

CHECK IN
COTTON HOUSE HOTEL, BARCELONA

A Temple of Cotton and Comfort

Rates
From 326 euros (\$370).

Basics
In a landmark 19th-century building that once housed the city's Cotton Producers Guild (textiles were big business in Barcelona for centuries), the interior designer Lázaro Rosa-Violán has woven a layered and evocative ambience reminiscent of the golden age of travel. The modern maximalist décor evokes many of the places where cotton has been cultivated, from India and Egypt to New Orleans, and room categories have names like Panama, madras, taffeta and damask. The cozy library is like a Turkish fumoir with turquoise leather club chairs and Ottoman textiles. Virtually every corner of the hotel's public rooms invites exploration and contemplation. With 83 guest rooms, it is Barcelona's first five-star hotel operated by Marriott Autograph Collection.

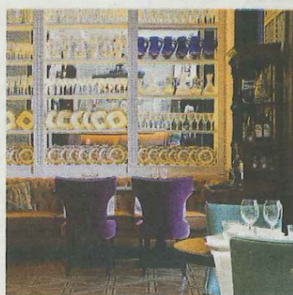
Location
Cotton House, which opened in March 2015, provides an easy five- to 10-minute walk to a swath of shops, restaurants and office towers of the Eixample, the central business and shopping district, as well as the tourist sites of the historic old city. The beaches and port are about a 20-minute walk.

The Room
With so much to look at downstairs, the virtually all-white guest rooms can seem almost monastic. Mine had a small balcony and a supremely comfortable king-size bed that worked well for sleeping and — with its night stands, reading lamps and extra outlets on either side — for working or surfing the web. But the bed swallowed up much of the room. And the unfortunate simulated-wood laminate flooring sounded cheap underfoot and undermined the sense of a five-star hotel in a historic building. Print renderings of cotton blooms and other botanical images adorned the walls.



The Bathroom
In my "madras" category room, the area on either side of the door served as a deconstructed bathroom-dressing-room-foyer with the toilet, tub and shower tucked into small rooms on one side and the closets, sink and mirror on the other.

Amenities
The hotel has a roof terrace with a small pool and new bar that offer commanding views of Mount Tibidabo and the cranes buzzing about the spires of Gaudi's Sagrada Família a dozen or so blocks away. Under-scoring the property's textile pedigree, the hotel offers a custom-tailoring package with the nearby (very upscale) Santa Eu-



Top right, the library, one of the public areas in the hotel, a landmark 19th-century building that once housed the city's Cotton Producers Guild; above, one of the 83 guest rooms; at left, Batuar, the restaurant.



lalia department store. Prices start at about 290 euros for a man's shirt. There is a fitness room, and the hotel lends iPods with custom playlists to guests who request them.

Dining
The joint restaurant and bar, called Batuar, is open from 7 a.m. to midnight, and in June the hotel added a bar with full cocktail service on the rooftop pool terrace. Breakfast in Batuar, included in the room rate, is a delight. Facing south, the glass-walled room gets morning sun year round (for warmer weather there is a huge, umbrella-shaded terrace). The buffet included Catalan and Spanish cheeses and cured meats, country bread, egg dishes and omelets, fresh fruits and house-blended yogurts, not to mention a huge selection of pastries and decadent sweets.

Bottom Line
Cotton House has a convenient location, excellent service and some richly decorated interiors as well as abundant outdoor space available in a city that has good weather much of the year. There is plenty to enjoy all around the hotel, but if you plan on luxuriating in your room, be sure to book one in an upper category.

ANDREW FERREN

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