including eating,

watching TV, greeting guests, dressing up, working, and sleeping. Therefore, a high caution should be

taken in choosing the acoustic materials of the wall and ceiling finishes.[181] Some designers hope to see

soundproofed rooms with white-noise generators to reduce the amount of noise coming from elevators,

hallways, and bathrooms.[182]

      Privacy: Several factors play a role in the comfort of guests in terms of their privacy. The bed's

location in the room is one example. It should be hidden from the entryway of the room, where there is a

---

[179] Margaret Rose Caro, "Blunders by Design," <u>Lodging Magazine</u> Jan. 2001.

[180] A high temperature of 75º F should be maintained during day and night in wintertime, whereas in summer time, 72º F is advisable during the day and 68º F during the night. A 30 CFM is a recommended fresh air supply.

[181] There should also be a substructure with acoustical separation from floors above and below, and the walls should be at 48 STC.

[182] Mary Scoviak, "Hotels: The Next Generation," <u>Interior Design</u> June 1996.

possibility that people at the door such as room service personnels see them. Also, some guests feel uncomfortable if their bed is unmade when someone is at the door.[183]

Security in Guestrooms: Guests' sense of security develops from their guestrooms. They are the only sanctuary spaces in the hotel that provide guests with privacy from the rest of the hotel functions, and should therefore be equipped with advanced systems of security. Security features in guestrooms include door restrictors, peepholes, and automatic door closers. It is proven that the claw-type restrictor is more secured than the chain-type restrictor, because claw-type is stronger and less troublesome.   In addition, the chain-type might leave marks on the door with extended use and dangling on the door. Door viewers or peepholes are also essential security features. In luxury hotels, guests expect the hotel to provide door viewers that provide a 180-degree field of vision and undistorted images of both sides of the hallway. Automatic door closers are another feature that should be used. There are two types of automatic door closers: door check and spring-loaded hinges. Door checks are more effective and ideally suit the luxury hotel industry. They eliminate the noise from slamming the door, control the door through the door closing process and ensure complete closure.[184]

Windows add another dimension to the guestroom's security. In most cases, windows should allow an opening only for ventilation and for allowing fresh air into the room. The window should clearly post a label instructing how it should be operated. The opening of the window may be restricted to a few inches by adding window stops.

In-room safes are essential, and should be large enough to accommodate equipments such as laptops, cameras, and other personal items. There are three types of safe locks. The mechanical lock uses a key to operate the safe. The electronic digital lock uses a digital numeric keypad; the guest is expected to create a personal code to operate the safe. The third type requires a credit card with a mag-stripe to lock and unlock the safe. Although there is a possibility that guests might lose their keys or credit cards or forget their codes, all three types of safes can be overridden or opened by a professional. While some

---

[183] David Beer, "Hotel Design and Development: Planning for the Future," Harvard University 29 June 2000.
[184] Harry Smith, Hotel Security (Springfield, Illinois: Charles Thomas, 1993)124,125.

guests do not feel safe to use their credit cards or carry safe metal keys, the digital safes remain the most commonly used in luxury hotels.

Guests also have the choice of placing their valuable items in safes located at the front desk. Such safes are monitored and restricted to employees. Guests are provided with a private room to place their items inside the deposit boxes.

The television in guestrooms should automatically advertise security instructions as soon as it is turned on. The hotel should give a comprehensive presentation on their property in addition to safety instructions in order for the guests to familiarize themselves with the hotel.

Fig. 3.12 Morrison, M. "Room Service, 21st century-style." USA WEEKEND. Nov. 3-5, 2000.

Guest bathrooms

Guest bathrooms offer guests another scope of private relaxation. Since 1980s, the new Asian luxury hotels had a great influence on the bathroom. Amenities may include a whirlpool, Jacuzzi, oversized tub, enclosed WC, double-sink vanity, shower, TV or a view out from the bathroom (Fig. 3.21), and maybe a heated towel rack. They also include guest's basic needs such as a shaving kit, a towel rail, toilet roll holder, a full-length mirror, an adjustable make-up mirror, a soap tray, a waste bin, a telephone, speakers/television, a vanity unit or a washbasin.

Since the last decade, guests have been looking for bigger bathrooms, and more counter space, outlets in the bathrooms, and makeup mirrors.   Some have been looking for a more pampering spa within the bathroom area and more entertaining facilities. Others hope to find hairdryers and a towel heater. Designers foresee that extra space inside bathrooms will make room for a dressing area, a walk-in closet and a vanity; another area for the shower, bathtub, and toilet; and a third area with a sink, lighting and mirrors. The following criteria became the newest standard in luxury hotels:

Toiletries: Mending kit, shoe polisher, comb, cotton balls, toothbrushes, presentation basket, shower cap, lotion, and magnified lighted mirrors designed to match the bathroom.[185]

Shower: Showerheads should have the choice of pulse or spray option for a gentle mist to a vigorous thalasso-massage. They should be individually computerized to save the guest's preference – no need to re-enter the data each time the guest showers.[186] Guests should also be able to adjust showerheads such as the direction of spray, or force of water.

Water closet: The location of the water closet is important. It must not be located across from the door (Fig. 3.27, 3.28). It can be screened, partially screened, or separated from the bathroom. Siphonic

---

[185] Lou Cook, "Better is Better: Where Bathrooms Are Concerned, the Basic Amenities Just Won't Do," <u>Lodging Magazine</u> Sept. 2000.

[186] Mary Scoviak, "The Full Service Business Room of the Future," <u>Interior Design</u> June 1996: 164.

closets are another choice to be corbelled from the wall, which makes it easier to clear the floor beneath, and the flushing cisterns may be enclosed within the adjacent duct.[187]

Bidets: Bidets became standardized in luxury and upscale hotels. They are important hygienic fixtures for the general public and therefore demand an additional space in the bathroom. Corbelled fixtures from the wall for the previously stated reason may be utilized.

Washbasins: Dual vanity basins may be provided in luxury hotel guest bathrooms for more time efficiency desired by this specific clientele.[188] The second washbasin might be located outside the bathroom. Tower racks might be provided below the washbasins (Fig. 3.22 and Fig. 3.28).

Countertops: They can be finished with marble, granite, or even glass.

Bathtubs: Tubs no longer need to be rectangular; they started taking new shapes and new locations within the bathroom. The Regent New York has tubs that can be filled with water in 60 seconds.[189] Towel bars should be within easy reach of bathtubs.

Telephones: Emergency phone lines should be provided at the WC and at the bathtub.

Lamps: Twenty lumens per square foot is the minimum standard. Incandescent, halogen, or fluorescent lamps may be utilized in addition to controlled color lights that the guest can adjust depending on his or her mood. Overhead lighting should be located over the vanity and makeup countertop. An interior downlight should be placed in the shower stall.

Electrical: Electrical outlets should be located in different places to accommodate both guests' various needs as well as those of the cleaning services. The ideal locations of these outlets would be at the countertop for shaving machines and hair dryers.

Acoustics: The bathrooms are located back-to-back with an adjacent bathroom sharing common vertical duct and pipe work. Therefore, there should be a substructure with acoustical separation from floors above and below, and the walls should be at 48 STC.

---

[187] Fred Lawson, Hotels and Resorts: Planning, Design and Refurbishment (Woburn, MA: Architectural Press, 1999) 238.
[188] David Beer, "Hotel Design and Development: Planning for the Future," Harvard University 29 June 2000.
[189] Ibid.

Entertainment functions: Implementing a TV system controlled from the bathtub and a fully surrounded audio system are some of the features that enhance the entertaining facilities in the bathroom area (Fig. 3.25).

Privacy: Enclosing the WC with a partition provides guests with more privacy while another is using the bathroom at the same time. A dual vanity allows individual space for the guest and more privacy (Fig. 3.22, 3.23).

Fig. 3.13 Floor to ceiling windows became a desirable feature at luxury properties such as the Mandalay Bay Las Vegas, where guestrooms enjoy a full view of the strip.

Source: personal photography

Fig. 3.14 The Emirates Towers Hotel in Dubai placed their enhanced telephone system on silver plated trays to evoke the luxury experience.

Source: personal photography.

Fig. 3.15 The picture to the right shows a panel located at the bedside table. The two buttons (Don Not disturb, and Please Clean Room) if pressed, will turn on the indicators located outside the guestroom door (shown on the picture to the left).
Source: personal photography at the Crowne Plaza Dubai.

Fig. 3.16
A typical guestroom at the Ritz Carlton Atlanta. Housekeeping fully prepare the bed by removing extra pillows at bed time. The linen used is 100% Egyptian cotton.

Source: personal photography.

Fig. 3.17.a and b The Emirates Towers Hotel offer sleek cherry-wood wardrobes with chrome finishes, shoe rack, storage, glass-fronted drawers with leather tabs as part of their luxurious amenities.

Source: personal photography.
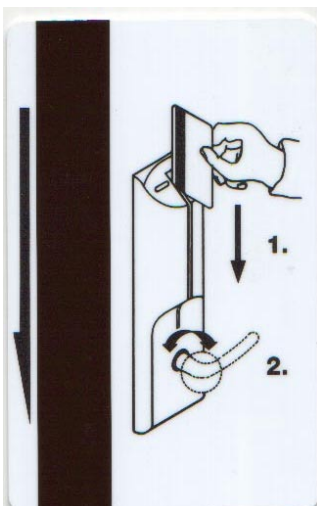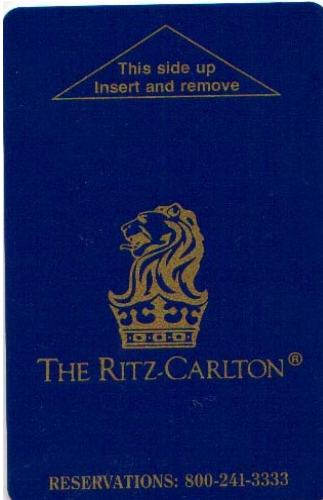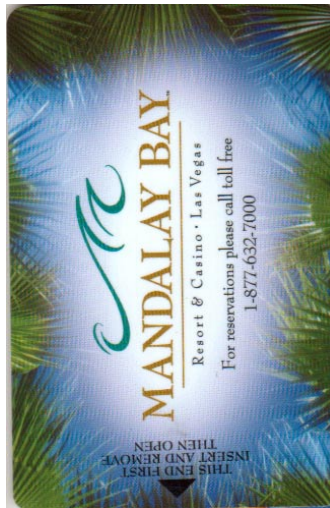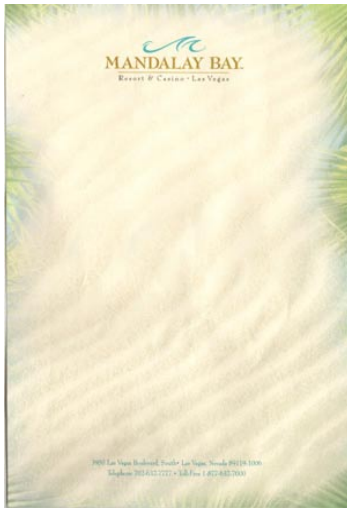
Fig. 3.18 The image of keycard and stationery used participates in the luxury experience.

The top set of pictures shows the key card and the notepad used at the Mandalay Bay Las Vegas.

The middle set has a formal appearance of the hotel logo at the Ritz Carlton Atlanta.

The bottom set represents three hotels. The middle key ruins the image of the Hyatt Regency Roissy by the use of advertising. The left key shows a graphic illustration of how to operate the door at the Crowne Plaza Dubai. The Westin Houston illustrates their most desirable feature, the bed, on the face of the card, and placing the instructions at the back in six languages.

Source: personal photography.
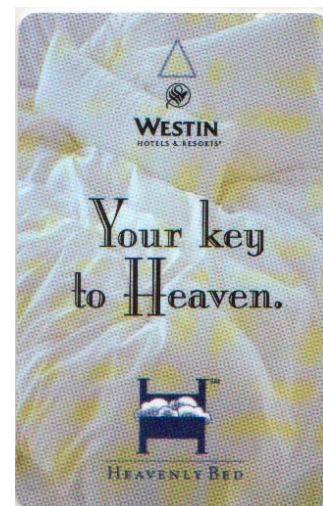
At the Emirates Towers Hotel, Dubai, the office area offers the following:
Fig. 3.19.a (top right) an in-room fax, high speed internet connection for laptops, in-room Web TV's with wireless keyboard.

Fig. 3. 19.b (bottom left) The drawers comes with a variety of sizes to accommodate different needs.

Fig. 3.19.c-d (middle right and bottom right) The electrical outlets, and the lamp button, are hidden under a chrome finished sliding pocket.
The stationery is also hidden under a leather finished panel.

Source: personal photography.
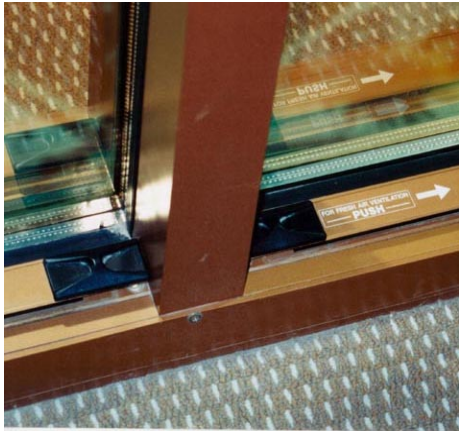
Fig. 3.20 Floor to Ceiling windows can be slightly opened for ventilation purposes. Source: personal photography at the Mandalay Bay Vegas.

Fig. 3.21 New luxury properties offer a view out of bathrooms such as the Emirates Towers Hotel Dubai.

Source: Business Traveler, Spring 2000.

Fig. 3. 22 the Emirates Towers Hotel Dubai feature glass finished dual washbasins Source: Emirates Towers brochure 2000.

Fig. 3. 23 Mandalay Bay also used the granite finished dual vanity as part of their concept of luxury in bathrooms. Source: personal photography.

Fig. 3.24 The infrared keyboard became a new trend.

Source: personal photography at the Emirates Towers Hotel.

Fig. 3. 25 The luxury Peninsula Bangkok incorporates television inside its bathroom as part of its luxurious amenities. Source: personal photography

81

Fig. 3. 26 Enclosing the WC has been a new trend in new luxury properties.

Source: personal photography at the Mandalay Bay.

Fig. 3.27(left) the Ritz-Carlton Atlanta placed the WC across from the door, which is not visually impressive
Fig. 3.28 (right) the Emirates Tower Hotel placed a visually attractive grey marble top vanity with a large mirror across from the sand-glass double door.

Source: personal photography.

Information Technology

> The successful companies of the next decade will be the ones that use digital tools to reinvent the way they work. These companies will make decisions quickly, act efficiently, and directly touch their customers in positive ways – Bill Gates[190]

Technology is firmly becoming embedded in our society at all levels. Population is steadily increasing, bringing more demands and expecting technologies that "do more with less".[191] As defined in the Longman dictionary of the English Language, technology can be either "the theory or practice of applied science" or "the totality of the means and knowledge used to provide objects necessary for human sustenance and comfort."[192] The latter definition is considered the main claim of technology when applied to hospitality. In fact, a more accurate definition was given by Pine in 1997. He offered a hospitality-based definition of technology by referring it to skills, knowledge, and methods that attained plans in a faster and more efficient way.[193] The convergence of these technological applications places knowledge and information at the core of the competitive profile of tomorrow's hospitality enterprise.[194]

Technology can be categorized as follows: the *Building Technology* refers to the design and the construction of the building. *Environmental Management Technology* relates to controlling the internal environment of the hotel. *Food Production and Service Technology* helps enhance the production of food. The fourth type, the *Information Technology*, is the most important technology having experienced great developments and advancements over the last decade.[195]

The 1980s and 1990s witnessed new products and commodities that are technologically controlled, such as accessing account and checking-out from the TV panel, accessing the Internet from

---

[190] Judy Signaw and Cathy Enz, "Best Practices in Information Technology," Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly (Oct. 1999): 58-71.58.

[191] David Kirk and Ray Pine, "Research in hospitality systems and technology," International Journal of Hospitality Management 17 (1998): 203-217.

[192] Longman. Longman Dictionary of the English Language (Longman, Harlow, 1984).

[193] Ray Pine, "Technology." In: Jafari, J. (ed.) Encyclopedia of Tourism (London, NY: Routledge, 2000).

