



Whether it's the space-age bachelor pad-inspired lounge or the stylish bathtubs with ceiling faucets, Seattle's newest luxury digs, Hotel 1000, puts the swish back into swishy. Photo-Michael Kissinger

Life is good at Seattle's Hotel 1000

By Michael Kissinger-Staff writer

The adult male faces thousands of difficult, often painful choices over the course of his life span: to be or not to be, boxers or briefs, does it taste great or is it less filling?

However, I was recently forced to make a decision so foreign to me and my unsophisticated ways that, in the end, I left it up to chance: would I prefer the hot stone massage or the "man scrub"?

Such is the internal tug-of-war that faces a dude and spa virgin such as myself when left in the soothing hands of The Spaahh, nestled deep in the aroma therapy scented bowels of Seattle's latest luxury property Hotel 1000.

Located in the newly branded neighbourhood of "West Edge," between the yuppie climes of Belltown and the older, more touristy haunts of Pioneer Square, Hotel 1000 combines posh pampering with modern day bells and whistles such as 40-inch LCD screen televisions with 5.1 surround sound, MP3 and iPod docking stations, wireless Internet, and one of the swankiest bath tubs with ceiling faucets this writer has ever

sat his tush in.

Although the hotel only opened in late June, it's already attracted a number of high profile guests, including David Beckham and his Real Madrid soccer team, who visited Seattle for a sold-out exhibition match this summer.

A mixed-use development that boasts stunning views of Puget Sound, the 120-room hotel is also home to 47 high-end condos, which share the hotel's amenities, including a rooftop pet exercise area, fitness centre, spa and golf club.

Considering the Pacific Northwest's notoriously rainy weather, it shouldn't be a surprise that playing a round of virtual golf at one of world's top 50 golf courses has become a popular activity among guests and golf enthusiasts looking for a rain-free tee time. The hotel even has its own director of golf who provides lessons, putting tips and generally makes things easier for would-be golfers pre-occupied with their upcoming hot stone massage or man scrub.

With the virtual course set to Scotland's world famous St. Andrews, I logged on the computer as "The Gimp" and proceeded to live up to my name and then some, registering a stunning 33 over par and enough mulligans to have warranted a lifetime ban from most golf courses in the real world.

Though it's not the golf club's official 19th hole, the hotel's BOKA Kitchen and Bar provided a stylish and comfy setting to relax after a hard afternoon of relaxing.

How stylish? In addition to swishy furnishings, lighted sculpted bamboo installations from local glass artist J.P. Canliss, and an adjoining space-age bachelor pad lounge that would suit both the Jetsons and Ricky Ricardo, executive chef Seisuke Kamimura and his team of tastemakers insist on calling their appetizers "urban bites." And who am I to judge when said bites include such tasty tidbits as Thai-spiced chicken lollipops, watermelon gazpacho and Maine lobster croquettes, not to mention a bevy of thoroughly kicking cocktails like the smoky hibiscus margarita and "spa splash" made with cucumber, mint, passion fruit and lime.

Speaking of spa splashes. As it turns out, the powers that be chose the hot stone massage over the man scrub for my inaugural spa treatment. And to be honest, it was a bit of a relief. While the man scrub sounded funnier and would have made for scintillating joke material around the office, the hot stone massage actually put me in a state of relaxation that normally would have required a prescription. I think it might have even realigned a chakra or two or three.

And what Seattle sojourn would be complete without a trip to scenic Safeco Field to watch the slumping Mariners sink further into major league oblivion? Just a five-minute cab ride from Hotel 1000, the outdoor baseball stadium-with its fantastic sightlines, frequent train whistles from the adjoining Amtrak station and abundance of restaurants and food stands-puts the majority of professional sports stadiums (read: B.C. Place) to shame.

In the end, the Mariners somehow ended their 11-game losing skid and eked out a rare win against the all-mighty New York Yankees, but it wasn't enough to save them from a playoff-less post-season and several months of downtime to figure out just

what went wrong and how it might be fixed.

In fact, I can't think of a team more in need of some virtual golf, followed by a hot stone massage to help the Mariners forget their woefully abysmal season. I'd even go so far as suggesting a man scrub might be in order, if I knew what that was.

For reservations and more information about Hotel 1000, go to www.hotel1000seattle.com.

published on 10/06/2006