

TACOMAWEEKLY

Hotel Murano makes for a perfect getaway right in our own backyard

By Victoria Becker
For Tacoma Weekly

With limited resources and time, a "staycation" can be better than no vacation at all. That means staying close to home in Tacoma – the perfect place for a staycation. Since I was exploring for just two days, I decided to live it up at Hotel Murano.

Not surprisingly, Hotel Murano is evidently on the celeb list. I spotted comedian Martin Short arriving the same time as I. When the doorman greeted us, an artistic vision presented itself ahead. Low, modern furniture punctuates the bar and fireplace. The effect is sort of floaty, giving a feeling of peace. Glass sculptures prevail; an icy glass female figure with sheer attire stands close to the reception area welcoming visitors. The space is elegant and sophisticated yet not stuffy. The reception at the desk is friendly, easy and competent.

I entered my room and thought, "All is well." The down comforter felt like a cloud and the lamps were a bit sexy eliciting light from the red base. The view? Spectacular. I could have just read and relaxed in my room in the sky above all the hustle and bustle, but I had a massage to attend.

Wearing the robe supplied by the hotel, I entered the adjoining Savi Day Spa. Sally Smith, the raven-haired part owner, welcomed me

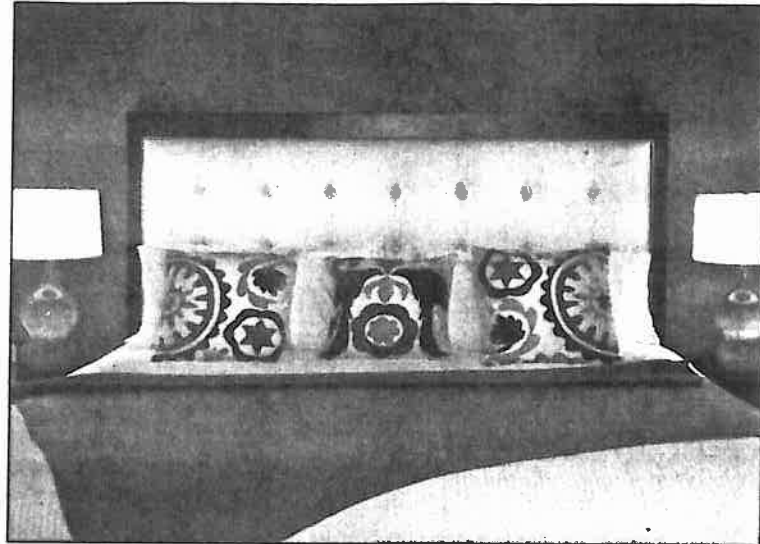


PHOTO COURTESY OF HOTEL MURANO

BELLISSIMA. Hotel Murano provides a unique hotel experience through exquisite glass art and attention to detail. The walls of its public spaces are lined with glass art works by more than 40 artists from all over the world, and its 320 rooms are spacious, luxurious and some are even pet-friendly.

and informed me of their 20-year anniversary celebration. The spa seems quite popular with regular in-town happy guests who enjoy every pampering from massages to manicures. I chose the Paradise Body Indulgence, which included a full body massage performed with vigilant intent. The foot massage was heavenly, and my neck spasm was relieved. The rest of the treatment took place in the Vichy steam room where several vertical showerheads bathed me while I laid down. All was well.

After a nap it was time for an over-the-top meal at Over the Moon Café. This place is very

romantic. Resident owner Deanna Bender took my order of crab bisque and duck. The crab bisque was delicate yet filling with chunks of succulent crab floating in the creamy bisque. The two plump and tender duck breasts were surrounded by vegetables and a port reduction sauce worthy of a Paris bistro. Lunches are very affordable and not ordinary. There are also delicious salads, soups and pastas for lighter fare before a night out at the theater. The café is located at 709 Court 'C,' (253) 284-3722.

The next day started with another spa treatment. A facial unfolded. After the cleansing, exfoliation, facial massage and aromatherapy, my face felt like it was made of jelly. Then a magical potion was applied, which tightened and toned.

The afternoon was spent at the Tacoma Art Museum and shopping.

Last but not least, I ventured to Porter's Place for ribs and jazz. The large room is simply dec-

orated. Jazz is played on Saturday nights from 6-9 p.m. Alton Porter knows what he is doing. The barbecued ribs are of the variety that melts in your mouth and on your hands. Portions are humungous and the sides of potato salad, beans and rice are scrumptious. A jazz quartet plays cool stuff and it grooves. The whole thing costs the price of dinner, which is \$9-\$13. Sometimes there is a short wait to be seated. Lunch and dinner are served Monday through Saturday. Visit Porter's Place at 2615 E. 'N' St., (253) 472-6595.

As I took the elevator down on Sunday, I reflected on a weekend full to the brim with things I love to do. Dale the doorman opened the door and as I stepped onto the Tacoma streets I felt rested, refreshed and ready to work, thanks to the lovely service I received from people just like you and me. This staycation worked.

Hotel Murano is located at 1320 Broadway Plaza, (253) 238-8000.