



The Telegraph

The Dewberry - Charleston, SC

By Stephanie Hunt, Travel Writer

9 out of 10 - Telegraph expert rating

This mid-century modern gem in midtown Charleston positions itself as “Southern reimagined”, with impeccable attention to detail and design. The Dewberry has transformed an abandoned federal office building into a contemporary luxe 155-room hotel with outstanding service.

Location 8 / 10

The Dewberry overlooks centrally located Marion Square, site of many of Charleston’s festivals and events, including the Saturday Farmers’ Market. King Street’s shops, galleries and restaurants are just across the Square, as is the College of Charleston, and the South Carolina Aquarium and waterfront attractions (water taxis, Fort Sumter ferry) are a half-mile walk to the east. Beaches east of the peninsula are a 25-minute drive, and popular downtown destinations, such as the Battery, are one to two miles away, easily accessed by bike or trolley.

Style & character 9 / 10

Owner John Dewberry spent eight years with architects and designers to renovate this brick and marble building, originally commissioned by President Kennedy and opened as government offices in 1963. A fresh contrast to Charleston’s antebellum ambiance, the Dewberry tastefully celebrates the artful contours of mid-century modern design, with lighting hand-crafted from Charleston-based Urban Electric Co. and furnishings and textiles curated from private collections or custom-made.

Though contemporary, care has been taken to reference Lowcountry vernacular: a walled courtyard in the rear echoes traditional Charleston gardens, and abstract artwork throughout the hotel is by noted Charleston or South Carolina artists.

Service & facilities 9 / 10

Attentive service, from eager bellhops to a skilled, personable bartender stirring classic cocktails from the centrepiece brass bar, is de rigueur at The Dewberry. The hotel's marble-floored lobby and Living Room are inviting and sophisticated, with versatile seating that can feel private and cosy, or feasible for a business or social meeting. Plate glass windows welcome natural light, and wood panels accented with brass add warmth and texture.

The Dewberry Spa features cypress panelled treatment rooms and signature body treatments using native botanical (dewberry tree) and sea extracts. A fitness room includes high-end cardio machines and free weights; yoga arranged upon request. Complimentary bicycles are available for guests.

Rooms 10 / 10

Thoughtfully appointed rooms and suites feel more like a stylish home than hotel, with handcrafted furniture, curated books from the Charleston Library Society and local original art. Floor-to-ceiling windows, especially on the upper floors, offer incredible views of the cityscape and harbour. Cushy Irish mattresses are topped with primo linens and just-right pillows. Minibars showcase tempting but pricy regional goodies, including Callie's Biscuits, bourbon and other spirits, and artisanal chocolates.

The all marble and brass bathrooms are large and luxurious, with private toilets, walk in showers, soaking tubs in King suites, and thirsty oversized Irish terry towels and signature Dewberry botanical bath products. Grand suites feature a spacious seating area.

Food & drink 8 / 10

The Living Room bar (open midday to midnight) is a swanky spot serving classic and signature cocktails, as well as coffee, tea, wine and beer plus a small menu (cheeses; deviled eggs with smoked trout roe; oysters). The Dewberry's brasserie style restaurant, Henrietta's, serves breakfast, lunch, dinner and Sunday brunch.

The dinner menu highlights local ingredients in classic presentation (steak frites; fresh fish; a stellar roasted chicken) offering tasty juxtaposition to Dewberry's contemporary atmosphere. For breakfast, granola and yoghurt or an omelette with house cured ham (both \$13/£10) will fuel a day of sightseeing.

Value for money 8 / 10

The Dewberry prices are among the highest in town, but satisfies the guest who values quality design and luxurious touches. Doubles from \$300 (£240) year round. Free Wi-Fi.