



The living wall in the Hotel X lobby. | LIBRARY HOTEL COLLECTION

## **This New Toronto Hotel's Long List of Luxury Services Makes It Hard to Leave**

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Toronto is in the throes of a lodging boom; a much-talked-about hotel seemingly opens every week. With such a crowded landscape, standing out is key to a newcomer's success. The Hotel X Toronto by Library Hotel Collection, located across the waters of Lake Ontario from Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport—roughly 10 minutes from the heart of the city—doesn't put its guests right where the action is. For those looking to more easily access all that downtown has to offer, on foot perhaps, these 10 “driving” minutes might prove to be a deterrent.

But with nine acres of lakefront property to play with, Hotel X makes that distance forgettable, and in some ways, preferable, by stocking up on can't-get-anywhere-else amenities.



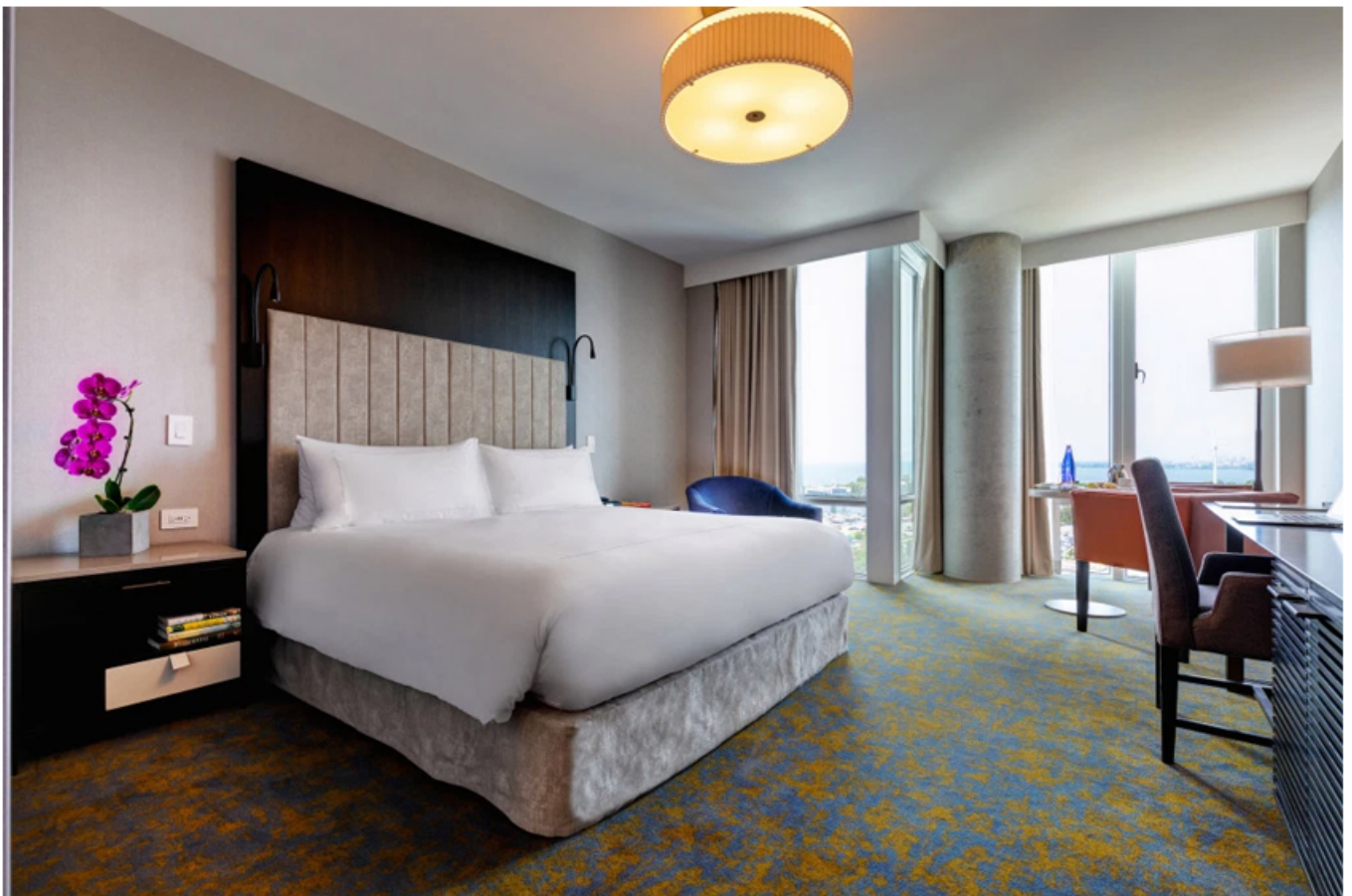
An exterior view of the 10XTO Athletic Center and Hotel X Toronto. | LIBRARY HOTEL COLLECTION

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“From the moment our president Henry Kallan saw the grounds, he realized that never under normal circumstances would you have such vast space to develop in the downtown area of a great city like Toronto,” says Adele Gutman, vice president of sales, marketing, and revenue for Library Hotel Collection. “This was an exceptional opportunity to have the space to put so many amenities, which no other downtown hotel can offer, plus these wide-open skyline and lake views. That would be our unique selling point, to set us apart from the competition.”

