

HOTEL REVIEW

CHARMING

by Maarten Hoffmann

Whilst Rose was swanning around Barcelona this month, I was asked to review a hotel in Brighton and when I asked her to swap, I cannot print here her abusive response!

The new Charm Hotel is based in the New Steine in the Kemptown area of Brighton which is populated by small hotels and, to be frank, a few low rent guest houses, so I was very pleasantly surprised to arrive at a very smart grade 2 listed building recently totally refurbished by the new owners.

The reception is bright and airy and we were efficiently shown to our room with windows onto the grass covered square and the sea. The surprise here is that once the door is closed, you really could be in any 3/4 star hotel in the country. Sumptuous carpeting, beautiful lamps and a bed to die for. Lets face it, all the accoutrements are all well and good but it is the bed that is the deciding factor in most hotels.

This bed is huge with a superb deep mattress and Egyptian cotton duvet and more goose down pillows than you can shake a stick at. I slept better than I have for many a night. All rooms are en-suite with large rain head showers and great lighting which my wife assures me is the bane of her life when trying to do make-up with poor lighting. Me thinks the designer was a lady. The image here is of Carol Cleveland of Monty Python fame who, I am sad to report, was not on my bed when I checked in.

Now to the second most important thing within a hotel, after the bed - breakfast.



I was really not sure what to expect but what a pleasant surprise. The entire ground floor rear of the building is the breakfast room with doors onto a patio for summer dining. It

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is smart and well laid out with a central table full of healthy goodies but of little interest to me. Full English is the order of the day whenever I am in a hotel and on this occasion I decided to give them a little test and ordered

eggs Benedict. So easy but equally easy to get it wrong and, I have to admit, I am a fussy diner. If the eggs are not runny in the centre and the ham not Canadian maple ham, it goes back to the kitchen. No need - it was perfect first time.

My wife is a vegetarian gluten free soul and that often presents a problem to kitchens and she insists her fried eggs are hard in the middle. I think this was a request too far for the kitchen as they arrived a tad runny. Back they went and returned again, still too runny. Off they went again and returned perfect. This is not only testament to my difficult wife but to their response to a problem. It was handled with good grace and determination to get it right.

If you have the need to stay in Brighton, don't overlook the smaller boutique hotels, rather than the large chains, as there are some gems to be found and the Charm is one of them.

Prices:

From £120 to £260 per night
Events up to 30 delegates

The Charm Hotel

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