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The Standard

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Sleeping with the Hip

It's been years—decades even—since downtown Los Angeles has been a hotspot of social activity. A new era of revitalization for the area took off running with the opening of the downtown Standard hotel. Though The Standard on the Sunset Strip has long been established as the place to see and be seen, even general manager of the new location, Michael Rawson, did not expect its immediate success.

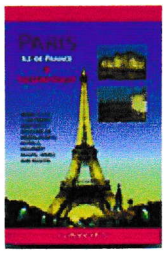
Lobby and check-in desk

Three months after the opening sleepover party (attended by Hollywood's finest clad in pajamas), most of the 207 guest rooms are booked at the weekends by fun-loving hipsters. During the week business types fill much of the hotel, carefully tucked away in rooms where they won't be affected by noise from party-goers. Rooms come in various sizes with names like Huge, Gigantic, Humongous and Wow! Each features modern, minimal décor which speaks of today's retro-futuristic craze: shiny, silver throw pillows; a bar-code inspired design covering walls, curtains and lamps; beds on low, carpeted platforms; and, in the Wow! rooms, a giant, foam foot sculpture in the bathroom.

"Wow!"-sized room

Amenities for business travelers include 14-foot work desks with free T-1 connection; cordless, two-line speaker phones with data ports; and meeting rooms and conference facilities. Amenities for the party types include stereos with CD players (and The Standard's own mix CDs available for purchase), large-screen TVs, mood lighting, aromatherapy toiletries, extra-strength travel candles, and a mini-bar that can only be described as an emergency kit—Good 'n' Plenty candy, cold saké, a disposable camera, Mr. Bubbles, vitamin-enriched water, condoms and aspirin.

The rooms may be a good place to kick back, but twelve stories up is where the real action is: the rooftop bar and pool. Hotel guests ride the escalator from the lobby to the second floor—a holding area for the un-hip where bouncers display



attitude and scrutinize clothing—and continue up to the roof via elevators. On the roof, bar-goers are met by fake topiary, a live DJ, sleek Formica furniture, and a slim chance of getting a drink unless they catch one of the waitstaff in red cheerleading uniforms. Past the pool sit several white pod structures. Upon closer inspection, you're likely to find happy patrons lounging on heated, vibrated waterbeds inside.

Rooftop bar

24-hour restaurant

If the rooftop scene gives you an appetite, it's back to the ground floor for a meal at the swanky diner. Open for breakfast, brunch, lunch and dinner, the restaurant serves comfort food with an edge and the staff displays none of the snobbish attitude of the bouncers outside.

The fitness center may be relatively empty at early morning hours but it's there if you want it, 24 hours a day. So is room service, serving the same cuisine found in the restaurant. Plenty of other distractions can be found about the premises—(astroturf) lawn games on the roof, a pool table in the lobby, an electronic organ near the elevators—but we're guessing the greatest distraction of all might be the very people who frequent this new downtown mecca of style.

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