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# LODGING

## Luxury and Ambiance | By Michele Andrus Dill

The Puget Sound area has numerous hotels that offer exceptional ambiance as well as luxury and convenience. They include the fun, new **Hotel Five** in downtown Seattle; the glass-art-themed **Hotel Murano** in Tacoma; the hip **W Seattle**, which in March completed a \$2.5 million first-floor renovation to create an appealing Living Room and new Trace restaurant and bar; and the lovely, restful **Willows Lodge**, which has enhanced its spa and sits amid Woodinville wine country, about 20 miles northeast of Seattle.

### HOTEL FIVE

2200 5th Avenue, 866-866-7977, [www.hotelfiveseattle.com](http://www.hotelfiveseattle.com); 116 guestrooms, 180 sq. ft. of meeting space.

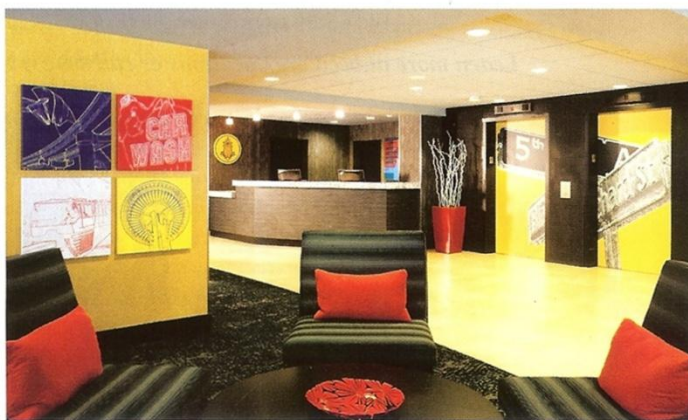
Just stepping into the Hotel Five lobby makes us feel happy. "Nice!" my husband, Michael, comments as we take in the lively modern decor, with lemon yellows and tomato reds in accent walls, accent pillows and chairs, amid serene blues, tans and grays. The space is so large, it has two seating areas—one with a flatscreen TV—as well as a business station with free Internet use where Michael can call up sports scores. Through the picture windows, I see the Monorail zipping by.

Then both of us notice the complimentary miniature pineapple cupcakes and 24-hour coffee service. The little cakes are a charming welcome treat, in keeping with the five-story boutique hotel's commitment to utmost hospitality.

Emphasis on service is one of the many reasons to stay at Hotel Five, which opened last June. Others include free Wi-Fi; the property's location approximately midway between Pike Place Market and Seattle Center; and the hotel's airy and pleasant

Max's Cafe, open for breakfast and lunch, with reasonably priced options such as the outstanding \$15 Truffle Croque Madame and marvelous \$12 Smoked Salmon Benedict.

The spacious guestrooms have vibrant abstract art, gorgeous light-cherry floors and rain showerheads. The Italian-tiled bathroom in our Urban Suite adds two shower body sprays, along with two



COURTESY: PINEAPPLE HOSPITALITY

The spacious lobby at the new Hotel Five in downtown Seattle shows off the hotel's lively modern decor.

stainless steel vessel sinks. The attractive suite also has separate bedroom and living room areas, and a deluxe Keurig coffeemaker.

We find it hard to choose between chillin' in our room and sightseeing, so we're not surprised to learn that the person overseeing the front desk was so



delighted by the hotel when she stayed as a guest, she applied to work here. Room rates start at \$135.

#### HOTEL MURANO

120 Broadway Plaza, Tacoma, 866-986-8083, [www.hotelmuranotacoma.com](http://www.hotelmuranotacoma.com); 319 guestrooms, 10,000 sq. ft. of meeting space.

"I'd use an 8 iron instead of a wedge; the wind off the water is blowing right into our faces," advises Chambers Bay guest service supervisor Eric Stevens as Michael prepares to carry across a huge swath of sandy bunker studded with islands of golden fescue. Michael's goal is the No. 15 cup, 127 yards west of the tee we chose on this short par 3. Behind the pin stands Lone Fir, the course's iconic tree, and behind the fir lies the spectacular panorama of Puget Sound.

In 2015, the par-72, 7,585-yard, Scottish links-style, Robert Trent Jones II-designed course, owned by Pierce County, will become the first Northwest course to host the U.S. Open. We're enjoying a round as part of Hotel Murano's Championship Experience Golf Package, a partnership of the hotel, Chambers Bay, and two other prestigious Puget Sound-area courses: Gold Mountain and The Home Course. The package gives us the opportunity to golf all three layouts during a two-night stay at the hotel, which is less than 12 miles from Chambers Bay.