[194] Michael Olsen and David Connolly, "Experience-Based Travel: How Technology is Changing the Hospitality Industry," Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly (Feb 2000): 30-40.

[195] David Kirk and Ray Pine, "Research in hospitality systems and technology," International Journal of Hospitality Management 17 (1998): 203-217.

the Web TV, controlling in-room temperature and curtains automatically, and controlling the guestroom door entry from an in-room phone panel.[196] Such features are described in detail in this thesis under the "guestrooms section." This chapter will discuss some of the applications and softwares that the hotel industry developed to enhance guest satisfaction.

Hotel Expert: This software allows employees in the hotel to activate calls from virtually anywhere in the hotel through a telephone or a PC that is connected to the local area network. It makes sure to automatically assign tasks to the proper employee and if the task was not taken in 15 minutes, it will then notify the manager about the situation. The Barbizon Hotel and the Empire Hotel in New York, which used this system, proved this service gave their properties an efficient, high level of service, and it also improved their physical plant operations. The two hotels witnessed a 30-percent increase in repeat-guest patronage and saved a total of $750,000 over a period of three years, through increased efficiency and decreased paperwork.[197]

Revenue Management: This software used by Marriott International helps isolate the different hotel market segments such as business travelers, or leisure travelers and it offers an intelligent way of understanding those segments: their behavior, stay patterns, and price sensitivity. It helped the Marriott properties create a guest arrival forecast, an inventory-restriction recommendations, and information on potentially weak occupancy periods.[198]

Guest-History Program: This software maintains a history or a profile of all guests, their visit dates, their preferred rooms, any special prices they received, and their food and beverage selections. The system maintains future reservations by having the guest's preferences available, and it helps arrange future visits with amenities, such as extra pillows or a ready newspaper.[199] The Balsams Grand Resort

---

[196] Desinano, P. and Vigo, C. "Developing information technology options in the hotel industry: the value chain approach." Seaton, A.V. (Ed.). Tourism: The state of the Art (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1994) 275.

[197] Judy Signaw and Cathy Enz, "Best Practices in Information Technology," Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly (Oct. 1999): 58-71.

[198] Ibid., p. 67.

[199] Pauline Sheldon, "Hospitality Information Systems," Tourism: Information Technology (New York, New York: CAB International, 1997) 118.

Hotel in the remote location of the White Mountains of northern New Hampshire determined that 85 percent of their business is from repeat guests or first-time visitors who were recommended by previous repeat guests.[200]

The Concierge's Helper: The Copley Plaza Fairmont in Boston has installed a system that aids the concierge in identifying guests with special needs or dietary preferences. The system also provides wake-up calls, event information and a map of every street in Boston. This has pushed the guest-satisfaction index close to 90 percent.[201]

Minibars: Information technology affected the minibar functions. For example, there are electronic sensors beneath each bottle inside the minibar. When a bottle is removed, the sensors alert the central computer through radio waves or cables. The front desk will then automatically charge the price on the guest's folio and send an instant replacement of the bottle.[202]

Telecommunications: Enhanced telephone systems in guestrooms play a significant part in a guest's satisfaction. The telephone should be able to connect the guest to front desk, housekeeping, other rooms, and other functions instantly. Another feature a telephone should have is the ability to record voice messages. Some hotels carry another innovative feature that forwards the calls received to the guestroom to the guest's cell phone, the guest will then have the choice to take the call after the recorded name of the caller had been played.[203]

Some luxury and upscale hotels provide cellular phone rentals. This is a convenient service, especially for international guests. However it is likely that this service will not grow as guests increasingly travel with their cell phones.[204]

Yet, how does this technology effect a guest's perception of luxury? To many guests, technology that supports new products and services is considered to be one of the key elements that motivate the

---

[200] Judy Signaw and Cathy Enz, "Best Practices in Information Technology," <u>Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly</u> (Oct 1999): 68.

[201] Ibid., p.69.

[202] Pauline Sheldon, "Hospitality Information Systems," <u>Tourism: Information Technology</u> (New York: CAB International, 1997) 127.

[203] Rick Bruns, "Phoning It In," <u>Lodging Magazine</u> November 2000.

[204] "That Familiar Ring," <u>Lodging Magazine</u> November 2000.

perception of luxury. It fulfills guests' desires to a certain level. As the third millennium dawned, people

believed that this stream of technological improvements will take them to the next world where

everything is better. In the book Digital Delirium, the author mentioned that "The machine-world

reciprocates man's love by expediting his *wishes* and *desires*, namely by providing him with wealth."[205]

John Naisbitt with Nana Naisbitt, and Douglas Philips, in the book High Tech High Touch: Technology

and Our Search for Meaning, spoke of technology in terms of addiction, intoxication, seduction, and the

American dream, that it feeds our pleasure centers physically and mentally.[206] And the imperfections of

today's technologies will be clear only in the face of tomorrow's advancements.[207]

The main danger of technology is that some guests may be intimidated or won't know how to use

such a technology. Gandhi wrote, "a certain degree of physical harmony and comfort is necessary…but

above a certain level it becomes a hindrance rather than a help."[208] People still want to see the human

element in the hotel industry.[209]

In conclusion, technology can be considered a luxury as long as it does not become a good for

mass consumption. Taking human factors into account is viewed as a potential factor for advancement in

luxury status of commodities and products, and then it is more likely that technology makes a successful

contribution to the hotel industry. Hotels can still maintain their status of *luxury* if they know how to

exploit their capabilities in such a way that competitors cannot easily duplicate.[210] As hotel technology

becomes more advanced, hoteliers must wield creatively in order to remain competitive.

---

[205] Arthur Kroker and Marilouise Kroker (eds). "Digital Humanism: The Processed World of Marschall McLuhan," Digital Delirium. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997, p. 97.

[206] John Naisbett, High Tech High Touch: Technology and Our Search for Meaning (New York: Random House Page) 1.

[207] Ibid., p. 27.

[208] Simon Kemp, "Perceiving Luxury and Necessity," Journal of Economic Psychology 1.5 (Oct,1998): 591-606.

[209] David Kirk, and Ray Pine "Research in hospitality systems and technology," International Journal of Hospitality Management 19 (1998): 203-217.

[210] Michael Olsen and David Connolly, "Experience-based Travel: How Technology Is Changing the hospitality Industry," Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration quarterly (Feb. 2000): 40.

Health Spas

Depending on the length of stay and the reason for the visit, and whether the guest uses health club facilities, the presence of such facilities enhance the hotel status. However, health club facilities and swimming pools in resorts should be planned more carefully than in convention and downtown hotels. The best hotels provide one's mind and body with health services that help reduce fatigue or overcome jet lag.[211] Guests expect to find the standard of service and design in health club facilities the same as that in the hotel's lobby and other areas. Hotel guests and health club members enter the club area and proceed to the front desk for check-in. Guests and members sign in, get their locker keys, store their valuables, and proceed to use the facility. Depending on the culture of where the hotel is located, some cultures necessitate separating women from men in the facility by allocating separate timings or building a duplicate facility: one for women, and one for both genders. In all cases, health spas should be separate but equivalent, where women use one and men use the other. Such an area is often called locker room. The locker room includes spacious and generously mirrored dressing area (with hair dryers, soaps, slippers, towels), massage rooms, shower stalls, saunas, steam baths, and an area for socializing.[212] Some Thai hotels offer complimentary tea. The gymnasium should enjoy a view to entice guests and members to use high-tech equipment such as treadmill, cycling and stretching machines, trampolines, and nautilus and free-weight machines. And depending on the amount of land allocated for the club facility and marketing demand, a sport hall may be included with the health facility. The sport hall can house any or all of the following: basketball, volleyball, racquet ball, badminton, indoor tennis courts, squash courts, volleyball, and golf.[213]

---

[211] Peter Anderson, "Growth of Spas," Lodging Magazine Dec 2000.
[212] Walter Rutes and Richard Penner, Hotel Planning and Design (New York, NY: Whitney Library of Design, Watson Guptill Publications, 1985) 70-71.
[213] Fred Lawson, Hotels & Resorts: Planning, Design and Refurbishment (Woburn, MA: Architectural Press, 1999) 81.

Food and Beverages

The food and beverage area brings another dimension to the hotel's status because it serves its guests as well as outsiders. The demand on restaurants ranges from 80-90% during breakfast hours, 15-25% during lunch hours, and 30-40% during dinner hours.[214] Luxury hotels should accommodate guests' needs with numerous restaurants; guests expect to choose. It is important that one of the restaurants represent the local cuisine and at least one restaurant offers an international menu. And although different management operates most of those restaurants, the design theme of the restaurants should be consistent with the luxury status of the hotel in terms of physical appearance, style, ambiance, graphics, and service. Food presentation plays an integral part of setting the ambiance of the restaurant. Tableware such as china, silver, glassware, table appointments, linens, and the menu all play a part. Restaurants should feature a view by being located strategically in the hotel such as at the top floors like the Peninsula Hong Kong or overlooking the swimming pool.

Lounges and bars offer refreshments to hotel guests and outsiders. "The hotel's bar is very much a part of the luxurious grand hotel experience," architect David Beer said. "After a long flight, the bartender is often your first point of contact after checking in. He can become your friend welcoming you back on your next trip, part of the home away from home experience."[215] A lounge should occupy at least 10% of the space in the lobby. Separate lounges that serve as reading areas or writing rooms are desirable for some guests who look for quiet, comfortable relaxation, and are featured at hotels like the Marriott Hotel at Covington, Kentucky. Bars can occupy various areas such as the swimming pool area, or even higher floors. They can be associated with conference functions, restaurants, and the entertainment area (piano bar, casino, and night club).

---

[214] Fred Lawson, "Public Facilities," Hotels & Resorts: Planning, Design and Refurbishment (Woburn, MA: Architectural Press, 1999) 241.

[215] David Beer, "Hotel Design and Development: Planning for the Future," Harvard University, Boston, 29 June 2000.

In the book <u>Hotels and Resorts</u>, the author indicated that a deluxe hotel should have at least one seat per room with a net area of 22 square feet at restaurants and cafes, and 0.8 seats per room with a net area of 17 square feet at bars and lounges.[216]

Hygiene

Improper design, materials, services and products cause hygiene problems. The daily housekeeping service should make sure to keep the bathrooms free of bacteria and molds. Wallpapers collect dust and cannot be easily maintained. Inoperable windows inside guestrooms cause congestion inside the rooms. Smoking rooms at the Westin Cincinnati, for example, were congested due to smoking; natural ventilation would have solved this problem (see Fig. 3.20). The popular Hand Hot Air dryers are products that hotels should avoid. In the article "Good Hygiene and Hot Air," the author indicated that using paper towels reduce bacterial counts by 58 percent while the hot air dryer increases the bacterial counts up to 438 percent in addition to the bacteria that it is blown from inside the dryer.   Also, the average time it takes to dry one's hands is 12 seconds in comparison with hot air dryer, which takes 43 seconds.[217] By any means, any luxury hotel is required to maintain the cleanliness of its environment. Service or cleaning equipments should not be visible to guests. The Ritz Paris, for example, delivers new linens and sheets to guestrooms in a basket. The Burj Al Arab uses a visually pleasing cleaning cart (compare Fig. 1.2 with Fig. 4.51).

A visit to an upscale restaurant in a Cincinnati upscale hotel was a good example.[218] The waiter wiped off the remaining food off the table with his hands and then proceeded to serve the customers at a nearby table. A simple table vacuum cleaner would have avoided this cleaning problem. Any restaurant at a luxury hotel using this cleaning method will definitely loose its image.[219]

---

[216] Fred Lawson, "Public Facilities," <u>Hotels & Resorts: Planning, Design and Refurbishment</u> (Woburn, MA: Architectural Press, 1999) 241.
[217] "Good Hygiene and Hot Air," <u>Lodging Magazine</u>. November, 2000.
[218] This thesis will keep the name of the restaurant confidential.
[219] Personal observation.

Universal Design and Handicapped Accessible Rooms

The increasing number of people with disabilities are wanting to enjoy their stay in a barrier free environment. Hospitality Design for the Graying Generation is the most comprehensive book written on the concept of Universal Design in Hotels. The book demands that all hotel areas be designed for everyone's pleasure and use, including those with diverse needs and capabilities such as reduced hearing, visual difficulties, and physical disabilities.[220] Historic hotels, however, are not meeting these standards, and unfortunately non-US luxury hotels are not bound by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

All lodging facilities are now required by law in the United States to provide at least 2% of the total number of rooms with handicapped-accessible rooms to accommodate guests who use devices such as walkers, canes, crutches, or wheelchairs or to accommodate those with partially or profound hearing loss. Auxiliary aids include services such as TDDs or text telephones, Braille materials, taped texts, assistive listening devices, and open and closed captioning. Handicapped-accessible bathrooms should be designed with at least the minimum standard dimensions required for spaces that allow a turn of a wheel-chair and with the standard materials that allow the guest to transfer from the wheel-chair to any of the bathroom fixtures: bathtub, shower stall, and water closet. Other examples include positioning a shower seat in the tub basin, including an adjustable spray discharge, and providing grab bars next to fixtures. [221]

---

[220] Alfred Baucom, Hospitality Design for the Graying Generation (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1996)146.
[221] Thomas Davies and Kim Beasley, Accessible Design for Hospitality (New York: McGraw Hill, 1994) 35, 88,89.

Fig. 3. 29 Fully equipped gym with state-of-the-art fitness equipment at the Jumeirah Beach Hotel Dubai. The designer used daylight to enhance the atmosphere.

Source: The Jumeirah Beach Hotel. Dubai: Motivate Publishers, 2000.

Fig. 3.30 Hand towels are provided in all Ritz Atlanta Public bathrooms. Notice that they also provide open baskets for disposal.

Source: personal photography.

2001 and Beyond

Technology will be the major influence on the idea of luxury. Luxury hotels will witness the increase use of smartcards, identification and verification technology such as door locks that recognize guests, biometric identification systems, and white noise. Customizing guests' needs prior to their arrival will be desired by most guests. Digital computers will be used and plasma TVs will eliminate armoires in guestrooms.[222]

The Conrad Hilton College based in Houston, Texas, has projected that the future guestroom will combine the travelers' needs with modern technology, which includes the following:[223]

- Alarm clocks that increase the amount of light in a room rather than emitting a tone.

- Keyless locks that are controlled by coded information gained through scanning the guest's finger, palm, or retina.

- Windows replaced by guest-selected, computer-generated scenes to create a more restful, relaxing in-room environment.

- Electronically controlled mattresses to provide guests with the right level of firmness and support.

- In-room exercise amenities using tension lines and doorknobs so that guests can de-stress while they get fit in the privacy of their own room.

- In-room virtual reality entertainment centers.

---

[222] "Key to Successful In-Room Technology is Simplicity and Discretion,"
<http://www.hotelonline.com/Neo/New…s1999_1st/Mar99_TechSimplicity.html.>
[223] "Hotel Room of the Future," <http://www.hotelonline.com/neo/new…eases1999_2nd/apr99_FutureRoom.html>

Chapter Four

CASE STUDIES

The two case studies in this chapter are the Ritz Hotel in Paris, and the Burj al Arab Hotel in Dubai, UAE. This chapter studies the attributes that made these two hotels the most luxurious ones in the world. It studies ideas that were introduced by Cesar Ritz, and later used by other luxury hotels including the Burj Al Arab Hotel, a hundred years later. The two hotels were chosen for various reasons: they were the first two hotels to attract presidents, or kings to patronize the hotels when they first opened;[224] and they both claimed to give new definitions to luxury in hotels. While Ritz Paris has maintained its luxury status for over 102 years, Burj Al Arab was called the Ritz of the 21st century and takes the concept of luxury further.

---

[224] Marie-Claude Metrot. Personal Interview. 1st September 2000, and
Mary McLaughlin. Personal Interview. August 2000.

The Ritz

Cesar Ritz opened the world's first truly luxurious hotel in Paris in 1898 after struggling through a life of humble beginnings in Switzerland. He started as a hotelier at the age of 15. In 1867 he went to Paris in search of work where he was hired as a waiter in the fashionable restaurant Voisin. There, he catered to the needs and tastes of the rich and famous. At 22, he became the manager of the Grand National Hotel in Lucerne, Switzerland, and instituted changes that made the hotel the most elegant in Europe. After 11 seasons, he became the manager of the Savoy Hotel in London. He made the hotel a cultural center for high society. Together with Escoffier (considered the world's greatest chef), he created a team that produced the finest cuisine in Europe.[225] He made evening dress compulsory and introduced *orchestras* to hotel restaurants. Ritz pioneered each hotel bedrooms having its own bathroom.[226] His imagination and sensitivity to people and their desires contributed to a new standard of hotel keeping.

