

## Art of Local at SpringHill Suites

By Johanna Read, TravelEater.net

SpringHill Suites is indeed doing the unexpected. Marriott's all-suites hotel brand wants guests to "expect the unexpected and indulge in the little things that make their trip more exciting". Enter their just-launched Art of Local program.

Whether traveling for business, with kids, solo, or as a couple, guests' busy schedules mean there's never enough time to explore. "We want to give our guests a chance to experience the local culture, right in our lobbies," says SpringHill Suites' Vice President and Global Brand Manager, Loren Nalewanski.

Not only is SpringHill Suites bringing local artists and their works directly into their hotels, the brand is helping local schools rebuild their art education. As Mr Nalewanski describes, "It starts from the heart, with the community, not just with professional artists".

So, at SpringHill Suites you'll see the works of both professional and amateur artists. On the pro side, you'll have a chance to see:

- Virginia's The Food Artist Group making sculptures with sugar, candy or vegetables



- Hit + Run making screen-prints on bags and clothing by hand

- Austin's Jessie Bearden "drawing" celebrities with seeds and sugar or writing the name of a city with colourful fruit

- Or even the New York indie-pop band MisterWives

On the amateur side, you'll see kids' art hanging in lobbies, printed on greeting cards and even on the key card for your room.

And you'll know that SpringHill Suites is improving local schools and communities. Through the non-profit group FreshArtists.org and the Save Art! Program, SpringHill Suites provides art supplies and programming to under-funded local schools. They've already been funding the program for four years, and so far nearly \$150,000 has been raised for schools.

SpringHill Suites is a chain that acts like a boutique hotel, and the hotel is always looking to provide guests with "suite extras".



West Elm has partnered with the hotel and so your room will have furniture and decor both stylish and functional. Their custom trundle sofa is a couch by day, a twin bed above and pulls out into a trundle bed too. A queen room can sleep as many as six people comfortably. Microwave, coffee-maker, mini-fridge, a large TV and free wifi mean you don't even need to leave your room. The fitness centre, 24-hour market, included breakfast, and relaxed lounge areas may draw you at least to another floor.

"Sweet extras" include a make-your-own-waffles bar at the vast breakfast buffet, Chuppa Chupps lollipops at Reception, and, at the Chicago Downtown River North location, Milk Duds, in honour of the Milk Dud factory that once stood nearby. ■

[WWW.SPRINGHILLSUITES.MARRIOTT.COM](http://WWW.SPRINGHILLSUITES.MARRIOTT.COM)

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