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A grande dame prepares for the America's Cup



By **Diane Bair and Pamela Wright** | GLOBE CORRESPONDENTS JANUARY 13, 2017

The first thing that strikes us is the artwork. There are four multicolored works by renowned Japanese contemporary artist Takashi Murakami. The flamboyant Reigning Queens pieces by Andy Warhol and Cineole by Damien Hirst, from his famous dots series, also hang in the lobby. In the grand stairway, there's Sz, by artist Philippe Decrauzat, a modern swirly, whirly black and white op-art piece. The hotel is filled with bright, edgy, contemporary art.

It's not what we expected to see in the 130-year-old [Hamilton Princess Hotel & Beach Club](#) in Bermuda. But the "Pink Palace" has unveiled a massive \$100 million facelift, going from slightly stodgy to stunning. Now, the grande dame overlooking Hamilton Harbour sits prettier than ever, and poised to be the Official Host Hotel for America's Cup 2017. Welcome Team Oracle, and anyone else looking for front row seats to the race.

The award-winning redesign was two years in the making and included renovations of most rooms and suites, a new state-of-the-art marina, a new infinity pool, and revamped central courtyard, two new restaurants, a new 8,200-square foot spa, and a 60-plus piece art collection. A sweeping terrace overlooking the water sits on top of a new retail corridor.

You'll want to stay in one of the newly-renovated rooms in the Poinciana or Gazebo Wing. The stylish room re-do includes soothing palettes punctuated with bright colors and modern Bermudian art. All have updated marble baths; the best have private decks with harbor views.

You could easily spend your entire stay at the hotel. Snag a lounge chair at the sleek, waterside infinity pool, before wandering up to the 1609 Bar & Restaurant for fresh fish tacos or spicy BBQ sliders. Then head to the marina and watersports center, where you can go sailing, paddle boarding, kayaking, or jet skiing. Private boat charters and tours are also offered. Book a treatment at the new exhale spa, with indoor and outdoor spaces, a lap pool, and yoga pavilion. The adjacent fitness center, with more than 2,100 square feet, boasts water views, and offers a variety of classes, in case you're starting to feel a bit sloth-y.

In the evening, the buzzing new Marcus' restaurant has fast become an island hotspot. Under the helm of celebrity chef Marcus Samuelsson, the open-kitchen, waterside eatery features signature dishes like the daily whole roasted, locally-caught fish, fire roasted jerk chicken and grilled shrimp tostadas.

But, you say: the hotel isn't on one of Bermuda's famed pink sand beaches. No worries. The hotel has its own private beach in a pretty cove with an on-site bar and restaurant, just a short and free shuttle bus drive away.

HAMILTON PRINCESS HOTEL & BEACH CLUB 800-441-1414,

www.thehamiltonprincess.com.