The name Ritz to this day remains synonymous with refined elegance in luxury hotels and service. One can say that this car is too *ritzy*, or that apartment is *ritzy*, a word that calls to mind the man who introduced new dimension of luxury in hotel design and service. "…when they say 'ritz' or 'ritzy' they are using a man's name; that 'jones' or 'jonesy' would be an exact if unlikely parallel."[227]

The Ritz Hotel was a dream that Cesar spent years planning.[228] After carefully studying guests' wants and needs, he decided to open the first hotel that catered to a specific class of society.[229] So specific in fact, that a dress attire, black jacket and tie, was required at all times when using the public

---

[225] "M. Escoffier est certainment le premier cuisinier du monde, il dépasse de beaucoup tous les autres chefs que j'ai rencontré." Ritz here declares the importance of the Chef Escoffier. Together, they complemented each other's dreams of having an ideal hotel, as the success of a hotel is dependant upon its kitchens and vice versa. Source: Marie Louise Ritz, Cesar Ritz: Host to the World (New York: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1938) 111.

[226] Hugh Montgomery Massingberd, "A Homage to Cesar Ritz," Grand Hotel: The Golden Age of Palace Hotels, An Architectural and Social History (New York: The Vendome Press, 1984).

[227] Stephen Watts, The Ritz of Paris (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1964) 9.

[228] "L'Hotel Ritz…est une petite maison à laquelle je suis tres fier de voir mon nom attaché." Cesar's dream was to establish a hotel that bears his name. Marie Louise Ritz, Cesar Ritz: Host to the World (New York: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1938).

[229] "Je Compris qu'il y avait en Angleterre une clientèle prête à payer n'importe quel prix pour avoir ce qu'il y avait de mieux." Ritz, in 1889, believed that there are clients in England who are ready to pay any price to stay in hotel that is better. Source: Marie Louise Ritz, Cesar Ritz: Host to the World (New York: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1938) 158.

facilities. Although this was a snobbish attitude, his main aim was to provide comfort, refreshment, and service without ostentation. The guestrooms did not have a radio or television inside. He had three conditions for his hotel: hygiene, efficiency and beauty. He defined luxury by choosing a strategic location and quality building, offering attention to details in room finishes, furnishing, and layout, and progressive planning of circulation, space adjacencies, the palm court, glass-covered lobbies, open dining terraces, guestroom layout and furniture placement and drapery treatments. He offered solutions to design and service problems, and supported them psychologically, and originated several concepts in the food and beverages sector as well as service and management. Together, these factors represented Ritz's new definition of "luxury". The hotel has maintained this status for 102 years by upgrading and preserving its facilities to meet current demands.

Built under Louis' XIV patronage, Hadrouin Mansart designed the Place Vendome and the buildings surrounding the square – including what became known as the Ritz Hotel – to house royalty. The mansions sold to big financiers and tax collectors and provided a central setting for an equestrian statue of the king. The statue was replaced after the French Revolution with the Vendome Column. Mansart designed the Place Vendome as an octagonal plan cut by a single road giving the square the atmosphere of a salon. Mansart's facades feature a classical style with colossal pilasters and frontispieces of pediments and giant columns.[230] Ritz then bought building Number 16 in the1890s and later combined two adjacent buildings. With the help of Charles Mewé, the architect, Ritz converted the original building into the first true luxury hotel in the world.

What is so attractive about the Ritz? How was luxury redefined? Why did it become synonymous with luxury? While most luxury hotels built prior to the Ritz Hotel showed grandeur and elegance in their lobbies, Cesar Ritz felt that luxury must be present in both the physical environment and the services. Only a well-appointed lobby does not make the hotel luxurious, as was previously believed but it is the entire package: guestrooms, finishes, lobby, offices, restaurants, services, etc, that contribute to the sense of luxury. Further research about the hotel revealed that, rather than applying the standards

---

[230] <http://www.bluffton.edu/~sullivanm/vendome/vendome.html>

known to luxury hotels at the time, Cesar Ritz carefully designed every aspect of the hotel. This included the size of the building, the location, entrance, décor and atmosphere, lobby, check-in, services, the concierge, signage, ornamentation, lighting, security, materials, finishes, furnishings, guestrooms, technology, bars, restaurants, and shopping facilities. The special care in the design of all areas is discussed further.

First, the image of the building was of great significance. Ritz believed that a luxury hotel should not necessarily be ostentatiously ornamented and of a grand scale. On the contrary, he chose the building to have the atmosphere of a gentleman's townhouse where the guest can live and be entertained at the same time. The Place Vendome remained a "symbol of luxury" as it recalled all the jewelers of Paris to house their stores at the *Rue du La Paix* (today, only Boucheron remains at number 26) and housed the ministry of Justice at number 13.[231] This site was a gathering place, at the time, to the elites of society, and was within a walking distance from the Tuileries. Place Vendome, set a landmark of luxury in Paris.

Over the four arches of the entrance of the building, a simple announcement of Hotel Ritz was proportionally placed without the exaggeration of a specific logo (Fig. 4.2). Ritz was sure that the standard of luxury the hotel offers was sufficient to advertise for itself. The hotel did not build a port cochère to maintain the consistency with the other buildings on the square as was originally planned by Mansart. Parking was not an issue in 1898, but today, there is an underground garage that was built after the middle of the twentieth century under the Place de Vendome that serves the square. In addition to facilitating parking, a valet service has been offered since 1898. There is a single revolving door (Fig. 4.3) with the bellman station placed at the front to escort the guests with their luggage upon their arrival. One point of entry means increased security and more restrictions to outsiders. Today, the doors of the Ritz lock at 10 pm. Only guests of the hotel can access the hotel after that time. All entrances are monitored with surveillance cameras and security guards 24 hours a day.

---

[231] Translation of "La place Vendôme reste symbole de luxe : son nom évoque les joailliers de la rue de la Paix (seul Boucheron est au nº26), l'hôtel du Ritz au nº 17 fondé en 1898." Source: http://tourisme.voila.fr/villes/paris/fra/sit/ville/01_pvend/acc.htm

Ritz considered what international guests expect to see in an elite Parisian hotel. And since a number of guests arrive from the United States, the decoration and the furnishings of the hotel should reflect the traditions of Paris; otherwise, Ritz mused these Americans would not cross the ocean to see another American hotel. This explains why most successful hotels gain more praise if they reflect the traditions of the host country. *Room service*, as will be discussed further, is another measurement that set difference between the traditionally designed Ritz and any traditional hotel in the States.

César Ritz's concept of *lobby* was very different as compared to other hotels. He believed that a "luxury" lobby should be intimate and smaller. It should not be at the entrance, as this would encourage loiterers to enter the hotel and disturb the guests.[232] The lobby at the Ritz included different seating arrangements. In some areas, the lobby offered privacy to guests, and encouraged socialization especially in the main hallway of the lobby (Fig 4.5). The front desk is located exactly to the right of the entrance to monitor all guests coming in through the main door. The guests are escorted to the elevator across from the front desk, and then to their rooms.

Much of the personal touch in a luxury hotel comes from its staff. César Ritz originated the idea of white tie and apron for waiters, black tie for the maitre d'hôtel, and morning coat for the upper staff and the manager – another idea borrowed by other hoteliers.[233] Furthermore, the management executives were accessible to their guests; their offices were located throughout the hotel, within easy reach of guests. Despite the grandeur of his hotel, César Ritz sought to treat his guests as true *guests*, not just cash customers. In this respect the concierge was very important. The concierge was the fountainhead of the ancillary services, who might be one person whose full capabilities are unknown by guests. At the Ritz, a concierge develops a trust with the hotel, the same kind of trust that should be established between the concierge and the guests. Being a concierge is an art form. He doesn't just answer questions – he satisfies guests' needs. A situation once occurred at the Ritz when a female guest was instructed by her rich acquaintance to purchase many items before her friends' arrival. Since the lady did not have the cash

---

[232] Stephen Watts, The Ritz of Paris (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1964) 58.
[233] Marie Louise Ritz, César Ritz: Host to the World (New York: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1938) 113.

on hand to make the purchases, the concierge recommended that she go to a different hotel, where she was given the money she needed. This all happened because the concierge was concerned with helping the guest, even at the risk of recommending the services of another hotel.[234]

Ritz's idea of wayfinding added more curiosity. Even though the three buildings tend to be a labyrinth, Ritz believed that directional signs would ruin the image of the hotel. He also thought that they will evoke the feeling of being a "non-resident." From here originated the gallery that connects the two buildings.[235] The gallery is reached from the lobby, through the *salon de thé*, and by making a sharp turn at the dining room. The gallery offers the most concentrated shopping Paris can offer. A suggestion of a sign was rejected thinking that the double *galerie* on both sides will steer the guest gently, "demonstrating that the whole thing is perfectly simple if you know your Ritz."[236]

Additionally, the gallery at the Ritz was considered the most desirable feature. It displayed the most sophisticated boutiques in Paris. The display windows were consistent in size and included carefully selected, expensive items. The idea of galleries was later borrowed by many luxury hotels (Fig. 4.11).

Throughout the hotel, ornamentation was carefully added to finishes and materials without ostentation. This attention to items such as staircase, door handles, lighting fixtures, was part of how Ritz defined luxury.

Technology did not change at the Ritz without cause. For example, it took exactly two years to accept the invention of the new potato machines in the hotel kitchens. Ritz always wanted to keep personal service throughout the cooking steps. The same concept applies to room service. The Ritz located four individual buttons on a bedside table instead of on the phone. The buttons are marked with *Chambermaid, Valet, Waiter* and *Service Privé*. The fourth button connected guests with their private

---

[234] Stephen Watts, The Ritz of Paris (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1964) 196-198.
[235] The main building is located on the Place Vendome. Ritz purchased another two buildings behind the main one. The third one was found to be quite a distance from the second building. He then thought of connecting the two with the gallery.
[236] Ibid., p.16.

servant's room, if the servants joined the guest on his trip.[237] Nevertheless, Ritz was the first hotelier to install electric lighting throughout the hotel and extend their functional purposes to aesthetic ones. He spent weeks experimenting with the effect of electric lighting on his wife. This was one innovation that many luxury hotels quickly followed. He was concerned with lighting that showed women's clothes, jewelry, and complexion to a flattering advantage. Interestingly, he discovered that a delicate apricot pink was the most becoming lighting color. He claimed it showed the complexion of the human body at its most beautiful.[238] Ritz also pioneered in the use of indirect lighting for the same purposes of the apricot pink lighting color. For example, in the main dining-room, he used alabaster urns that reflect the light upward onto a tinted ceiling. Similarly, in the bedrooms, he suspended bowls with silkcords. And only a few years later, his dining tables boasted the first table lights, which gave ample light to plates while presenting a dimmed and intimate atmosphere overall – another technique later adopted industry wide.[239]

Unlike other hotels, Ritz did not have a particular style in mind. He wanted the interiors to match the exterior of the building and did not seem to place much emphasis on the differences in styles. His architect, Mewés, took him on an educational tour to the Louvre, the Versailles, and other museums. Inspired, he then duplicated certain pieces from the places they toured. They ordered silver from Cristofle, glass from Baccarat, rugs and tapestries from Braquenié, brocades and silks from Chatel and Tassinari.[240] Ritz selected an eclectic mix of items because he wanted his hotel to resemble a gentleman's home, where pieces are never bought at the same time. His obsession for cleanliness made him choose materials and fabrics differently from other luxury hotels. For example, he did not use heavy fabrics such as plushes and velvets. Although they were regarded as high quality materials, they attracted dust and were difficult to clean, instead he used lighter materials, and introduced chamois skin sheets under the linen sheets to maintain cleanliness. For the same reasons, he used metal beds rather than wooden ones, and he preferred to paint the walls rather than using wallpapers. Counterpanes were also light in weight

---

[237] Ibid., p. 17.
[238] Marie-Claude Metrot. Personal Interview. September 2000.
[239] Stephen Watts, The Ritz of Paris (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1964) 57.
[240] Marie Louise Ritz, Cesar Ritz: Host to the World (New York: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1938) 234.

and color and could easily be washed and maintained.[241] Ritz considered carefully the amount of closet

space his guests needed. He designed built-in wardrobes with hangers and drawers. Drawers were

measured specifically to accommodate different uses required by his wealthy clients such as buns, rolls,

rats, and false hair for women. An interesting story occurred while settling on a particular style for dining

chairs. Once Colonel Hans Pfyffer noted that the original, rose brocade-covered dining chairs, while

comfortable, should have arms to encourage guests to remain longer at the table, Ritz immediately

returned all the side chairs and ordered armchairs instead, for the rest of the hotel. This represented Ritz's

concern towards guests' comfort.

All guestrooms were different. They were spacious but had different styles in furnishing and

color schemes than others. There were also times when guests brought their own furniture. Every room

was given a name after one of the residents like the Windsor (Fig.4.8), or the Coco Chanel. As described

earlier, all the furniture was brought from different places, at different times, and was made of expensive

materials. Every room therefore had a unique quality.

There were two restaurants and three bars in the hotel, all of which were concerned with hygiene

under the directions of Escoffier. He offered not only artistic food presentations, but was also aware of

the digestive properties of the food he served. The *Salon Carré*, a registered national monument, served

private luncheons and dinners.   The *Salon de thé*, used as a waiting room, was located on the way to the

hotel restaurant and was sometimes used for receptions. *L'Espadon*, meaning swordfish; another

restaurant specializing in seafood, was an integral part of hotel dining options (Fig. 4.9). The design of

L'Espadon was carefully created by Ritz himself. It had an outdoor atmosphere including a lowered sky-

like ceiling. The variegated granite chip pillars where selected from Italy. His other introductions

included Venetian glass to serve shellfish and an offering of nine oysters "for the man who cannot quite

decide between a dozen and a half-dozen."[242]

---

[241] Stephen Watts, <u>The Ritz of Paris</u> (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1964) 57.
[242] Ibid., pp. 15-22.

During the hotel's construction, and after its completion, César Ritz evaluated every space carefully prior to its occupancy. He made sure that drawers would slide easily and switches were placed at an appropriate height. He also added tapestry to walls that looked bare, and placed thinner net curtains to rooms with a fine view. After his notes were implemented, he retested these rooms to make sure that everything was exactly as he wanted it. He personally instructed housekeeping how to make the bed in order to prevent the sheets from having wrinkles, and to make sure that pillows were fluffed up correctly.[243]

At the Ritz, renovation was applied with careful detail replacing old worn materials with close-to-identical new ones reflecting the traditional Ritz idea. Although expensive and hard to find, these touches satisfy guests' constant expectations of furnishings and materials. Decades after the death of Ritz, the hotel has succeeded in maintaining his luxury standards until the 1970s, when the hotel's profits and standards declined. Mohammad Al Fayed, who also owns Harrod's of London, purchased the hotel, and spent approximately $75,000,000 dollars to restore the hotel to Ritz' original standards. He also added more amenities to meet new demands. This includes the school of Escoffier, the gymnasium, and the nightclub.

Under the current French system of rating hotels, the Ritz has been given a five star rating.

---

[243] Ibid., p. 58.

Fig. 4.1 The Ritz Paris.
Source: personal photography.

Fig. 4.2 The Ritz sign.
Source: personal photography

Fig. 4.3 The Ritz Hotel Entrance.
Source: personal photography.

Fig. 4.4 The entrance at the Ritz.
Source: personal photography.

Fig. 4.5 Hotel lounge/lobby at the
Ritz. Source: personal photography.

Fig. 4.6 The Bellman Station.

Source: personal photography

Fig. 4.7 Staircase from the lobby.

