

Ahoy there! All aboard the big Blu

 By [Brian Berkman](#): contributing editor, travel

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Positioned on a promontory in Granger Bay made from reclaimed land, the Radisson Blu Hotel, Waterfront gives the impression of being an ocean liner. You will hear and smell the sea throughout your stay and, if you're in one of the sea-facing rooms, the sea views are seriously spectacular.



Perched on the water's edge... It's like being at sea.

Not that the mountain and golf-course views are anything to sniff at, unless the wind direction changes and Mouille Point's sewage scent wafts past.

For over a decade this has been an iconic spot for sundowner cocktails and for their famous lunch buffet at Tobagos Restaurant. They have now completed an upgrade of their 103 Standard and Superior rooms which have the clean-lined Scandinavian vibe of their founding company and perfectly suit a beachfront hotel. I like the look a lot.

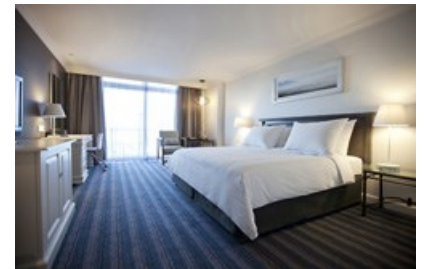
"With our positioning on the edge of the glistening Atlantic Ocean and a short distance from the heart of Cape Town, The Radisson Blu Hotel Waterfront continues to be one of the city's finest hotels. The refurbishment ensures guests receive sleek, updated rooms along with the modern luxuries they have come to expect from the Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group," says Michael Rathgeb, general manager at Radisson Blu Hotel Waterfront.

Thinking of the planet

I like that the refurbishment focused on environmentally responsible practices in line with their "Think Planet" concept, a bid by the Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group to go green and alleviate pressure on its carbon footprint. All new ceiling-mounted down-lighters at the Radisson Blu Waterfront have LED lamps, reducing the hotel's energy consumption by a claimed 75% while, as you'll find in many hotels, energy-saving devices limit the use of lighting and air conditioning to when guests are in their rooms.

Bathrooms were also redesigned and plumbing fitted with aerators to ensure that water flow is reduced without affecting water pressure. Care was taken to use only sustainable timber during the renovation process.

In 2012, The Carlson Rezidor Group was awarded "One of the World's Most Ethical Companies" by the Ethisphere Institute for the third consecutive year. "The biggest challenge of the renovation", Rathgeb says, "was to complete the project while the hotel was in full operation. Every detail of the process was meticulously planned to compress the timeline as much as possible and ensure that the process ran smoothly. The multi-million rand development created approximately 300 extra jobs during the period of the project."



Sea-facing rooms have a nautical theme while a richer, earthier theme is used in the other half of the hotel overlooking Cape Town.

Feel like a swim? Feel free

The ocean-liner-vibe is most evident in the enclosed atrium which brings in light and separates the "sea" and "land" facing rooms. Lightspace, the principal agent and designers responsible for the project, used two primary design schemes for the opposing elements of land and sea. A nautical theme was incorporated into the sea-facing rooms and corridors while a richer, earthier theme was used in the other half of the Radisson Blu overlooking Cape Town.

This hotel gets extra points for having a swimming pool that is always warm for a dip. It always amazes me how many five-



Much closer and you'll be soaked!

star properties do not have heated pools, even in summer. There is a rim-flow pool with a blue-tile mosaic that magically matches the sea beyond.

The waves crash so near to the pool that seawater sometimes comes into it to disturb the seagulls perched on its edge that drink from the pool water. I used to feel that hotel swimming pools should be directly accessible from guest areas and one shouldn't have to walk through a restaurant or lounge area in one's swimwear to get there. At this recent visit I felt rather smug walking past the many locals who use the hotel's restaurant and bar area congratulating myself on my obvious status as an in-

house guest and the smugness continued while ordering a pool-side dinner, munching away with the last of day's summer sun warming our backs.

For more information go to <http://www.radissonblu.com/hotel-capetown>.

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