

For hotels, pampering is a fine art

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No time for the local museum on an overnight trip? Try lingering at your hotel.

A new breed of hotels is dressing up walls, lobbies and guest rooms with original artworks from a mix of famous, midcareer and promising artists. Instead of hanging bland or factory-produced art that blends in with the background, they're choosing memorable - and in many cases, very expensive - works. A growing number of hoteliers think that art can help them create an experience that will draw more travelers.

Cities as varied as New York, Nashville and Tacoma, Wash., now boast of hotels in which the fine art is so fine that they could almost double as museums.

Louisville, for instance, has the 91-room 21c Museum Hotel, opened two years ago by developer Steve Wilson and his wife, Laura Lee Brown, to showcase some of their \$10 million contemporary art collection. It includes Text Rain, an interactive video installation by conceptual artists Camille Utterback, an American, and Romy Achituv, an Israeli.

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