

At Boston's New Envoy Hotel, Art Takes Center Stage

by Alex Schechter October 29, 2015



In the center of the new *Envoy Hotel*'s soaring lobby sits an unassuming pool table. It looks like any regular pool table—until you get up close. And then you notice it's not a pool table at all, but a massive multi-user touch screen that guests can use to check email, look up nearby restaurants, or just play virtual pool.

“We wanted to make [the lobby] innovative, social and interactive; but still have it be authentic, and not too in-your-face,” says Carrie Nielsen of Group One Partners, responsible for the overall design of the hotel, which opened last month.



Courtesy of Envoy Hotel

The same could be said of the guest rooms, which are refreshingly simple, and yet have the kind of playful, customized features (TV stands made from recycled bikes; ladders as floor lamps; sliding glass bathroom doors printed with antique maps of Boston) that have helped recent concepts like [21c Museum Hotel Cincinnati](#) and [Quirk Hotel](#) stand out from the pack.

Located in Boston's rapidly developing Seaport Innovation District, the 136-room Envoy sits right on the edge of the harbor. As a result, over 80 percent of the rooms have floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking the water. Almost every view is a winner. Moreover, the beds face the windows, and have low headboards, to maximize the scenery.



Courtesy of Envoy Hotel

“In designing the Envoy, our goal was to create a new perspective, to provide a unique point of view and a new way of seeing,” Nielsen explains.

This mantra permeates all areas of the building. There’s almost *too* much to touch and look at, and that’s kind of the point. From the curated art (each elevator landing has a specially-commissioned piece) to the lobby’s wild 10-foot chandelier—made from coiled phone cords, brass chains, and rope—the hotel is a sort of mad scientist’s lab, filled with art experiments designed not to shock, but to provoke thought.

Standard doubles from \$349 per night.