

# In Inn

The Ivy Keeps San Diego's Gaslamp District Burning

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The Ivy's staid exterior hides a plethora of juicy secrets. King-size bunk beds and voyeuristic showers aside, there's much more to this new San Diego hotel than the sordid adult pastimes we all enjoy so much. In fact, let's just call it a feast for all five senses.

Created by linen service magnate Michael Kelly, the \$100 million property's interiors were designed by Powerstrip Studios founder, Dayna





Lee, whose background in Hollywood set design came into play when conceptualizing the project. The building's "all-business" exterior slowly gives way to sensual textures and whimsical touches that become more dramatic as guests move from public areas to private spaces. Lee gleefully admits to messing with the heads of visitors to the hotel.

"Our role is to enhance a specific emotion. We played with a sense of space. We played with surfaces. The end result is that on some level you know that you have entered someplace special and extraordinary," she says. At the Ivy, lighting goes topsy-turvy and shines from the floor, rather than the ceiling. Support pillars, long considered a necessary evil and downplayed in most buildings, get supersized and enveloped in buttery leather — and that's just the lobby.

Games of scale and perspective aside, the guest rooms provide all the luxuries demanded by today's discerning hotel guests, such as personal butlers, wireless Internet, 42-inch high-definition plasma televisions and 300-thread-count sheets. Lee says she set out to create rooms that are, "Stylish and unique. We wanted to create a warm, urban comfortable feel, much like you'd find in a townhome on the





Upper East Side of New York City.” The hotel features 159 guest rooms, along with 17 unique suites. It’s within these that the Ivy really lets its naughty side shine. The Star Suite boasts the aforementioned king-sized bunk beds, along with a stripper pole and fully stocked bar. The Sweet Suite elevates personal hygiene into a spectator sport with a soaking tub in full view of the room’s living area, as well as a shower big enough to hold an entire cheerleading squad.

Of course, no boutique hotel would be complete without a posh bar, and Ivy has this base covered with Envy, a nicely appointed nightclub, which draws guests, along with area V.I.P.s, in hordes. Those seeking a breath of fresh air along with jaw-dropping views of the San Diego skyline can head upstairs to the hotel’s lounge, Eden. The largest rooftop entertainment space in Downtown

San Diego, it features a fire pit, intimate seating arrangements along with a full bar. The hotel’s roof is also home to the pool and makes a stellar bikini-watching destination that rivals any of San Diego’s ubiquitous beaches.

Chef Damon Gordon, formerly of New York’s Gansevoort and Miami’s Delano Hotel, cooks up something for everyone in the Quarter Kitchen. Must-try dishes include a 20-inch Kobe beef hot dog and a libido enhancing oyster pizza, which, for propriety’s sake, is probably best consumed in-room.

When asked if an Arizona location would ever be considered, Lee laughed. “I don’t know, but I can put in a good word.” Until then, Phoenicians heading west would be well advised to skip the sand and head directly to the Ivy.

Discover more secrets at [www.ivyhotel.com](http://www.ivyhotel.com)

