

Hotel Emiliano



The Emiliano is a very fashionable new hotel (about 5 years, I was told) on the Rua Oscar Freire¹ in the trendy “Jardins” neighborhood of Sao Paulo. So discreet and chic is the hotel that when our taxi pulled up at the entrance, I thought we were in front of a modern office building; still, it is the only hotel in Sao Paulo that is listed in *The Leading Small Hotels of the World* guide. “Les mauvaises langues” would say that they probably have a good friend there.

I had the impression that the hotel tried to be chic at all costs. It could have been nicer were the approach more pragmatic and practical and still keep its chic and snob appeal.



Rua Oscar Freire

It was nevertheless quite good.

The hotel has in my opinion one major deficiency: the absence of a swimming pool which cannot be easily remedied but other minor shortcomings certainly could.

On top of that some of the things that should work either don't work at all or do so sporadically. I am thinking, among others, of the free broadband internet access everywhere within the premises which every hotel should have but still so few offer.

- The eight digits (4564##24) are those that you have to dial to access your voice mail! Why be simple when you can make it complicated?
- Our door lock did not work – it was promptly repaired, some of the complicated light switches did not work either; I didn't bother to have them fixed.
- The faucet of the shower is so far from the tap that it takes about 20 seconds for adjustments to take effect, the admittedly beautiful showerhead is not adjustable so that where you have to stand is imposed by your height and there is no bathtub; the latter didn't bother me at all.
- There was no coke nor beer in the minibar; I thought it was part of the “snob appeal” at first but they had just forgotten.
- A good portion of the staff only spoke Portuguese.

¹ The posh street in Sao Paulo, like Los Angeles's [Rodeo Drive](#) of Brazil.

- No buffet at breakfast!

As a result the service is not as efficient and especially not as smooth as it could be. Obviously the management of the hotel did not see the humorous scene in Robert Altman's 2001 film "**Gosford Park**" in which the maitre d'hotel replies to the American guest that asks him to be served at the breakfast table: "a gentleman is served at lunch and dinner but helps himself for breakfast".

Having a buffet wouldn't have to bring to an end a more personalized service for such things as eggs, extra coffee or simply catering to this or that wish of the patrons. As it is, the friendly staff has a hard time "following". And you see guests asking for small things that are time-consuming and that they could have easily and promptly handled themselves were there a buffet.

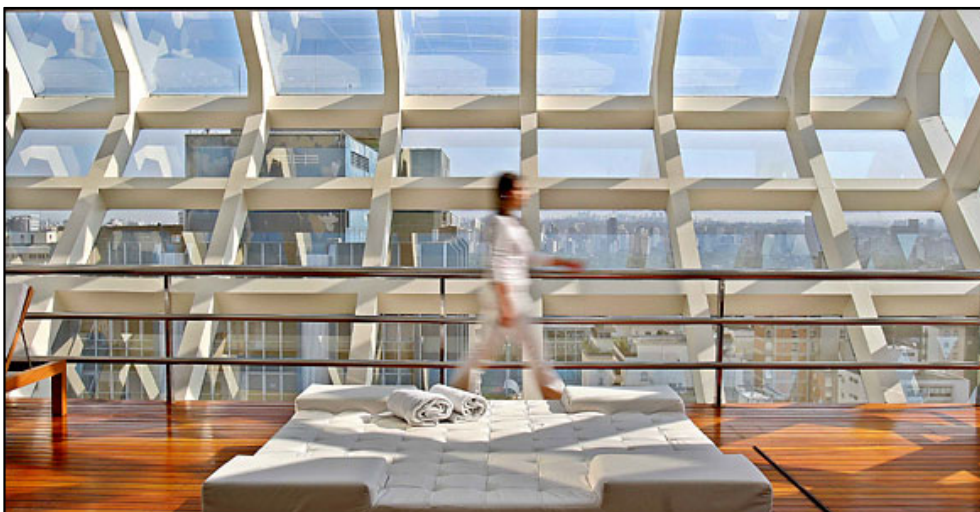


Massu and Nini at breakfast

In my opinion and Robert Altman's I guess, all hotels should have a buffet for breakfast. Even small traditional European hotels have found that out.

- The two elevators work independently resulting in wasted time and energy since most everyone calls both of them to take the first one that arrives.
- In the fitness / sauna area the doors to the sauna and toilets are not marked. This I presume is to give you the feeling that you are at home but it just creates confusion because at the end of the day you are not home and thus don't know which door leads to where. Because we entertain a lot at home, even in our small house, at least by hotel standards, we have a sign on the guest bathroom's door!

The Spa



- The hotel could not organize a proper bus tour of the city. All they had to offers was by private car from where you don't see as well as from a bus; it is of course also much more expensive and not as much fun. So, why?

But

- there are very few rooms / suites on each floor – three on ours, a definite luxury compared to the endless corridors of even 5 star hotels and palaces;
- there are two “Japanese baths²” - translate wooden Jacuzzis - at two different temperatures, I used;
- there is a butler service to unpack / pack your luggage, I passed;
- a complimentary ironing service, I used;
- a complimentary good French bottle of wine; Brazilian or at least South American, I thought, would have been more appropriate. I did not have time to drink, we took along to Rio for later consumption, its still in my bag, I will offer it to our niece that joined us from New-York on this trip, since I cant take it back to Tehran anyway;
- paying champagne and caviar bar with all kinds of champagne and even different kinds of caviar, I obviously passed.
- If someone wants to dine in the hotel, I understand the restaurant is good; I preferred the traditional **Churrascaria**³ where we were invited.

The ever present, elegant – Armani uniforms? - staff wearing Bluetooth earpieces and often busy talking via walky-talkies, is friendly and fairly efficient.

The rooms are excellent. There were two large beds in our big room with Egyptian⁴ cotton sheets and of course design furniture, lamps and bathroom; all in very good taste and in the latest understated chic fashion. Everything in the hotel is very good quality and in an Italian trendy fashion.



Lobby

You wouldn't be surprised seeing Giorgio Armani here!

Our bill for two days, including airport pickup, the two hour city tour and just a small breakfast with a “special discounted rate” was about \$ 1000.

² Usually quite a complex affair but here fortunately reduced to its simplest expression.

³ Comparable to our Chelow Kababi or a barbecue. You are continuously served different kinds of meat roasted on charcoal and / or embers of wood and cut in front of you at the table.

“It owes its origins to the fireside roasts of the [gaúchos](#) of southern Brazil traditionally from the [Pampa](#) region, centuries ago”.

⁴ I thought Brazilian cotton was good too!

Last minute “breaking news”

I just received an email informing me that they had added about \$35 (less than 0.5% of our bill) which they had “forgotten” to charge me for to my credit card post-facto.

I would have passed...

Links

<http://www.emiliano.com.br/>

<http://www.lhw.com/home.aspx>

<http://www.geographia.com/brazil/saopaulo/index.htm>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rua_Oscar_Freire

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Churrascaria>

http://www.armani.com/index.jsp?language=en&site=GH&movieSession=../global_home.swf&audio=acceso

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sento>

Thank you

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