


[JOIN](#)



Follow The Independent on Twitter



**Santa Monica**  
 Le 11 \$279.95  
 Hot \$288.36  
 Hunt \$197.10

[News](#) | [Opinion](#) | [Environment](#) | [Sport](#) | [Life & Style](#) | [Arts & Ents](#) | [Travel](#) | [More](#)  
[News](#) | [48 Hours In](#) | [Africa](#) | [Americas](#) | [Asia](#) | [Australasia & Pacific](#) | [Europe](#) | [Middle East](#) | [UK](#) | [Hotels](#)

[Home](#) > [Travel](#) > [Hotels](#)

## 24-hour Room Service: Hotel Shangri-La, Santa Monica

Get set for some film-set chic  
 By Sarah Barrell  
 Saturday, 19 June 2010

Santa Monica: it's got the beach, it's got the hot bodies but somehow it had, for a while, lacked the buzz of neighbouring Venice or nearby Malibu.

The arrival of the elegant beachfront hotel *Shutters on the Beach* heralded the beginnings of a tide change along Santa Monica's oceanfront and now, with the \$30m (£20m) overhaul of the Shangri-La hotel, Hollywood's attention is once again firmly Santa Monica-focused.

Outside, there's been little change but a lick of black-and-white paint on this 1930s Art Deco landmark, and that's just as well. Inside, the West Coast design doyen Marc Smith has ensured that the historical and architectural integrity of this Streamline Moderne building remains, with the addition of a contemporary fizz.

There's a courtyard with elevated pool surrounded by black and white curtained cabanas, from which you can summon masseurs or cocktails. The indoor/ outdoor restaurant serves dishes largely made up of produce from the Santa Monica farmer's market. And there's a rooftop bar with views of the iconic Hollywood sign.

The hotel is aimed pretty squarely at the film industry business traveller. We were allocated a "production suite" that had a little adjoining room with a huge TV screen and high top table that would have perfectly suited a couple of film producers working on the hoof, but was a pretty useless sleeping space for our three-year-old daughter.

The larger [suites](#) with kitchens and sofas are more suitable for beach-bound families. I got the impression that most guests are accompanied by nothing more unwieldy than a storyboard or a personal assistant, and as a result we felt somewhat like we'd crashed a smart party.

The views from the guest rooms are like film stills: perfectly framed [California](#) beach scenes, with broad stretches of yellow sand, surfer-topped waters and skyscraping palm trees. Suite 700 has the best vista, with a wrap-around terrace and two sun-soaked adjoining bedrooms. Decked out in leather and chrome, the suite is favoured by GQ and similar glossies for shoots.

Recent guests include Sharon Stone, William H Macy, Heidi Klum and Sean Penn, while the hotel's public areas, particularly the rooftop bar and pool area, have fast become the place to watch Hollywood and for Hollywood to watch itself work and unwind. Which in many cases is just as good, if not better than a movie.

### Location

This beach base is less than half-an-hour's drive from LAX [airport](#) and a little more than that to Hollywood. The hotel is set back from the sands by a couple of big car-heavy highways but a bridge directly opposite offers access to the seemingly endless stretch of pounding Pacific-backed beach. If briny pleasures don't appeal, hire a bike and cycle along the path that runs some 10km south to Venice and beyond to Marina del Rey.

The hotel's immediate neighbourhood is in flux. You will find everything from middle-of-the-road American franchises (Old Navy, Gap) to a J Crew boutique and sushi bars along the promenade. All is overlooked by the faded, neon-decked fairground on Santa Monica Pier.

### Comfort

The 71 rooms and suites all differ in shape and size but all follow similar colour and decor schemes with pieces of stand out Art Deco-style furniture designed by Marc Smith of which the sleek red leather and chrome chairs and smart black and chrome lighting are works of art. Thanks to a glass wall in our bathroom, ocean views were to be had from all corners. Fluffy Frette robes are embroidered with the hotel's stylish logo (an Art Deco-style silhouette of the hotel). Freebies included Green Natura products. Yoga classes can be booked.

*Hotel Shangri-La, 1310 Ocean Avenue, Santa Monica, California, US (001 310 394 2791; shangri-la-hotel.com).*

Rooms ★★★★★  
 Value ★★★★★  
 Service ★★★★★

Doubles start at \$348 (£215), room only.  
 Compare Travel Insurance - 5 day Euro cover from £4.33 and Annual worldwide policies from just £43.08

SHARE | PRINT | EMAIL | TEXT SIZE



Back to black: the decadent courtyard

ENLARGE

**SPONSORED LINKS:**

Ads by Google

**Santa Monica Beach Apts**  
 Find Affordable Rooms Starting From \$40/Day. Browse & Book Online Now!  
[www.AirBnB.com/SantaMon](http://www.AirBnB.com/SantaMon)

**Hotels in Recife**  
 Great Hotels in Brazil! Official site. Book online today.  
[www.HolidayInn.com](http://www.HolidayInn.com)

**LA Rooms**  
 Book 2 Nights and get a Free 3rd Night and Free Breakfast for Two. Discover Los Angeles.com/ReCarpet/

**KAYAK - Official Site**  
 We Search 100s of Sites at Once Save on Santa Monica Hotels  
[www.KAYAK.com](http://www.KAYAK.com)