

# INSPIRATIONS



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humanoid robot  
on elementary  
school students  
with special needs

*Edward Murphy Elementary School student Liam Farias Trindade enjoys interacting with NAO. Read the full story on page 14 of this edition.  
(Photo, Wendy Singer)*

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## Adapted Travel HOLLYWOOD

## Holiday resort in Hollywood, Florida offers multitude of facilities to accommodate all needs

By Alexandra Cohen

**THE DIPLOMAT BEACH RESORT:** A number of years ago, my family joined friends for dinner at the Diplomat Beach Resort in Hollywood, Florida (<http://www.diplomatresort.com>). Looking around at the beautiful facilities, I distinctly recall hoping to experience the hotel in its entirety one day.

Recently, that wish came true, our visit coming soon after the completion of a \$100 million transformation of this oceanfront, all-encompassing destination resort offering a fresh new take on vacationing for all business and leisure travellers. From the Atlantic coast to the



A beautiful view of the beach from our room.

Intracoastal, the reinvented resort pays homage to the hotel's storied past as a social hub, with a modern take on design and amenities, including a luxurious spa and more than 10 new culinary concepts.

Upon entering the Diplomat, the first thing that you notice is an open concept lobby with sweeping views of the ocean via the floor-to-ceiling windows of The Hotel Bar - the property's wraparound indoor-outdoor bar.

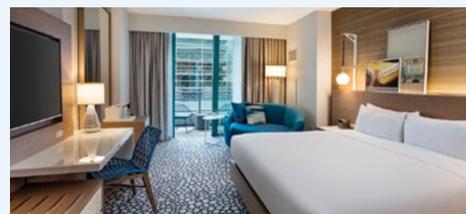
**SPECIAL NEEDS:** The hotel has 41 mobility and hearing accessible rooms, featuring one king bed or two queen doubles, and an accessible tub and/or shower. The rooms also have visual alarm and notification devices for the doorbell or door knock. The Diplomat has ramp access and elevators all throughout the property

for those with disabilities, including entrances and exits, the lobby, restaurants, pools and the spa. Both the pools and the Jacuzzis have lifts.

**ACCOMODATIONS:** The Diplomat is now part of Curio Collection by Hilton, a global set of upscale hotels handpicked for their unique character. We stayed in a gorgeous Oceanview Double Deluxe Room with a balcony, providing a beautiful and completely unobstructed view of the ocean. Wonderfully appointed, this retreat is both original and modern, with a gracious lounge area and work space as well as a generous bath with both a glass-enclosed shower and a separate deep-soaking tub. In-room indulgences – luxe robes, plush bedding and Bigelow bath amenities – enhance the experience of Florida beachside living at its finest.

**DINING OPTIONS:** The Diplomat has no shortage of exceptional dining options. We were there for four nights, and via the "Diplomat Restaurant Group" (DRG) there were no less than 10 innovative and surprising culinary destinations to choose from. Let us certainly recommend breakfast at Point Royal, a coastal restaurant also open for lunch and dinner. This is a large dynamic buffet filled with almost every breakfast option imaginable, from house-made pastries and an inventive cereal bar, to egg dishes, salads and grains.

Our first dinner was also at Point Royal (<http://www.pointroyal-fl.com>), part of famous chef Geoffrey Zakarian's approachable American cuisine, complete with indoor/outdoor seating and a grand, yet modern, Raw Bar. There were a variety of hand-crafted cocktails to choose from, and my dining partner opted for a satisfying rum passion fizz. While we looked at the menu, our fabulous server brought us some delicious cornbread and smoked



Diplomat accessible deluxe king room.

honey butter (smoked in house). Next, there was no question that we wanted to sample a seafood platter, so we opted for The Diplomat, featuring six oysters, six clams, an eight-ounce king crab, three pink shrimp, and half a Maine lobster. This was absolutely superb. We then shared some tossed heirloom lettuces, which included shaved carrots, radish, and aged sherry vinaigrette. The yellow-fin tuna tartare, with avocado and chili-sesame seed vinaigrette, was next, followed by an order of roasted Maine diver scallops, which included baby turnips, fennel, herbs and smoked fish chowder. All in all it was an amazing meal, which we capped off with the most decadent of desserts, a Black Forest meringue pie. The rich, dark chocolate pie crust was filled with a layer of sharp cherry curd, topped with light meringue rippled with dark chocolate.

The next night, we also enjoyed a superb meal at Monkitaill (<https://www.monkitaill.com>), which won the top spot for Best Hotel Restaurant in USA Today's 2017 Readers' Choice Awards. After eating there ourselves, we no doubt understand why it was selected for this honour. Celebrity chef and restaurateur Michael Schulson is at the helm; Monkitaill is his seventh restaurant. The menu is a contemporary take on the classic izakaya, featuring sharable small plates and sushi as well as an array of specialty cocktails and saké. Surrounding an open robatayaki kitchen in the heart of the restaurant is a private dining area overlooking the Atlantic Ocean. Tucked away beyond Monkitaill's main dining room is Nokku, a discreet cocktail lounge with four private rooms, each having full karaoke capabilities.

What an absolute treat this was! My dining partner started off with a blooming blossom drink from the cocktail menu. We then proceeded to allow the chef to make a series of outstanding suggestions. This began with the hot Hamachi, toro caviar, and the big eye tuna special. The

Edamame dumplings were specifically recommended to us, having won the nod for Best Bites of 2017 by noted South Florida food critic Michael Mayo. To say that this dish exceeded our expectations is an absolute understatement.

The tasting continued with some Rob-itayaki lobster tail, skirt steak and short rib skewers, a duck scrapple bao bun, a tempura shrimp taco, an aged New York strip, and broiled sea bass with aioli and snap peas. Just when we thought that the meal could not possibly get any better, our server brought us two excellent desserts. First came the fruit loop ice cream and almond joy, which came in mini cones. Next was a chocolate mousse with miniature brownies, cherries, and ice cream on top. What a meal! If you are anywhere in the vicinity of Hollywood, Florida, you must come to the Diplomat to dine.

**ACTIVITIES:** In addition to the two beachfront pools, there is also jet skiing, ocean kayaking, paddleboard rentals, and the property's newest addition, the Dip + Slide water play area.

**THE CABANA EXPERIENCE:** Exclusively designed for The Diplomat, specialty cabanas created by fashion designer Trina Turk are available for rent on the lower floor of the pool deck, providing a relaxing and stylish oasis for the day. We were fortunate to spend an entire day in a private poolside cabana where we were pampered by the pool concierge and spoiled with generous amenities and a comfortable haven.

**BOUCHER BROTHERS ON THE BEACH:** We were thrilled to discover that The Diplomat partners with the award-winning Boucher Brothers Management to pamper guests during their day on the beautiful Hollywood Beach. We got to spend a day lounging in private daybeds and relaxing on a chaise for a luxurious take on 'fun in the sun'. The team from the Boucher Brothers could not have been nicer in setting us up, and they in fact came back several times over our stay to adjust the umbrellas and make sure everything was okay. Lunch and drinks were available right at our chairs. This service is available daily from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. To reserve, call 1 (954) 602-6000. For more information, visit [www.diplomatresort.com](http://www.diplomatresort.com). ❁