Michael takes Eric's advice, and the ball soars beautifully over the sandy maw to the green, landing within 15 feet of a potential birdie. Ah, but the undulating topography of Chambers Bay means that nothing is as easy as it might seem. Michael three-putts for a bogie. And still looming is the blue-rimmed, strongly contoured, par-5 No. 18, with numerous bunkers—one of them at least 12 feet deep, whose 10 wooden steps provide access should you find the sand. Expert golfers relish the challenge, and the opportunities for creative shotmaking at Chambers Bay, yet with five tee choices per hole, no water hazards and just one tree, the course is enjoyable for players of varying skill levels.

After an invigorating round on the walking-only course, Hotel Murano guests can enjoy massages in the Savi Day Spa; drinks by the gas fireplace in the hotel's enormous skylighted lobby; and large, tranquil guestrooms in soothing decor schemes with pops of color such as red-glass lamp bases. Our Superior Suite also provides views of the Foss Waterway, a separate living area big enough to accommodate a four-chair dining table, and two white-marble baths.



COURTESY: PROVENANCE HOTELS

Once we're reenergized, we attend an art show—the hotel's. The Murano boasts an extensive collection of contemporary blown glass by more than 45 artists from around the world, befitting a property named for the Venetian island famous for its glassblowing.

When we've completed our self-guided tour, we experience culinary art in the hotel's Bite restaurant, where Washington state and world wines are available, and the food is delicious, from the Spicy Prawns to the Chicken Olivida featuring Northwest free-range chicken. For dessert, we pay tribute to the 10-step 18th-hole bunker by ordering the delectable 10-layer chocolate cake.

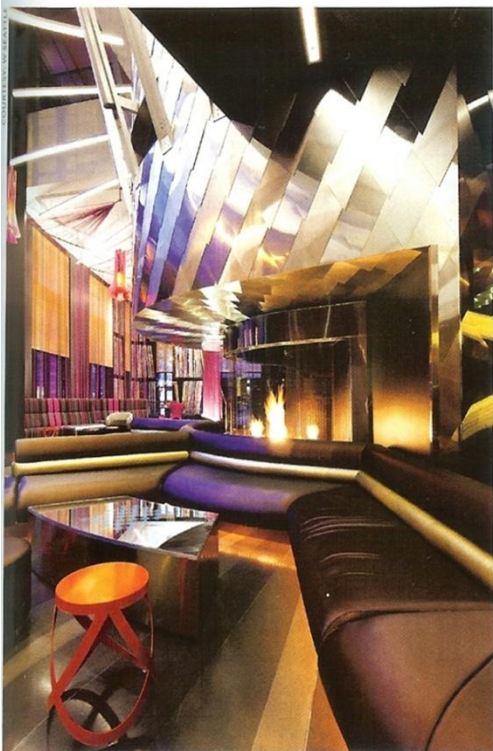
Hotel Murano is located across the street from the Tacoma convention center, and near attractions such as the Museum of Glass, Tacoma Art Museum, Washington State History Museum, Tacoma Glassblowing Studio and LeMay—America's Car Museum, opening June 2. Room rates start at \$159.

#### W SEATTLE

1112 4th Avenue, 206-264-6000, [www.wseattle.com](http://www.wseattle.com); 424 guestrooms, 10,000 sq. ft. of meeting space.

Numerous hotel guests and locals are convivially SIPing near the large, stainless steel-shingled gas

Hotel Murano displays glass art on every floor. This lobby chandelier was created by Venetian artist Massimo Micheluzzi.



W Seattle renovated its first floor to create an appealing space with numerous seating areas.

fireplace—a modern take on the firesides at grand Park Service lodges—in W Seattle's new lobby Living Room. Wednesdays and Thursdays, the hotel hosts SIP—Social Interactive Playtime—with a DJ spinning music. A similar but later-hours Social Interactive Night Time takes place Fridays and Saturdays.

On one section of the long, bronze-colored leather banquette in front of the fireplace, a 20-something couple converses over red wine. In an alcove, a family gathers around a glass table near walls with images of vinyl-record sleeves, enlarged to 6 feet tall. Near the two-story windows that look out on Fourth Avenue, businessmen unwind on a gray settee with magenta stripes. Their smartphones rest on a stainless steel coffee table that looks like a cargo container. Pink and gray rope strands, evoking loom fabric, serve as curtainlike dividers in parts of the room.