Source: personal photography

Fig. 4.8 The Windsor Suite at the Ritz.
Source:
http://www.ritzparis.com/fr/R020
0.asp

Fig. 4.9 L'Espadon.
Source:
http://www.ritzparis.com/fr/R0300

Fig. 4.10 Salon Psyche.
Source:
http://www.ritzparis.com/fr/R0304

Fig. 4.11 The Gallery at the Ritz.
Source: personal photography
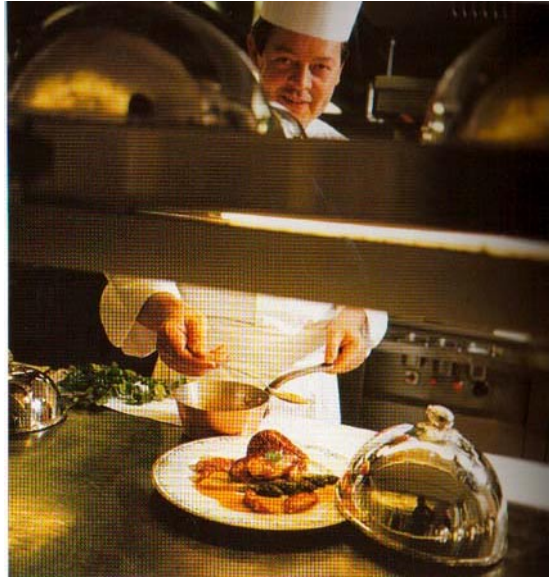
Fig. 4.12 Preparing for food presentation. Source: a complementary magazine by Ritz Hotel.

Fig. 4.13 All articles are washed, spread flat to cool down, and then folded as conceived by Ritz. Source: a complementary magazine by Ritz Hotel.

Fig. 4.14 Ritz originated embroidered damasks linens, all of which are peach hued sheets and pillow cases of the fine Egyptian cotton (220 threads). Source: a complimentary magazine by Ritz Hotel.

Burj Al Arab Hotel[244]

The hotel's owner, Sheikh Mohammad Bin Rashid Al-Maktoum, the Crown Prince of Dubai, grew up in a rich influential family. The wealth of the city comes from oil, gold and the sea. Financing the hotel was not an obstacle. The owner's primary objective was to surpass all hotels in the world in luxury and to set a new landmark in Dubai (see Fig.4.16).

Originally, the site included the Chicago Beach Hotel and Resort. Built in the 1970s, it was one of the first hotels that marked the beginning of Dubai's tourism industry. Since then, tourism developed rapidly, and the luxury hotel industry attracted people internationally – particularly Germany, France and England. Today, the city houses 280 hotels of which 70% are among "luxury" and "upper class level."[245]

The Chicago Beach Hotel was demolished in 1994, and was replaced by the 1.2 million sq.ft Burj Al Arab Hotel on December 1st, 1999. More than 4,000 construction staff and 250 different designers were involved in the five-year process of construction. The architect, Thomas Wright of W.S.Atkins based in England, designed the building, while the interior designers were KCA International London, and the design of lighting was given to Morris Brille from New York.

The building program blended state-of-the-art technology with an attentive and personalized service to meet guests' needs and unexpected desires. Luxury at the Burj can be interpreted in terms of excessiveness. The hotel reflects the theme of marine life of Dubai. It "evokes a sense of luxury, excitement, sophistication and adventure," according to architect Tom Wright, the design principal at W.S. Atkins, the hotel architects. "To give more luxurious feel," the architects designed each of the 28 guest floors on two levels.[246] In other words, every guestroom has two floors.

The location plays an essential role. It is ideally located near the major highway that connects Dubai with Abu Dhabi,[247]near major attractions such as the Wild Wadi,[248] Beach front,[249] Dubai Internet

---

[244] Most of the technical information has been gathered from the Public Media Director and the management at the hotel unless otherwise indicated.

[245] Khalid Bin Selgyyem, general Manager at the Tourism And Marketing Division of Dubai Government. Interview. LBC Television, August 15.

[246] Edward McBride, "Burj Al Arab," Architecture Aug. 2000: 116-123

[247] Dubai is a major city in United Arab Emirates, and is only 90 miles from the capital, Abu Dhabi.

City,[250] educational institutions,[251] a golf course, hotels, shopping district, Jebel Ali Free Zone,[252] fine restaurants and night clubs. Moreover, it is only 10 km south of the major business district, which includes the Dubai Trade Center.

The owner emphasized that the state-of-the-art technology in hotels influences the perception of "luxury." What will lure guests, he believed, is the "excessive" use of materials, products, coupled with the latest technology in the structure. The hotel, for example, stands 321 meters (1,052 feet) above sea level, which makes it the tallest hotel in the world. It is built on a man-made island, and connected with the mainland via a bridge. Supporting the hotel are the 250 foundation pilings of 1.5 meters in diameter driven 45 meters into the seabed.

The exterior double-skinned Teflon-coated woven glass fibre screen, 'the sail', is the first time such technology has been applied vertically as a building skin. The material has two functions: it acts as a shield against the heat, and acts like a canvas at night for the light show, a fully computerized display of color changing luminaries.[253] The steel cross bracing behind the fabric was placed to protect the hotel from wind and earthquake loads.[254] The helipad is 212 meters above sea level, allowing a maximum 7.5 ton helicopters to land. The feature that impressed people the most was "al Muntaha" restaurant.[255]   It stands 197.5 meters above sea level and protrudes from the top level of the hotel. The original design concept was to use glass finished floors to be able to look down at the sea. Fortunately, the design was rejected as it might cause diners to feel uncomfortable and nervous.

---

[248] Largest park

[249] part of the Persian gulf

[250] Dubai Internet City will serve as an international free trade zone for information technology, ecommerce and media facilities that will enable IT and related enterprises to operate globally out of Dubai

[251] The American University in Dubai

[252] Jebel Ali Free Zone is built around the largest man-made port in the world and covers over one 100 square kilometers of office units, warehouses and land sites that are available on lease, whilst storage space in the cold & cool stores, open storage areas and ultra modern cargo handling equipment can be hired. It offers a unique opportunity to do business from the Middle East at unbeatable tax and business incentives. It provides access to some 1.5 billion plus demanding and affluent consumer market in the region. Source:<http://www.jafza.co.ae>

[253] Currimbhoy, N. "Color washes turn a Dubai Hotel into a huge, animated lighting spectacular." Architecture record, (May 2000) 321.

[254] Edward McBride, "Burj Al Arab," Architecture August, 2000: 121.

[255] An informal survey taken at the lobby of Burj Al Arab.

Panoramic elevators traveling 7 meters per second allow guests to enjoy a view of the Persian Gulf. There are a total of 10 elevators to accommodate the 202 guestrooms.

Like the Ritz, the hotel does not carry any flashy signs indicating its name. On the contrary; it is part of the logo and is only written in artistic Arabic lettering. The logo is placed at each side of the entrance, and framed in gold to keep consist with the design theme of the hotel (Fig. 4.19).

Security is strictly enforced in the hotel. The island that holds the hotel is connected to the mainland via a bridge. A checkpoint is positioned before the bridge to restrict the public from accessing the hotel. People not staying at the hotel are required to pay an entry fee of Dhs 200 at the door. [256] The fee can be reimbursed should the visitor decide to eat at any of the dining areas. After the bridge, the main entrance welcomes both arriving guests and visitors. A separate entrance on the side is for employees. Two other entrances serve arriving guests through the helipad and the boat dock. Guests are also welcome to reserve any of the hotel's 8 Rolls-Royce Silver Seraph's for transfer to and from the hotel. The cars are free of charge for guests. Additionally, surveillance cameras are very well hidden.

The authors of the book <u>1001 Nights at the Burj Al Arab</u> felt that the four towers at the main driveway define the entrance of the hotel. Fireballs eight foot in diameter are propelled eight meters high from the towers, creating an optical illusion as the fire is reflected off the glass sail of the hotel.[257] Together with the water cascading near the vehicular loop, it forms a spectacular show.

The entrance lobby is an elliptical shape outlined on the floor by hand tufted carpet, and a reflected ceiling coffer in gold above, framing a glass and mirrored chandelier (see Fig 4.23). The lobby does not serve as a waiting area. People are entertained in the lobby area by the quiet spectacles of light show or water and light fountains. The lobby is separated into two floors. Like the Ritz, lounges are placed separately within the hotel. Although Ritz despised the idea of large lobbies that attract "outsiders", Burj Al Arab restricted entry gave the opportunity to enjoy a 180-meter high atrium lobby. The lobby is an entertainment in itself because of its magnitude and its colors that change in every floor.

---

[256] Dirham is United Arab Emirates currency where 1 US dollar is equivalent to 3.67 UAE Dirham.
[257] The flame balls are produced by releasing a controlled quantity of non-toxic propane gas.

To maintain both the sail-like form of the building and the complexity of the three-dimensional shape of the atrium, the architect designed a series of shaped membrane patterned panels. "Each membrane is constructed of PTFE coated fiberglass separated by an air gap of 500mm and pre-tensioned over a series of trussed arches. These arches span up to 50 meters between the outer bedroom wings of the hotel which frame the Atrium, and are aligned with the vertical geometry of the building."[258] Not only do the membranes function serve for an aesthetic purpose but they also take positive wind pressures by spanning from truss to truss and negative wind pressures by spanning sideways. At night, the whole Atrium wall acts like a canvas for a light show of projected colors.[259]

The cascading waterfall, situated between the escalators leading to *Sahn Eddar*, the under sea level restaurant, combine finely atomized water with fiber optics to produce visual patterns day and night. As water and fog flow downward through its steps filled with glass stones, arches of water, illuminated with colored fiber optics, jump across in choreographed movements.[260]

Arriving guests bypass the check-in process by being escorted directly to their designated floors. A separate concierge desk awaits each guest to arrange his or her stay.[261]

The earlier part has already discussed Ritz's belief that a luxury hotel must offer personalized service. Chapter three discussed that the desirable ratio of service in a luxury hotel is 1:1 ratio where one employee handles one room. The Burj Al Arab 1,200 members of staff serving the 202 rooms, gives a ratio of 6:1 where 6 employees/ staff handle one room. Additionally, the hotel deliberately appointed its staff from 50 different nationalities in order to add diversity among the hotel's staff. All classes of personnel wear a distinct uniform that identify the waiters from the butlers, valets, or even the concierge. Even more interestingly, at least one of the staff is stationed inside each of the hotel's public restrooms. They hand the guest hot towels, *Hermes* lotion and perfumes; all served on baskets.

---

[258] Khuan Chew and Uschi Schmitt, eds., <u>1001 Arabian Nights at the Burj Al Arab</u> (Cyprus: ABC Millenium, 2000) 27.
[259] Ibid., p.27.
[260] Ibid.,p.23.
[261] There is one concierge desk on every floor.

Both the Ritz and the Burj Al Arab utilized minimal signs thinking that signs would distract the "luxury" status of the hotel and make the guest feel like a "non-resident". At the Burj Al Arab, however, people are escorted to their desired destination by any of the employees.

Careful ornamentation was added to furnishings, materials and products to evoke a luxurious meaning. Rugs for example were hand-made (see Fig.4.29). Glassware in restaurants was carefully designed to follow the theme of the restaurant (see Fig.4.44). TV cabinets were also ornamented (see Fig.4.38). Versaci famous motif was inserted carefully into floor materials (see Fig.4.31). The seating in the lobby followed the nautical theme as well (see Fig 4.20).

César Ritz was the first hotelier to install electric lighting throughout his hotel and to extend their functional purposes to aesthetical ones. Like the Ritz, Burj Al Arab also use a delicate apricot pink lamps in guestrooms to enhance the complexion of the human body at its most beautifully.[262] In addition, at Burj Al Arab, this concept is carried one step further, there, the latest technology in lighting is used to turn the hotel into a showcase.

The origin of interior furnishings, finishes, and decoration has often become associated with luxury. The best available appointments were imported from different locations renowned for such materials. For example, 30 different types of marble were used for walls and flooring in guestrooms and public areas, and were brought from Brazil and Italy. Mosaic and stain glass were brought from Italy, France, the UK and Dubai. Carpets and rugs were brought from South Africa, India, the UK and Dubai. Cherry-wood was brought from Canada, and Germany. Bird-eye maple wood was brought from North America. Wooden doors were fabricated in Dubai. Chandeliers were made in Austria and the UK. Mirrors came from the UK. Vases were collected from Italy, USA and the UK. Original artwork was gathered from local artists. Stair case railings were made in Dubai. Curtains were shipped from France, the UK, Italy, the US and Thailand. Dubai was also the source of the 22-carat gold leaf applied in the interiors of the lobby and guestrooms. An estimated area of 8,000 square meters is gilded. Not all

---

[262] Marie-Claude Metrot. Personal Interview. 1st September, 2000.

interior spaces are identical.[263] The uniqueness of the spaces created by using different materials conforms to Ritz's idea, creating an atmosphere of a gentleman's house.

Having identified the needs of high profile guests helped the hotelier incorporate them during the programming phase of the project. Eventually, the size and the form of the guestroom reflected current design trends. Creating a unique feel was more difficult. The technology used in guestrooms was the most likely feature used to distinguish their guestrooms from less luxurious ones.[264]

In total, there are 202 suites: 14 one-bedroom deluxe suites; 18 one-bedroom panoramic suites; 4 one bedroom club suites; 28 two-bedroom suites; 6 three-bedroom suites; 2 presidential suites; and 2 royal suites. The latter specifically cater to the royalty such as the Sultan of Brunei and the King of Jordan.

Generally speaking, "spaciousness defines luxury" believed Ritz. All suites range from 169 sq. meters to 780 sq. meters and they all enjoy a view of the Persian Gulf. Every guestroom is located on two floors. The first floor contains a living area, a bar area and an office space while the second floor contains bedrooms. Both the presidential and royal suites have elevators connecting the two floors. Wall treatment and finishes differ in both color and style. Guests have the choice between cool colors or warm colors depending on their moods. In fact, all the artifacts, antiques, pieces of furniture were brought from different places too, which creates a unique identity for each room. The foyer within the suites offers guests the option to circulate to the office area; living room; bar; store; guest bathroom; or the stair case that leads to the bedrooms in the second floor.

Technology in guestrooms is featured in the lighting system, telephones, in-room security, curtains, and other products. First, guests can access their rooms via a proximity reader card (see chapter three for more details). At the entrance of the room, a surveillance camera is placed to monitor visitors. An intercom system is also provided at the door so guests can control, monitor and automatically open the door from either the TV set or any of the rooms' telephones (Fig. 4.24). The guest may also personally

---

[263] Mary McLaughlin. Personal Interview. August 2000.
[264] Pilot survey personally conducted at the lobby of the Burj Al Arab.

open the door in the traditional way. All 42" plasma TVs offer 100 channels featuring video on demand, and Internet access through infrared keyboard. A real time recording system enables guests to pause a live broadcast. They can also monitor restaurants and current activities at the hotel as well as the hallway outside the guestroom. Telephones can also summon the private butler. It is worth mentioning that every room has a minimum of 9 phones. A ghost clock (projected light) is placed on the wall connecting the two floors (Fig.4.42).

To control the amount of daylight entering the room, there are three layers of curtains. These are a standard feature in many hotels. At the Burj, guests have the opportunity to automatically control any of the curtains via a remote control. The remote can also control the AC in the room by setting the thermostat at a desired temperature.

The control panel located at the bedside table has a button labeled "trail to the toilet". If the switch is turned on, the nearest lamp will turn on, as does the lighting in the room leading to the toilet.[265] Although some consider this feature unnecessary, many enjoyed the fact that it is available.

The office consumes part of the room. It is equipped with a laptop, scanner, fax, copier, printer, and high-speed Internet connection that are housed in special drawers near the desk. The chair is ergonomic and is finished with leather (Fig.4.34).

What distinguishes the Royal suites from the rest of the suites is that they feature an electronic revolving bed, a private elevator, a private cinema, 27 phones, two master bedrooms, a study room with book collections, one VIP room, a spacious dining room, a grand staircase, an upper sitting room with a coffered ceiling tented in silk, all furnished with fiery sun colors. One of the bathrooms is covered with *Fantastico Arni* marble obtained from a quarry that was closed 50 years ago. The rarity of the materials used at the Burj is the ultimate in luxury.

When it comes to dining, the hotel offers a variety of food outlets, all of which reflect a consistency of luxury experienced in other areas at the hotel. The number of restaurants, bars and lounges, exceed that required by luxury hotel standards.

