

HOTEL BENNETT

Charleston's newest luxury hotel has all the luxe bells & whistles

WORDS BY VANESSA PASCALE

Nestled on bustling King Street is Hotel Bennett — Charleston, South Carolina's newest luxury hotel. A refreshing addition to the Holy City, Hotel Bennett is an architectural gem adorned with mint green shutters and quaint black lanterns. But it's the entryway that truly evokes awe. A world of elegance rests beyond the front doors — dramatic spiral staircases, tall, tufted seating areas, delicate hand-painted murals, and artistic tile. The lobby houses a posh cocktail lounge with a baby Grand piano as well as a pink-hued champagne bar named Camellias.



Hotel Bennett boasts 179 guestrooms and suites. During our stay, we resided in a junior suite, which has a bedroom, living room, and bathroom. The beautiful room is outfitted with eye-catching chandeliers, dark wood furniture, and a soothing color palette of gold, soft blues, and cream. The bedroom features a king bed with plush white bedding, a desk, and bookshelves stocked with hardcover novels wrapped in twine. The bathroom is just as serene with its white marble tile, inviting pedestal tub, and separate rainfall shower.

I highly recommend adding on The King's Club during your stay. For an additional cost, guests have access to this exclusive space where refreshments are served daily and a private concierge is present. As the name suggests, you're treated like royalty here. There is an open bar stocked with top-shelf liquor and five food presentations (prepared by the hotel's Chef de Cuisine) throughout the day: continental breakfast, light fare lunch, afternoon tea, evening hors d'oeuvres, cordials, and

desserts. Here, we enjoyed a light breakfast, where scrambled eggs, sliced ham, fruit, pastries, and a Bloody Mary bar were served, and a lunch that featured a salad bar with grilled chicken, poached shrimp, and an assortment of cookies. Situated on the 6th floor, the outdoor terrace provides a lovely view of King's Street and additional seating.

Hotel Bennett has a variety of topnotch dining options, including Gabrielle (formal dining), Camellias (champagne bar), Fiat Lux (rooftop dining by the pool), and La Pâtisserie (a casual bistro that serves "the city's finest breads, pastries, and sandwiches"). Gabrielle is a gorgeous two-story restaurant with floor-to-ceiling windows, leather chairs, and a stunning crystal art installation draped overhead. Helmed by Executive Chef Michael Sichel, the masterfully-executed dishes are inspired by the chef's work in Europe and New Orleans. The dinner menu boasts mouthwatering dishes, including grilled octopus, French onion soup, steak, and seafood.



We dined at Gabrielle for Sunday brunch and had the challenge of selecting from an array of dishes that each sounded more scrumptious than the last — Breakfast Beignets, Crepes Amandine, Shrimp and Grits, Lemon Ricotta Toast, Gabrielle Burger... To start, we ordered the Biscuits & Gravy with Amish Chicken Ground Sausage. Not your typical southern dish, *this* was elevated fare. The biscuits were warm and fluffy, while the gravy was creamy yet light, and incredibly delicious. Every morsel was devoured. For our main dishes, we ordered the Belgian Waffle with Smoked Pork Belly and Organic Strawberry syrup; and Eggs Bennett: Storey Farms Organic Poached Eggs and Filet Medallions topped with beraniase. Both plates featured a symphony of flavors that came together harmoniously. I definitely recommend dining at Gabrielle — the food is excellent.

Retire to The Spa Hotel Bennett for some R&R. The spa boasts five treatment rooms, a relaxation area, and fitness center. While you wait in the relaxation room, help yourself to some water, tea, and light snacks. We experienced the 80-minute Ultimate Aromatherapy Massage in the couples' room, and left completely invigorated. The spa menu also features facials, like the Gold Hydralifting Facial, and body treatments, like the Holy

City Healing Wrap. Whatever treatment you choose, you're sure to feel pampered and refreshed.

Charleston is a popular destination for weddings, and Hotel Bennett's Crown Ballroom is the perfect place to celebrate your nuptials. Honestly, every corner of the hotel presents a beautiful backdrop for photos, especially their rooftop which has a heated pool, Fiat Lux, and six private rental cabanas outfitted with seating, a TV, refrigerator, fan, bottled water, and fruit basket. During our visit, the hotel was bursting with wedding guests and intimate parties enjoying champagne and tea at Camellias, which serves an extensive collection of bottle and by-the-glass offerings, caviar, ceviche, tartare, desserts, and Afternoon Tea (from 2-4 pm on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday). Hotel Bennett embodies Charleston charm and luxury, and is the best when it comes to the city's accommodations. **ML**

For reservations, visit www.hotelbennett.com or call 833-331-9616. Hotel Bennett is located at 404 King St., Charleston, SC 29403.