

written & edited by aaron saunders

FROM THE DECK CHAIRSM

REPORTING ON THE BEST IN CRUISING AND TRAVEL | HOSTED BY THE AVID CRUISER

[HOTELS](#) [AIRPORT REVIEWS & GUIDES](#) [LIVE VOYAGE REPORTS](#) [PHOTO TOURS](#) [VIDEO FEATURES](#) [ABOUT FTDC](#)

Land Cruise! The Ritz-Carlton Montreal and Quebec's Auberge Saint-Antoine

Land Cruise! A Day at the Ritz-Carlton Montreal

by AARON SAUNDERS on NOVEMBER 10, 2015 · [LEAVE A COMMENT](#)

Montreal's Ritz-Carlton Is *très bien*



Welcome to the Palm Court at the Ritz-Carlton Montreal! Photo © 2015 Aaron Saunders

The only real problem with the **Ritz-Carlton Montreal**, as I see it, is that you may have a hard time leaving. Actually, replace “may” with “will”, and you’ll begin to understand why it took me until well after noon to leave the hotel today to go and explore the beautiful city of **Montreal** in the Canadian province of Quebec.

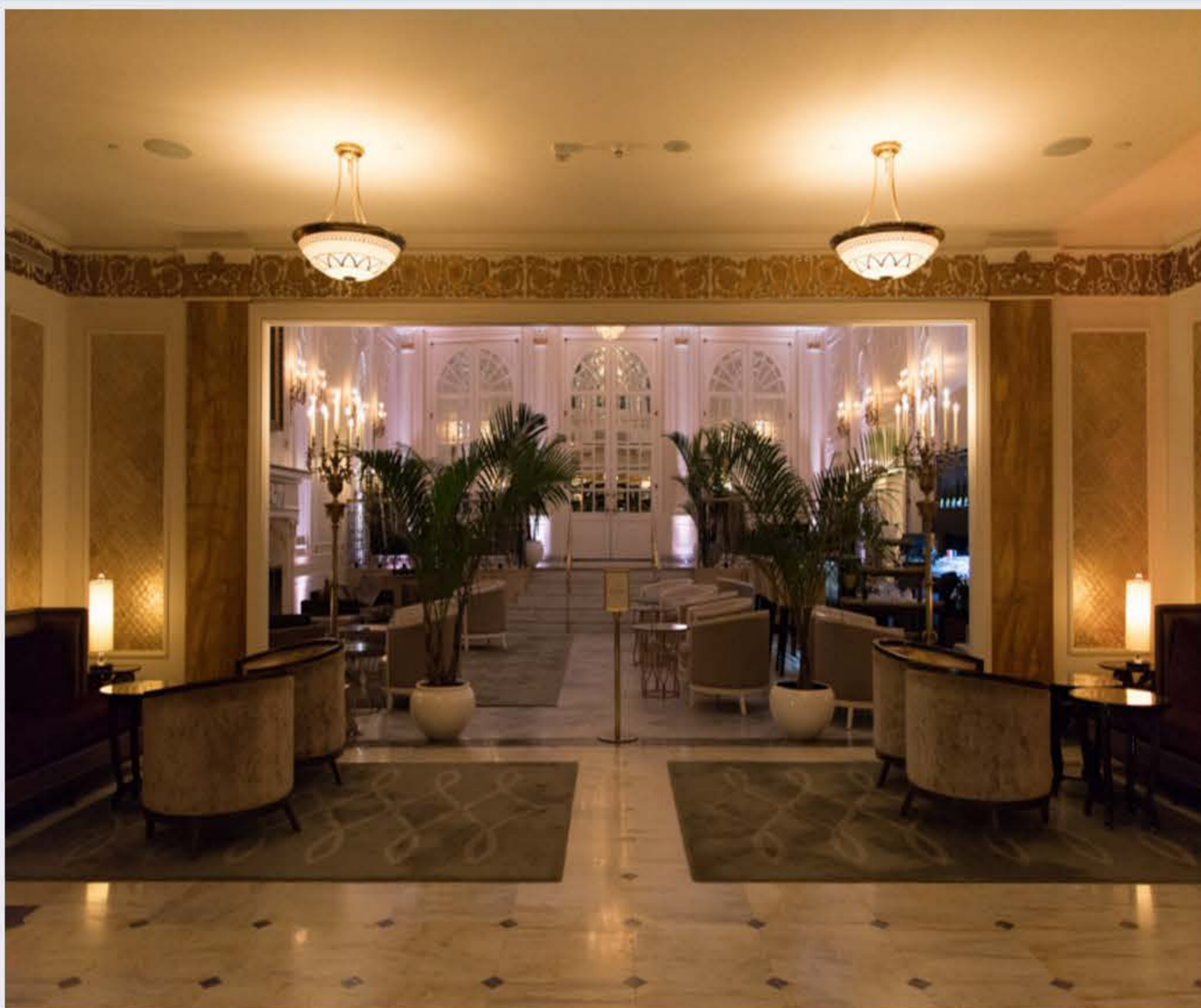
Like most Ritz-Carlton, properties, the Ritz-Carlton Montreal is designed to be an enclave of luxuriousness. Like most Ritz-Carltons, it succeeds. But there are a few things that truly set this classic hotel, originally opened in 1912, apart.