---

[265] <http://www.furtonix-into.com/burjalarab.htm>

Al Muntaha, meaning "the Ultimate," protrudes from the 27th floor offers modern European cuisine, and allows seating for 120 people (Fig.4.48, 4.49). The design reflects a 21st century space-age theme. There are 2 tunnels that resemble a circuit panel. A separate bar and lounge are included within Al Muntaha to seat 74 people. The undersea level restaurant is called *Al Mahara* (Fig.4.44). It offers Asian and Western seafood, and allows seating for 114 people. Al Mahara, meaning the Shell, can be reached by riding a three minute simulated submarine elevator that travels 60ft below sea level. A wine cellar leads the guests from the submarine to the dining area through a gold arched shell tunnel. The Middle Eastern restaurant at the lobby level, *Al Iwan*, has a capacity to seat 110 people (Fig. 4.47). The space is adorned in Crimson Reds, Black, White and Gold and finished in glass mosaics, gold leafed arabesque arches, cherry wood carved panels, gold on red printed fabrics, and flame-glow lamps attached to the wall. Sahn Eddar is another lounge that seats 120 people located in the atrium lobby level. On the poolside area, *Bab Al Yam,* meaning the sea's door, offers buffet and à la carte, the restaurant allows seating for 84 people. *The Juna bar* – seating for 35 people – is located on the ground mezzanine floor, furnished with the warm tones of gold, yellow, black, and red. Juna is an Arabic name that stands for Eye of the Sun. One possible reason for calling it this name is that it is one of the best places to watch the sun set. While *Assawan* serves the health fitness area on the 18th floor, *Diwania Assawan*, is a library snooker room bar. It seats 26 people.

The hotel also has 11 retail stores decorated in a matching theme (Fig.4.50). Banquet and meeting facilities are also available and are fully equipped with state-of-the-art technology and kitchen facilities to serve different types of events. Al Falak Ballroom for example, is designed as a 2 tiered circular wedding cake decoration of golden yellow, pinks, oranges with black, brass and gold-leafed trims and accents. The ballroom can seat up to 400 people. The five conference suites are all linked to the main ballroom.

Different types of health facilities are also provided to enhance the hotel's image (Fig.4.54). To serve conservative guests; the hotel separated female facilities from the mixed ones. For example, it offers 2 gymnasiums – 1 female only and 1 mixed, 2 indoor swimming pools and relaxation areas – 1

female only (Fig. 4.51) and 1 mixed, 1 large outdoor swimming pool; in addition to16 treatment and therapy rooms; saunas; Jacuzzis; steam rooms; plunge pools; solariums; aerobics studio; squash courts – all offer separate facilities for females only. Every area has an individual design concept and is equipped with state-of-the-art technology.

Burj Al Arab was granted a seven star rating by the Ministry of Travel in Dubai.[266] Different magazines and critics spoke of this rating. Consultant David Goldsmith[267] believed that the hotel "surpasses the highest quality rating available in its industry that was designated the first 7 Star hotel in the world. Not 6, but 7, on a scale of 1-5. " Goldsmith deemed that the hotel deserves the rating because it understands that it is in the whole experience that makes the sale, not just elements. In other words, if the hotel only offered the best room service, they would not be the best in the world. If the suites were outfitted with all the amenities such as fax, phone, Internet, wet bar, they still would not be number one. What makes this all work is the package. The travel magazine, Condé Nast Traveler, wrote that the hotel is one of the next 7 wonders of the world, as it is a destination unto itself.

Conclusions

From the comparison of the two case studies, it is possible to conclude that luxury can be defined in the entire experience of the guest in a hotel. In other words, if a hotel only offered the most luxurious guestroom, the hotel would not be luxurious. Nineteenth century hotels were considered luxurious when luxury was only present in the lobby and public area and not in any of the guestrooms. Cesar Ritz gave importance to every detail in the hotel, including public areas, guestrooms, kitchens and restaurants. The Ritz concept of luxury affected the whole industry. The Burj Al Arab Hotel followed many of Ritz's original concepts and developed them to meet current guests' demands. The hotel wanted to surpass luxury present in any hotel, and therefore carefully planned all aspects of the hotel to assure that every guest will experience luxury at any time and at every corner. Funding the hotel, however, played a

---

[266] Mary McLaughlin. Personal Interview. August 2000.
[267] One of the founders of the Syracuse based MetaMatrix Consulting Group Inc. 7 Stars On A Scale Of 1 To 5: Excellence in Customer Service. <http://www.powerpointers.com/showarticle.asp?articleid=532>

critical factor in achieving what was originally planned. César Ritz, for example, required an enormous

amount of money to achieve his plans. He solicited funds from princesses of London and Paris, and had

to convince them of his ideas. Funding Burj Al Arab Hotel on the other hand, was not an obstacle.

Architecture wrote that Burj Al Arab is a monument to the triumph of money over practicality that

elevates style over substance.[268]

---

[268] Edward McBride, "Burj Al Arab," Architecture Aug. 2000: 125.

Fig. 4.15 The Wadi Water Park and Jumeirah Beach Resort are adjacent to Burj Al Arab

Source: a complementary publication issued by Burj Al Arab Hotel.

Fig. 4.16 The building to the right shows Burj Al Arab and the building to the left is the Jumeirah Beach Resort.

Source: a complementary publication issued by Burj Al Arab Hotel.

115

Fig. 4.17 The atrium looking upward. Source: personal photography.

Fig. 4.18.a (left) a view of the atrium looking downward. The arrow to the right indicates one of the guestrooms' doors, while the arrow to the left indicates the separate check-in desks. Source: personal photography.
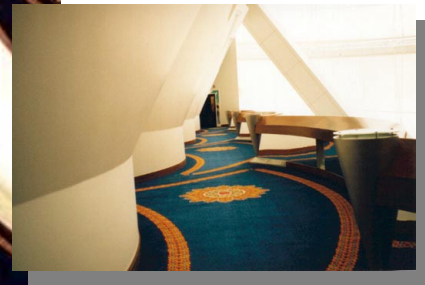Fig. 4.18.b (right) shows the hallways to guestrooms. Source: personal photography.

Fig. 4.19 The entrance of the Burj Al Arab Hotel.

Source: personal photography.

Fig. 4.20 Seats carry the nautical theme of the hotel.

Source: personal photography.

Fig. 4.21 State of-the-art technology used in the fountain.

Source: personal photography

Fig. 4.22 valet service at the Burj Al Arab

Source: personal photography.

Fig. 4.23 service staff waiting to escort guests.

Source: personal photography.

Fig. 4.24 Surveillance camera and entry system is located at each guestroom entry.

Source: personal photography.

Fig. 4.25 (top) seating within the bedroom area in addition to the living room on the first level of the guestroom.
Fig. 4.26 (middle) the bedroom reflects a warm color scheme and is washed with daylight from floor to ceiling window.
Fig. 4.27 (bottom) housekeeping carefully prepare the bed and put away extra pillows.
Source: personal photographs.

All suites has different styles, furnishings, and color scheme.
Fig. 4.28 (top) is the living room at the smallest suite.
Fig. 4.29 (middle) is the deluxe one suite bedroom.
Fig. 4.30 (bottom) is at the presidential suite.
Source: complementary pictures from Burj Al Arab.

Fig 4.31 (top) entrance at each bedroom provides privacy
Fig. 4.32 (middle) dressing area of the smallest suite.
Fig. 4.33 (bottom) different types of storage at the dressing area.

Source: personal photography

Fig. 4.34 (left) fully equipped office.

Fig. 4.35 (right) wires hidden in drawers.

Source: personal photography.

Fig. 4.36(left) 3 layers of automated curtains.

Fig. 4.37 (right) storage is located under the stair case to store personal belongings.

Source: personal photography.

Fig. 4.38 (left) an example of one of the plasma TVs that can be rotated to the desired view angle. Fig. 3.39(middle) hotel logo carefully embroidered in linens. Fig. 4.40 (right) peach apricot lamp is used, an original Ritz idea. Source: personal photographs.

Fig. 4.41 Housekeeping carts are made of high quality material, and are designed to hide all types of storage.

Source: Marie-Claude Metrot.

Fig. 4.42 Ghost clocks are projected to the wall inside the guestrooms of the Burj Al Arab.

Source: personal photography

Fig, 4.43 different views of the bathroom located in the deluxe one-bedroom suite. Double doors open into the bathroom, ample natural light reach the bathroom from the floor to ceiling windows. A rest area is located in the bathroom for more relaxation. Floor is finished with white marble and walls are finished with mosaic. Toiletries are placed on the granite top dual-vanities that provide guests their essential needs, and are all designed by Hermes.

Source: personal photography.

Fig. 4.44 (top) the entrance to the undersealevel restaurant.

Source: a complementary publication issued by Burj Arab Hotel.

Fig. 4.45 (below) food presentation and careful selection of silverware at the same restaurant.

Source: personal photographs.
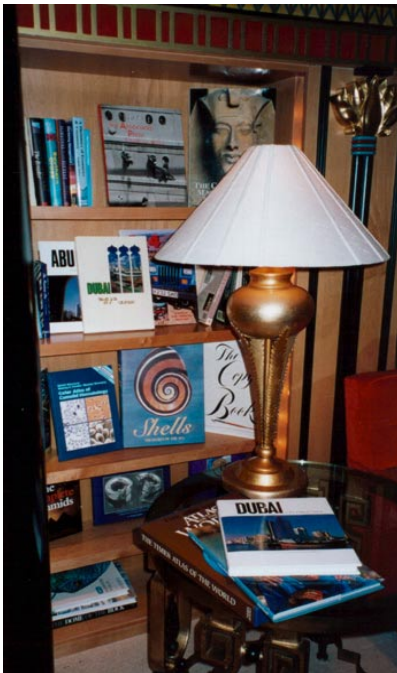

Fig 4.46(left): the library spa lounge.

Source: personal photographs.

Fig 4.47 (right) the entrance to Al Iwan restaurant.

Source: Complementary photograph from Burj Al Arab Hotel.

Fig 4.48 (top) Al Muntaha Restaurant protruded from the building.
Source: <http://www.ataiaircon.com/uaeproject.html>.

Fig 4.49 (bottom) the interior of the Muntaha Restaurant.
Source: personal photography

Fig 4.50.a and fig 4.50.b
retail stores at Burj Al Arab.

Source: personal photography.

Fig 4.51 the indoor swimming pool extensively for women.   A sufficient leather seating area surround the pool, which is modeled after the Middle Eastern civilization. Columns are finished with mosaic and arabesque added at one side of the pool.

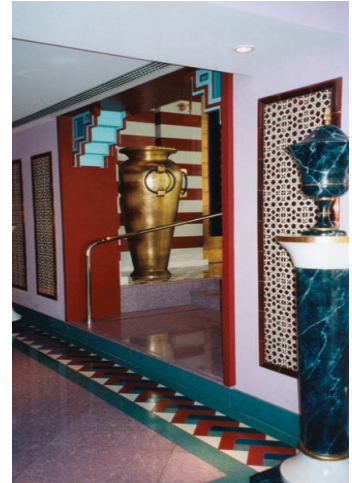 Source: a complementary brochure by Burj Arab Hotel.

Fig 4.52 (left) service that transport guests from the hotel to the beach area, or the water park. Fig 4.53 (middle) A Jacuzzi overlooking the Persian Gulf. Fig 4.54 (right) entrance to the health facilities area Source: personal photographs.
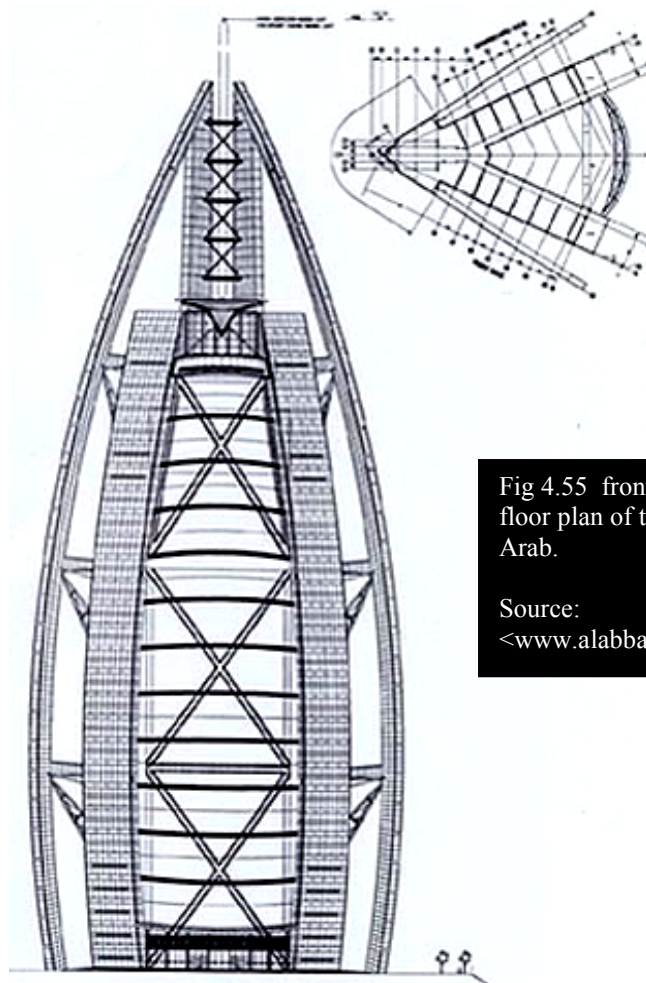

Fig 4.55 front elevation and floor plan of the Burj Al Arab.

Source: <www.alabbargroup.com>

Chapter Five

ANALYZING A HOTEL RATING SYSTEM

In the previous chapters, luxury has been discussed in both its historical and present terms in order to get an understanding of how guests might perceive the concept and what factors influenced this perception. This chapter discusses the two approaches that rate luxury hotels objectively: rating hotels based on their average daily room rate, or based on guidelines put forth by different companies around the world.

Average Daily Rate

The average daily rate (ADR) rates hotels based on the room prices per night (table 5.1). The higher the quality of finishes, physical property, furnishings, services, and other extras, the higher the room rates. The author, however, believes that the system is not adequate because the increase in prices does not necessarily reflect the quality of the hotel. For example, a luxury hotel in New York offers a room for $280 in comparison with $80 for a luxury room in Las Vegas. In other cases, some hotels need to raise their room rates in order to cover increased hotel operating costs. Table 5.1 is from the book Check In Check-Out. It shows examples of hotel chains that are classified using this system.

Luxury Hotels ($150 +)	First Class Hotels ($125 +)	Midrange Hotels ($75 +)	Upscale Budget ($60+)	Economy ($45+)
Four Seasons	*Crowne Plaza*	*AmeriSuites*	*Best Western*	*Econolodge*
Hyatt	*Doubletree*	*Clarion*	***Comfort Inns***	*Knights Inn*
Renaissance	*Hilton*	*Four Points*	*Fairfield Inns*	*Microtel*
Ritz-Carlton	*Marriott*	*Hampton Inns*	*Howard*	*Motel 6*
Westin	*Radisson*	*Holiday Inn*	*Johnson*	*Red Roof Inns*
Wyndham	*Sheraton*	*uality Inns*	*La Quinta*	*Super 8*

Table 5.1 Categorizing hotels according to the average daily rate. Source: Gary Vallen and Jerome Vallen, Check-in Check-out (Upper Saddle, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2000) 16.

129

Guidelines and criteria-based ratings

The authors of the book Check-In Check-Out indicated that many agencies dedicate services by establishing a list of guidelines. Such guidelines rate hotels objectively, and in many cases they were standardized within some countries. Because international travelers are never sure of what hotel best meets their needs and expectations, the existence of detailed criteria becomes a helpful source. The agencies that provide those services can be formal, informal, privately run, or governmentally run.

There have been some efforts to develop a unified rating system internationally, such as the system created by the World Tourism Organization (WTO). The organization is intergovernmental, operating from its headquarters in Madrid, Spain, and sanctioned by the United Nations. It serves travel and tourism globally with rating systems such as; deluxe (luxury), first class, second-class (tourist class), third and fourth class (unacceptable for tourists). The guidelines are comprehensive. Unfortunately, many travelers are not aware of their existence.

