

Christmas Gift Guide - LOVE LOCAL

Johnstown Estate: A sensational spa sanctuary full of surprises

HOTEL REVIEW

By *Chloe McKeating*

An early Christmas present in more ways than one, I had the pleasure of being invited to The Johnstown Estate Hotel in Co Meath. To say that the staff and the hotel exceeded expectations would be a complete understatement.

Situated within 120 acres of stunning grounds and parkland, this luxurious 4-star resort has been developed around an impressive 1750's Georgian residence in Enfield. The exterior of the hotel itself gives off a majestic rural vibe but the interior is something much, much more. The contemporary décor has captured the 18th century aura but maintained a modernised splendour and all-in-all it radiates lavishness and luxury within every nook and cranny of the place. The more I saw, the more I was left in awe of this hidden gem, right on Dublin's doorstep. Despite these unprecedented times, I was able to feel like I could enjoy my experience to the fullest, regardless of the situation.

The busy atmosphere, array of amenities available and general buzz ensured that each guest escaped the harsh reality of the outside world, even if it was just on a temporary basis. The hotel was impeccably clean.

I cannot express enough my amazement when I came across multiple chandeliers without one speckle of dust. I mean, not one! If you are lucky enough to own a chandelier, you will understand how truly impressed I was.

I can vouch for the cleanliness of the grounds and overall establishment and this should give every customer peace of mind when booking a getaway or short stay in these times.

I had the privilege of staying in the Junior Suite during my break and I can honestly say this was one of the most impressive suites I have seen within any hotel break, I've had.

The Johnstown Estate Hotel does not hold back when it comes to creating an ambience of extravagance and tranquility. Everything from the stand-alone bath, walk-in shower (yes, they had both) and Dyson hairdryer, down to the Elemis toiletries, scream affluence and opulence.

The suite itself matches up with the interiors you see throughout the hotel and are populated with luxurious soft silks, velvets and linens. The spacious living/dining area had a London Townhouse feel and this really is the perfect spot to indulge and immerse yourself in the finest of surroundings.

As much as I would have loved to give up my job, life and home and live out the rest of my days in this amazing suite, I don't think the Johnstown Estate Hotel staff would have appreciated a squatter in amongst all the beauty of the place. Plus, I had a rooftop experience, thermal suite and spa treatment to attend. When thinking back to my experience of the spa, one description comes to mind; 'Masters of Relaxation'.

I cannot put into words how impressed my partner and I were. Just wow. Can I say 'wow' enough to express how exceptional it really was? From the moment I entered this vicinity, I felt a weight had been lifted from my shoulders.

The spa itself is like a hidden cocoon - it's an amazing idea to create an intimate and



personal escapade for all. I completely lost myself here. For me, the spa, thermal suite and rooftop experience had an overall botanical and bohemian feel as they had decorative plants and active natural aromatics to help one have a tranquil and reviving escape from the conventional world.

I received a Signature Elemis massage from Kesia who really did give me the VIP experience. She is amazing at her job. She was informative, professional, and very passionate about her job and anyone who gets the pleasure of treatments will discover this for themselves.

She was invested in creating a personal experience for me and ensured I left feeling more relaxed than I ever was. She gave me advice for future skin care regimes and I really cannot recommend her enough. However, I do hold her accountable for my 'lights out' at 10pm.

Each area of the Thermal Suite has been designed to relax and revive you and there are multiple different ways to do so. It includes a salt room, sauna, steam room, heated loungers and a reflexology pathway. Here, I had my first shower experience (little amuses the innocent!).

The shower combined naturalistic sounds with

smells, as well as multiple different shower powers and angles.

I may have swallowed some eucalyptus on the way but all part a wonderful time.

The rooftop experience was like no other - it followed suit with the cleanliness of the hotel and was filled with a hydration pool, jacuzzi, heated seating areas and a firepit. We got speaking to some of the guests there and everyone agreed this was out of this world

and one of the best that they have had in Ireland.

Later that evening, my partner and I dined in the Fire and Salt restaurant and we left with our bellies full and palate's well and truly satisfied.

The food is exceptional.

The restaurant mirrors the overall feel of the hotel and created a sophisticated yet relaxed atmosphere for all.

I had a look around the place when waiting on my food and every table were seemingly enjoying every bit of the experience.

The menu catered for all appetites.

Whether you are vegan, vegetarian or a regular carnivore like me, it had a little bit of something, for everyone. My thoughts on the dining side was that every request was fulfilled in a pleasant, friendly and efficient manner.

I noted that this was down to the staff -

everyone had a role and fulfilled their specific role to the highest standard.

From my experience, hotel restaurants can sometimes come across a little chaotic and we sometimes see the receptionist or other members of staff, serving or 'chipping' in, anywhere they can to help.

Not in The Johnstown Estate Hotel. The staff were enthusiastic, energetic and it seemed that our feelings mattered to them.

This is amazing to see, and I must applaud them all as they really did make the experience seem like a five-star one, as opposed to the non-agreeable four stars that the hotel has been awarded.

I want to give a special mention to Denez, the head waiter. He was charming, approachable, humorous and yet very professional.

His nature was admirable, and I really need to express how much of an asset he is.

The residents seemed to agree as he had everyone laughing and smiling every time he was in their presence.

Never in my 28 years on this earth have I had someone refuse a tip and say that it was their pleasure to serve me. Denez was the exception. What an absolute pleasure it was, to be acquainted with this member of staff.

My overall feeling of The Johnstown Estate Hotel was incredible.

I left truly fulfilled and every aspect of the place is breathtaking, and I believe it has something enjoyable for all the family.

The staff are credit to the hotel and I couldn't have asked for anything more from a hotel experience.

I cannot wait to go back and experience it all over again.