Welcome to the Ritz-Carlton Montreal! Opened in 1912, the hotel celebrates its 103rd birthday this December. Photo © 2015 Aaron Saunders

To start with, this was the first branded Ritz-Carlton hotel in North America. It was constructed by the Carlton Company of Montreal, and was originally to have been called “The Carlton.” But the man behind the Carlton Company personally knew **Cesar Ritz**, who lent his name to the new Montreal hotel for a cool \$25,000. The only stipulation? The hotel must maintain the high standards that Caesar Ritz set out for his own property, the Hotel Ritz Paris.

Hence, the first Ritz-Carlton hotel was born. Today, the Ritz-Carlton Montreal holds the unique distinction of being affiliated with the Ritz-Carlton brand, but remaining independently owned.



The first thing you see as you enter: the elegant Palm Court. Photo © 2015 Aaron Saunders

Today, the Ritz-Carlton Montreal tops the lists of the best hotels in Canada. This past summer, **Travel + Leisure** readers named it as their favorite city hotel in the entire country.

“We at Ritz-Carlton Montreal are delighted to be selected the ‘No. 1 city hotel in Canada,” said **Andrew Torriani**, CEO and General Manager. “It is an honour to be recognized by such a well-regarded travel publication. We take great pride in maintaining high standards of quality in all areas from design, to service and amenities, and are grateful for the recognition by all the readers who took the time to vote.”



This space – like the rest of the hotel – is stunning. Photo © 2015 Aaron Saunders

What makes the Ritz-Carlton Montreal so special? It starts when you walk through the revolving door off Sherbrooke Street and enter into the absolutely gorgeous lobby. With an unassuming Reception Desk off the left as you enter, the first thing you’re likely to see is the **Palm Court** – the hotel’s opulent, baroque lounge that also does double-duty as the only **Dom Perignon Champagne Bar** in the entire country.

Open evenings from 5:00 p.m. until 11:00 p.m., the Dom Perignon Champagne Bar is the perfect place to relax with a glass of bubbles. Decked out in elegant shades of black and gold, it's the perfect marriage with the Ritz-Carlton brand, remaining classy and understated at all times.



