

## Rock and Soul



Rockstar bathrooms, vinyl couches, vinyl (record) players, bold decor with clean lines and one-of-a-kind accents. Until about a month ago, I did not know that this picture is tangibly painted on the grounds of a boutique hotel hidden on the east side of South Congress.



This psychedelic sign marking the entrance to Hotel St. Cecilia is representative of the dark, yet vibrant feel inside the property.

Thanks to my friend Rebecca, I was invited to a pre-launch party for an iPhone application called Happy Houred, that enables users to enter their location and find real-time drink specials depending on their geography and drink preferences. The application was developed by Lindsay Johnson of Lush Life ([www.lushlifeny.com](http://www.lushlifeny.com)), who hosted the event in a bungalow at Hotel St. Cecilia, which I had been wanting to visit since I heard about it. So, I took two friends with me on what soon became an unexpected, yet awe-inspiring adventure.

The private event showcased one of six bungalows, a sleek condo with black and white furniture, and earthy shades that hung from the wide windows. We mosied outside to take a look at the long, narrow, rectangular pool with classic lounge chairs and another vibrant reminder that we we had taken a step back in time to the true rock and roll era: a commanding neon sign reflecting "SOUL" into the pool.

We stopped into the bar that is guarded by a white peacock as part of the interior decor, which is only open to guests and friends of guests. As we were soaking up the experience, Sara, who works for the property, offered to give us the grand tour of the unoccupied suites. We happily took her up on her offer. We were in awe. Outdoor showers, wrap-around decks, an outdoor fire pit adjacent to one suite, a piano, vinyl couches, flat screen tv's, velour decor, incredible lighting...I could go on and on.

Of course, we asked about room rates, because we were easily sold on the landscaping, by Mark Word, also the landscape designer of Hotel San Jose, and the style. Studios range \$275 on weekdays to \$315 on weekends. Bungalows range from \$390 on weekdays to \$460 on weekends. Suites range from \$290-540. We also learned of the accommodations popularity for musicians during ACL and SXSW, specifically what I call the 'Rockstar Suite', complete with a piano, and private screened in porch.

I highly Rebeccamend trying to book one of these rooms for you or out of town guests you may be hosting for a special occasion, or just asking for a tour of the grounds---this was entertaining in itself! I was told Mondays and Tuesdays are great days to tour, since many of the guests will have vacated after the weekend, and the suites will be open for touring prior to the next weekend's guest arrivals.

Take a look at the photos I took below. Also, check out more photos and video footage of local espionage at its best...cutting-edge blog, Republic of Austin, snuck into the bar at St. Cecilia in August and caught it on tape!

\*Photos by Rebecca

