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PLACES TO STAY

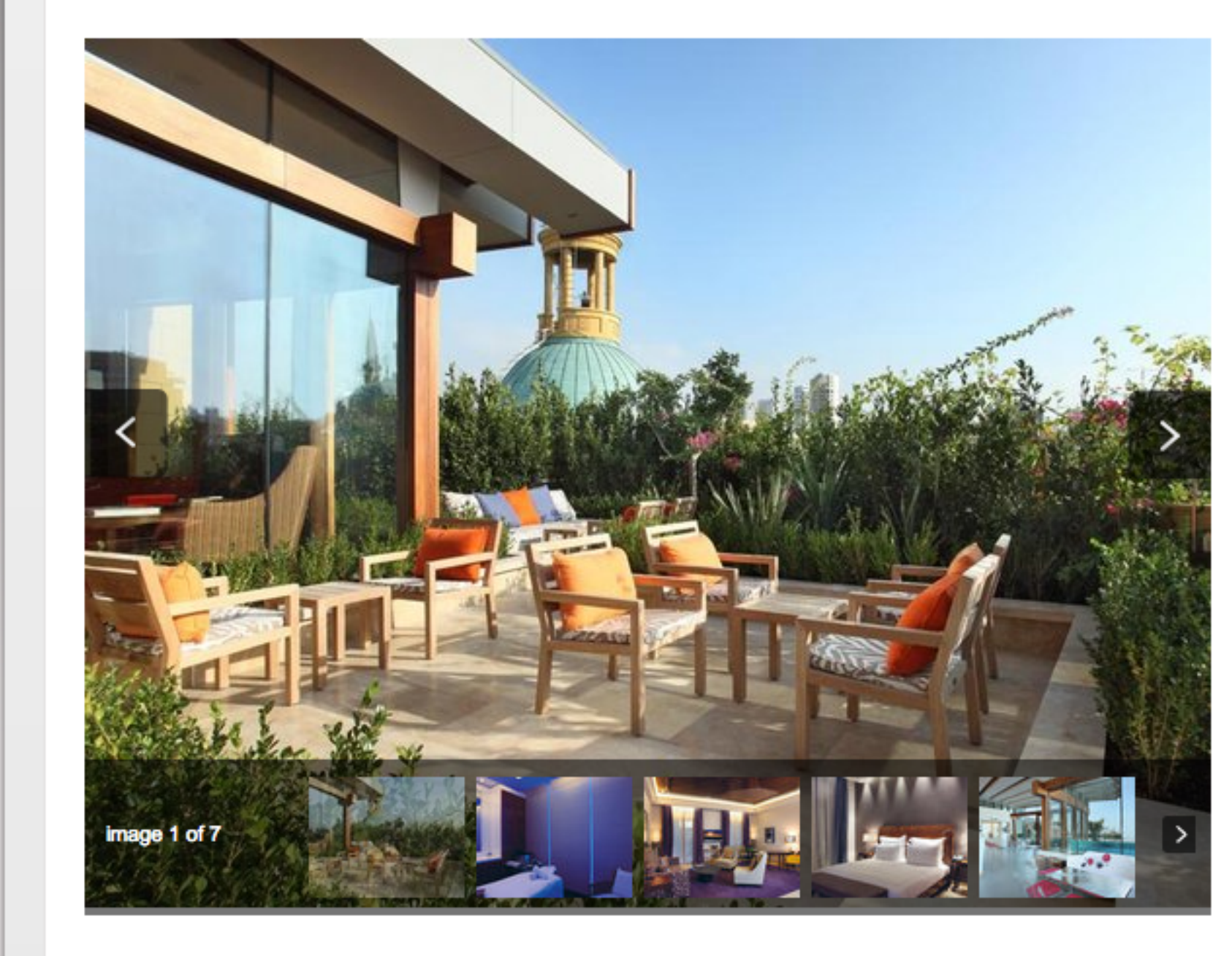
Le Gray

Martyr's Square, Central Beirut District, Beirut, | **Lebanon** ◆◆◆◆

From **£222** per room per night

By Rowena Carr-Allison | Posted: Tuesday 11 October 2013

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With a string of successful properties under his belt, including London's One Aldwych and Carlisle Bay in Antigua, **Le Gray** is the latest string to stylish hotelier Gordon Campbell Gray's bow. With its imposing facade towering over a corner of the historic centre of Beirut, while still just a short stroll away from Place d'Etoile and the souks, the hotel is ideally located to explore downtown.

But it's inside - in its stunning interiors - that Le Gray really comes into its own. The first thing that strikes you as you step into the sleek reception is its circular glass-domed atrium, followed swiftly by the shiny white floors that have been polished until you can see your reflection. Style stakes here are high and, housing no fewer than 500 contemporary works of art that have been personally sourced from Beirut, Damascus, London and Paris, its reputation as one of Beirut's first design hotels is confirmed.