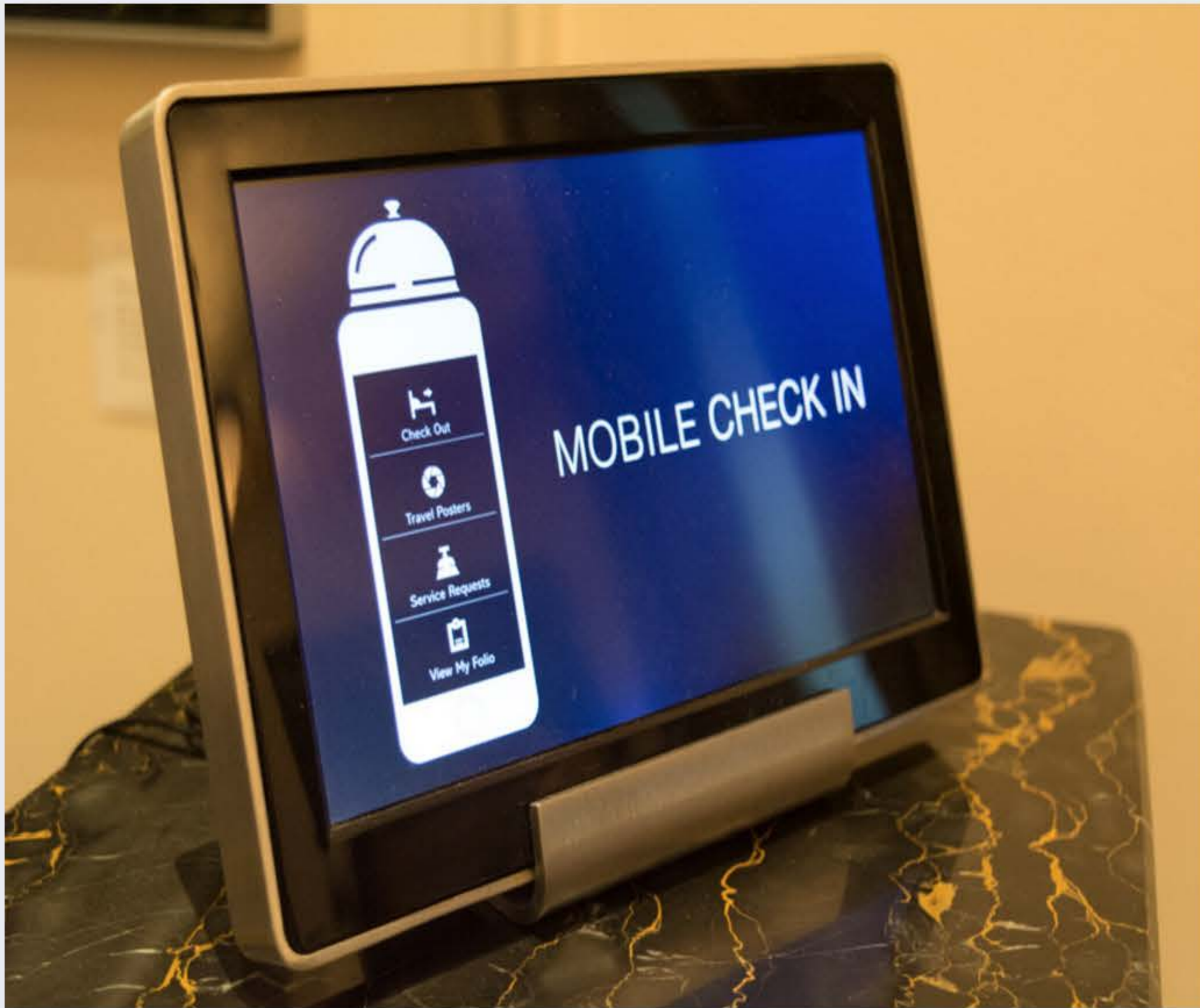
The Ritz-Carlton Montreal also sports the only Dom Perignon Champagne Bar in the entire country. Photo © 2015 Aaron Saunders