In addition to the general criteria created by the WTO, some countries developed their own. For example, the Swiss Hotel Association obtained a self-evaluation plan that uses five criteria in rating their hotels. France broadened the WTO five categories by adding a letter next to the rating such as Two-Star L (whereby L indicates Luxe/Luxury). Mexico also enhanced the WTO guidelines by adding a luxury class to the categories. Australia uses a six-star category whereby six is a luxury hotel. In Japan, the Japanese Travel Bureau rates hotels based on their guestrooms, baths, and gardens. In China, the National Evaluation Committee that is authorized by the China National Tourism Administration modifies the WTO ratings. South Africa utilizes a mandatory grading plan that it requires hotels to follow. Yugoslavia uses a letter rating from A to D, where A is the first class and D is the lowest, in addition to the letter L for luxury. The Irish Tourist Board employs a star system that rates the presence of technologies such as the elevators, and air conditioning, but it does not reflect the quality of those facilities. England has more advanced research on this field. For example, the National Tourist Board, the Automobile Association, the Royal Automobile Club, Michelin and Egon Ronay are all different

organizations or enterprises that offer ratings systems, in addition to adding a specific percentage to the rating.[269] In the United Arab Emirates, the Ministry of Tourism in Dubai developed five-star rating criteria.[270]

The authors of the book Check-In and Check- Out believed that the United States has been the most advanced country to develop detailed criteria that assess all aspects of hotels such as the ambiance, the quality, the services, and the physical features.[271] AAA and Mobil are the most recognized private agencies that apply ratings in an efficient manner using professional inspectors during anonymous visits to hotel facilities. Although the ratings offer detailed guidelines on how the physical qualities of luxury hotels should be and what services are expected, this thesis argues that separating the evaluation of physical qualities from services will allow guests to better understand which area the hotel failed to provide. A good example is the "Stars and Diamonds" systems launched by the Mexican Hotel Association, which separates rating the physical property from the services in order for the guest to be aware of what exactly each rating focuses on. The star rating is dedicated specifically to the quality of the property and the guestrooms whereas the diamond system only rates the services, the staff, and the management of the hotel.[272] Using the latter technique is more objective, and the guest will know exactly how the hotel was rated. However, the AAA and the Mobil systems have the most comprehensive guidelines. The following example examines the American Automobile Association.

American Automobile Association (AAA)

AAA was established in 1902 and is one of the world's largest travel organizations. Annually, it evaluates more than 45,000 accommodations, restaurants, and tourist attractions, as well as campgrounds. The results are published in tour books used by more than 40 million members and non-members in the

---

[269] Gary Vallen and Jerome Vallen, Check-in Check-out (Upper Saddle, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2000)15-21.
[270] Haitham Murad. Personal Interview. 25th April, 2001.
[271] Gary Vallen and Jerome Vallen, Check-in Check-out (Upper Saddle, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2000)15-21.
[272] The Lodging Conference 1999. 'Stars and Diamonds' Name of Mexico's Hotel Rating System." September 2, 1999. <http://www.hotelonline.com/neo/news/…sept99_MexicoHotelRating.htm>.

United States and Canada. Through extensive research in the hospitality field, and with the aid of hotels, associations, and travel agencies,[273] AAA established the Lodging Diamond Rating Guidelines in 1963. The criteria classify lodging properties according to their physical design and services. Those include lodgings with limited services such as apartment properties, bed and breakfast, condominiums, lodgings with moderate services such as motels and ranches, and lodgings with full services such as hotels and resorts. The criteria also include sub-classifications that fall under the previous classifications. They are more descriptive and include suite, extended stay, and hotels of historical significance.

The evaluation covers the following eight areas: exterior and grounds, public areas, room décor and ambiance, guest room amenities, bathrooms, housekeeping, management, and guest services. This thesis will only focus on the classification requirements of five diamond lodgings where renowned properties are luxurious and exceed guests' expectations (see Appendix B for the detailed criteria).

Conclusions

Hotel ratings are important instruments to both travelers and hotel investors. Hotel investors employ such ratings as a checklist prior to hotel construction and can therefore determine the budget, costs, and plans for the hotel. They sometimes hire consultants like the AAA to check if a hotel meets the AAA guidelines. On the other hand, if there were a universal rating system that all countries recognize, promote, and publish, travelers might feel more confident about the quality of their choices in accommodations when traveling to unfamiliar places. The book Check-In and Check-Out showed that under the current rating systems, luxury or first-class hotels in some countries are considered third class in other countries.[274]

---

[273] American Hotel and Motel Association, Automobile Club of Southern California, Budget Host International, Budgetel Inns, California State Automobile Association, Canadian Automobile Association, Choice Hotels, Four Seasons, Regent Hotels & Resorts, Holiday Hospitality, Hyatt Hotels, La Quinta Inns, Marriott International, The Breakers Palm Beach, The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Co, US Franchise System, Westin Hotels & Resorts, among many others.

[274] Gary Vallen and Jerome Vallen, Check-in Check-out (Upper Saddle, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2000) 17-21.

This thesis deduced from the AAA system that ratings might stress services more than the quality of the interiors. Harry Nobles, the former AAA inspector, emphasized that importance in his meetings with hotel general managers. He said "I could not accept that a hotel should maintain a 4 or 5 diamond rating full-time when it only provided the required services part-time."[275] The importance of product and service delivery consistency increases in direct correlation to rate charged, the property's image and reputation, and the AAA or MOBIL rating.[276] "Exceptional guest services can sometimes make the difference between a three and four diamond or a four and five diamond rating."[277] Some hotels perceived the importance of applying design and architecture to enhance the guest's stay at the hotel.[278] Unfortunately, it is hard to compare the service with the physical property and combine them under a single rating system which makes the hotel remain in jeopardy of losing the fifth diamond simply for not reaching the required standard of service. Services are subjective after all, to the service personnel, who may experience unexpected circumstances that hinder satisfying the task as soon as it is needed.[279] Additionally, ratings did not distinguish the most luxurious property from the less luxurious ones. In the United Arab Emirates, for example, the Ministry of Tourism rates hotels on scale of five, where a five star hotel is luxury, however, any hotel that exceeds the requirements of a five star rating will be granted a sixth or seventh star.

---

[275] Harry Nobles, "Consistency: The Hallmark of a Fine Hotel," Hotel Online Sept 1999: 1.

[276] Ibid., p.1.

[277] Harry Nobles, "Can Outstanding Service Offset Hotel Physical Deficiencies in the Rating Systems?" Hotel Online June 1999: 1.

[278] Judy Signaw and Cathy Enz, "Best Practices in Hotel Architecture," Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly 2000: 44.

[279] Harry Nobles. "Are AAA Ratings Always Accurate and Objective?" March 21, 2001. <http://www. hotelonline. Com/neo/news/pressreaaleases2000_7May00_AccurateRatingss.htm>

Chapter Six

CONCLUSIONS

Luxury is a concept that reflects not only aesthetics but also economics, technology, services, location, and amenities. The shift of the meaning of luxury from the past to the present represents a transformation to a modern world where technology enhances all levels of life. While monumental staircases and ballrooms implied the "luxury" status in 17th century hotels, size and technology replaced the idea in 18th century hotels.[280] While palace hotels were renowned for their luxury in the 19th century,[281] the 1920s 42-story Waldorf-Astoria hotel became the last word in luxury.[282] When previously guestrooms were located along double-loaded hallways, the atrium became the most "luxury" a hotel could offer in 1967.[283]

Keys and locks were first utilized in the mid-19th century. They introduced a new measure of security only available for the elite. Metal keys enhanced the security of locks in the 1970s, optical key cards replaced the status of metal keys in the 1980s, and mag-stripe key cards replaced metal keys in the 1990s. The invention of proximity keys, smart cards, coded locks, biometric locks, and cell phones accessing guestroom doors will slowly change the meaning of "luxury" in hotels in the future.

What is so attractive about luxury hotels is that they offer an experience that is too memorable to be mimicked by other hotel types. They guarantee guests an environment that is hygienic, functional, safe and beautiful. They offer creatively designed surroundings that may not be found at home.

Understanding what the guests want and need should not be discounted. It is important to anticipate their unexpressed needs by searching the market. Attributes of luxury differ between groups of guests, due to dissimilarity of travel experience, awareness of the concept, social status, background, culture, gender, age, and reason of travel.

---

[280] Elaine Denby, <u>Size and Grandeur in The United States, in Grand Hotels</u> (London: Reaktion Books Ltd., 1998).
[281] Ibid.
[282] David Watkin, <u>The Grand Hotel: The Golden Age of Palace Hotels: An Architectural and Social History</u> (New York: Vendome Press) 23.
[283] Kaye Whitten, "The Victorious Atrium," <u>OAG Frequent Flyer</u> May 1987. Also see Richard Saxon, "Why Atria?" <u>Atrium Buildings: Development and Design</u> (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1987) 5.

> Business firms in competitive markets must abandon the historical approach of manufacturing what they want to sell and instead manufacture what their customers want to buy…The first requirement of hotel planning, therefore, is knowledge of the market, and this involves researching into people and their needs.[284]

Nevertheless, accommodating various guest types remains challenging. At luxury hotels, saving each guest's profile guarantees returning guests that their personal needs and preferences will be met. His or her favorite feather pillow, preferred room or stay arrangement will be ready for the following visit. Business travelers will still expect a state-of-the-art office space or meeting rooms on the premises to expedite their work. Leisure travelers will find recreational amenities that are unique and distinct. Children must also be entertained. The Ritz Paris for example offers kids programs that engage them in activities on the premises. Children's beds are carefully prepared by private butlers, and the linens are beautifully embroidered with teddy bear motifs.

In abstract terms, luxury is desired because it is not yet generally attained. Berry argued that desirability is explained by a specific refinement, or qualitative aspect, of some universal generic need. Berry said:

> These refinements, as products of desire, reflect the differences between individuals: I want coffee, you want tea, he wants lemonade, she wants whiskey. These differences nonetheless have a common focus because of their root in common need: we all need a drink…. Thus it is that we typically regard caviar, a palace, a Dior gown and a weekend in a certain Lake District hotel as luxuries.[285]

But the subject in question belongs to the 20th century industrial societies, Berry elaborated. Those who lived in earlier centuries would identify the same categories of luxury but would attribute different social values to them.

There is one unique difference between paying high prices on luxury goods or paying high prices on a one-night stay at a luxury hotel. Spending $27,000 on a luxury Grand Cherokee, for instance gives ownership to the car for years to enjoy. Spending the same money on a one-night stay will give an

---

[284] Philip Nailon, Towards an Integrated Approach to Hotel Planning (Aberdeen, United Kingdom: The Central Press, 1970) 18.

[285] Christopher Berry, The Idea of Luxury: a Conceptual and Historical Investigation (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994) 40.

ownership to the room for only that night. In the latter scenario one buys nothing more than a memorable experience that is ethereal and spiritual. Nevertheless, the experience will forever accompany memory.

Chapter two explored three modern theories on the luxury concept. First, if one replaces 'self-actualization' in Maslow's hierarchy of needs with the word "luxury" one will be more likely to understand the relationship between luxury and need. Each time a guest satisfies one of the needs, one will gradually go a step higher towards luxury. This theory explains Maslow's hierarchy of needs. On the other hand, the higher the need level in Maslow's theory, the more expensive it gets. Consider the expensive diamonds and the free flowers on a sidewalk. They both please the eye, but diamonds are luxurious while the latter is not. Second, according to King Lears' theory on the demand elasticity, the demand on some goods is affected by their prices.   In other words, luxuries and necessities are defined in terms of elasticities. In most cases, the higher the price gets, the more luxurious an item gets. The rising prices of necessary items have little effect on the quantity purchased. Additionally, the number of luxuries purchased will radically decline, if the prices go higher. On the contrary, if the prices of luxuries went down, the demand on luxuries will increase. Third, according to Bernstein's study, the more often one experiences a luxury event, the less one considers the experience luxurious.

Prior to the 18th century luxury hotels included bedrooms for wealthy guests as opposed to sleeping on mattresses thrown on the floors at the lobby level, which was the norm for lower social and economic classes. [286]   In the 18th century this idea changed and private bedrooms became conveniences rather than luxuries and were introduced in different hotel ranks. Such amenities were considered unnecessary to lower ranks of society. This change bridged the gap between upper and lower class accommodations, creating a continuum between wants and needs. In the 19th century, physical comfort became even more desirable to all levels of the society. [287]   And, those comforts were accommodated, in part, thanks to the technological advancement of the time. Consider, for example, the elevator that was first installed at the Fifth Avenue Hotel in New York. Even though it was slow, it was the epitome of

---

[286] Nikolaus Pevsner, "Hotels," A History of Building Types (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1976) 169.
[287] John Crowley, The Invention of Comfort (Baltimore, Maryland: The John Hopkins University Press, 2001) 143.

luxury in 1853 since it eliminated the need to climb flights of stairs, altering the perceived hierarchy of floors. Previously, the ground level floor was considered desirable and reserved for wealthy guests because one did not have to climb stairs. After the introduction of the elevator, the upper floors became the desired floors for wealthy clientele because one was removed from the noise and elevated to the quieter upper floors.[288] In the 20th century, elevators became necessities as building technologies improved and taller hotels were constructed. Currently, the elevators at the Burj Al Arab Hotel are the optimum in luxury simply because they travel at 7 meters per second, again due to technological advancements.[289] Therefore, one could posit that things that begin as luxuries lose their status once they are mass-produced and available to all economic classes.

Furthermore, the 20th century witnessed a radical change as guests of all classes of society began patronizing luxury hotels.[290] Various factors influenced this changed:

- air-travel became available by the 1940s;
- advertising travel on TVs in the 1950s encouraged travel to new destinations;
- foreign guests' complaints on hotels in 1960s encouraged the establishment of rules and guidelines;[291]
- percentage of spending per holidays rose more rapidly than the number of holidays taken in 1970s;[292]
- the competition among hotels to provide their guests with luxury amenities increased in the 1980s;[293]
- the development of the Internet in the 1990s partially replaced travel agents and offered "luxury" hotel rooms at 65% off the retail price.[294]

---

[288] Roger Horowitz and Arwen Mohun, eds., "A House Divided: The Culture of the American Luxury Hotel, 1825-1860," His and Hers: Gender, Consumption and Technology (Virginia: The University Press of Virginia, 1998) 47.
[289] Mary McLaughlin, media relations manager at Burj al Arab. Personal interview. July 2000.
[290] Jeanne Davern, Places for People (New York, NY: McGraw Hill, 1976) x.
[291] Roger Bray and Vladimir Raitz, Flight to the Sun (New York: Continuum, 2001) 175.
[292] Ibid., p.175.
[293] Laurence Bernstein, "Luxury and the Hotel Brand," The Cornell Hotel And Restaurant Administration Quarterly December 1998.

Joseph Ransley and Hadyn Ingram emphasized in their book <u>Developing Hospitality Properties and Facilities</u> that " levels of income and leisure time continue to rise in developed places. In addition to an increased and improved level of education, customers are more aware of design trends and features and more appreciative of luxury in chosen hotels."[295]

Although luxury was never stringently defined, it was evident from the previous chapters that Cesar Ritz's definition of luxury became the benchmark for the industry. His ideas were adopted in the 20th century hotels. Ritz wanted his hotel to be hygienic, efficient and beautiful. He wanted to provide his guests with extreme comfort and mimic the atmosphere of a gentleman's home. To reach his goals, he incorporated the most recent technology throughout the hotel, and creatively designed the interiors. Private baths inside guestrooms, personalized service, dress code for guests, specific uniform for the staff, electric lighting throughout the hotel, a telephone inside every guestroom, a strategic location in the most "luxurious" spot in Paris – Place Vendome,[296]open dining terraces, attention to finishes and furnishings were the "luxuries" of the 19th century that later became standards. To maintain the status of the Ritz, it was important to cater to the current needs of guests. The hotel went through major renovations in the 1970s, preserving all Ritz's ideas and adding amenities such as the swimming pool and the nightclub. Ritz was probably one name that became synonymous with "luxury" throughout the twentieth century.

Branding "luxury" hotels became known toward mid-twentieth century, and the hotel industry structure changed from individual ownership to a powerful corporate structure. The authors in <u>Developing Hospitality Properties and Facilities</u> predicted that brand globalization will continue. There will also be an increased focus on image and entertainment. Location and attentive service will remain synonyms with "luxury", and most importantly, technology will "control" the level of "luxury" in hotels and will put them on competitive edge.[297]

---

[294] Gary Vallen and Jerome Vallen, <u>Check-in Check-out</u> (Upper Saddle, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2000).

