

## America's greenest hotels 2008 - Where luxury meets ecology, from Manhattan to Waikiki

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With persistent energy costs turning green habits from trend into standing policy, environmental measures that would have dazzled just a few years ago are becoming as expected and unimpressive as compact fluorescent light bulbs. You'd be hard-pressed to find a Motel 6 or truck stop without some level of green certification.

In a bit of a shock, this year's Sustained Excellence award winner from the Environmental Protection Agency went to New York City's downtown Marriott. Yes, that Marriott-in the sweltering asphalt of Manhattan's Financial District. Insiders, however, weren't surprised. Marriott announced a company-wide policy to cut energy consumption (not just costs) by 25 percent by 2017, they've also debuted 'spudware,' biodegradable cutlery made from potato and soy, and turned golf courses into Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuaries.

With corporate titans making very public efforts to go green, it's little surprise that some self-described Friends of the Environment aren't what they claim to be. One hotel whose brochure claimed to be 'eco-friendly' was backed up in practice by nothing more than an optional recycling program. Such puffery-called 'green-washing'-is hampering the industry and the larger environmental movement. It always pays to double-check a hotel's credentials and give so-called green thumbs the white-glove treatment.

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