



**21c Museum Hotel in Louisville, Kentucky  
Voted #1 Hotel in U.S. and #6 Hotel in the World**

In *Condé Nast Traveler's* Readers' Choice Awards

Louisville, KY, October 16, 2009 – 21c Museum Hotel has been selected as the #1 hotel in the United States and #6 hotel in the world in the prestigious *Condé Nast Traveler's* Readers' Choice Awards for 2009. Hundreds of hotels were evaluated by *Condé Nast Traveler* readers for the top award and more than 25,000 individuals participated in the voting. This year marks one of the few times an independent hotel has won the Readers' Choice top award. 21c is the only U.S. hotel to be ranked as one of the world's top twenty hotels this year.

The *Condé Nast Traveler's* Readers' Choice Awards rankings are based on the quality of rooms, service, food/dining, location, and overall design. The 21c Museum Hotel scored above 95 in all categories and excelled in rooms and overall design, where it notched identical scores of 98.9 out of 100.

The announcement was made at an event organized by *Condé Nast Traveler* and the award was presented to 21c Museum Hotel by the New York City restaurateur, Danny Meyer. Meyer noted at the ceremony, "When I stay at 21c I feel coddled, transported, nurtured, nourished, stimulated, rested, and above all, smart."

21c Museum Hotel was launched in 2006 by Laura Lee Brown and Steve Wilson, philanthropists and art collectors who had a vision for bringing contemporary art into people's daily lives and supporting the revitalization of one of America's historic city centers—their hometown of Louisville, Kentucky. 21c Museum Hotel is woven into the fabric of the city and the downtown arts and theater district, serving as a gathering place where guests, artists, performers, and Louisvillians congregate for great food, innovative arts programs, and historic cocktails with a modern twist.

Art is integral to the character of 21c Museum Hotel, which has 9,000 square feet of exhibition space featuring rotating curated exhibitions. 21c Museum is the only museum in North America dedicated to collecting and exhibiting contemporary art of the 21st century. Its exhibitions are open to the public free of charge 24-hours a day, seven days a week and are complemented by a dynamic series of live performances and arts events. In addition to the special exhibitions, works of art can be found around every corner—in elevators, courtyards, hallways, landings, restrooms, and on the floor, roof, surrounding streetscape—filtering into both public spaces and unexpected places. The

vision behind 21c Museum Hotel is that contemporary art can be accessible for everyone, and the exhibitions and installations create a setting that is both playful and engaging.

21c Museum Hotel's restaurant, Proof on Main, features award-winning food and beverage with warm, professional service and affordable prices. Inspired by the cuisine of Italy and the American South, Chef Michael Paley's flavor-focused menu fosters sustainable agriculture and features ingredients produced by local farmers, such as bison and vegetables raised by the Proof team at nearby Woodland Farm, the home of Brown and Wilson. The bar, a local hot spot, offers more than 50 of Kentucky's finest bourbons as well as seasonal, specialty cocktails. Complementing Paley's culinary artistry is a changing series of exhibitions and art installations throughout the restaurant and bar.

21c Museum Hotel is housed in a series of renovated 19<sup>th</sup>-century tobacco and bourbon warehouse buildings that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The facility was designed by Deborah Berke and Partners Architects, which is recognized for modern design rooted in the surrounding community and urban environment. 21c Museum Hotel combines a cosmopolitan sensibility with Southern hospitality and features 90 inviting guest rooms that offer comfort, smart design, fun touches, and modern amenities.

Environmental awareness and eco-friendly practices guide the daily operations at 21c, from the sustainable and reclaimed materials incorporated into the hotel design, to the hotel's recycling program, to partnerships with local growers and producers that support family-owned farms.

"We are thrilled with the recognition 21c Museum Hotel has received from travelers around the world and from *Condé Nast Traveler*," said 21c co-founder Steve Wilson. "Louisville is widely known for the Kentucky Derby, but there is much more to do in our city than go to horse races. We are delighted that travelers are responding so positively to our presentation of work by living artists and the experience of 21c Museum Hotel."

"Too often today, hotels are bland, isolated oases within cities that provide accommodations and dining but are removed from the city's character and residents," said Michael Bonadies, President and CEO of 21c Museum Hotels. "Thanks to 21c's accessibility and social vibrancy, our guests have the opportunity to gain a real sense of the people and culture of Louisville as well as contemporary art from around the world. We are honored to be recognized as a destination for this great city and for travelers from around the country and the world."

Currently on view at 21c Museum is "Creating Identity" which explores how portraiture—one of the oldest forms of representation—is being conceptualized by the current generation of artists. The exhibition features works by both emerging and established artists, including Yinka Shonibare,

Chuck Close, David Hockney, Kehinde Wiley, Mickalene Thomas, Miguel Ángel Rojas, CutUp, Kenneth Tin-Kin Hung, Germán Gómez, Ben Durham, and Chris Radtke. For more information on the exhibition, visit: [www.21cmuseum.org](http://www.21cmuseum.org).

### **21c Museum Hotels Team**

Co-founders Laura Lee Brown and Steve Wilson assembled a nationally recognized team to lead 21c Museum Hotels. Michael Bonadies is President and CEO of 21c Museum Hotels, Chett Abramson is Vice President and COO, and Sarah Robbins is Vice President. Before joining 21c Museum Hotels, Bonadies, Abramson, and Robbins were formerly of the Myriad Restaurant Group. Myriad built a reputation for innovative food and dining excellence with such acclaimed restaurants as Nobu, Next Door Nobu and Nobu Fifty Seven in New York, Nobu London, Tribeca Grill, Montrachet, and Rubicon in San Francisco. Craig Greenberg is Vice Chair of 21c Museum Hotels and is an attorney specializing in creating and executing development strategies to realize innovative urban revitalization projects.

### **Louisville**

The Kentucky Derby is Louisville's most famous attraction, but there is much more to see and do in the city and the surrounding region.

- Louisville has a vibrant arts community and is one of the few cities in the U.S. that is home to a professional orchestra, ballet, opera, theater and children's theater.
- The city hosts some of the country's outstanding cultural events, including the Humana Festival of new American plays and IdeaFestival, an annual gathering of the world's leading thinkers and innovators.
- Louisville's downtown features "Museum Row," home to Louisville Slugger Museum and Factory, the Muhammad Ali Center, Glassworks—where visitors can blow their own glass—and museums of history, arts and crafts, and science. The Speed Museum, located near the University of Louisville, features works of art dating from 4000 BC to the present day and from the cultures of the ancient world, Africa, Europe, the United States, as well as the Kentucky Collection of painting, sculpture, and decorative arts.
- The Old Louisville neighborhood is the nation's largest historic preservation district of Victorian homes and buildings.
- The Louisville area has 14,000 acres of green space, including four major parks by Frederick Law Olmsted, best known for designing New York's Central Park.
- Located on the Ohio River, Louisville is only a 2-hour flight from New York and an hour flight from Atlanta or Chicago.

For reservations and more information, visit [www.21cmuseumhotel.com](http://www.21cmuseumhotel.com).

For press information contact:

Molly Swyers

21c Museum Hotels

502.638.4923

[mswyers@21chotels.com](mailto:mswyers@21chotels.com)