[295] Joseph Ransley and Hadyn Ingram, <u>Developing Hospitality Properties and Facilities</u> (Woburn, MA: Butterworth-Heinmann, 2000) 281.

[296] <http://tourisme.voila.fr/villes/paris/fra/sit/ville/01_pvend/acc.htm>.

[297] Joseph Ransley and Hadyn Ingram, <u>Developing Hospitality Properties and Facilities</u> (Woburn, MA: Butterworth-Heinmann, 2000) 281.

By extension luxury hotels are assumed by advertisers and hoteliers to be desirable or pleasing to the general public.[298] Advanced hotel ratings give an abstract definition of luxury that is most likely to affect one's own decision. But how objective are those ratings? Chapter five demonstrated that services affect the final rating decision, which is, sometimes, anonymously done once a year like the AAA system. There must then be a separation when rating the services and the physical environment, like the one developed in Mexico. Ratings should also distinguish the most luxurious hotels from the less luxurious hotels. For example, the five-star Ritz Paris and the five-star Paris Intercontinental are not comparable.[299] A universal rating system should be adopted. In other words, all agencies must try to develop one universal system for hotels all over the world.

Designing a luxury hotel is not as simple as ensuring that every functional necessity is available. A luxury hotel should transcend all the characteristics of hospitality,[300] including services, cutting edge technology, and the physical facilities in order to satisfy a range of clientele. A successful design comes from understanding the needs of guests, and then creating an unparalleled experience that accommodates different cultural backgrounds and tastes. Looking historically at the successes and failures of such luxury hotels as the Ritz is important as it provides valuable insights for current projects. The findings of this study suggest that further investigations are needed into guests' needs and desires as far as physical design is concerned, and in addition to the quality of guest services. Thus, it is hoped that this thesis will serve as a reference and resource for future research into the topic of luxury hotels.

---

[298] Christopher Berry, The Idea of Luxury: a Conceptual and Historical Investigation (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994) 40.
[299] Personal observation.
[300] Laurence Bernstein, "Luxury and the Hotel Brand," The Cornell Hotel And Restaurant Administration Quarterly December 1998.

Bibliography

Books

Baucom, A. Hospitality Design for the Graying Generation. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1996.

Bednar, M. The New Atrium. New York: McGraw Hill, 1986.

Beebe, L. The Ritz Idea: The Story of a Great Hotel. New York: Ritz-Carlton Hotel Corporation, 1936.

Berry, C. The Idea of Luxury: a Conceptual and Historical Investigation. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

Berthelot et Hartwig Derenbourg. La Grande encyclopedie, inventaire raisonne des sciences, des letters et des arts, par une societe de savants et de gens de letters. Paris, Lamirault et cie (1886-1902), vol 26, pages 794-796.

Boorstin, D. Palaces of the People. New York: Random House, 1967.

Boxer, M. The Paris Ritz. New York: Thames and Hudson,1991.

Boykin, P. Hotel Guestroom Design. Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt, 1991.

Bray, R. and Raitz, V. Flight to the Sun. New York: Continuum, 2001.

Buehr, W. The Story of Locks. New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953.

Chew,K and Schmitt,U. (eds.). 1001 Arabian Nights at the Burj Al Arab. Cyprus: ABC Millenium, 2000.

Crowley, J. The Invention of Comfort. Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press.

Davern, J. Places for People. New York, NY: McGraw Hill, 1976, p. x.

Davies, T., and Beasley, K. Accessible Design for Hospitality. New York: McGraw Hill, 1994, pp.35,88,89.

Denby, E. Size and Grandeur in The United States, in Grand Hotels. London: Reaktion Books Ltd, 1998.

Desinano, P. and Vigo, C. "Developing information technology options in the hotel industry: the value chain approach." Seaton, A.V. (Ed.). Tourism: The state of the Art. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1994.

Elliott, C. Technics and Architecture: The Development of Materials and systems for Buildings. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992.

Faulkner, W. Architecture and Color. New York: Wiley-Interscience, 1972.

Firebaugh, W.C.. The inns of Greece and Rome: And a History of Hospitlaity from the Dawn of Time to the Middle Ages. Chicago: W.F.Hall Printing Company, 1923.

Groth, P. LIVING DOWNTOWN: The History of Residential Hotels in the United States. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1994.

Horowitz, R. and Mohun, A. (eds.). "A House Divided: The Culture of the American Luxury Hotel, 1825-1860". His and Hers: Gender, Consumption and Technology. Virginia: The University Press of Virginia, 1998.

Johnson, P. The Birth of the Modern: World Society 1815-1830. New York: Harper Collins, 1991.

Kohr, R. Accident prevention for hotels, motels, and restaurants. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1991.

Kroker, A. and Kroker, M. (eds). "Digital Humanism: The Processed World of Marschall McLuhan." Digital Delirium. New York: St. Martin's Press,1997.

Lawson, F. Hotels and Resorts: Planning, Design and Refurbishment. Woburn, MA: Architectural Press, 1999.

Longman. Longman Dictionary of the English Language. Longman, Harlow, 1984.

Mandeville, B. The Fable of the Bees. Indianapolis: Library Classics, 1998.

Marberry, S. and Zagon, L. The Power of Color: Creating Healthy Interior Spaces. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1995.

Massingberd, H M. "A Homage to Cesar Ritz". Grand Hotel: The Golden Age of Palace Hotels, An Architectural and Social History. New York: The Vendome Press, 1984.

Maslow, A. Motivation and Personality. New York: Harper, 1954.

Muto, S. "History of Las Vegas". Las Vegas: 16 Hotels & Casinos, 5 Themed Restaurants. Tokyo: Shoten Ken Chi Ku-Sha, 1997.

Nailon, P. Towards an Integrated Approach to Hotel Planning. Aberdeen, United Kingdom: The Central Press, 1970.

Naisbett, J. High Tech High Touch: Technology and Our Search for Meaning. New York: Random House Page.

Norman, D. Turn Signals Are the Facial Expressions of Automobiles. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1992.

Pevsner, N. "Hotels". A History of Building Types. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1976.

Pine, B., J. and Gilmore, J., H. The Experience Economy. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 1999.

Pine, R. Technology. In: Jafari, J. (ed.) Encyclopedia of Tourism. London, NY: Routledge, 2000.

Ransley, J. and Ingram, H. Developing Hospitality Properties and Facilities. Woburn, MA: Butterworth-Heinmann, 2000.

Riani, P. John Portman. Washington, DC: American Institute of Architects Press, 1990.

Ritz, M. L. Cesar Ritz: Host to the World. New York: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1938.

Roger H. & Arwen M. (eds). Berger, M. W. "A House Divided: The Culture of the American Luxury Hotel, 1825-1860". His and Hers: Gender, Consumption and Technology. Virginia: The University Press of Virginia, 1998.

Rutes, W. and Penner, R. Hotel Planning and Design. New York: Whitney Library of Design, Watson Guptill Publications, 1985.

Saxon, R. The Atrium Comes of Age. Essex, England: Longman Group, 1993.

Saxon, R. "Why Atria?." Atrium Buildings: Development and Design. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1987.

Sekora, J. Luxury: The concept in Western Thought, Eden to Smollett. Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1977.

Sheldon, P. "Hospitality Information Systems". Tourism: Information Technology. New York, New York: CAB International, 1997.

Simpson, J.A and Weiner, E.S.C (eds.). The Oxford English Dictionary. 2nd edition. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989, volume 9.

Smith, H. Hotel Security. Springfield, Illinois: Charles Thomas Publisher, 1993.

Spechler, J. "Hyatt Hotels and Resort: Achieving Quality through Employee and Guest Feedback Mechanisms". Managing Quality in America's Most Admired Companies. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 1993.

Spechler, J. "The Ritz-Carlton Company: Reducing Service Variability with Human Resources Systems." Managing Quality in America's Most Admired Companies. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 1993.

Stiel, H. and Collins, D. Ultimate Service: The Complete Handbook to the World of the Concierge. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall/Career & Technology, 1994.

Stitt, F. "Hotels". Architects' Room Design Data Handbook. New York: Von Nostrand Reinhold, 1992.

Tchudi, S. The Secrets of Locking Things Up, In, and Out. New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1993.

Vallen, G. and Vallen, J. Check-In Check-Out. Upper Saddle, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2000.

Walker, J. Introduction to Hospitality. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1996.

Watkin, D. <u>The Grand Hotel: The Golden Age of Palace Hotels: An Architectural and Social History</u>. New York: Vendome Press, p. 23

Watts, S. <u>The Ritz of Paris</u>. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1964.

Weisskamp, H. <u>Hotels: An International Survey</u>. New York, NY: Praeger, 1998.

Zuk, W. and Zuk, T. <u>New Technologies: New Architecture</u>. Sterling, Virginia: WordCrafters Editorial Services, Inc., 1994.

Journals

Abbott, J. and Fried, G. "Asphalt Jungle: Providing Parking-area Security through Design and Common Sense." <u>Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly</u> (April 1999): 51

Bernstein, L. "Luxury and the Hotel Brand". <u>The Cornell Hotel And Restaurant Administration Quarterly</u> (December 1998).

Currimbhoy, N. "Color washes turn a Dubai Hotel into a huge, animated lighting spectacular." <u>Architecture record </u>(May 2000): 321.

Dishman, L. "Architect brings sunshine to hotel lobbies." <u>Tallahassee Democrat</u> 7 June 1987.

Dubé, L and Renagham, L. "Creating Visible Customer Value." <u>Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly</u> (Feb 2000): 61-72.

Goldberger, P. "Public Places: The Secret Life of Lobbies." <u>Gourmet</u> May 2000, p. 187.

Kemp, S. "Perceiving Luxury and Necessity". <u>Journal of Economic Psychology</u> 19.5 (Oct1998): 591-606.

King, C. "What is Hospitality?" <u>International Journal of Hospitality Management</u> 14.3/4 (1995): 221.

Kirk, D. and Pine, R. "Research in hospitality systems and technology." <u>International Journal of Hospitality Management</u> 17 (1998): 203-217.

Mays, V. "The Hotel Guest Room." <u>Progressive Architecture</u> 69.6, June 1988: 108-113.

McBride, E. "Burj Al Arab." <u>Architecture</u> Aug. 2000: 125.

Olsen, M., and Connolly, D. "Experience-Based Travel: How Technology is Changing the Hospitality Industry." <u>Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly</u> (Feb 2000): 30-40.

Partlow, C. G. (1993) "How Ritz-Carlton applies 'TQM'." <u>The Cornell Hotel Restaurant Administration Quarterly</u> 34.4: 16-24.

Portman, J. Atlanta Marriott Marquis. <u>Unpublished article</u>. The Portman Office. November 2000.

Portman, J. Jr. Architectural Concept for the Atlanta Marriott Marquis. <u>Unpublished article</u>. May 1985.

Rushmore, S. & Malone, C. "Keys and Hotel Security". <u>Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly</u> (Dec 1998).

Scoviak, M. Hotels: The Next Generation. <u>Interior Design</u> 67.7, June 1996.

Signaw, J. and Enz, C. "Best Practices in Information Technology." <u>Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly</u> (Oct 1999): 58-71.

Walker Group. "Fire Safety in Hotel/Motel Guest Rooms." <u>Interior Design</u> 54.2, Feb 1983: 192-201.

Whitten, K. "The Victorious Atrium." <u>OAG Frequent Flyer</u> May 1987.

Wolff, H. "The Future of Hospitality: Design and Development". <u>Urban Land</u> Aug. 1997.

Zimmerman, J. "Dubai a Land of Dishdashas, cell phones." <u>The Cincinnati Enquirer</u>, (Feb 13, 2000).

Yan, L.C., "A Feng Shui Model as a Location Index." <u>Annals of the Association of American Geographers</u> 64 (1963):23-45.

"The Next Seven Wonders". <u>Conde Nast Traveler</u> March 2000.

Internet

Anderson, P. "Growth of Spas." <u>Lodging Magazine</u>. Dec 2000.

Burgner, L. "Applying Light and Color: Warmth and Luxury."
<http://www.lightforum.com/techniques/lightcolor2.html.>

Bruns, R. Phoning It In. <u>Lodging Magazine</u>. November 2000.

Caro, M. R. "Blunders by Design." <u>Lodging Magazine</u>. January 2001.

Cook, L. "Better is Better: Where Bathrooms Are Concerned, the Basic Amenities Just Won't Do." <u>Lodging Magazine</u>. September, 2000.

Goldman, M. "Calling All Cards!". <u>Lodging Magazine</u> March 2001.
<http://www.lodgingnews.com/lodgingmag/2001_03/2001_03_38.asp>

The Lodging Conference 1999<u>. "Stars and Diamonds" Name of Mexico's Hotel Rating System</u>.September 2,1999.
<Http://www.hotelonline.com/neo/news/…sept99_MexicoHotelRating.htm.>

McGoey, C. "Hotel Security as an Amenity." <http://www.crimedoctor.com/bio.htm>

Meade, V. "It's in the Cards." <u>Lodging Magazines</u>. March 2000.

Nobles, H. "Creating Atmosphere." <u>Hotel Online</u>. Jan 2000, p. 1.

Nobles, H. "Specific services that AAA Deems Critical at the 4 and 5 Diamond level." <u>Hotel Online</u>. March 1999

Nobles, H. "Consistency: The Hallmark of a Fine Hotel." <u>Hotel Online</u>. Sept 1999, p.1.

Nobles, H. "Are AAA Ratings Always Accurate and Objective?" March 21, 2001. Http://www.Hotelonline.Com/neo/news/pressreaaleases2000_7May00_AccurateRatingss.htm

Nobles, H. "Can Outstanding Service Offset Hotel Physical Deficiencies in the Rating Systems?" <u>Hotel Online</u>. June 1999, P.1.

"Good Hygiene and Hot Air." <u>Lodging Magazine</u>. November, 2000.

"Key to Successful In-Room Technology is Simplicity and Discretion." <http://www.HotelOnline.com/neo/new…1999_1st/Mar99_TechSimplicity.html.>

"That Familiar Ring." <u>Lodging Magazine</u>. November, 2000

APPENDIX A
Surveys
Master of Science of Architecture
University of Cincinnati-Ohio by *Linda Nubani*

"The following survey focuses on guests' perspectives on the quality of luxury hotels and their future expectations of hotel trends. The results of this survey will be compiled and generated to help support the research process of the thesis"....Thank you
Estimated time of completion: 10 minutes

---

1. How would you define the concept 'LUXURY' in hotels?

_____

_____

---

2. How would you rate the level of importance of the following features/issues (you expect to see in hotels) where V.Imp= <u>Very Important</u> F.Imp= <u>Fairly important</u> Imp= <u>Important</u> N=<u>Neutral</u>   N. Imp= <u>Not Important</u>

	V.Imp	F.Imp	Imp	N	N.Imp
a. Location	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. Exterior architecture	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. Interior Design	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. Quality of furnishing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. Shopping	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
f. Guest services	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
g. Restaurants/ cafes	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
h. Corridor widths and character	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
i. Room size	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
j. Parking facility	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
k. Office space in rooms	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
l. View out from guestroom	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
m. View out from guest bathroom	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
n. Entertaining facilities/ features in bathrooms (such as TV or Radio)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
o. Easiness of check in and out	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
p. Pricing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
q. Color scheme	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
r. Security	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
s. Storage/ closets/dressing area	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
t. Wayfinding	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
u. Relationship of spaces	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
v. Technology	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

---

3. What would be your expectations in future luxury hotels:

_____

4. What kind of activities or habits do you usually do in spaces such as guestrooms, lobbies, other?

Guestrooms: _____

Lobbies (watching people, meeting, business, etc) _____

Other spaces (please specify) _____

5. In your opinion, which design concept is more related to 'luxury'?

Atrium lobby* ☐   Ceilinged lobby* ☐   Not necessarily related ☐ I don't know   ☐

6. We would like to thank you for taking the time to fill this survey, but we would like to know a little bit about yourself that will help us define guideline criteria for designing future luxury hotels:

a. Age   _____ Male/Female _____

b. Nationality _____ Current city of residence _____

c. Profession _____   Nature of business _____

d. Average length of stay in each travel   _____

e. Average of number of travels per month   _____

f. Reason for choosing a hotel?   _____

g. Which room type do you stay at? Deluxe, standard, suite, club level..etc.
                                                                    _____

7. Additional comments:

_____

_____

*Atrium lobbies are those guestrooms arranged along single-loaded corridors, much like open balconies overlooking the lobby space.

