

Mondrian Gold Coast, Australia



AUTHOR:
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There's a rhythm to mornings on Australia's east coast, even in winter. By 5am, there are kookaburras laughing, locals running or ready to surf and, in trying to keep up, I found myself pausing, mesmerised by the sunrise over the ocean.

Just an hour-and-a-half drive from Brisbane Airport, Mondrian's latest opening on the Gold Coast is a striking luxury addition to a stretch of Burleigh Heads, famed for its surfing and nightlife.

From the outside, the hotel is unassuming, rising like a block of flats between the coast and the hinterland. Inside, however, is a different story – my suite was elegant and airy, with a palette of taupe, emerald, ivory and terracotta and enormous floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking the sea.

Spread across 24 floors with

208 rooms (all stocked with coveted Le Labo Santal 33 amenities) that include suites, studios, homes, beach houses and a Sky House, the clean, geometric architecture is designed by Los Angeles-based Studio Carter.

The best part? You don't even need to go far to spot whales. After a long flight and hour's drive, all I had to do was sit back on my balcony and watch humpbacks breaching beyond the breakers.

Meanwhile, those not willing to pay a premium for the full expanse of the ocean view need not fret, as they are still rewarded with the lush greenery of the hinterland and the sunset on the other side.

Beyond its convenient location, the real draw here is the food. There's LiTo, the hotel's all-day Italian restaurant, but it's at Haven, the hotel's signature restaurant that I chose to dine. The ever-changing menu here

reflects the coast's bounty, with tasty seafood such as Australian bay bugs (a local lobster variety that's sweet and tender) and the catch of the day, which can be grilled over flame, fried, woodfire-roasted or simply steamed. Just steps away, the poolside menu offers oysters, tostadas, crudo and lamb skewers along with an extensive wine and cocktail list.

After all that indulgence, I opted for a reset at CIEL Spa. Although I enjoyed a facial, I was intrigued by the spa's cryotherapy dry float, where a water-filled bed supports the body providing either a warm- or cold-water immersion, without getting wet. It's as futuristic as it sounds and exactly what the body needs after a day spent chasing waves.

Tel: 00 61 7 5508 0000
mondrianhotels.com

How to book it

Rooms range from £250-£2,945 per night, including breakfast. Depending on the suite chosen, there are self-catering options too.



Photography: Justin Niebois

Aussie energy

Four Seasons Hotel London at Tower Bridge, UK

AUTHOR:
JENNIFER MORRIS

Eating perfectly poached eggs in the vast rotunda of Four Seasons Hotel London at Tower Bridge, amid a sea of white and silver, I felt a world away from the morning hustle and bustle of our iconic capital. Yet just beyond the grand facade of the Grade II-listed former Port of London Authority headquarters lies one of the most famous views in the world.

Originally opened in 2017 as Four Seasons Hotel London at Ten Trinity Square, the property announced its new name in 2024 alongside unveiling fresh guest experiences and brand partnerships – think driving a Bentley Blower in Bicester and private tours of the Tower of London – “marking its deepened connection to one of London's most iconic landmarks”.

Many of the rooms, suites and residences at the property overlook the bridge and river (there are 135 keys in total), and last year the

hotel also unveiled its expansive Skyline Penthouse, with wraparound terrace and secret rooftop garden.

Its location away from the luxury hotel heartland of central London gives it unique appeal. Its sister property on Park Lane may be better known – being the brand's first property to open outside of Canada in 1970 – but I would argue Four Seasons Hotel London at Tower Bridge is equally, if not more, majestic, especially given the building's storied history.

There is even a private club hidden away in wood-panelled rooms.

My husband and I dined at the hotel's opulent Asian restaurant, Mei Ume, which was alive with joviality on a Tuesday lunchtime.

The honey glazed Iberico char siu pork and golden-topped bao buns – washed down with beautifully crafted cocktails – blew us away. Afternoon tea is also available in the hotel's hub at Rotunda Bar & Lounge, in partnership with Lily Vanilli, as well as more conventional fare.

The jewel in this city hotel's crown, however, is its sprawling subterranean spa, complete with gold-covered walls, where we maximised our last few hours swimming and steaming in a delightfully hedonistic hideaway.

Tel: 020 3297 9200
fourseasons.com

How to book it

Rooms from £650 per night inclusive of breakfast. Skyline Penthouse rates are available on request.



Capital cachet