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CEO of Alba

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UAE AED 15
SAUDI ARABIA SAR 15
BAHRAIN BHD 15
KUWAIT KWD 1.25
OMAN OMR 15
QATAR QAR 15
OTHERS \$4

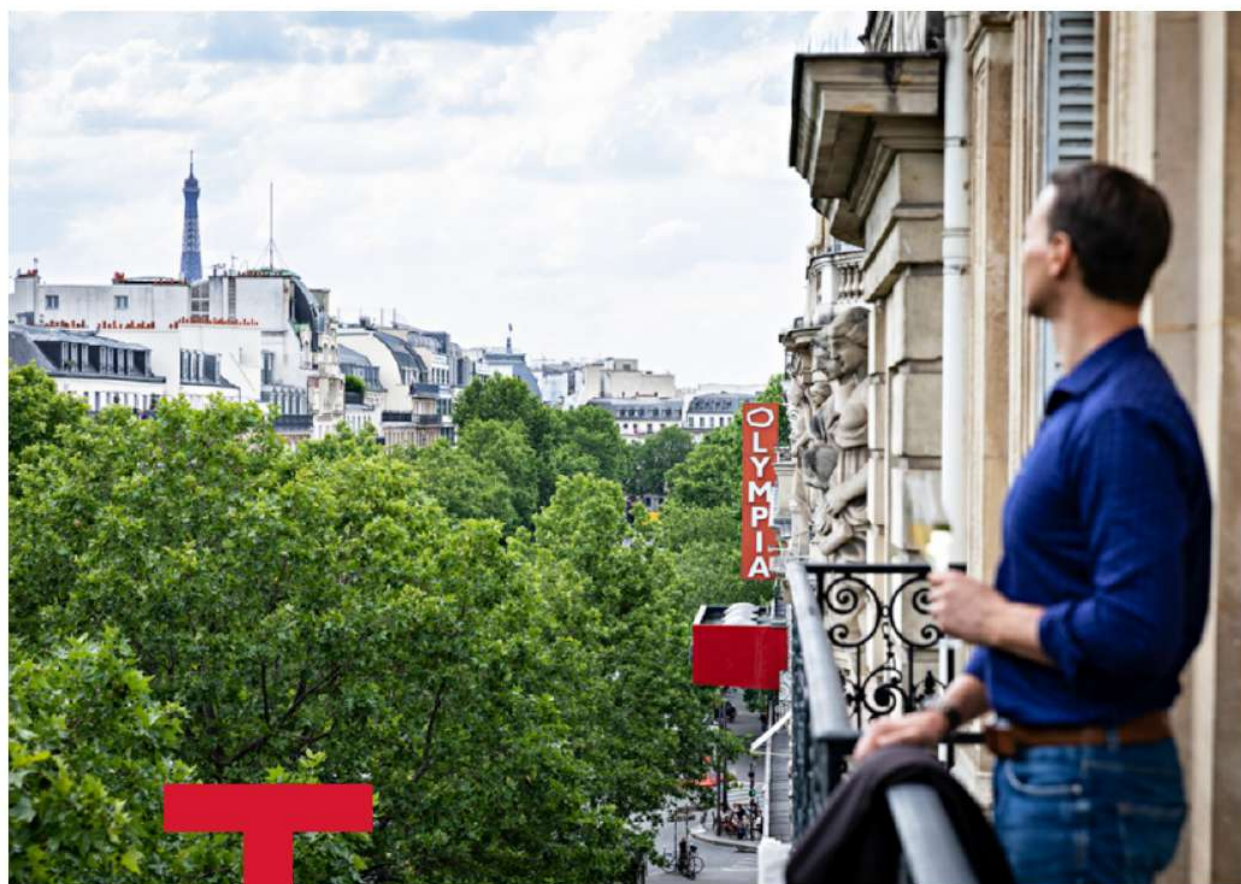


By Claudine Coletti

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HOTEL REVIEW

Sofitel Le Scribe Paris Opéra



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Deep in the heart of the Opera district in Paris sits one of the city's most historic hotels. Sofitel's Hotel le Scribe is set in a building more than 160 years old yet is fresh from a 2019 makeover that makes many nods to its legacy while also drawing in modern elements that epitomize

subtle Parisian glamor.