The intriguing, inviting “sonic lodge” decor—designed to connote nature and technology, two hallmarks of the Puget Sound region—continues into the adjacent bar and new restaurant, Trace. Our eyes are immediately drawn to the dramatic two-story lodge poles; the golden-hued ceramic floor tiles with patterns that look like tree rings; and the 20-foot-long mural along the south wall,

which appears to depict jellyfish from one angle, a jet from another.

The restaurant not only serves regional wines but also spirits from local microdistilleries, and sake to complement its impressive sushi bar. We start our meal with the *kampachi*, the spicy tuna roll and the salmon-based Seattle roll, which are all amazing. We agree we'll dine here again just for those.

In subsequent courses, Northwest-sourced ingredients shine, such as cheese (Beecher's), cured meats (Zoe), eggs (Stiebrs Farms), kale (Full Circle Farm), sirloin (Painted Hills Natural Beef), salmon (Quinalt River), chocolate (Theo), apples (Okanogan Valley) and honey (Moon Valley Organics).

The notable new first floor complements W Seattle's sizable guestrooms, whose categories range from “Wonderful” to “Extreme Wow.” We're in a corner Wow Suite that has views of the Olympic mountains, the Space Needle and Puget Sound. Dark woods and earth tones form a backdrop for striking elements such as the plush lapis lazuli-colored couch in the separate living room. The commodious bathroom includes a jetted tub with a neck-massage function, which I claim for a luxurious soak after dinner. Rates at W Seattle, which is located in the heart of downtown, start at \$189.

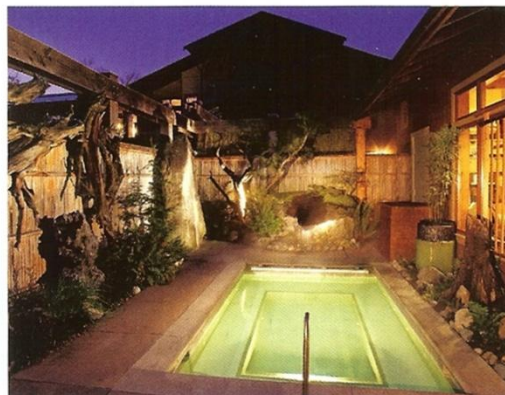
#### WILLOWS LODGE

14580 N.E. 145th St., Woodinville, 425-424-3900, [www.willowslodge.com](http://www.willowslodge.com); 84 guestrooms, 5,153 sq. ft. of meeting space.

I can almost hear my muscles saying “aaaaah” and “thank you” as masseuse Nancy expertly employs long, soothing strokes, stretching moves and “Relax” body balm in a Lomi Lomi massage.

The fabulous treatment is taking place in the lovely former guestroom now incorporated into the Spa at Willows Lodge, which was remodeled and expanded earlier this year. The 2,500-square-foot space now includes a

The recently remodeled and expanded Spa at Willows Lodge provides views of a foliage-framed courtyard whirlpool.



JEFF GAVEN



steamroom, a two-person manicure/pedicure room, four individual-treatment rooms, a couple's massage room, and a sitting area decorated in pleasing lichen and moss greens, with a view to a foliage-framed courtyard with a large whirlpool.

After the calming massage, I relax even more with a bubble bath in the soaking tub of our superlative guestroom. A slatted-wood screen between the bathroom and bedroom slides open so that I can see the fireplace and flatscreen TV. For refreshment, a minibridge is stocked with beverages of our choice, or we can make French press coffee or shake our own martinis. All Willows Lodge rooms have private patios or balconies, and "Nicest" rooms have jetted tubs and towel warmers.

Next on my itinerary is joining Michael—who's been reading a book by the stone fireplace in the beautiful high-beamed lobby, constructed with reclaimed 100-year-old Douglas fir timbers—for a meal in the lodge's Barking Frog restaurant.

The wine list is extensive, featuring options from around the world, and also a special Woodinville Collection spotlighting handcrafted local wines. Food-menu items include the superb Grand Marnier Prawns starter, and Northwest-influenced entrees such as Pan-Seared Alaska Sea Scallops and Anderson Ranch Rack of Lamb, with artful preparations such as the pearl couscous, brussels sprouts, fennel confit, and fig demi-glace accompanying the lamb. And next door to Barking Frog is the renowned Herbfarm, which serves multicourse dinners themed to the season.