Photo © 2015 Aaron Saunders

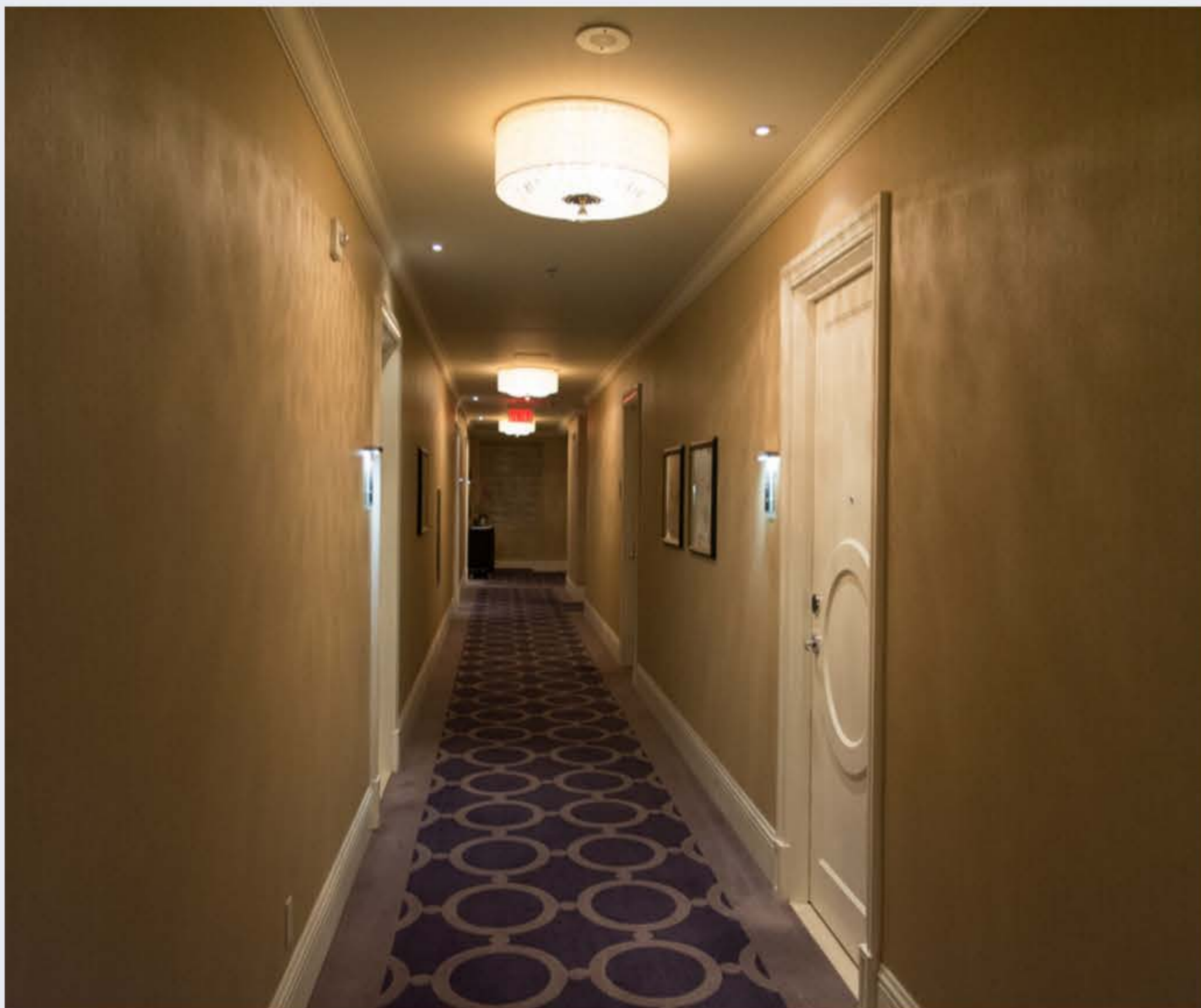
While I'm not so big on Champagne, I am a *huge* fan of this room, which I feel might be the most impressive space I've seen in any hotel, anywhere in the world. Period. Sure, there are plenty of nice hotels – and I've stayed at a number of Ritz-Carlton properties before – but this one takes the cake.

