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# The Hotel



**Central city hotel**  
**Review 28th – 30th April 2018**



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# Luxury Hotel in Spain

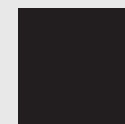


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[@TODO]

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## GLOBAL HOTEL CONSULTANCY



### Our Mission

The standard rating framework provides little room for differentiation in an elite market. Five Stars is no longer indicative of the discerning traveller's opinion of a property, but simply a badge indicating a minimum level of facilities.

GHC's patent pending Perception Index combined with the analysis of experienced hotel professionals aims to make Five Stars the mere entry point for a new global performance rating. Much like the Google Algorithms for ranking, the Perception Index underlying models change as standards are adopted and marketing conditions adjust, keeping it a living standard to measure against.

Using our unique Perception Bias we are able to rank and rate any area of a property for any type of traveller from a macro to a micro level. Additional biases can be mapped onto your statistical PI report at any time as dictated by marketing and operational requirements.



## Summary of Findings April 2018

To the less discerning eye and an undemanding clientele, The Hotel would pass with a 9.7/10 overall score. However, the purpose of our mission (and our skill set) is to fine test all aspects of an hotel so we can provide a hypercritical assessment and produce a report that will help even the premier hotels in the world optimise their offering.

Whilst the overall score is still over 84%, there were some key points that let the hotel down, some of which could be addressed easily, a few of which are "immoveable objects". We feel a unique feature at the hotel to attract more passing trade in winter would be very beneficial. In summer, the outside area sells itself and is very desirable, but in the slower months when non-resident food and beverage sales are even more key for revenue, there needs to be another reason for people to come and eat here.

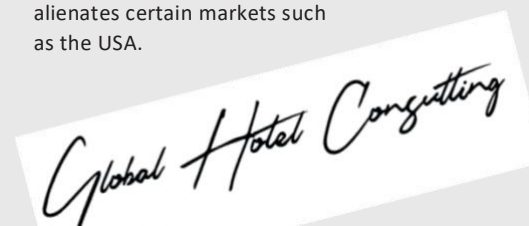
Overall, there were many fundamental positives to take

away, but definitely room for improvement in some crucial areas and a few in more enhancements in services or features would further improve the worldwide standing of this property.

One of the biggest negatives is unfortunately something that cannot be changed easily. In our global search for the best hotels on the planet, we have noticed a stark trend that really separates the best hotels from the second best and that is the size of the lead-in rooms. In the best city hotels worldwide, a minimum 35m2 for a lead in room is standard and anything less alienates certain markets such as the USA.

### Purpose:

1. To provide an objective overview of this re-opened hotel after extensive renovation.
2. To score the services and facilities under our new scoring system for so-called 5\* hotels.
3. To enable The Hotel to address any particular issues with service or facilities.



# 5.



## You Say:

"A contemporary 5-star hotel in the heart of a breathtaking region. A place where your wellbeing is paramount. And where the possibilities for discovery are endless. Perfectly located just ten minutes from Girona, and within easy reach of Barcelona".



Perception Index Overall Score April 2018: **01**

**84.31%**

# GHC

## Two night stay 2018

### KEY TAKEAWAY

Consistency of service levels throughout all areas of an hotel is a must for any property in the very top end of the hospitality world. The GHC perception index demands certain minimum levels of service for which there is no positive outcome for the hotel so where those minimum levels fail to be met, the impact is severe.

As such, The Hotel was penalised for service in the lobby and bedroom.

That aside, SIZE DOES MATTER. The lead in bedrooms, upon which we must base the reports, are very undersized for the 5\* market and lost the bedroom score 8% overall.

#### WINS:

1. Restaurant service
2. Concierge service
3. General quality of fixtures and fittings
4. Food + wine
5. Breakfast
6. Bed comfort

#### LOSSES:

1. Arrival welcome
2. Bedroom size
3. Service aspects in the bedrooms
4. Lobby service
5. Exterior decoration// maintenance levels
6. Website customer service

# LOBBY

Re-designed during the refurbishment, the lobby appears a little small at first but over the 2 days it was evident, even with the hotel at full capacity, that space and seating provided is ample. Staff were plentiful and attentive at the reception desk and concierge but it did feel like there was a disconnect between the front door and the reception desk. The internal doorman was often not there in the hour we spent sitting in the lobby. That is understandable with some portering services to perform, but there needed to be some attention from the check in staff and concierge in that case.

