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Art Hotels

By Traci L. Suppa

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You'll find more than mass-produced prints of beach scenes adorning the walls at several notable Florida hotels. You may even be inches from fine works of art by internationally renowned artists. Large hotels often borrow pieces from local galleries and museums or commission artists to create bespoke work. Privately owned hotels and smaller inns may showcase the owner's personal collection. Read on to discover artful accommodations around the state.

A Hotel & Museum in One

The Alford Inn in Winter Park is a special case—it's the only U.S. hotel that's also part of a museum. You can view 130 works on display from the Cornell Fine Arts Museum's Alford Collection of Contemporary Art at Rollins College. To learn more about the art pieces, join the weekly guided walking tour on Sundays at 1 p.m., or do a self-guided version using your smartphone. The collection, mainly contemporary works with modern and social themes, changes regularly, so visit more than once.

PHOTO: SCOTT COOK, ROLLINS COLLEGE

SOCIAL BUZZ

Duncan McClellan on Florida artists:

Florida artists see light differently, so their use of color reflects this unique vision. Florida is full of talented emerging artists who are exploring their visions avidly. Here in the gallery, we have Mariel Bass, Danyell Bauer, Danielle Colon, Eric Claycomb and Jacob Stout.

Duncan McClellan is an artist and owner of Duncan McClellan Gallery in St. Petersburg.

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The Grand Bohemian, Orlando

Original Art at High-End Hotels

Walk into the Casa Monica Hotel in St. Augustine and the lobby's ornate frescos, fountains and chandeliers make you feel like you've arrived at the finest hotel in Morocco. The property features a gallery of works

curated by hotelier Richard C. Kessler that include original and rare pieces, ranging from oil paintings and bronze sculptures to contemporary jewelry from international and local talents. The Grand Bohemian and Castle hotels in Orlando and the Grand Bohemian Hotel in Celebration are other Kessler hotels with galleries and noteworthy art.

sculptures and glasswork by Florida artists including Christopher Still, Carrie Jadus, Duncan McClellan and Arnold Ruiz. The collaborative installations include Clear • Water, a fountain evoking a sunset and egrets in flight, and Ascent, a 3-D glass and metal sculpture representing the changing colors of waves.



Casa Monica Hotel, St. Augustine

"Art is a great way for people to travel in their mind, to alter their perspective and become inspired—it's an immediate mood enhancer," says Susan Smey, corporate director of retail for the Kessler Collection. "Our goal is to create unique spaces that our guests can kick back and enjoy."

Bringing the Outside In

Several hotels commission art specifically for their spaces. The new Opal Sands Resort on Clearwater Beach showcases Florida's great outdoors with original paintings,

Grand Art in Small Spaces

You may feel as if you've stepped into an upscale modern art gallery, but after checking into the 12-room Royal Blues Hotel in Deerfield Beach, you'll realize the boutique inn serves double duty in showcasing owner Edward Walson's personal collection.

Also a Hollywood producer and director, Walson tapped into his creative community and found several expressive photographers and painters to introduce at his hotel property. There are typically 25 works on display, from rock 'n' roll celebrity photos by Brian Hamill to abstract canvases by Lorelei Linklater, daughter of director Richard Linklater.

Self-Guided Art Tours

If you're curious to learn more about the art in your hotel, ask for a brochure. The Sonesta Coconut Grove offers a pamphlet to guide guests around its abstract collection. Many of the pieces—by Jan Dibbets, Carl Palazzolo, Frank Stella and

others—were commissioned for the hotel. There's also a FAM (Fashion, Art, Music) night every month, with artists appearing in the lobby.

At the Ritz-Carlton Bal Harbour, Miami, self-guided tours are also encouraged. The permanent

collection includes 28 pieces by artists such as Olga de Amaral, Richard Deutsch, Ed Moses and Joe Walters. You won't just find it on the walls, either. In addition to paintings and photography, there are sculptures in bronze, limestone, wood, stone and ceramics. *



Left to right: Sonesta Coconut Grove, Miami; Ritz-Carlton Bal Harbour, Miami