The level of elegance and comfort present in the lobby translates over into the hotel's guest rooms and suites.



You can even check-in via a kiosk at the Front Desk. Photo © 2015 Aaron Saunders

In 2012, the hotel re-opened after a \$200-million restoration project spearheaded by the Quebec firm of Provencher Roy & Associates. Its 98 guest rooms and 31 suites were all renovated from top-to-bottom in a style that is modern and elegant, but which still recalls the hotel's classic past. The Ritz-Carlton Montreal is also home to one of the city's largest suites – the massive, 372-square metre (4,000 square foot) **Royal Suite**.



Guest corridors are attractively outfitted. Photo © 2015 Aaron Saunders

My accommodation for the next two nights isn't quite as large, but it's *plenty* large by normal hotel room standards. The **Signature King City View** rooms measure between 37 and 47 square metres (400-510 square feet), and feature nearly everything you could possibly want – and a few things you didn't even know you want!

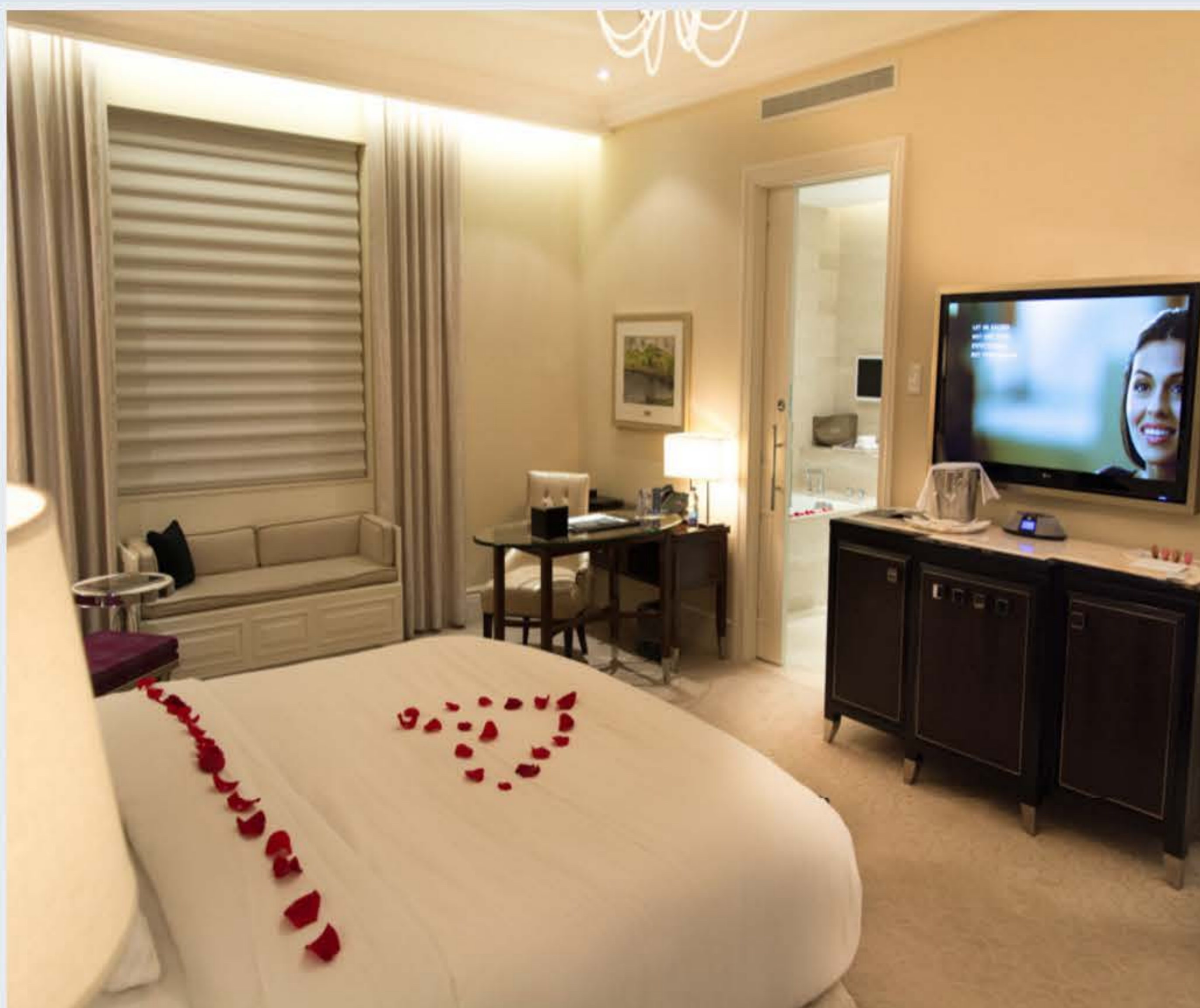
Because I'm here writing about the property for a Valentine's Day feature, my room had a romantic turn-down service complete with real rose petals on the bed, his-and-hers pillows, sparkling wine, and rose petals placed attractively on the enormous soaker tub in the equally-enormous bathroom.



