

Review: Cedarbrook Lodge

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Thanks to a site upgrade, there's some wacky character substitution happening in the old posts. Thanks for your patience and understanding -- I'm working on it. In the meantime, please imagine quotation marks where there's weirdness.

Heads up: Our stay was hosted by the hotel. We paid for tips, only. We were totally spoiled and I loved the place. I'm going to sound kind of like a shill but I'm not, you'll have to trust me on this. The pics are mine, shot with a D200 in daylight with a fixed 50mm lens.

I have become picky about hotels. Don't mistake this for snobby, that's not the same thing. I will stay at a Travel Lodge just as happily as I'll stay at a Grand Hyatt and I have been known to prefer the Travel Lodge if the amenities are right. Picky is perhaps not the right word, rather, I have become keen to the details of what makes a nice hotel. And the Cedarbrook Lodge is a Very Nice Hotel.

It is a luxury to eat at a restaurant where you hand yourself over to the chef. [Chef Marc Bodinet](#) fed us a lovely five course meal made from locally sourced ingredients. There was a creamy crab bisque with truffle and a taste of sherry underneath. There was a fresh pasta with peas and bacon (cured in house). There were two kinds of fish, both perfectly cooked and both with an almost caramelized finish. There was rabbit (for the husband, I can't eat rabbit) with morel mushrooms in a dark reduction sauce. And there were cinnamon sugar donuts with drinking chocolate. I love the adventure of eating like this. It was decadent and fancy for a Monday night. And yes, it would have been expensive, there's no denying it. [The full menu with pricing is [here](#).]



And while I was impressed with the food, I was more impressed with the hotel. I don't eat a lot of high end meals, I'm more of a cheap ethnic eats kind of diner. It's not that I can't appreciate it, it's that it's out of my budget. But I do stay in a lot of hotels. And this place, less than a five minute drive from Sea-Tac Airport — so close we could see the air traffic control tower from our room — is like an oasis in the south end of Seattle.

It's green and quiet at Cedarbrook. It's almost impossible to believe that the airport is just over there. While yes, you do see some signs of life elsewhere, as soon as you enter the grounds you feel impossibly far away from where you just were. There's a strip of airport hotels less than five minutes away, and at Cedarbrook, you are in the midst of a garden hearing birdsong and watching the sun go down. It's uncanny.

The rooms are comfortable, quiet, and nicely appointed. There are a lot of details I really appreciated. No powered creamer for the coffee in your room (that stuff is an abomination) — they use the Mini Moo half and half. The personal products are in recyclable packaging. The windows open. The bathtubs are huge, deep soaking tubs. There's a common area in each building — they call it a living room — with snacks and drinks that are available 24 hours, in case you arrive from the airport raging with low blood sugar. There's free wifi and free parking. There's a nice breakfast served in the hotel lobby; that's included. The public spaces are bright with big windows. There's great art on the walls by Pacific Northwest artists. The business center is an open area and it's free. There's a shuttle that will take you to the airport or the nearby light rail station.

These things on their own aren't huge, I've stayed in places that have big tubs or free wifi, but it's rare that you'll find all these things in one place. I felt like the hotel had seen my wish list and decided it was the checklist they were going to go against. That's nonsense, of course, but as we were driving home, I tried to think of one thing I didn't like about the place. There was nothing.

If you're stuck at SeaTac for a long stopover and don't have the inclination to get in to town, this would be a fantastic place to wait it out. (The hotel does offer day rates — you'll have to contact them directly to find out more.) If you're looking for a nice place to stay the night before your flight, this would be great too — it's not your typical generic airport hotel. As for visitors to Seattle, you should know that it's about a 20 minute drive into downtown and there's not a whole lot nearby that you'll want to walk to. If you're looking for a lively city location, this isn't for you, but if you want a retreat that's just outside of the city, it's ideal. Rack rates are 189/night for a queen, but there are some great specials — there's a 21 day advance purchase option that starts at 89/night.

I liked this hotel, a lot. They nailed the details and it's an island of quiet where you least expect to find it. If you need a stay near Sea-Tac, I recommend it, wholeheartedly.