

BUSINESS Traveler

INTERNATIONAL

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Consumer Checks

HOTEL CHECK: WEST HOLLYWOOD, CALIF.

The Standard



Most business travelers shy away from see-and-be-seen hotels because such properties generally tend to care more about carpets and curtains than high-speed Internet access and adequate work space. But things have changed, at least on the Sunset Strip in West Hollywood, with the opening last year of hotelier Andre Balazs' property, The Standard.

My Medium room (there are five room categories – Budget Sunset, Sunset, Medium, Large and X-Large) served both as a playground and satellite office. The fun furnishings included suede floor pillows, a silver beanbag chair, an inflatable sofa, a CD player and Andy Warhol print drapes. The mini-bar was stocked with such novel items as Vaseline, licorice and Go-Go, a beverage that claims to have aphrodisiac qualities. On the practical side, the room is equipped with two multiple-line phones (one of which is cordless), a T1 connection and large work table. Under construction is a business center that will include a few computers and a photocopier.

While The Standard is an excellent hotel in which to do business, it is just as good a place to unwind. I

enjoyed a cocktail in the lobby's cocoon/conversation pit, which is lined with floor-to-ceiling white shag carpet. The pool, surrounded by an electric blue AstroTurf sundeck, is also an excellent spot in which to mingle with the hotel's mostly 20-something clientele. The restaurant (it has no official name) is open 24 hours and serves basic American diner fare with some Asian and Latin influences.

All of the employees I encountered were unobtrusive, yet very helpful. Although check-in time is 4 p.m., the hotel was able to accommodate my 1 p.m. arrival. During the day, staff were constantly wiping counters, cleaning windows, vacuuming carpets and sweeping floors. The valet parking attendants were pleasant and very prompt in retrieving cars – they even knew how to drive my electric sports utility vehicle.

David Caplan

The Standard, 8300 Sunset Blvd.,
West Hollywood, Calif., tel. 323-650-9090,
fax 323-650-2820. Doubles start at \$99;
suites from \$650.