

Living in *Travel*

The g Hotel

By Caitriona O'Connor



The g Hotel recently won Best Connacht Hotel at the Irish Consumer Awards. It had previously been named as one of the top three hotels in the world for ambience and design on the prestigious Condé Nast Traveller magazine's Gold List for 2009. The luxurious 5-star hotel scored a remarkable 96.01 out of 100, ranking it as one of the most unique and appealing hotels in the world! With this knowledge, and after months of hearing my friends talk about how amazing the hotel is, I decided to take a trip down to Galway and experience it for myself.

Arriving at The g Hotel, I was wowed by the lobby area, which features a Swarovski crystal-strewn reception desk, John Kindness-designed ceramic Scotty dogs and fabulous furniture. Our receptionist introduced us to a member of staff, who gave us a quick tour of the hotel before showing us to our room, where our luggage was already awaiting for us. The check-in went perfectly and I was really beginning to relax.

Our bedroom was very impressive, with a view of Lough Atalia. We were told on our tour that the design of each bedroom has a "distinctive Philip Treacy touch," which I presume is one of the reasons why the hotel won its style and ambience award.

That afternoon, I visited the hotel spa and it was absolute paradise. At one stage as I lay on a tepidarium (a bed made from heated tiles) and closed my eyes, I felt like I was lying on a beach in Bali. I also spent some time in the spa's thermal suite, before I had the 'Signature' facial. As I settled into the chair my therapist explained the facial to me and then asked me to do a product 'smell test.' She explained that I should choose the products that appealed to me, as these would probably be best for my skin. Afterwards, she left me for a few minutes to relax before I headed outside to the g's wonderful Zen roof garden, complete with bonsai trees.

Later that evening, we headed to Matz Restaurant, named after executive chef Stephan Matz, and I have to say the atmosphere was superb. It was packed, which created a nice buzz, but impressively, as busy as it was, the service did not seem to be affected at all. We were welcomed straight away and shown to our table, where we spent the best part of 20 minutes

trying hard to choose which of the lovely choices on the menu to go for! I finally opted for the local beef fillet on fried potatoes with shallot fritters; my companion went for the supreme of local free-range chicken. Both courses were amazing and well presented. Our waiter recommended a great bottle of wine, too, which we both enjoyed. After all those relaxing treatments and a deliciously filling dinner, there was nothing left to do but enjoy a very peaceful, very early night.

The only way that I can describe my stay at the five-star g Hotel was sheer bliss. From its sumptuous restaurant menu to its uniquely designed bedrooms and from its entertaining cocktail bar to its therapeutic spa (and, of course, its welcoming charm), The g Hotel offers truly luxurious five-star hospitality. I left feeling completely relaxed and vowing to return soon!

For more information on The g Hotel and the special offers available, you can log onto www.theghotelie.com or phone 091 865200