My home for two nights: a Signature King City View Room, with special romantic turn-down. Photo © 2015 Aaron Saunders



Photo © 2015 Aaron Saunders



The room is spacious, airy and inviting – but still luxurious. Photo © 2015 Aaron Saunders

I also quickly learn that the room is smarter than I am. Lights are controlled via a touch-panel located near the door or on either side of the bed, and the panel offers numerous customization options and dimming functions to create the perfect lighting for any mood. The black-out blinds for the windows and the window shade are also electronically controlled by the same panel. Reading lights mounted to the bed snap on the second you touch their metallic surface, and temperature control is snappy and responsive.



The Room That's Smarter Than I Am: full control of every aspect of the room is done electronically. Photo © 2015 Aaron Saunders

Moving to the bathroom, the same level of control is present. One of the front desk staff personally escorted us to our room and explained the various controls to us – including the toilet, a Japanese-made Toto electric toilet with all the trimmings.



The spacious bathroom. Photo © 2015 Aaron Saunders



Giant soaker tub complete with...Photo © 2015 Aaron Saunders





It looks like a toilet...Photo © 2015 Aaron Saunders



...but much fancier. Photo © 2015 Aaron Saunders



I love the Asprey toiletries – a Ritz-Carlton staple. Photo © 2015 Aaron Saunders

The toilet is certainly smarter than I am. While the bathroom floor is heated, the toilet seat is too. Moreover, it opens automatically the second you step into its glass-enclosed shelter. It has a control panel that would make NASA blush, with various options for washing up. I'm surprised the thing doesn't sing to you while you go about your business!

Dual vanity sinks accompanied by my favorite Ritz-Carlton toiletries (Asprey), plus a television in the bathroom and one of the largest rainforest showers I've ever seen means that just leaving the bathroom, let alone the hotel, might be an issue.