Surrounded by the lush gardens of Exhibition Place (a huge events venue), the 30-story-tall Hotel X has been staggering its opening, slowly revealing its laundry lists of on-site facilities. The 404 rooms and suites with stunning views of the city skyline became available to the public last year.

Starting with a luxury room (from \$212 a night) to a three-bedroom penthouse (from \$9,108 a night), the interior style delivered that oft-reference residential aesthetic. An easy-going foundation of abstract-print carpeting, metallic leather headboards, velvet sofas, and marble surfaces provides a more minimalist visual experience in the guest rooms.



Inside one of the guestrooms. | LIBRARY HOTEL COLLECTION

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The soaring lobby, however, is more dynamically layered with striking, Instagram-worthy elements, including geometric-tile floors, oversized chandeliers that almost look Moorish in their design, and a massive green wall of 2,500 plants behind the check-in counter.

While this might sound generically straight-forward, Kallan says that there was a thoughtful strategy behind it: whenever possible, they wanted to pay homage to the city. “We design our hotels to be a reflection and a tribute to everything we love about that unique destination,” he says of the company’s locations in New York, Budapest, and more. “What does the world love about Toronto? What do we want to celebrate? The nature-loving, eco-friendliness of Canadians, their passion for sports and fitness, their warm embrace of global diversity and the incredible fusion of cultures from around the world, and their success in the film industry.” So to Kallan, even a mosaic floor that features tiles sourced from Asia, North America, and Africa but assembled in Canada is supposed to give the property a sense of place.



A bird's-eye view of the Hotel X lobby. | LIBRARY HOTEL COLLECTION

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But the inventory of services do line up with the aforementioned ethos. As a nod to Toronto's stature in the film industry, the property is home to a two-level cinema with 250 stadium-style seats. Hotel management is hoping it will be used for Toronto International Film Festival screenings starting in 2020.

There's also an enormous 90,000 square-foot athletic complex called Ten X Toronto, which is in fact a membership-only fitness club that is open to overnight guests, making it the largest hotel gym in the country. It's equipped with dedicated studios for yoga, spinning, Pilates, and group classes; nine glass-back squash courts; a golf simulator; and soon its own lap pool. (Though there is already a heated indoor-outdoor rooftop pool on the building.)



'The Pond' rooftop pool. | LIBRARY HOTEL COLLECTION

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The four-court indoor tennis program is overseen by Gary Muller, an ATP Tour player during the 1980s and 1990s who rose as high as number seven in the doubles ranking. Tennis could be particularly timely in Canada, too, given the success of local youngsters like Denis Shapovalov, and current U.S. Open champion Bianca Andreescu, who hails from the nearby city of Mississauga.

And just last week, Hotel X officially unveiled its opulent relaxation retreat: a 10-treatment room hideaway in partnership with Guerlain Spa—the very first in Canada—proving once again that this is meant to be a destination of singular experiences.



Tennis courts at the 10XTO Athletic Center with sunset views.  
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In September, Hotel X opened the doors to its fine dining establishment: Pétros82, a Mediterranean restaurant and raw bar from chef Richard Andino, who has been cooking in prime Toronto kitchens for approximately 25 years.

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The lobby-level dining room joined previously opened Maxx's Kitchen, a more casual eatery for crisp flatbread, robust salads, and comforting fish and chips; as well as Falcon SkyBar, a three-floor cocktail lounge with unobstructed views of Toronto. It's named after the bird of prey because on a clear day, falcons can sometimes be seen swooping around the sky. But if not, there's always the opportunity to watch planes take off and land from Billy Bishop.



'The Perch' at the Falcon Skybar.

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There is quite a lot going on with and in Hotel X. (There's an art gallery, too, dedicated to travel photography by Neil Dankoff.) After taking stock of everything the hotel has in its arsenal, Kallan says confidently, "Imagine how expensive it would be to find space for [all of it]. No one has anything like this."

But considering its location near a convention center, the hotel wanted to fight against becoming a niche concept that specifically targets only convention attendees.

"This place, where we like to think we have created a garden-filled paradise, there was previously a parking lot," Kallan notes. "I like to think it is charming that it is the opposite as the words of the Canadian singer Songwriter Joni Mitchell, who famously protested, 'They paved paradise and put up the parking lot.' I hope Ms. Mitchell will come to stay with us someday! I truly believe she will be pleased."