

Meetings

THE DESTINATION EXPERTS

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True to Traditions

Utah weaves an intriguing tapestry of heritage and culture

Golden State Glean

Communities along the coast of Northern California set the stage for sparkling events

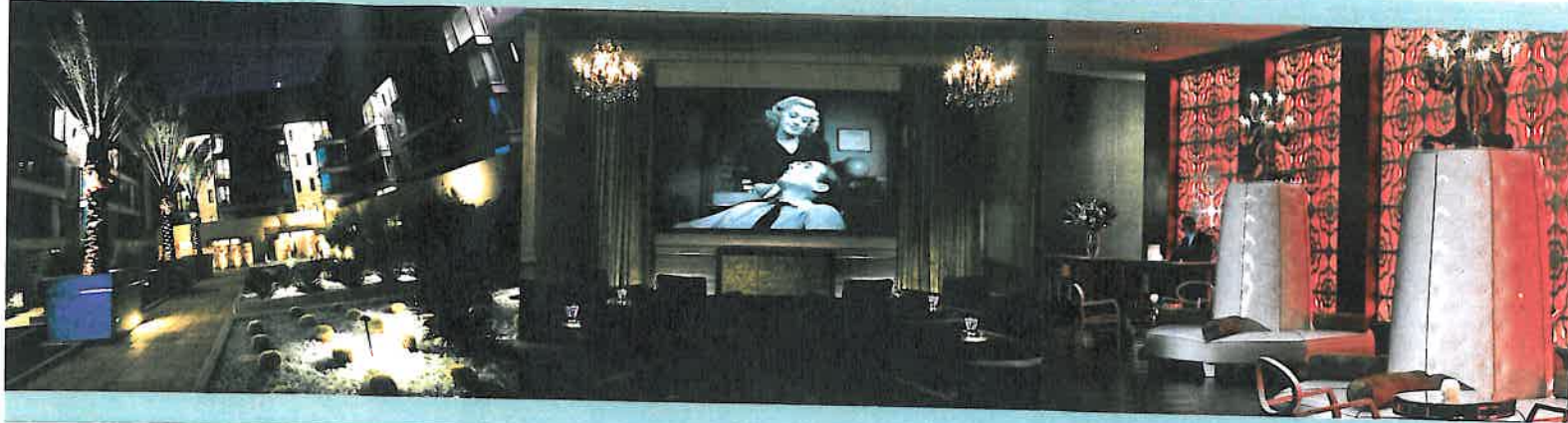
Star Power

Hip hotels are giving a creative edge to meetings and events

Garden Variety

The West is blooming with botanical event spaces





Star Power

Hip hotels are giving a creative edge to meetings and events

by MARLENE GOLDMAN

FROM POOLSIDE LOUNGES TO FUNKY PRESIDENTIAL SUITES, THE NEW WAVE of so-called “hip hotels” presents groups with an eclectic array of indoor and outdoor options for meetings and events.

In some cases, the hotels are new incarnations of watering holes where Hollywood stars of yesteryear came to stay and play. Whether brand-new or reinvented, no two of these properties are alike, with each offering its own unique take on group space.

Despite its desert locale, water is a main theme at the W Scottsdale (480.970.2100; www.starwoodhotels.com), which opened last year and is one of several new urban-flavored ad-

ditions to downtown Scottsdale, Ariz. Groups can take advantage of the hotel's aquatic features, including the second-floor Wet Deck, which overlooks Camelback Mountain and fea-

tures an infinity pool.

“We’ve got huge 20-foot lampshades that extend out over the pool,” says Leon Young, general manager of the W Scottsdale. “We can wrap those

lampshades in company logos.”

To the right of Wet Deck lies Sunset Beach, replete with imported sand, day beds, 13 cabanas and a sunken bar, a setting that has led to South Beach, Miami-style themed parties. The Wet Deck can accommodate 1,800 people.

W Scottsdale is also home to a room called Focus, a 1,000-square-foot meeting space with glass walls. The walls can be closed for a private meeting or pulled open to lead to outdoor space. The resort is considering working with a local studio to host yoga classes in the space.

In Portland, Hotel deLuxe (503.219.2094; www.hoteldeluxeportland.com) is another theme hotel, recalling the Golden Age of Hollywood film from the 1930s to 1950s.

“We have black and white photos of movies from that period,” says Dina Nishioka, public relations director for the hotel.

The hotel, which opened in 2006, is located in an historic building from the early 1920s, replete with crystal chandeliers and a floor-to-ceiling video screen in the lobby with an electronic photograph that changes every hour.

It is home to the funky, retro Driftwood Room, a bar that has been around since the 1940s. The bar incorporated its Art Deco original architecture, combined with Art Moderne, and, according to Nishioka, fits well with the Hollywood film theme.

The property offers three event rooms: the 1,240-square-foot Screening Room with theater capabilities, the 336-square-foot Green Room and

the intimate 273-square-foot Editing Room. All the design and detailing is based on the architectural and decorative arts of the 1920s through the 1940s.

Larger groups can use the outdoor rooftop, which can be tented or even used as an outdoor movie theater. Options include banquet dinners and cocktail receptions.

“The view is beautiful,” Nishioka says. “It’s the only place in Portland where you can get this view. You look east and see downtown Portland and west the hills of Portland.”

The Screening Room, off the lobby, is also popular with groups.

“We’ve had cocktails served in the lobby in that area,” says Nishioka. “Nike did a sleepover, slumber party and movies in the Screening Room. The attendees brought their pajamas and sleeping bags to watch movies and then slept in their rooms.”