

THE PHILANTHROPY ISSUE

San Francisco

HOW ONE MAN'S
TRANSFORMATION LED
TO THE CREATION OF A
PEACE-BUILDING MOVEMENT

UNITED PLAYAZ

IT TAKES
THE HOOD
TO SAVE
THE HOOD

GIVING TREE

Tracing the Roots of
SF's Philanthropic
Branches

GENEROUS POUR

Napa Vintners
Raise Millions for
Local Nonprofits

How many times have you wished you could just roll out of bed and pop over to your boarding gate for a predawn flight? Or dreamt of accommodations other than your sibling's guest room, and chauffeur or shuttle service at odd hours?

For as long as most of us can remember, the closest lodging to San Francisco International Airport has been in San Bruno, a circuitous mile-long drive or (with luck) a shuttle ride across the freeway. Hotels along the waterfront are a mile and a half away or farther south.

All that just changed with the opening of the new Grand Hyatt at SFO. Aspirations are high, considering the curved 12-story hotel, rising from the elbow of a freeway offramp leading to the rebuilt Harvey Milk Terminal 1, will serve the most transient of clientele. An estimated 80% of guests will stay just one night, yet touches of luxury in all 351 rooms include long-stay pleasures—eight USB ports, abundant outlets, a minibridge sans pricey snacks, a Nespresso machine, an Asian-style tea setup and ample storage space in the compact bathroom.

There's even a pressure-point foam roller "to help guests recover from the flight," as General Manager Henning Nopper puts it. "We're literally giving people back hours in their day."

Other features worthy of a

long stay include a roomy, well-equipped fitness room with yoga space, a California-Asian restaurant and sushi bar, a luxe cocktail bar, a 24-hour market and a light-filled 5,700-square-foot ballroom.

At the same time, the hotel is all in on the airport's sustainability commitment. Besides common recycling and energy-saving efforts, the hotel provides aluminum water bottles (and lots of refill stations) and bulk amenities instead of plastic bottles. It will donate surplus food to local shelters and generate 4% of its energy from photovoltaic cells. Hyatt is designing the new high-rise to meet criteria for LEED Gold certification.

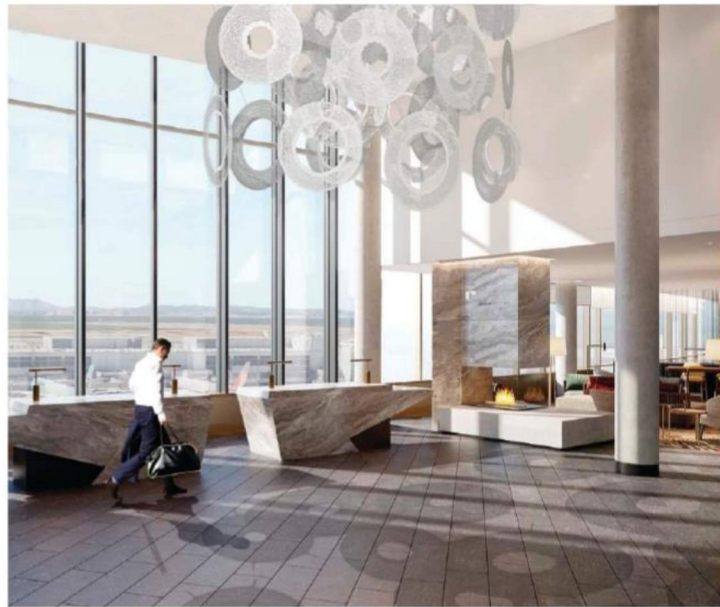
Some of the biggest planes in the world roll in and out of the parking lot next to the hotel, yet soundproofing and triple-paned windows turn the mesmerizing tableau into a silent movie. Binoculars and a *Plane Spotter* brochure that helps to identify the players stand on a windowsill in suites and runway-view rooms.

The Grand Hyatt at SFO is an "on-airport" rather than "in-terminal" hotel with its own new AirTrain light rail station; Sales Director David Lambert says the hotel is at most seven minutes from any terminal and one stop from BART. A sky bridge lined by a 150-foot stained-glass installation by artist Sarah Cain leads directly to the hotel's fourth-floor lobby, whose wide open spaces

A Sense of Home

Latest SFO amenity is a coveted comfortable night's sleep.

BY CHRISTINE DELSOL



Guests of the new Grand Hyatt at SFO will be able to reach their gates or BART in about 10 minutes.

and floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking parked airplanes resemble a terminal, minus the crowds and uncomfortable seats.

"You go from a cramped plane to the even smaller AirTrain into natural light and 20-foot ceilings," Lambert says. "There's nothing compressed about it."

The stained glass is one of the hotel's works by local artists commissioned by SFO in cooperation with the San Francisco Arts Commission. Large 3D pieces include a cloudlike aluminum sculpture by Tahiti Pehrson hanging in the lobby and Ellen Harvey's mosaic of glass and stone cut by hand in the ground-floor entrance that maps Bay Area open spaces instead of roads and cities. Smaller pieces in guest rooms represent local icons from the Golden Gate Bridge to Yosemite.

Infusing the hotel with the spirit of Northern California was a guiding vision for lead designer Kiko Singh. Guest room hallways evoke Muir Woods with forest-patterned carpets and doors with a bark texture; guest-room carpeting was inspired by sea cliffs and ocean waves. The vibe Singh says she hoped to instill in the Grand Club is: "This is your living room."

The airport itself informed some design decisions. The winglike reception desk is a nod to aviation, but Singh wanted to let the planes just outside play the starring role.

Her greatest challenge was creating a feeling of luxury while meeting the needs of people with such a wide range of reasons for being there. She focused on bringing some of Northern California's spirit to guests even if they never leave the hotel; some will be just meeting a friend for lunch during a long layover or attending a conference in the meeting rooms all day.

No matter why they come, Singh says, "the airport is their first sense of place, and I'm really trying to tell the story of Northern California."

FROM \$329 PER NIGHT, DEPENDING ON ROOM, SEASON AND NEARBY EVENTS, 55 S. MCDONNELL ROAD, 850.452.1234, GRANDHYATTATSFOT.COM



At left: Travelers on layover may refresh in a room, access the gym, message suite, restaurant, market or bar.