The bedrooms at Le Gray are spacious and everything about them screams state-of-the-art - from the LCD screens, free WiFi and iPad docking stations, to the televisions above the beds. Bathrooms themselves are also suitably luxurious, with mosaic floors and REN products, plus some particularly effective mist-free mirrors.

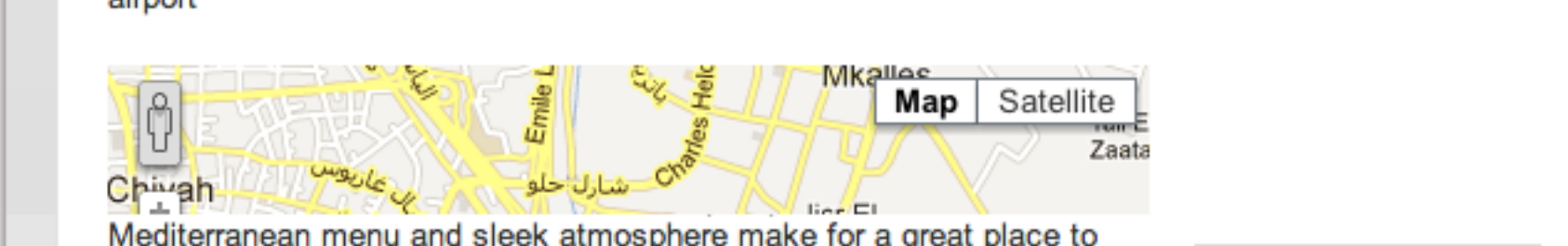
If you want to view the hustle and bustle of the city from a somewhat more relaxed vantage point, the rooftop lounge is home to an infinity pool, the swanky ThreeSixty bar and well-shaken cocktails and panoramic views as standard. Come sundown, the top floor's Cherry on the Rooftop club lounge comes to life and offers live DJs and plenty of space for dancing.

Food-wise there are plenty of options with restaurant Indigo on the Roof offering stunning blue-domed mosque views and beyond to the Mediterranean and Mount Lebanon. The open-plan kitchen, Mediterranean menu and sleek atmosphere make for a great place to head in the evening, while the much more laid-back Gordon's Café whips up some great snacks and lunches.

- What's hot?**
- The unrivalled views of downtown Beirut from the bar and **rooftop pool**
 - The impeccable service
 - The note-perfect design
- What's not?**
- The traffic noise can be an issue (although you are right in the city centre)
 - There could be more sun loungers around the pool
 - Although free, the WiFi is pretty slow

Need to Know: Le Gray

- Number of rooms:** 87
- Check-in/check-out times:** 2pm and 12noon
- Room service:** Yes
- Swimming pool:** Yes. The infinity rooftop pool
- Spa:** Yes. The Pure Gray Health Club & Spa is a sleek contemporary retreat with six treatment rooms run by Spanish skincare company Natura Bisse. There's also a hair salon and full kitted out gym.
- Dogs welcome:** No
- Eating and drinking:** Take your pick between Indigo on the Roof, the laid-back Pool Lounge or, for a fine single malt, the Cigar Lounge. For a light bite, head to Gordon's Café for pastries and other indulgent goodies.
- Near to?** A stone's throw away from the newly revamped central business district, the Place d'Etoile and the souks for a spot of shopping
- Getting there:** It's just a 15-minute drive from Rafic Hairiri international airport

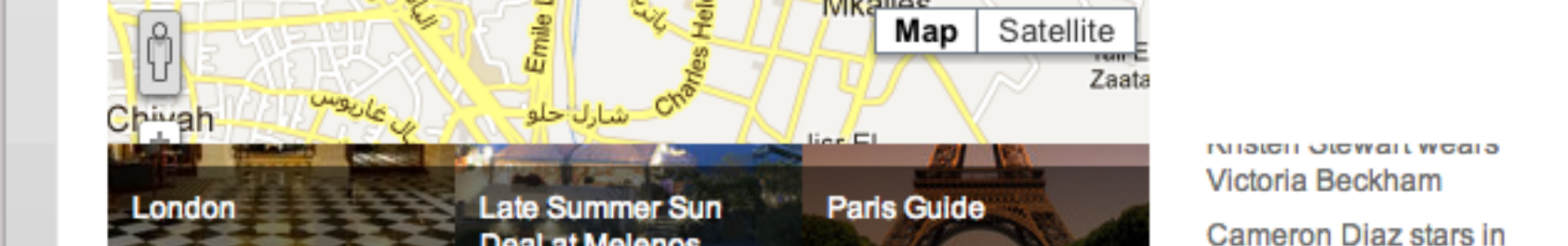


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The ELLE Edit

Best room: For a smaller more intimate room, the corner suites are great

Best dish: Wagyu Beef Filet, Dover Sole or Thai Baked Sea Bass in the Indigo on the Roof restaurant

Fashion/design credentials: Le Gray was designed by hotel interior guru Gordon Campbell Gray in collaboration with Fox Linton Associates

Who stays here? They remain tight-lipped about celebrity guests but Christian Louboutin did stay back in July...



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