

Forget the mini-bar, Grand Hyatt passes the test

By Ian Jarrett

THE GRAND Hyatt Dubai's wow factor kicks in when you enter the vast foyer, an area that provides an effective hub for the 674-room hotel and conference resort. Domes, pillars, fountains, palm trees and marble make a spectacular opening statement.



And there was also something of a wow factor on departure when I was presented with the account.

Wow! The Grand Hyatt has one of those annoying mini-bars in the room that registers as soon as you take something out.

The revenue-generating mini-bar in the Grand Hyatt also seemed to charge for items I only looked at.

"How many toys did you take, sir?"

"Toys? None."

"It says two here."

How many bottles of Bombay Sapphire gin?

"None."

"It says two here."

As I waited for my account to be sorted out, I had visions of this fiendish computer hidden in the depths of the Grand Hyatt.

"Did that guy in room 1301 almost take that chocolate bar? Let's charge him for being tempted."

Twenty minutes later, after several telephone calls from the checkout staff and two new accounts, I was on my way.

The mini-bar ambush did not detract from the overall experience of the three-year-old Grand Hyatt, which manages to

cope with being a business hotel that has outstanding leisure facilities, and a purpose-built conference centre which can accommodate 2,000 delegates.

It is to Grand Hyatt's credit that when I arrived from an Emirates overnight flight from Australia at six in the morning, they offered complimentary breakfast and found me a room within an hour.

Grand Hyatt Dubai labels itself as a city resort. Recreational facilities include a lavish spa, tennis centre, indoor and outdoor swimming pools and jogging track in 37 acres of landscaped grounds.

Rooms are generous in size and come with everything you would expect from a five star hotel: electronic safe and work desk with power points at desk level. The rooms also have excellent complimentary tea and coffee making facilities, electronic in-room air conditioning, two telephones with speaker phones in the room and one standard phone in the bathroom.

There are four dedicated non-smoking floors, 133 executive rooms on the 11th to 16th floors and an executive lounge on the 14th floor.

High-speed Internet connection is charged at Dhs 2.75 per minute with a

maximum charge of Dhs 110 (US\$30) for 24 hours. Clearly, what hotels have lost in revenue to the use of mobile phones and email, they are recouping with broadband Internet charges.

The hotel has an impressive dining area, built around a Market Square. There are 14 restaurants, bars and cafes offering Italian, Vietnamese, Singaporean, Lebanese and American food styles.

There is also a well-stocked wine cellar and cocktail bar, and a nightlife complex.

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