

Press Coverage: Wyndham Grand London, Chelsea Harbour

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DO NOT DISTURB WYNDHAM GRAND, LONDON

TRAVEL

THE frequent sound of helicopters taking off and landing overhead and the sight of some seriously flashy yachts in the harbour below indicate that we are in prime London real estate. This is celebrity territory, and Chelsea Harbour is the place London's rich and discreetly famous call home: Sir Michael Caine, Sally Burton, Tom Stoppard, Bernie Ecclestone, Bob Geldof ... and now us. For a weekend at least.

The Wyndham Grand boasts that it's the capital's only five-star all-suite hotel, and the rooms are certainly sumptuous and spacious. The whole hotel underwent a £25 million makeover last year and now also offers a chic spa complete with 17m pool and water jets. And, since an early flight meant my room wasn't ready when I arrived, I made full use of the facilities. ■

Wining and dining? We dined at the Chelsea Riverside Brasserie, overlooking the harbour and complete with a lovely decking area that would have been even more tempting had the weather been warmer. The menu includes a barbecue selection of prime meats plus



seafood and some comfort dishes. We had melt-in-the-mouth line-caught Cornish seabass on a bed of crushed potatoes, baby leeks and lemongrass sauce – the restaurant's signature dish. The service could have been faster – it felt like we waited an age for our aperitif of Taittinger rosé champagne – but we couldn't fault the quality of the food.

Room service? We could have chilled out on our balcony all day, watching choppers come and go and enjoying a spectacular view over the London skyline. There are all the usual facilities you would expect, such as flat-screen television, mini bar, free wi-fi and in-room tea and coffee, while a complimentary umbrella provides for unpredictable downpours. A super-comfy bed, plenty of bathroom goodies and ultra-soft bathrobe complete the picture. But what makes the biggest impression is the



sheer dimensions of the place – a separate lounge and sleeping area plus good-sized bathroom means you never feel hemmed in.

Worth getting out of bed for? It's a short walk from Imperial Wharf station, which links to Clapham Junction in minutes and the rest of central London from there. For alternative travel, pick up the River Bus from Chelsea Harbour. The King's Road is a short walk away, while the Design Centre is next door.

Budget or boutique? The Wyndham is too large and spacious to be a boutique hotel; nor is it budget. But it does have offers that can make financial sense. Consider its Family Time in Chelsea package: £336 per suite, based on two adults and two children under 12 sharing, which includes bed and breakfast, a Ewan the dream sheep toy, a Little Jetsetters pack and use of the spa, fitness centre and pool.

Little extras? The Wyndham is famed for its afternoon tea, and I can think of few better ways to spend a couple of hours than to sit on its decking overlooking the harbour nibbling on scones and quaffing bubbly.

Room for improvement? While the spa provides almost everything you might need – from cottonbuds to soap to slippers – there was no conditioner in the showers.

Guestbook comments? A peaceful haven from the madness of central London, yet within easy reach of the attractions.

RUTH WALKER

Wyndham Grand Hotel, Chelsea Harbour, London (www.wyndhamgrandlondon.co.uk). Suites start at £300 a night, including breakfast, and can accommodate a family of four, with two children up to 12 years old.