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# Fauchon's Gourmet Hotel Minibar Is An Industry Game-Changer



**Debbi Kickham** Contributor 

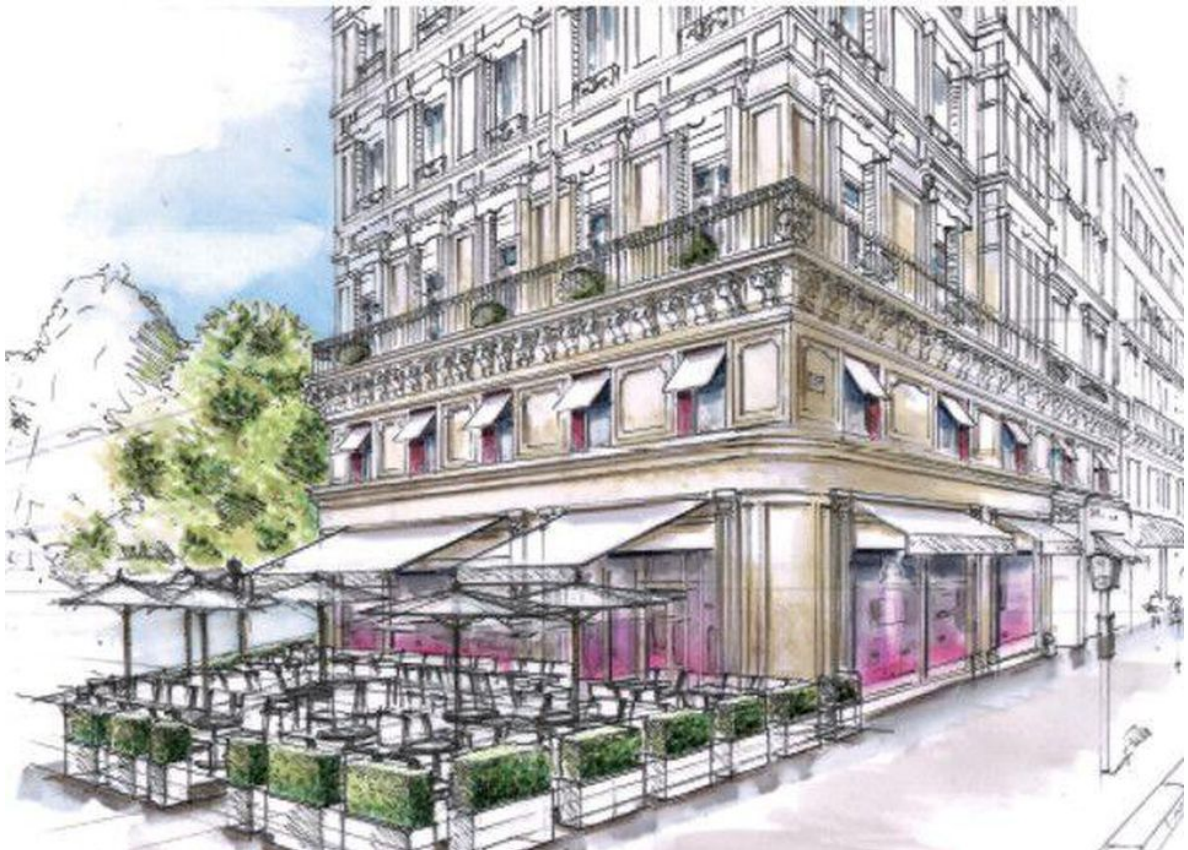
Travel

Former editor of Robb Report, I've never met a luxury I didn't like.

The name Fauchon has long been associated with fine foods, patisserie, and other French delicacies. Tomorrow will mark its entrance into the hospitality industry with the much-anticipated September 1 opening of its first luxury boutique hotel: [Fauchon L'Hôtel Paris](#). I wrote about the hotel a few months back -- see my post here:

<https://bit.ly/2PRUf6y>

But let's not stop there. I just visited Paris, and I went in person to view the new hotel, and was warmly greeted by the General Manager, Jerome Montanteme.



A rendering of the new Fauchon Hotel in the City of Light.

I was with my 100-year-old Mom -- (who is in excellent health and still shoe shopping!) -- and my sister Chris. We were escorted to the hotel's stunning Library reception area, which boasts the trademark colors of the Fauchon store around the corner: Black, white, and pink. The club chairs in the Reception area, made of pink Italian silk velvet, are especially gorgeous, luxurious, and welcoming.

Here's what else you need to know about this stunning new hotel.

The 54-room, five-star property is situated on the Place de la Madeleine, the home of the Fauchon brand since 1886, and is already a member of [The Leading Hotels of the World](#). Fauchon L'Hôtel Paris is just the first step in Fauchon's bid to become a global hotel group.

Earlier this year, the Fauchon Hospitality organization was created and is headed up by Jacques-Olivier Chauvin as President and CEO. Mr. Chauvin, who has been CEO with Relais & Châteaux, and SVP with Van Cleef & Arpels, is spearheading the effort to leverage the prestige brand's 130-year-old legacy as innovators of fine Parisian gastronomy to create a domain of service excellence, decadent gourmet cuisine, luxurious five-star hospitality, and tailor-made local experiences.

According to Mr. Chauvin, "The strategy is to establish a portfolio of Fauchon L'Hôtel branded properties, with a goal of 20 hotels over the next decade. With Fauchon's legacy in all aspects of the culinary industry, it is a natural next step to open our own hotels. It has been essential for us to define a concept that truly sets us apart, so we are not just another hotel brand."