We greatly appreciate your time and participation in completing this survey,

With sincere thanks,

Linda Nubani
E-mail: HOTELTHESIS @HOTMAIL.COM

	Very Important	Fairly Important	Important	Neutral	Not Important
Location	100	0	0	0	0
Exterior	15	18	52	15	0
Interior design	42	36	12	9	0
Furnishing	42	48	0	9	0
Shopping	18	6	18	42	15
Guest Services	58	36	6	0	0
Restaurants/ Cafes/ Bars	42	45	12	0	0
Corridor Widths and Character	42	15	21	15	6
Room size	30	36	33	0	0
Parking	36	36	21	6	0
Office Space	15	21	18	15	30
View Out from guestroom	18	24	33	24	0
View out from guest bathroom	0	6	9	27	58
Entertaining facilities in bathrooms	6	6	27	21	39
Easiness of check-in and -out	64	12	24	0	0
Pricing	12	24	64	0	0
Color scheme	36	9	48	6	0
Security	91	0	9	0	0
Storage/ dressing area	6	39	55	0	0
Wayfinding	76	12	12	0	0
Relationship of spaces	76	0	18	6	0
Technology	9	30	55	6	0

Table A.1 analysis of the answers of guests over the age of 50 years old (n=72)

	Very Important	Fairly Important	Important	Neutral	Not Important
Location	79	18	0	4	0
Exterior	29	43	14	11	4
Interior design	50	25	25	0	0
Furnishing	50	32	14	4	0
Shopping	25	14	39	7	14
Guest Services	50	21	21	7	0
Restaurants/ Cafes/ Bars	46	21	25	7	0
Corridor Widths and Character	32	32	36	0	0
Room size	54	29	14	4	0
Parking	50	21	25	4	0
Office Space	24	36	18	18	5
View Out from guestroom	46	25	11	18	0
View out from guest bathroom	46	25	11	18	0
Entertaining facilities in bathrooms	18	29	14	21	18
Easiness of check-in and -out	71	21	7	0	0
Pricing	50	25	21	4	0
Color scheme	25	35	25	14	1
Security	46	25	14	11	4
Storage/ dressing area	18	25	54	4	0
Wayfinding	25	46	21	4	4
Relationship of spaces	11	50	18	14	7
Technology	46	14	36	4	0

Table A.2 analysis of the answers of guests under the age of 50 years old (n=78)

	Very Important	Fairly Important	Important	Neutral	Not Important
Location	91	9	0	0	0
Exterior	27	23	32	18	0
Interior design	45	32	14	9	0
Furnishing	45	27	14	14	0
Shopping	9	9	50	23	9
Guest Services	45	32	14	9	0
Restaurants/ Cafes/ Bars	36	45	14	5	0
Corridor Widths and Character	41	23	27	9	0
Room size	32	32	32	5	0
Parking	59	23	14	5	0
Office Space	35	14	14	18	20
View Out from guestroom	32	23	14	32	0
View out from guest bathroom	0	14	23	27	36
Entertaining facilities in bathrooms	23	9	18	18	32
Easiness of check-in and -out	73	5	23	0	0
Pricing	32	0	64	5	0
Color scheme	14	18	64	5	0
Security	77	0	23	0	0
Storage/ dressing area	9	45	45	0	0
Wayfinding	64	27	9	0	0
Relationship of spaces	45	32	5	14	5
Technology	36	5	55	5	0

Table A.3 analysis of the answers of female guests (n=66)

	Very Important	Fairly Important	Important	Neutral	Not Important
Location	86	11	0	4	0
Exterior	19	39	30	8	4
Interior design	48	29	24	0	0
Furnishing	48	49	4	0	0
Shopping	32	12	14	23	19
Guest Services	60	25	15	0	0
Restaurants/ Cafes/ Bars	51	21	24	4	0
Corridor Widths and Character	33	26	31	5	5
Room size	52	32	15	0	0
Parking	32	32	31	5	0
Office Space	8	42	21	15	13
View Out from guestroom	36	26	26	12	0
View out from guest bathroom	11	8	4	43	35
Entertaining facilities in bathrooms	5	26	21	24	24
Easiness of check in and out	64	27	8	0	0
Pricing	35	44	21	0	0
Color scheme	43	27	13	15	1
Security	57	25	4	11	4
Storage/ dressing area	15	20	61	4	0
Wayfinding	35	35	24	4	4
Relationship of spaces	35	25	29	8	4
Technology	25	35	36	5	0

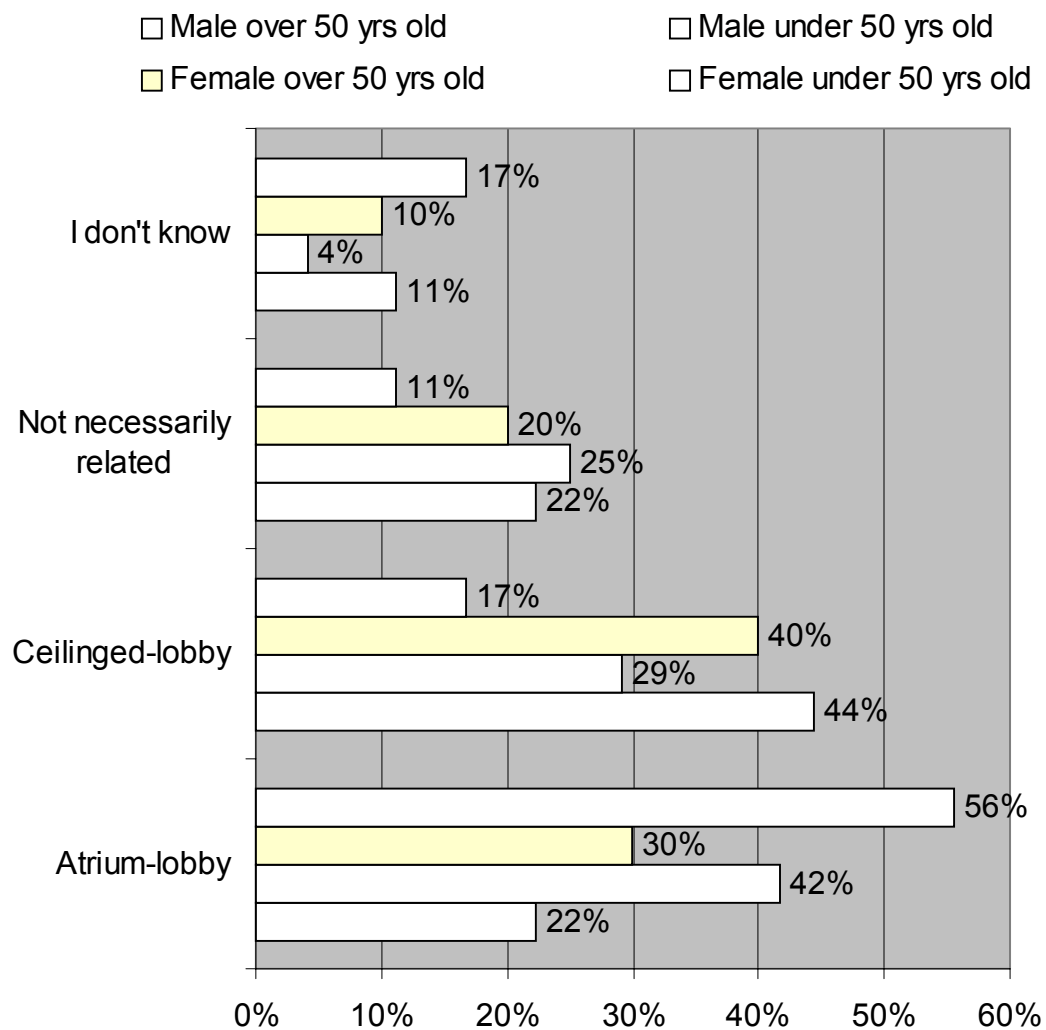Table A.4 analysis of the answers of male guests (n=84)

Figure A.1 Analysis of attributing luxury to atrium-lobbies and ceilinged lobbies

APPENDIX B

AAA Five Star Guidelines

1. Exterior and grounds

They should be outstanding in the luxury properties and designed in a professional, creative way, in harmony with the architecture of the building. Parking areas should be paved, with ample light that leads to the entrance to the hotel, where a canopy or a covering should shade the area to protect people from the weather.

2. Public areas

Furnishings and décor: They have to be well-coordinated in a specific color scheme and in harmony with the theme of the property. They must be spacious and inviting.

Floor coverings: There can be different floor materials with the options of high quality of wood, carpet, marble, granite, or other materials.

Illumination: The lighting can be used to enhance the overall quality of the area; both decorative and functional lighting should be incorporated into the general ambiance of the public areas.

Corridors: All corridors should be climate-controlled with outstanding wall and ceiling finishes such as textured or plasterboard painted walls with a ceiling trim, or any decorative border.

Signage: Signage should be directional and in harmony with the hotel's theme.

Miscellaneous: This may include multiple recessed phones with notepads and pens. There should be separate elevators for services. The hotel should also offer vending and ice machines as well as a sealed ice dispenser.

Lobby/ registration area: It should be spacious and visible from the entrance. The registration area should be of high-quality solid wood or marble and away from the traffic flow. The lobby should offer ample seating areas and the choice of multiple groupings. A variety of artwork should be displayed at the lobby level along with live plants professionally decorated in harmony with the theme or the historic

nature of the hotel. The bell station can be part of the concierge at the lobby level. Music should also be part of the overall theme.

Restaurant and dining facilities: A minimum of one multiple outlet; full-service formal or casually elegant dining area with a separate cocktail/bar is required.

Recreational Facilities: This includes whirlpool, sauna, pool, a professional health club with state of art equipment with lockers, and convenient dressing areas provided nearby.

Meeting rooms: Professional state-of-the-art meeting rooms with audio-visual equipment, soundproofing, and outstanding furnishings.

Restrooms: They should be conveniently located within the lobby area, with designer soap or fragrances provided. Cloth and towels should also be provided.

Sundries and other shops: These include gift shops, boutiques, and beauty salons.

3. <u>Room décor and ambiance</u>

Furnishings and décor: The furnishing should be luxurious, [301] very well coordinated and in harmony with the theme of the property. The room should be spacious with ample empty space. It should include comfortable conversational seating, a television viewing arrangement with two arm chairs, and an easy chair with an ottoman covered with high-quality fabric materials. There should be enough room for a desk as a workspace. The clothes storage should be a fully enclosed, illuminated closet, with 12 open-hook wood hangers, two satin hangers, and skirt or pant hangers. At least two pieces of luggage should fit inside the closet. The bed should be made of superior-quality mattress and box spring. Bed linens should include plush, quilted bedspreads, comforters with dust ruffles, triple sheeting, and choice of pillow fills. Draperies must have full-length sheer and blackouts with valances or exceptional wood shutters. Artwork may include sophisticated prints or lithographs with enhanced matting and frames.

Heating/ air conditioning: Rooms must have a quiet HVAC unit with a separate climate control.

---

[301] This condition does not explain how to classify furnishings as luxurious

Room types: Variety of bed sizes: Double, queen- and king-size beds. A choice of one bed room suite or more, and connecting rooms should be available.

4. Guest room amenities

The television should be viewed from both the seating and the bed area, and it should offer a variety of programs including free and pay movies. The channel directory and the TV listings should be inserted in an enhanced folder. Multiple phones through the rooms must have voice mail and message light capabilities with features such as programmable keys and a speaker. Two to three sources of illumination should be provided for different tasks. Professional upgraded stationery in addition to complementary magazines or reading materials can be placed on the desk area. Other additional amenities may include an in-room bar, decorative insulated ice buckets, two folded robes on the bed, utility bags, and a one-hour pressing service.

5. Bathrooms

They should reflect current industry trends providing a luxurious appearance.[302] Finishes should be of granite, marble, or high quality ceramic tiles. A textured, mildew-resistant finish with artwork on the walls may add luxury to the overall ambiance. There can be a tub/shower combination with occasionally a large separate shower stall with high finishes of enhanced faucets and fixtures. A high-grade skirted or enclosed vanity with a large framed or beveled mirror over it should be made available. Additional amenities may include tub and shower-height soap dishes, towel bars and shelves, facial tissues in a decorative cover, hair dryer, scale, telephone, illuminated make-up mirror, and bath rug, as well as a seven-piece amenity package with two large bars of soap, bottled shampoo, and additional high-quality items in an upscale presentation.

---

[302] Note that the luxurious appearance in this case will remain subjective to the judgment of the inspector.

6. <u>Guest services</u>

Guest services are delivered by the hotel reservations, guest's arrival, check-in, bell services, housekeeping, wake-up calls, check-out, order-taking from rooms, order delivery to rooms and miscellaneous services. This can be explained in full detail in the following tables:

Reservations:

- *Accepted 24 hours*
- *Answered promptly*
- *Addressed by guest name*
- *Rate structure is explained*
- *Food & Beverages are explained*
- *Preferences should be taken*
- *Preregistration information*
- *Explanation of deposit and cancellation policies*
- *Review of request*
- *Confirmation number should be provided*
- *The hotel should ask if there are other needs*
- *The guest should be thanked*
- *The hotel should send confirmation to guest by fax, email…etc*

Arrival:

- *Prompt, friendly and courteous greeting*
- *Explains parking procedure*
- *Promptly unloads luggage; learns guest's name*
- *Gives directions or escorts guest to registration area*
- *Uniformed doorman, in harmony with the theme of the property.*

Check-In:

- *Prompt, cheerful, recognizes guest*
- *Acknowledges guests waiting in line*
- *Preregistered guests are not asked for duplicate information*
- *Confirms rate and room type*
- *Delivers message discreetly*
- *Gives room number discreetly*
- *Hands guest key, registration packet and credit card*
- *Offers assistance*
- *Uses guest's name*

Source:<http:// www.aaa.com/news12/Diamonds/5diamondsvc.html>

Bell Services:

- *Friendly greeting using guest's name*
- *Very informative*
- *Offer to hang garment bag…etc*
- *Explains safety and security features*
- *Inquires about additional needs*
- *Offer to fill ice bucket*
- *Explains features and functions in rooms*

Housekeeping:

- *Full evening services*
- *Folds back or removes bedspread*
- *Turns up pillows*
- *Attention to details such as repointing tissues in bathrooms.*
- *Cleans wastebaskets, floors, surfaces…etc*
- *Leaves goodnight gift or message*
- *Places robes on bed*
- *Turns radio music on low*
- *Refreshes ice*
- *Replaces glasses.*

Room Service (order delivery):

- *Delivery within 5 minutes.*
- *Morning newspaper delivered to door.*
- *Friendly greeting.*
- *Server is uniformed with appropriate attire.*
- *Pleasant presentation with review of order.*
- *Fresh flowers on upscale tray*
- *Upgraded condiments such as salt and pepper shakers.*
- *Cutlery, food and table settings equivalent to dining room.*
- *All food at proper temperature.*
- *Prepare table set-up.*
- *Prompt removal of trays and tables upon request.*

Wake-up calls:

- *Operates user's name*
- *Live, personal call within five minutes of requested time.*

Room Service (order taking):

- *Available 24 hours.*
- *Phones should be answered within 3 to 5 rings.*
- *Use guest's name.*
- *Ask appropriate questions*
- *Gives time estimate.*
- *Repeats order to guests.*
- *Quiet background.*
- *Doorknob cards available for breakfast orders.*

Check-out:

- *Express or video check out.*
- *Bell captain arrange transportation*
- *Bellman should arrive in 5 minutes.*
- *Conversant bellman.*
- *Friendly greeting bellman.*
- *Friendly desk clerk.*
- *Provides copy of bill*
- *Confirms payment method.*
- *Proper presentation of bell.*
- *Thanks guest for staying.*

Miscellaneous Services:

- *Valet service, overnight dry cleaning.*
- *Offsite restaurant reservations.*
- *Timely response*
- *Knowledge of local area.*
- *Shoe shine services.*
- *Hair salon arrangements.*
- *Local transportation arrangements.*
- *Massage available through health club.*

Source: <http://www.aaa.com/news12/Diamonds/5diamondsvc.html>