The 5-star hotel was where the first paid public screening using the Luminaire brother's Cinematographe device took place in 1895. Ten films were shown in what was Le Salon Indien in the Grand Café at the time. Today, that same room is used for breakfast, with an original Cinematographe displayed at the entrance. The rest of the hotel has a fashionable and minimalist style, with pale walls and colorful furnishings against copper and black fittings. The overall feel is serene and chic, much like the city.



► Accommodation

From the outside, considering it's a grand building, Hotel Le Scribe is not imposing. The entrance is nestled between shops and cafés and can be easy to miss, but although it blends in with its surroundings, it is very much a presence on its namesake road. As I enter the lobby, the first thing I notice is a piece of art above the concierge desk: a back-lit white townhouse façade with a female silhouette at the window. It somehow feels very Parisian. The reception, concierge, bar, and café all feed off the foyer, and while the modestly-sized area can feel bustling with just a few guests, the team is warm and friendly and speaks multiple languages, quickly attending to queries and visitors.

While the 213-room hotel is too large to be called boutique, it feels homely. However, once you enter the suites, the size of the property becomes apparent. I stay in a Prestige Suite, which has a living room, bedroom, ample wardrobe space, bathroom, and separate WC. On another floor, I view an Opera Suite, which has a vast living area with tall ceilings and plenty of floor space. Connecting doors mean that neighboring guests can choose to link up multiple





rooms, easily making the accommodation the size of an apartment suitable for a small family or group of friends.

Each room features a large wall-mounted mirror, which doubles as a television, so if you choose not to switch it on, it blends in seamlessly with the décor, which is contemporary and stylish. The walls are light, with bursts of color provided by purple armchairs, tinted light-fittings, and patterned cushions. And despite the hotel being on the corner of two busy roads, the rooms are quiet and the beds high and comfortable, guaranteeing you a peaceful respite from the lively city outside.

► Activities

Although Paris is a sprawling capital, many of its most famous landmarks sit centrally and are walkable from each other and the hotel if you enjoy a stroll. If you prefer a taxi, they are easy to find, with public transport also widely available.

Hotel Le Scribe is just moments away from the Palais Garnier opera house, a stunning 19th-century building that offers tours and regular performances. And if you're a fan of shopping, the striking glass-domed Galeries Lafayette Haussmann mall is just a few minutes up the road. If you're looking for a memorable cultural experience, the hotel is less than a 20-minute walk away from the famous Louvre

museum, which I spent an entire afternoon exploring. It's worth noting for the Louvre that tickets must be booked online in advance, with specific time slots allocated to manage the flow of visitors.

Within the hotel, if you feel like treating yourself, there is a full spa and wellness area offering a range of treatments. True to the overall boutique feel of the property, the spa is built for exclusivity and can be hired out in full for guests that value their privacy or are looking for a more personal experience.

Something to remember if you're in Paris for the weekend is that some restaurants and landmarks are closed on Sundays or Mondays, so if you're hoping to visit somewhere in particular, it's worth checking opening hours before setting off. The more popular and trending restaurants also get booked up well in advance, so be sure to call ahead to guarantee a table.

► Dining

Aside from the breakfast room, which is below ground, Hotel Le Scribe has three dining options off the lobby: a café, which can also be accessed from the road and is open to the public, the main restaurant, and a bar/lounge that offers drinks and light bites.

The Rivage restaurant is open for lunch Monday to



Friday and dinner Thursday to Saturday. The menu offers a modest selection of seasonal Mediterranean dishes, with tapas-style appetizers designed for sharing. We choose to dive into the fish, sharing Tuna Carpaccio and a unique tiramisu-style shredded crab to start, followed by a tasty roasted Hake and a large portion of saffron risotto. As the restaurant is closed on Sundays, we also checked out the room-service menu, which largely mirrors the lunch/dinner menu, plus some extra staples such as sandwiches and pizza.

Le Bar du Scribe in the evening is a cozy and exclusive setting, with a classic design and crescent-moon-shaped bar. It's an easy place to sit privately or with friends and enjoy cocktails, soft music, and mood lighting.

► Final thoughts

The environment in the Sofitel Le Scribe Paris Opéra is very much in tune with the style of the city. Comfortable and unique, if you're looking for a genuine Parisian vibe, it's definitely one to explore.