For example, in the whole time our consultant sat there, no-one asked if he needed anything – a drink, or something else which is unusual for a hotel of this standing.

Check in was reasonably smooth but with the technology available these days, “on-line check-in” should be available which will get over the registration,

passport and credit card formalities and then you simply collect the key.

Similarly, app-based check in bar codes for room entry are becoming more and more popular for business travellers. Depending on your ratio of business versus leisure, it might be worth exploring this technology whilst offering the traditional personal service as well (that should obviously never go).

The lobby was very well kept as was the area outside the hotel. Staff were very well presented with uniforms that were specifically tailored to them.

Service at the reception desk was quick and efficient and 2 separate requests for information about the city and local restaurants were met with good quick answers, recommendations and directions by the concierge.

**NOT GOOD:**

There were three key minus points in our scoring system.

- On arrival, no welcome drink offered. This is fairly standard in most of the hotels we know globally.

- No hot/ cold towel on arrival. Again, in the places we have visited worldwide, this is fairly standard.

- The ratio of male to female staff in the lobby was very heavily male. In our observations of international city 5\* hotels, there is a good array of female staff on hand. With markets like the Middle East, this is quite important as Muslim women only feel comfortable approaching another female to ask questions.

**GOOD:** Concierge, general presentation of the area and staff, design.

# Scorecard

Criteria	Leisure	Business
1. Approach & Entrance	85.71%	87.5%
2. Staff & Personal Services	81.82%	81.2%
3. Service Levels	61.54%	58.82%
4. Check-in	100%	100%
5. Cleanliness & Presentation	100%	100%
6. Guest Appearance in Lobby	100%	100%
7. Facilities	80.65%	87.1%

## Overall PI Score

# 84.7 %

Using the Leisure Bias, score was 84.7%. Business Bias scored 85.1% overall.



# BEDROOM

Wonderfully presented, particularly the bathrooms. The major comment would be the size of the lead in rooms. At 25m2 they are quite tight for 2 people with luggage. They are what they are but a luxury tour operator who knows their market would be promoting Junior Suite and upward only, otherwise complaints possible. It does not mean a luxury tour operator would not sell the lower room categories but there would be some discussion with the client for sure. Most clients expect 35m2 as a minimum in city centre, 50m2 in resort.

There was only one glaring negative that could be rectified easily and that was the state of the window frames outside. When you open the windows, it's evident the wood on the outside needs completely re-varnishing.

Bed quality & mattress were very comfortable. Ventilation was easy to work and set correctly on arrival. The black out was almost perfect with

the shutters still letting in some light (not perfectly aligned) and the soundproofing was very good.

Audio Visual equipment was generally easy to work with, but the satellite should have more English channels available.

Lighting controls were generally okay but the omission of a master switch by the bed is annoying.

**GOOD:**

Some notable standout pluses were the offering of a shoe cleaning service, general cleanliness, a very good turndown service, the daily weather report



delivered to the room and the unique provision of reading books.

**NOT GOOD:**

On the flip side, there were no plug adaptors and no phone chargers or USB adaptors - both standards in five star now. There was no pillow menu for those who suffer with allergies and only one bedside table. Outside windows in need of attention. Bedroom not cleaned while unoccupied between 9am and 3 pm.

Most embarrassingly, the shoe cleaning service sent back shoes that were clean, but completely unpolished on two attempts. This after an advance tip of 10 euros to the bell boy.

# Scorecard

Criteria	Leisure	Business
1. Electrics	66.67%	57.14%
2. Size, Appearance & Ventilation	95.56%	88.3%
3. Bed, Mattress & Pillows	97.01%	88.24%
4. Furniture	66.67%	66.67%
5. F&B Facilities	78.95%	78.95%
6. Service, Services & Room Facilities	48.48%	50%



## Overall PI Score

# 87.5 %

Total observed Perception Index score was 87.5% for the Leisure Bias, whereas under the Business Bias model this score drops to 76.3%

# BATHROOM

Size was impressive for a lead in room and definitely a plus. Bathrobes provided were of very high quality and the fixtures and fittings (mostly marble) definitely befitting of a top end 5 Star.

**GOOD:-**

- Extensive marble affords a five star feel and the size is bigger than average.

- Speed of the bath fill contributed to the score at an impressive under 4 minutes; particularly good for the business traveller; and the size and depth were both pleasing. No condensation and excellent lighting (in spite of no natural light / window) added to the impression.