The rooftop pool offers amazing views of Montreal. Photo © 2015 Aaron Saunders

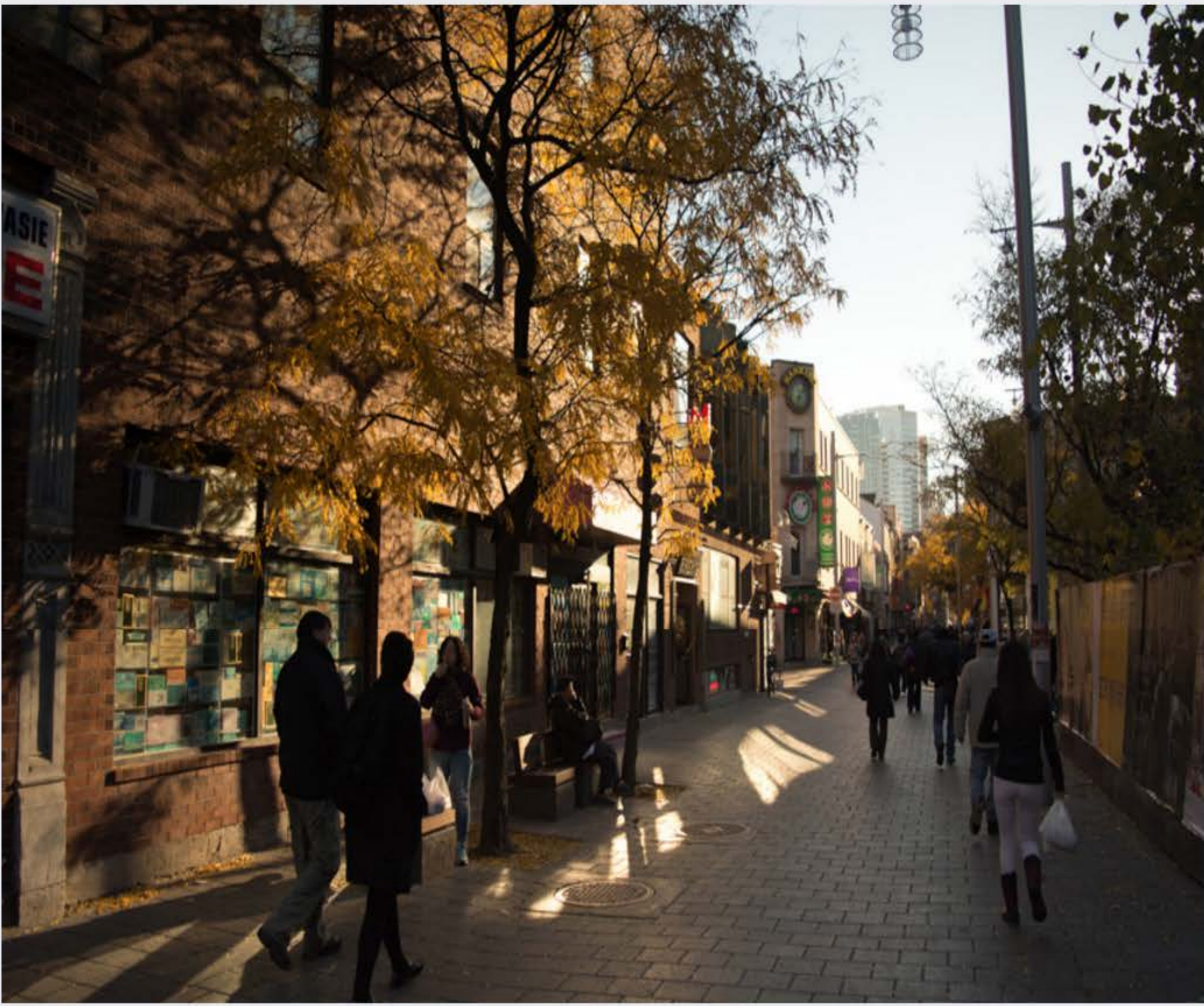


Photo © 2015 Aaron Saunders



The pool is actually heated by reclaimed energy from the hotel's kitchens. Photo © 2015 Aaron Saunders

I did eventually leave and go out for a day of exploration in Montreal. I have the photographic proof below. But I was very, very happy to return to the Ritz-Carlton Montreal later.



