The Vendue: An Art-Lover's Escape in Charleston
Immerse yourself in local art, fine dining amidst Charleston's historic district
By Clare Sweeney Charleston Local Expert February 11, 2015

The Vendue lobby entrance invites guests into both a boutique hotel and an art gallery from Vendue Range

Charleston, S.C., is celebrated for many things, from its historical architecture to its world-class culinary scene and even the friendliness of its people. As Charleston becomes a top travel destination, more visitors are also taking note of the city’s burgeoning artistic identity.

Charleston’s own natural beauty seems to paint a wide brushstroke across the more well-known aspects of the city and, in turn, influences local artists and galleries. One hot spot of local art is The Vendue, a recently renovated historic hotel in the heart of downtown Charleston.

The Vendue's stately lobby entrance from Vendue Range in downtown Charleston, S.C.
First built as a French trading warehouse in the 1780s, the hotel gets its name from the word vendue, meaning "sold" in French. Since becoming a hotel in the 1980s, additional buildings at 24 and 26 Vendue Range have been added to the original space at 19 Vendue Range.

The Vendue isn't your traditional hotel, and since its re-branding in spring of 2014, it's become even more extraordinary.

The Vendue's main floor lobby doubles as a chic art gallery, displaying work from both national and local artists.

Upon your first step inside The Vendue, you just know: this is unlike any hotel experience you've had before. The juxtaposition of The Vendue’s historic district setting and its own historic foundations, alongside an interior brimming with sculpture and paintings, is an exciting one.

The Vendue seems to lead guests through a property that could easily be considered a gallery in its own right, with more than 300 pieces on display from over 40 local and national artists. The Vendue art collection isn't just contemporary! Lovers of all art styles will enjoy the seasonal rotation of exhibits throughout The Vendue hotel.

The main dining room of The Drawing Room Restaurant is the perfect blank canvas for a delicious, colorful meal at The Vendue.
Walking from one work to another in the ground-level lobby, guests are guided toward The Press, an in-house coffee bar paying homage to the original building’s role as home to South Carolina's first newspaper.

Guests will also discover The Vendue’s concierge staff, front desk, and full-time art docents, who lead twice daily tours of on-property exhibits at 11 a.m. and 5 p.m., as well as private tours by request.

The Vendue’s art-appeal is even apparent in the dishes served at The Drawing Room Restaurant. Pictured here is the sustainably sourced fresh catch of the day.

With The Vendue’s conversion into Charleston’s premier art hotel came a re-imagining of their restaurant. Aptly named, The Drawing Room offers an upscale yet relaxed environment on the hotel’s first floor.
Keeping with the central theme, The Drawing Room menus combine traditional Charleston recipes with modern, inventive preparations. Open to both hotel guests and the public for daily breakfast and dinner as well as Sunday brunch, The Drawing Room seeks to impress and inspire, artfully plating and presenting each dish like an artist frames his work.

Don’t miss Vin a la Vendue on Tuesday evenings, featuring half-price bottles and live painting by The Vendue's current artist in residence.

The Vendue’s East Bay King Room guarantees a luxury experience, with feather bedding and unbeatable views of the historic district.

Guests have an impressive variety of room options, from the Palmetto Suite to the indulgent Signature Fireplace King and East Bay King rooms. All 84 guestrooms are spread across 19 and 26 Vendue Range, and each is uniquely adorned with artwork and special amenities.

While 19 Vendue houses The Press, The Drawing Room and The Rooftop, 26 Vendue is home to the artist-in-residence studio and a daily art reception with complimentary wine and canapés.

Quite literally on top of an exceptional hotel, The Vendue adds the final touch to your experience: a rooftop bar with 360-degree views of Charleston's picturesque city streets and harbor. Named simply "The Rooftop," this heated bar is open nightly and enjoyable in any season.

It's no surprise that both hotel guests and locals take advantage of The Rooftop as the perfect beginning or ending to an evening out.
The Vendue's new tagline encourages visitors to "Experience Art Outside the Frame," and that's exactly what's on the agenda as a well-attended guest of Charleston's only art hotel.

This boutique-style property is perfectly situated for easy exploration of Charleston's bustling downtown.

Photo courtesy of The Vendue