



After a Decade, NOLA's Historic Jung Hotel Re-Opens

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PHOTO: Historic Jung Hotel, New Orleans (photo courtesy of Jung Hotel)

The newly opened (January 2018) Jung Hotel on buzzing Canal Street in downtown New Orleans is pristine, airy, welcoming and bright. It feels fresh and so new that when I visited earlier this month a name had yet to be given to the hotel bar.

But the property's history goes back to the early 1900s when a family (Peter Jung, Sr., Peter Jung, Jr., and A.L. Jung) first opened the original hotel. The property would eventually change hands and names several times—as well as being added to the National Register of Historic

Places—before shuttering for a full 10 years around the time Hurricane Katrina devastated the area.

Today, New Orleans is thriving again (it's the city's 300th birthday) and the Jung—which has 207 rooms and will soon have 113 luxury apartments on its top floors—offers complimentary breakfast, newspaper delivery and 16 meeting rooms for conferences, weddings and other events. The seventh-floor executive queen room I stayed in had an in-room stacked washer/dryer and kitchenette (unique to this floor only), two pillowtop queen beds, lots of sitting/lounging space, a working desk and natural light for reading as well as a spacious bathroom with granite countertops and a walk-in shower.

Residences will include luxury amenities, utilities, weekly maid service and a furniture package option if buyers would rather not go through the trouble of decorating and furnishing the apartment on their own. There will be two pools on site, one for hotel guests and a separate pool only accessible to residents. Since the hotel is situated near the University Medical Center, the Veterans Hospital complex and the Tulane University Medical Center and teaching complex, the Jung anticipates its apartments will be the perfect place for doctors and hospital staff to settle down—all the perks are there: proximity to work, luxury, comfort and ease.

I had a light breakfast inside the Jung's restaurant (lunch and dinner service began a couple weeks after my stay) and a glass of wine at the bar later in the day, where I met the hotel's food and beverage manager. His favorites on the new menu include the waffles, bananas foster and steak and eggs for breakfast as well as the shrimp and grits for lunch. Because NOLA has such a rich food scene, I explored a bit on foot and made it a point to try some of the hottest restaurants in town before leaving. On a quick trip, here are a few favorite food and drink suggestions you absolutely cannot go wrong with:

Grab a Coffee at the Ace Hotel

Surrounded by boutique hotels in NOLA's Warehouse District, also known as the Central Business District (CBD), the Ace Hotel is always a go-to, whether for drinks or a coffee. The Ace feels like home in any city and I did a little people watching for a bit with a latte and croissant before browsing nearby shops.

Lunch at Maypop

Southeast Asian food with a Southern twist, Maypop does fusion well. In the CBD, this restaurant is lovely with lots of plants; an open, bright space; floor-to-ceiling windows and a beautiful bar. It's never too early for a cocktail here, as I found out at my noon lunch, and the Crimson Cooler (tequila, hibiscus flower, jalapeño and habanero shrub) is a perfect midday alternative to a traditional margarita. The warm burrata cheese with spicy crawfish and saffron curry (with roti bread for dipping) was magical, as was the crispy skinned red snapper with crawfish and sunchoke.

Dinner Option One: Compere Lapin

Nina Compton, a former Top Chef contestant—originally from St. Lucia—who previously worked at Miami's Scarpetta, opened up Compere Lapin (French for "Brother Rabbit") in the CBD in 2016. The restaurant, located inside the Old No. 77 Hotel, fuses Latin-Caribbean, European and traditional Southern flavors in a creative menu that includes dishes like hamachi with guava curry and papaya, conch croquettes with a pickled pineapple sauce and an incredibly tasty curried goat with sweet potato gnocchi and cashews.

Dinner Option Two: Curio

Near the Royal Street antique shops in the French Quarter is a two-story restaurant that offers American cuisine with a Creole soul in a warm, colorful and inviting space that was once a curio

shop during the 19th century. Start with the fried oysters and a Banshee cocktail, continue your feast with the flavorful cane syrup glazed short rib or the coriander blackened redfish and finish with the “Coffee and Doughnuts,” a cafe au lait creme brulee with delicious doughnut drops.

Drinks at the Monteleone Hotel’s Carousel Bar

Across from Curio is Hotel Monteleone, known for its 130+ year history and revolving carousel bar. This circular bar isn’t the best place for someone like me who has motion sensitivity, though it moves very slowly. But it’s something you must do at least once when in NOLA. Listen to some live music while sipping a classic cocktail on the carousel that’s been spinning for 60+ years inside the historic (and maybe even haunted) hotel.