

BELLA Magazine

LIFE IS BELLA!

By Jessica Licciardello

When I travel, one of my goals is to find places that celebrate art, expressed with a sense of style that is unique and thought provoking. I love to find this in galleries and museums, but amazing art and culture can also be found in hotels. I discovered Ace Hotel in NYC, and it is a hub of art, history, and hospitality in the heart of midtown Manhattan. The lobby feels like a throwback to a time gone-by, with dim lights, comfortable deep fabrics, and industrial style fixtures, juxtaposed with modern art and technology. There are places to sit and work, and enjoy a cocktail not only as a guest but as a passerby in NYC. There is a fun retro-style photo booth, and on weekends they host entertainment that can be enjoyed well into the evening.

I needed a cozy place to rest after a long day exploring the city, and I found my room there to be simple, fun, and relaxing. There was a vinyl-record turntable and selection of records to listen to, which made me very happy, as I am an avid record collector. As I played the records and settled in, it started to feel more like a simple yet chic apartment in NYC than a hotel room. Each room features original art installations, and the entire hotel features art by more than 60 different artists. Gazing out the 10th floor window was a treat for the senses, seeing the historic building facades and wood water-towers, and looking down to see the people walking on the street. It was a larger than life experience.

That evening, I ate at the Breslin, featuring the cuisine James Beard Award-winning Chef April Bloomfield and Executive Chef Ryan Jordan. The tables are adorned with oil lamps, the walls with eclectic but warm decor, and the menu features dishes with a focus on peak seasonal ingredients sourced from local farmers and purveyors. The cocktails are amazing, as I enjoyed a fantastic Moscow Mule here as well.

There was an art installation in their gallery on the main floor, feature the work of Jessie Stead. The exhibit was titled “Beaded Interludes (reprise)” and consisted of glowing beadwork on the walls, which were made up of rubber balls that were reminiscent of childhood. The balls also felt fun and had intricacies like little aliens embedded in the rubber which felt like discovering new worlds. At night the illuminated installation made for a

surreal and exciting atmosphere.

Ace Hotel feels like a bubble of ecosystems all working together to make one immersive experience. There is a fun store, Milk Bar, which features branded items like enamel pins and stickers, as well as desert treats that can be enjoyed there or mailed to friends and family. Down the hallway is Opening Ceremony, which collaborates with many renowned designers and artists like Proenza Schouler, Comme des Garçons, Band of Outsiders and Alexander Wang which offer their spin on travel essentials and souvenirs.

I would recommend this art-centric and unique hospitality experience to a world traveler or NYC native as a place to visit and unwind by stepping into the curated world of Ace Hotel.