

## 72 HOURS IN NASHVILLE, AMERICA'S PREMIER ROCK 'N' ROLL PLAYGROUND

Why yes, that is a recording studio next to your hotel room

BY KIRK MILLER



22 MAY 2018

Taking a taxi from the airport to the Hutton Hotel, Nashville's just revamped four-star hotel, I mentioned to the driver that I've never been a fan of the city.

"I'm hoping to see a different side of it," I said. "Last time, it was all honky-tonk bars and bad cover bands."

The driver turned around (his head, not the car). "Oh, what you saw, that's the whole city."

Thankfully, my driver was completely wrong. (Nice guy, though.) After a 72-hour whirlwind tour of Music City, I've changed my mind. This isn't a country music theme park. It's an artsy, culinary wonderland with several different musical accents in its arsenal.

And that description goes for the hotel as well.



## Your Digs

The **Hutton**, located in the West End neighborhood and a few blocks from Music Row, opened in 2009. The hotel quickly earned a reputation as a funky, upscale alternative to downtown's bland big-box offerings.

As the city's grown — one estimate from the Nashville Convention & Visitors Corp suggested the area's gaining 80-100 new residents per day — and become more than just a country music and bachelorette party hangout, Nashville's also seen a rise in boutique guest housings.

No longer the only cool kid on the block, the Hutton underwent a redesign (with help from Studio 11 Design), finishing up in December of 2017. Musical motifs are decidedly front and center: there are even dedicated Writers' Studios on the premises (as witnessed by the image leading this review), conceptualized by Dierks Bentley and OneRepublic's Ryan Tedder and available for use by anyone (including some big talent: spring 2018 earworm "The Middle" was written in one of the rooms).



The Hutton's other big music venture: Analog, a music venue on site crafted in conjunction with Red Light Management — basically, the people behind Dave Matthews. It's an intimate, two-level room filled with comfy couches, perfect sightlines and some of the best sound you'll hear in a live setting (the system was built by Bose and is run by a Grammy-nominated house engineer). The venue also houses an amazing cocktail bar headed by Megan Cross, a transplant from California rare-spirits mecca Old Lightning.

You should give the venue — and the cocktails — a dedicated night out. For your nights in, you'll be sufficiently comfortable in one of the 250 guest rooms: they're spacious, and the bathrooms feature rainfall showers and products from one of our favorite grooming lines, Triumph & Disaster. And you'll even access to the hotel's Tesla housecar. Plus: 24-hour room service, optional access to an in-room record player and vinyl collection, a free cocktail between 4 and 6 p.m. daily, complimentary wifi, on-request spa services and a minibar filled with local products.

The **penthouses** and the venue-adjacent Hutton Suite also seriously up the amenity ante: access to personal assistants, balconies, fireplaces, kitchens, floor-to-ceiling windows, a grand piano, etc.

There's only one on-premise restaurant (WestEnd), but it's worth more than one visit: the homey vibe — the floor's made from reclaimed barnwood — and upscale Southern cuisine (duck bacon BLTs, chicken wings with bourbon sauce and fried jalapeños, etc.) work across breakfast, lunch and dinner, and you'll get another exceptional cocktail program by Cross.

So your stay is nice. But seriously: Explore this city.





### Your About-Towning

Yes, hit up Broadway for a night of honky-tonk bars, cover bands and cheap drinks (and a billion bachelorette parties). Do the Country Music Hall of Fame. But also realize that there's great contemporary art and some of the country's best food and drinks within minutes of wherever you're staying. Catch big-name musicians in the midst of (until now off-limits) recording sessions at [Imagine Recordings](#), quench your thirst at the [Fat Bottom Brewery](#) in East Nashville (aka Music City's Brooklyn), rediscover the best of Southern cooking at [Husk](#) (led by James Beard winner Sean Brock), then finish your night with at the hidden speakeasy [The Patterson House](#), where your best bet is to let the bartenders pick something for you (NYC spinoff Attaboy is a similarly great option). On Fridays and Saturdays, grab some hot chicken from Hattie B's stand in line for a private tour of Jack White's [Third Man Records](#).

### Your Package

The [Hutton Hotel's Summer in the Studio](#) runs through August 25th. Starting at \$499 per night, the package includes two nights in a Hutton Hotel King Suite, two tickets to a 90-minute Behind-the-Scenes Studio Recording Experience at Imagine Recordings (you'll get there via the house Tesla), a daily breakfast and a VIP welcome amenity.