

TRAVEL

Sleeping Around the NW | In Tacoma

By M.J. CODY

SPECIAL TO THE OREGONIAN

Blinding light awakens me. Flashlight? Headlights? No, it's dawn. I didn't shut the drapes last night. I stumble to the window, shading my eyes. I'm 16 stories high with no obstruction in view. It's not raining. And no clouds. There's Mount Rainier silhouetted on the horizon.

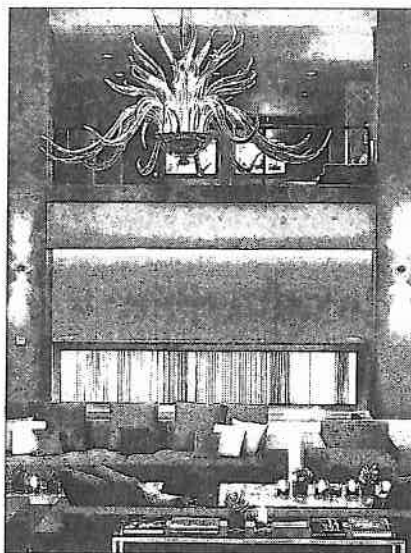
I arrived in Tacoma by train, one of my favorite things to do to watch the world go by. On this particular route, you follow the Columbia River, speed through rural farmland and cruise along the sound with dramatic views that you won't see by car. A quick taxi ride from the train station and you're downtown. You'll find harborside walkways, exceptional public art, terrific restaurants, engaging shops and not-to-be-missed museums. Nearby is the 700-acre Point Defiance Park with zoo, aquarium, gardens and hiking trails. Information: traveltacoma.com

Hotel Murano

1320 Broadway Plaza
Tacoma, WA 98402
866-986-8083
hotelmuranotacoma.com

Details: 319 rooms and suites. Rates: \$119-\$609 (ask about packages). Flat-screen TVs, cable, wireless/Internet available (fee). No smoking. Children welcome. Pets (\$35). Fitness and business centers, Savi Day Spa, Salon Miro, The Bite restaurant and Lobby Bar on-site.

Cucumber slices are over my eyes, and I am slathered in green clay and wrapped tight like a guacamole burrito in foil. The audio system sends a steady sound of ocean waves crashing. I imagine I'm lying on the beach, peaceful, a lump of contented flotsam. I am at Savi Day Spa undergoing a heavenly Detoxifying Sea Cocoon, just one of the treatments here in the hotel. A former Sheraton, Hotel Murano is a jewel. The name was chosen after the famed glass-producing island near Venice,



HOTEL MURANO

Dashes of color and glass art bejewel Hotel Murano, named after a glass-producing island near Venice.

Italy, and inspired by Dale Chihuly and Tacoma's Museum of Glass. Each of the 25 floors features a world-class glass artist. Rooms are minimalist and refreshing, with dashes of color and grand views.

Sleeping Around the NW appears monthly. Reach M.J. Cody at mjcody@hevanet.com