Other nearby attractions include Redhook Ale Brewery, Chateau Ste. Michelle winery and the 10.9-mile Sammamish River Trail (bike rental available at the lodge). In addition, the resort hosts numerous events, such as the free chef-led cooking class one evening a month.

As Michael and I drive back to the demands of regular life after our visit, I pull up my calendar to see what summer dates might work for a cooking-class stay and a manicure in a cabana facing one of the lodge's gardens. Room rates start at \$219. **S**

## Also Notable

**Alderbrook Resort & Spa, Union, 360-898-2200, [www.alderbrookresort.com](http://www.alderbrookresort.com);** 93 guestrooms, 7,000 sq. ft. of meeting space: Alderbrook, two hours west of Seattle, on lovely Hood Canal, is ideal for a romantic or family getaway. Amenities include the Alderbrook Golf Club, a spa and an indoor pool.

**The Fairmont Olympic Hotel, Seattle, 888-363-5022, [www.fairmont.com/seattle](http://www.fairmont.com/seattle);** 450 rooms, 26,000 sq. ft. of meeting space: Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the hotel opened in 1924 on the original downtown site of the University of Washington. It has retained its historic charm while continually updating to provide modern amenities, including an indoor pool, as well as premier restaurants such as the highly esteemed Georgian.

**Four Seasons Hotel Seattle, 206-749-7000, [www.fourseasons.com/seattle](http://www.fourseasons.com/seattle);** 147 rooms, 10,570 sq. ft. of meeting space: The modern and elegant Four Seasons, near Pike Place Market, displays reproductions of works in the Seattle Art Museum collection; has a spa and an outdoor pool—with a stunning view of Puget Sound; and has Art Restaurant, where chef Kerry Sear serves fresh Northwest fare to create an artful culinary experience.

**The Heathman Hotel, Kirkland, 866-997-5475, [www.heathmankirkland.com](http://www.heathmankirkland.com);** 91 rooms, 2,509 sq. ft. of meeting space: The luxurious Heathman, located in the "urban village" of Kirkland, less than 15 miles east of Seattle, lives up to its motto, "Where service is still an art." The property offers views of nearby Lake Washington from select rooms, and provides amenities such as complimentary transportation to various East-side destinations; an organic-products-focused spa; and one of the Puget Sound area's top dining spots, Trellis, where chef Brian Scheehser wows diners with farm-to-table masterpieces that often include produce from his own garden.

**Hotel Åndra, Seattle, 877-448-8600, [www.hotelandra.com](http://www.hotelandra.com);** 119 rooms, 4,000 sq. ft. of meeting space: Scandinavian and Northwest design elements create a soothing downtown sanctuary in a renovated 1926 historical property. Room service is provided by Lola restaurant, offering a fusion of Northwest products and Greek-Mediterranean cooking.

**Hotel Max, Seattle, 866-986-8087, [www.hotelmaxseattle.com](http://www.hotelmaxseattle.com);** 163 rooms, 287 sq. ft. of meeting space: Stylish Hotel Max boasts more than 350 paintings and photos—including an artful photo on every guestroom door. Red Fin restaurant next door is extolled for its contemporary sushi creations and playful menu.

**Hotel Monaco, Seattle, 800-715-6513, [www.monaco-seattle.com](http://www.monaco-seattle.com);** 189 rooms, 6,000 sq. ft. of meeting space: A remodel of all guestrooms and suites completed in April was designed to create upscale luxury at this boutique Kimpton Hotels property. Amenities include a nightly hosted wine reception. The hotel's Sazerac Restaurant brings Southern flare to Northwest ingredients used "at their peak of yum."

**Hyatt Regency Bellevue, 425-462-1234, [www.bellevue.hyatt.com](http://www.bellevue.hyatt.com);** 732 rooms, 70,000 sq. ft. of meeting space: The luxury Bellevue Hyatt is part of The Bellevue Collection, which comprises three complexes offering shopping, dining and entertainment, along with office and residential space. Amenities include hypo-allergenic rooms and an indoor lap pool.

**Inn at the Market, Seattle, 800-446-4484, [www.innatthemarket.com](http://www.innatthemarket.com);** 70 rooms, 1,400 sq. ft. of meeting space: This boutique hotel in Pike Place Market has a courtyard; a rooftop deck with views of the market, Elliott Bay and downtown Seattle; and room service provided by noted Pike Place Market restaurants.