Proof that yes, I did get out and explore Montreal...eventually! Photo © 2015 Aaron Saunders



Photo © 2015 Aaron Saunders



Photo © 2015 Aaron Saunders

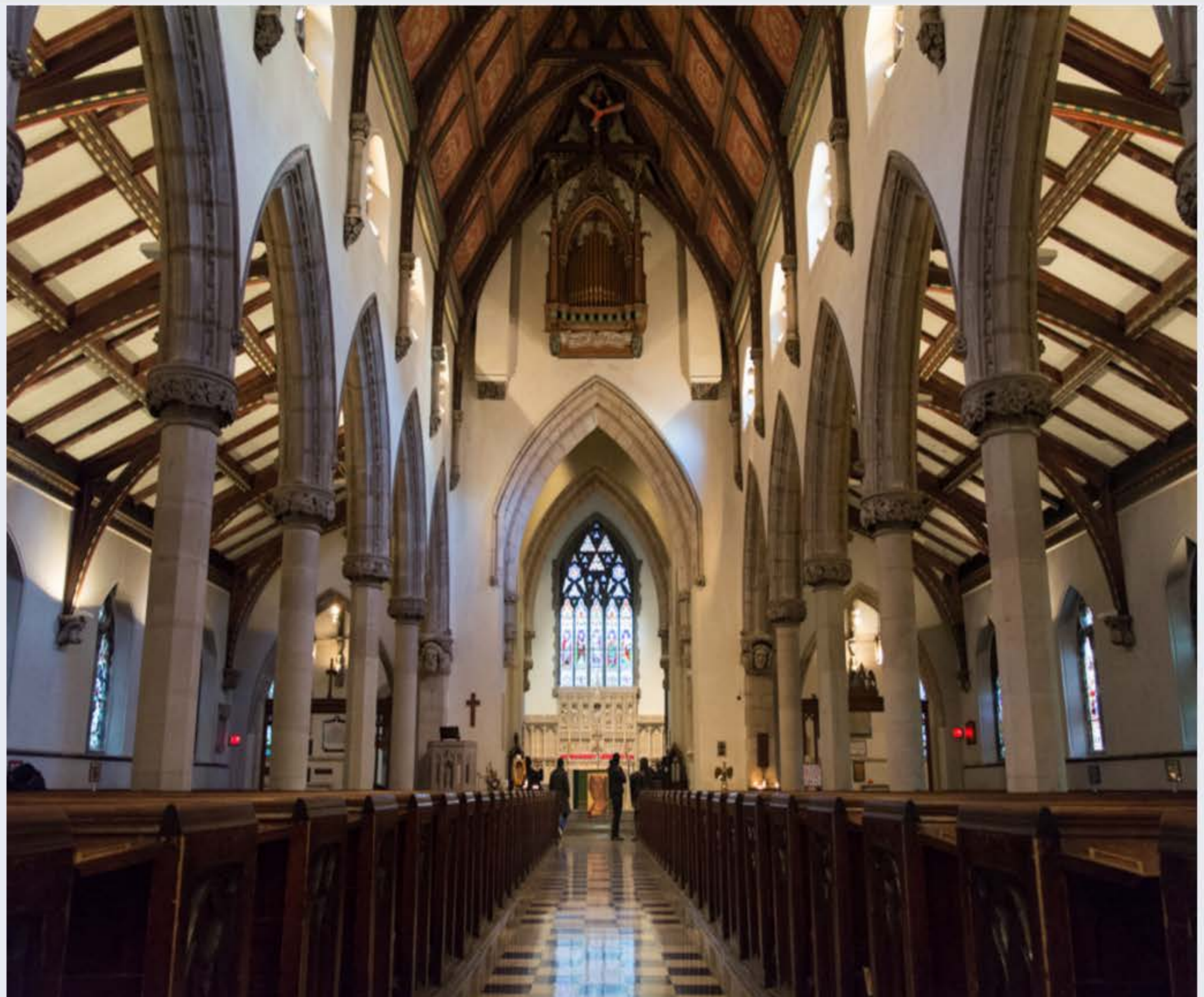


Photo © 2015 Aaron Saunders



Photo © 2015 Aaron Saunders

In a city with numerous great hotels, the Ritz-Carlton Montreal is something of a hidden gem.



Photo © 2015 Aaron Saunders

Our Live Report from La Belle Province will continue tomorrow from Montreal and The Ritz-Carlton Montreal as we make our way to Quebec City! Be sure to follow along with our adventures on Twitter @deckchairblog.