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And here's the really big, ground-breaking, game-changing news. Are you ready? Mr. Chauvin underlines that what sets a Fauchon Hotel apart is the gourmet approach at all moments in the guest experience, including the brand's groundbreaking in-room "Gourmet Bar" that has completely disrupted the "hotel minibar" concept by providing all guests a selection of complimentary Fauchon products. Yes, you heard that right. The pink-enamel armoires -- which were created by Roche Bobois -- will contain a wealth of complimentary goodies from the Fauchon store that will be restocked daily. Mr. Chauvin also told me in a scheduled phone interview, that some contents that are not consumed within the your hotel room can be sent home with you, to share with friends and family. (For the record, there will also be a few things in the gourmet bar that will require a fee, such as soft drinks and beer.)

The complimentary goodies include champagne, wine, alcohol, biscuits, macarons, marmalades, chocolates, fruit pates, as well as salted biscuits, spreads, and truffle chips. Before you check in, you can also specify if you want Sweet or Salty treats.

Since the hotel hasn't officially opened yet, it still is unknown exactly what, at this writing, will be included in the gourmet bar. And it's still a big secret -- images and photos of it have not been distributed to the press as of yet, as well.

While in Paris, I also visited the Fauchon store, and I unearthed a plethora of palate-pleasing gourmet foods -- some of which may be on the roster in the hotel guest rooms. These include everything from violet-flavored macarons; rose jams and teas; eclairs bearing the colors of the French flag; delicious gianduja chocolate/hazelnut pralines; and tarts covered in gold leaf. The original Fauchon store -- which was the first store to do home delivery in Paris -- was originally created more than 100 years ago, by a farming family from Normandy. Since that time, the Fauchon brand has been synonymous with the world's best gourmet food products, whose customers have included aristocrats, royalty, and famous VIP names such as the Kennedys.



The delicious Fauchon eclairs, some in the colors of the French flag. DEBBI KICKHAM

A visit to the store is always a treat -- and here's why. You can actually taste everything before you buy, so that you know if you like it. Want to try that duck pate with pistachio? Just say the word. How about the French jambon from Corsica? Or the foie gras from Alsace? They are all there for the asking, including the world-famous chocolates and the tiger-striped chocolate croissants. The store also contains a special rotating wine box containing special wines and dessert wines worth more than 100,000 Euros. And if you crave a glass of Chateau d'Yquem, you can purchase a bottle from 2003



for just 650 Euros. (For the uninitiated, this vintage is frequently referred to as "liquid gold." I've had three glasses of it in my lifetime -- and it is joy and privilege to consume.)



The special Fauchon wine box containing vintages worth more than 100,000 Euro. DEBBI KICKHAM



Yum's the word -- the tiger-striped chocolate croissants at Fauchon. DEBBI KICKHAM

Fauchon is also known for its innovative training of up-and-coming chefs who have gone on to be major names in the patisserie world including Pierre Hermé, Christophe Michalak, and Dominique Ansel, the creator of the now infamous “Cronut.”

But back to the hotel. The Fauchon Hospitality brand’s Unique Selling Proposition in every one of its hotels is easily defined as “GLAM“: GOURMET (the most creative Parisian patisserie adhering to



the French culinary tradition); LOCATION (at the heart of the urban life of the city); ATTENTION (attention and experiences which are bespoke, far beyond the usual exclusive hospitality services; and MESDAMES (a hotel always in tune with women featuring sophisticated lighting, Dyson hairdryers, properly sized bathrobes, Carita amenities, and more). All rooms also feature Porthault linens, and jacquard comforters bearing the Fauchon brand name. One of the most deluxe, #1101, is the Fauchon Suite costing 3,000 Euro per night and offering award-winning views. "You can see Manhattan from this suite," said Mr. Montanteme with a laugh.

A classic room such as #103 will go for about 400-550 Euro per night. A deluxe room embellished with cornices and moldings will set you back about 600-750 Euro for one night.



A classic guest room at the new Fauchon Hotel in Paris - with a color scheme to match the Fauchon store around the corner. FAUCHON

And here is something else that sets the hotel apart. Mr. Montanteme explained, in his inimitable charming and enthusiastic style, that guests can actually check-in before they arrive -- like you might do at the airport. Upon arrival, you'll be escorted to the Library -- "A very private area, with a relaxing atmosphere." Another point of differentiation: There is no concierge at this five-star hotel. Instead, explains Mr. Montanteme, all the guest-relations staff can answer any question, so that it does not matter to whom you make a request.

He said, enthusiastically, "To be guest-oriented is my religion. My job is to pay attention to our clients."

My visit also included a gourmet lunch, and I am still thinking about the green gazpacho that is one of the best I have ever tasted; a raspberry-and-pineapple juice tea with edible rose petals; and "canneloni" of zucchini filled with crabmeat.

Quipped my sister, after experiencing all that the Fauchon name can offer: "Now I want to open a franchise."

Debbi K. Kickham is a former Editor of Robb Report Magazine- "The Millionaire's Magazine" ([www.robbreport.com](http://www.robbreport.com))- and a current and veteran member of the Society of American Travel Writers, [www.satw.org](http://www.satw.org). A professional travel journalist for more than 25 years, Debbi has criss-cr... MORE

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