

# **Simpson Townhouse – one to consider for a Capital break**

**Leonardo Hotels have an extensive portfolio throughout Europe and there are several in Scotland, including three in Edinburgh.**

The 52-bed Simpson Townhouse intrigued as it was listed as boutique, was central, they advertise attractive deals and we were also curious to experience to look through the keyhole to discover what bosses have done to transform a former hospital building into a hotel.

It has an unspectacular, stone-built exterior, but management are welcoming and are not stuffy in their approach.

For example, they don't restrict guests to a limited food and drink menu and a wee note in the room encourages you to order in using popular online delivery services like Deliveroo or JustEat.

However, they have a strict no smoking code with a charge of £250 for any additional cleaning costs in a no smoking room.

They are also obliging in that if you forget a comb, shaving kit, dental kit, facial towels, nail kit, sanitary products, ice, clothes hangers, sewing kit or shoe polish they can be obtained free.

You can also borrow an adaptor which may require a deposit of £5.

Wi-fi is free in all rooms and it is lightning-fast to connect. Businessmen will be pleased at the sizeable desk in

the comfortable bedroom.

The desk has three plug points and the chair is solid with a strong back support if you are using your laptop.

There is also a computer for guest use in the lobby near the small bar which is stocked with beer, wine and spirits.

A taxi to the airport is around 22 and it is a 15-20 minute walk to Haymarket or Waverley Station.

The well-appointed Simpson Townhouse is also within easy walking distance of the city's top tourist attraction, Edinburgh Castle, and the world-famous Royal Mile.

The highly-popular National Museum of Scotland is even closer and so is the atmospheric Grassmarket and Victoria Street which are packed with bars, restaurants and specialist shops.

Theatre-goers are also within walking distance of several of the city's leading theatres and concert halls, The King's, The Lyceum, The Usher Hall and The Festival Theatre.

Retail therapy can be enjoyed in nearby Princess Street and George Street while foodies, and those who enjoy a refreshment, can indulge in Rose Street, a thoroughfare with around 30 licensed premises.

Overall, Leonardo Hotels are in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Belgium and Israel and they claim to have hotels in their portfolio with regional character.

They pride themselves in service and we received that everywhere in the hotel, including the breakfast room which offers a buffet-style and also cooked.

We indulged with a full English and kippers.

The Simpson Townhouse has bags of character. It is sited on the former Simpson Royal Maternity and Simpson Memorial Hospital opened in 1879.

It was, incidentally, the first maternity hospital in Edinburgh and built in memory of Sir James Young Simpson who discovered chloroform anaesthesia. We felt at home.

Our room didn't have a view and had restricted light, but the stained glass window on the former church next door was a pleasant surprise after dark.

The bed was comfortable and the shower easy to use. There was a deep bath for a soak.

The TV remote was easy to operate and the in-room coffee and tea was well-stocked. The Brodie's biscuits were an added treat.

And joy, the hotel was quiet even on a Saturday night with guests respecting others. We had a good night's sleep. Can't say better than that.

One criticism. Room maids should be more attentive with Pledge as dust traces on bedheads and mirror tops were evident.

Notwithstanding that, consider The Simpson Townhouse as an attractive option if you are coming to Scotland's Capital.