

EXPLORE

AUSTIN

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

No hotel occupies a more auspicious spot in Austin than summer's hottest new member of the hip city's hostelry family. Aptly named, **South Congress Hotel** sits amid SoCo's ubercool-kid universe, just steps from storied music venues and mere sashays from mom-and-pop boutiques, galleries and restaurants aplenty. A design collaboration between Michael Hsu Office of Architecture, Dick Clark + Associates, Studio MAI and Waterloo Workshop, the contemporary 71-room, 12-suite hotel hugs the sidewalk and vaunts open spaces as inviting as a rollicking street party. Urbane and midstoried, the urban retreat hosts sun worshippers at a stunning rooftop pool (complete with cityscape vistas); wows imbibers at a festive lobby bar; and draws the peckish to four restaurants, which include a juice and coffee bar, an American-style bar and grill, a casual California-themed cafe and a 12-stool intimate Japanese-scented concept by hometown hero Paul Qui. Streamlined guest rooms are roomy by Austin standards, and some of the suites have balconies that boast views of the Texas Capitol. With colorful tile work, a smattering of local art, bedding from Matteo and in-room amenities by Aesop, this posh hotel may signal even swankier days ahead for the beloved, retrofitted neighborhood. *Rates from \$279 per night, 1603 S. Congress Ave., Austin, 512.920.6405, southcongresshotel.com* —Becca Hensley

CHARMING CHECK-IN

The rooms at South Congress Hotel, which welcomes its first guests in August, feature hardwood floors, custom furniture and bespoke Matteo linens.