



HOSPITALITY & RETAIL

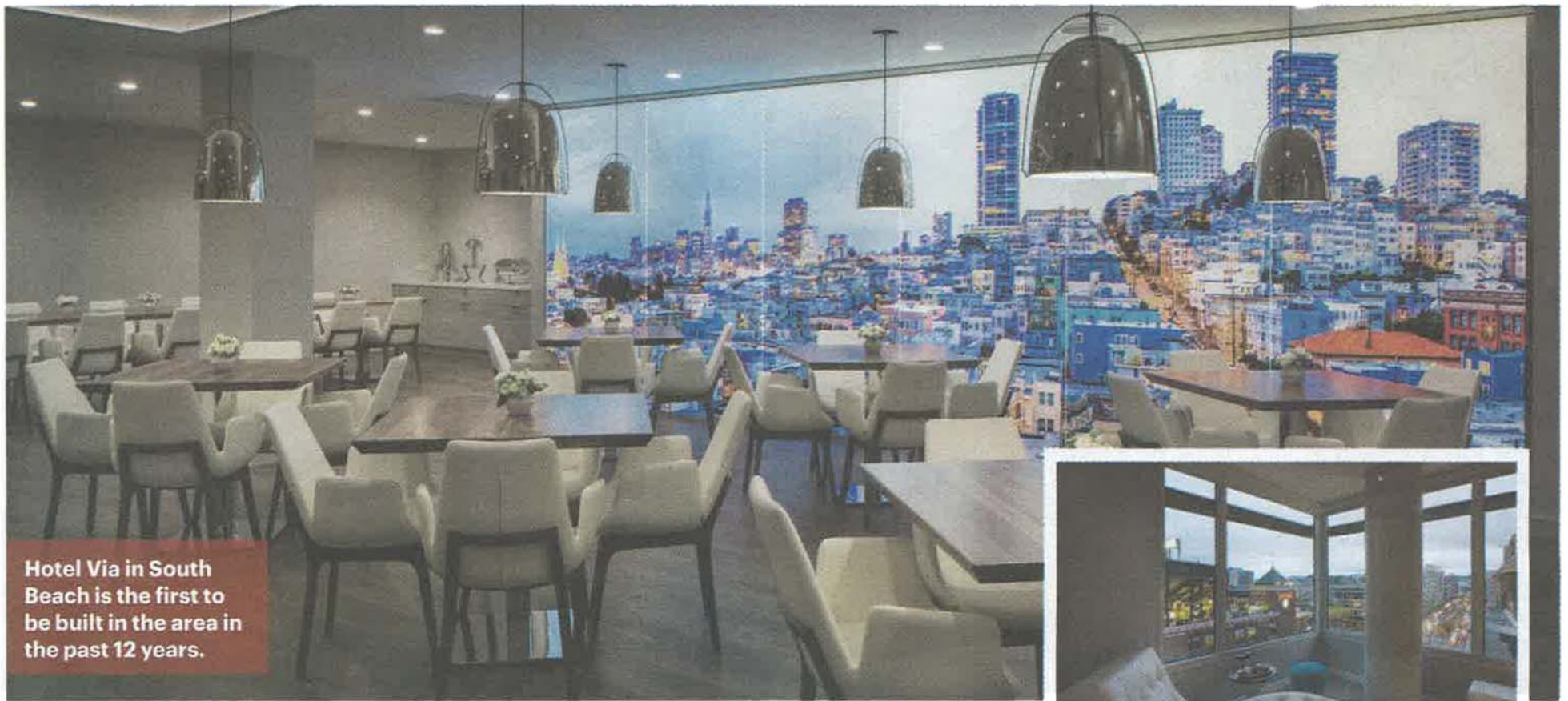
Katie Burke covers hospitality, retail, food and wine

✉ KBURKE@BIZJOURNALS.COM

☎ 415-288-4927

🐦 @SFBIZKATIE

CHECKING IN



Hotel Via in South Beach is the first to be built in the area in the past 12 years.

C WALTERS DESIGN

How technology sets new S.F. hotel apart

The South Beach property is the first new ground-up hotel in the city since 2008

A wave of new hotels under construction across the city is investing in new amenities and services that are redefining the region's hospitality industry.

Hotel Via is the first San Francisco hotel to be built from the ground up since 2008, and the folks behind the new 159-room boutique property are taking advantage of a bevy of new technology that's popped up since then.

Technology has played an increasing role in hotels' ability to deliver on service. Through a partnership with Comcast Business, the boutique hotel, which opened its doors last week, geared up a mobile concierge, with personal tablets in each room.

"Hotels used to be about the bed and the shower; now they are about the technology first, and then the bed and shower," Barbara Perzigian, the hotel's general manager said. "If you had a bad shower or bed, you can give people a few drinks to for-

get about it. But if you have an Internet problem, there's not enough booze in the world to keep them at the hotel."

The property, located across from AT&T Ballpark at 138 King St., has an average rate between \$300 and \$600 a night.

"When you build something from the ground up, you have a great opportunity to start with all of the right technology," Perzigian said of decisions like incorporating fiber-network-ready cable. "We'll never replace the humanness of the hospitality business, but the technology we put in makes it easy for the guest and makes it easy for us to take care of the guest."

The Comcast Cable offspring is in negotiations with a number of other soon-to-be-completed hotel properties throughout the city, and is expecting an increasing portion of its future business will come from hospitality clients.

"Technology for hotels is something that needs to add convenience to a guests' experience," Comcast Business Vice President Ted Girdner said. "How can we make it so the hospitality venues can focus on the guests, and have more time to do it because the technology supports the interactions they're going to have?"

LEGACY S.F. SHOPPING CENTER RESHUFFLES TO PREPARE FOR CHANGING RETAIL

The days of visiting City Center to shop at Mervyn's, the Good Guys and Office Depot are long gone. The legacy retail center is ready to break up with its past — now that its owners are planning a top-to-bottom facelift.

Acadia Realty Trust closed on the 204,000-square-foot retail center at the corner of Geary Boulevard and Masonic Avenue in 2015. It is now waiting to break ground on a multi-million dollar expansion and renovation that will add more than 30,000 square feet to the property by reshuffling the available parking.

"There are going to be winners and losers in the current retail evolution, and we will make deals as smart as we can with those retailers," said Chris Conlon, Acadia's executive vice president and COO. "We can't control how they run their business. We can only control who we put in and design it to be relevant for what we know about today's retail."



Chris Conlon

▶ TRENDING



GETTY

THE NEXT WAVE OF AMENITIES FOR S.F. HOTELS

About 40 percent of all hotel guests travel with three or more devices, which is a figure Comcast Business expects will drive a slew of updated amenities targeted toward tech-savvy travelers.

Here is the emerging standard for the hotels of tomorrow:

- ▶ In-room and public Wi-Fi with no limit on the number of devices
- ▶ Check-in and check-out kiosks

- ▶ Mobile apps and payments
- ▶ Location-based services, such as restaurant reservations or trip planning
- ▶ Personalization, like the ability to use a cell phone as a room key or using data from previous stays to prepare for a guests' anticipated requests
- ▶ Room-control devices
- ▶ In-room video entertainment