**La Residence Suite Hotel, Bellevue, 425-455-1475, [www.bellevuelodging.com](http://www.bellevuelodging.com);** 24 rooms, about 350 sq. ft. of meeting space: Enjoy suites with full kitchens at this boutique hotel near the shopping and attractions of downtown Bellevue.

**The Maxwell Hotel, Seattle, 866-866-7977, [www.themaxwellhotel.com](http://www.themaxwellhotel.com);** 139 rooms, 1,600 sq. ft. of meeting space: Located by Seattle Center, the hotel features colorful decor designed to evoke the flair of nearby attractions. Amenities include an indoor pool and a complimentary shuttle to destinations within a 3-mile radius. The Rock, Wood Fired Pizza & Spirits restaurant opened at the hotel in December.

**Mayflower Park Hotel, Seattle, 800-426-5100, [www.mayflowerpark.com](http://www.mayflowerpark.com);** 160 rooms, 4,300 sq. ft. of meeting space: Built in 1927 and carefully restored, the Mayflower offers European elegance.

**Mediterranean Inn, Seattle, 866-525-4700, [www.mediterranean-inn.com](http://www.mediterranean-inn.com);** 180 rooms, 800 sq. ft. of meeting space: The convenient Mediterranean Inn is located near Seattle Center and offers comfortable rooms with kitchenettes.

**Pan Pacific Hotel Seattle, 206-264-8111, [www.panpacific.com/seattle](http://www.panpacific.com/seattle);** 153 rooms, 5,500 sq. ft. of meeting space: A remodel completed in March created 900-square-foot Balcony Suites and 825-square-foot Space Needle Suites designed to capitalize on views of the Space Needle and of the

South Lake Union neighborhood, where the hotel is located. Amenities include state-of-the-art in-suite technologies, an ayurvedic spa and complimentary downtown towncar service.

Salish Lodge & Spa, Snoqualmie, 800-2-SALISH, [www.salishlodge.com](http://www.salishlodge.com); 84 rooms, 10,404 sq. ft. of meeting space: All of the guestrooms were recently renovated at this historic, award-winning property in the town of Snoqualmie, east of Seattle. Some rooms have views of breathtaking 268-foot Snoqualmie Falls. Amenities include a spa, The Dining Room restaurant and the opportunity to play the private Tournament Players Club at Snoqualmie Ridge.

Seattle Marriott Waterfront, Seattle, 800-455-8254, [www.marriott.com](http://www.marriott.com); 358 rooms, 11,354 sq. ft. of meeting space: A \$4 million renovation upgraded all the guestrooms at this hotel located across the street from the Seattle waterfront, with outstanding views of Elliott Bay.

Sorrento Hotel, Seattle, 206-622-6400, [www.hotelsorrento.com](http://www.hotelsorrento.com); 76 rooms, 4,761 sq. ft. of meeting space: Italianate architecture and personal service have helped to make the boutique Sorrento a Seattle icon since the hotel opened in 1909. The handsome Hunt Club restaurant is also a longtime favorite, noted for its inviting atmosphere and good food.

Tulalip Resort Casino, Tulalip, 888-272-1111, [www.tulalipresort.com](http://www.tulalipresort.com); 370 rooms, 30,000 sq. ft. of meeting space: Located approximately 30 miles north of Seattle, this property features a luxury hotel next to a lively 192,000-square-foot casino. Amenities include numerous exceptional restaurants, a spa, an indoor pool, live entertainment and the nearby brand-name-stores outlet mall.

Woodmark Hotel, Yacht Club & Spa, Kirkland, 800-822-3700, [www.thewoodmark.com](http://www.thewoodmark.com); 100 rooms, 9,000 sq. ft. of meeting space: The Woodmark is on the eastern shore of scenic Lake Washington. Amenities include a spa, Bin on the Lake restaurant and health-club access/classes.

In addition, Coast Hotels and Resorts (800-716-6199, [www.coasthotels.com](http://www.coasthotels.com)), Holiday Inn/Holiday Inn Express (800-HOLIDAY, [www.greatnwhotels.com](http://www.greatnwhotels.com)), Red Lion Hotels (800-RED-LION, [www.redlion.com](http://www.redlion.com)) and Starwood Hotels and Resorts Worldwide (203-964-6000, [www.starwoodhotels.com](http://www.starwoodhotels.com)) offer a variety of excellent choices in the Puget Sound region, and Mount Rainier Guest Services (360-569-2275, [www.mtrainierguestservices.com](http://www.mtrainierguestservices.com)) provides accommodations in Mount Rainier National Park. —M.D.