**NOT GOOD:-:**

- No underfloor heating

- No double vanity basins

- Toilet not separate from rest of bathroom (increasingly common at the top end)

- Toilet lids appear to be plastic but hard to tell. Wood would be expected.

- No toilet lid handle (these are very new but easy to fit and worth having).

- No anti-slip on the main marble floor.

- Rain shower not separate from bath. Again, becoming standard in most 5 Stars.

# Scorecard

Criteria	Leisure	Business
1. Bath & Shower	82.35%	82.35%
2. Amenities	66.67%	54.55%
3. Facilities	68.75%	62.5%
4. Toilet	62.5%	62.5%

## Overall PI Score

# 70.8 %

Total observed Perception Index score was 70.8% under the Leisure Bias, dropping dramatically to 62.2% when measured by the Business Bias.

# RESTAURANT

**Specific key points:-**

**Service:-** 10/10. We expected the table service to be “very good”, but actually it was “exceptional”. We have never scored service in an hotel restaurant 10/10. Key areas of the service that scored highly were the immediacy of being greeted on arrival, the swiftness of drinks delivery, correct spacing between course delivery, recommendations on dishes and wines, offer of newspapers and a willingness (and effectiveness) to satisfy requests for particular seating positions.

**Food:-** 9/10. Whilst we like seafood, we think Florence has more of a reputation for meat and pasta and the recommendation of seafood eating late on a Saturday might be perceived as more a desire to make sure the fresh fish was not wasted. However, it was cooked perfectly, was of excellent provenance and delicately flavoured. The starter salad was excellently fresh and plentiful.

The outside seating area had excellent ambiance, position and service, but was let down badly by poor unusable wifi, no outdoor power outlets and a very dirty awning (on top).

As the bar is co-joined to the restaurant, many of the points overlap but purely scoring the merits of the bar, there were lots of positives and no real negatives. The Vodka/ Martini was particularly good. 2 snacks provided at the bar with a drink is standard for the old 5\* rating system but it’s often forgotten in supposed 5\* establishments, but not this hotel. .

My only advice here would be to add some unique feature. Check out Gora Tensui in Japan and their “bar foot-spa”.

**GOOD:-**

- Ambience – no better place to be than on the edge of that square with life passing you by.

- Professionalism of waiters (friendly but not too friendly and excellent coordination between them, each one knowing which table was his, but able to switch if necessary).

- Breakfast items were all of good quality and the range of items available scored highly.

- Scores high for the a la carte menu and hot food made to order. Eggs Benedict was excellent one morning as was scrambled eggs and smoked salmon another.

- The use of real silver pots and cutlery was a bonus.

**NOT GOOD:-**

1. Bananas and blueberries not on buffet

2. Lemon wedges not on buffet (some markets particularly like lemon wedges with smoked salmon)

3. The green rubber coasters stuck to the bottom of your glass whenever you picked it up.

# Scorecard

Criteria	Leisure	Business
1. Food & Wine	96.15%	96.58%
2. Service	98.54%	98.54%
3. Design & Features	62.88%	64.10%
4. Subjective Experience	100%	100%

## Overall PI Score

# 94%

Total observed Perception Index score was 94% (Leisure) dropping only slightly to 93.8% on Business Bias.



# OTHER OBSERVATIONS

**Website:**

As we mentioned to Letizia before we came, we tried to book a spa treatment via the website. Spa is mentioned on the website:-

From hotel website.  
 "Elevate your fitness levels at our fully-equipped Florence gym with a wide range of cardiovascular, weight and resistance equipment. Welcome serenity in our Brunelleschi and Signoria Suites. Both feature special state-of-the-art steam rooms with chromotherapy and aromatherapy facilities."

The above text was under "FITNESS AND WELLBEING" and appears to have been removed.

We asked to book an aromatherapy massage via the website contact form. In the dropdown for the hotel, subject matter "Spa" is an option which further lead me to believe the hotel had one.

(The above enquiry form options still exist on the website.)

The worst thing was, no-one replied and we only found out about the lack of spa

when we mentioned to

reservations. All in all, not a

great experience.

However, the general usability of the website, and the booking on-line process, was good and when we ordered a car to collect me from the airport at short notice it was very simple on the phone and the driver on time and clearly visible etc. Items provided in the car such as hotel towels and water were also in line with the brand and what's expected at genuine 5\* properties.

**Accommodation Corridors**

Generally in pristine condition. On floor 5 it was noticeable that the carpet was quite worn outside the service door area opening onto the corridor.

The only other small criticism is to have more seating outside the lift. There was some along the corridor but more use outside the lift itself we feel.

# Overall Scorecard

Criteria	Leisure	Business
1. Lobby	84.7%	85.1%
2. Bedroom	87.8%	77.4%
3. Bathrooms	70.8%	62.2%
4. Restaurant	94.0%	93.8%

# Online Sentiment Analysis

As part of the reporting process, we take a sample of 100 recent reviews found online and run them through an AI natural language processing system to identify "Sentiment" (how someone probably feels about you) and "Content" (what they're probably talking about).

We do not attempt to second guess the machine so to speak. Our reasoning is that machine based learning, whilst not 100% accurate, will not introduce any bias when analysing text.

The scores on the facing page represent the percentages of reviews that appear to be "bad" and appear to be "good" based on the language discovered.

The breakdown represents the likely areas of focus overall. For example of people who chose to write bad reviews, 45% included comments about the comfort and facilities of the hotel.

Interestingly, cleanliness plays almost no role, good or bad, meaning that it's a given - the hotel is clean, but it earns no reputation points for being so.

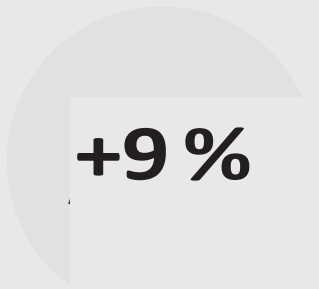
Meanwhile the location appears both as a strong positive AND negative - suggesting perhaps that pre-sale activity is not stressing the central location enough for those who might find it an

issue.

Using this data, combined with previous commentary in our report, you can start to understand which areas of the experience are affecting your customer's perception, and hence likelihood of rebooking / reviewing positively / referring.



<b>Cleanliness:</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>Comfort &amp; Facilities:</b>	<b>21%</b>
<b>Food:</b>	<b>34%</b>
<b>Internet:</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Location:</b>	<b>58%</b>
<b>Staff:</b>	<b>67%</b>
<b>Value for Money:</b>	<b>2%</b>



<b>Cleanliness:</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Comfort &amp; Facilities:</b>	<b>45%</b>
<b>Food:</b>	<b>22%</b>
<b>Location:</b>	<b>22%</b>
<b>Staff:</b>	<b>34%</b>
<b>Value for Money:</b>	<b>45%</b>

# GHC Report – Recommendations:-

In the social media generation, one always has to look forward to new trends and the ways in which people communicate with each other. Today's student is tomorrow's customer and the way in which this generation "socialise", whilst ever evolving, has one key social media app at its heart – INSTAGRAM. The latest trend is Twitter posts being screenshot and sent on Instagram. The point is, every hotel needs a "Brand Point" and it's that feature, or part of the hotel, that will become the INSTAGRAM spot . Therefore, something unique or quirky that is on the exterior of the building would be preferable, because then you get free social media press from non-residents as well as residents.

As to what that feature or image should be, it is a delicate question as the class and style of the hotel needs to be maintained at all times. One idea, which emanates from the very roots of what an hotel was designed for (a place for rest and respite, a comfortable bed and good food), harks back to Japan and one of the best Ryokans in this most hospitable and spiritual nation.

In the hills overlooking Mount Fuji, after a long journey, you are invited to remove all footwear and move swiftly to the lobby bar a few yards from the door. On first appearance, it is a regular long bar with stools. However, once sat on your stool, your feet come to rest in the flowing warm water of the hot springs underneath the Ryokan. A further invite to choose any drink of your choosing as a welcome, completes the feeling of overall relaxation and that you have indeed arrived somewhere very special.

The idea gains further weight when you consider the rising trend of hotel bars being very desirable places to hang out. Some of London's most iconic bars are back where they started in the 1920's and 1930's, housed inside some of the best hotels in the city. A larger bar area at The Hotel, with more dining tables moved to the back room, would enable the bar to be more prominent and have its own identity, whereas now it is very much a side part of the restaurant.

Other more implementable measures or tweaks we have mentioned in the report but these three would be critical in our opinion:-

- Improvement of the first impression for all guests, with a choice of welcome drink on arrival
- Better service standards in the room with intuitive room cleaning taking place while guests are out
- If you are going to offer extra ancillary services like shoe cleaning, make sure it is good.

