



**CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT:** Retro touches include a tape deck; Gold-Diggers doubles as a recording studio; Vinyl and whisky; Velvet adds warmth and texture; LA views; Music is everywhere; Each room is unique.



# GOLD STANDARD

JO STEWART CHECKS INTO A DESIGN-DRIVEN LOS ANGELES HOTEL THAT MOONLIGHTS AS A RECORDING STUDIO, BAR AND SOUNDSTAGE.

If appearances are everything in Hollywood, the Gold-Diggers hotel doesn't know it. I arrive to find a nondescript black-and-green building on a stretch of gridlocked road. A garish (yet endearing) sign outside tells me this is indeed the Gold-Diggers hotel, but the exterior aesthetic is more shady-dive-bar-bordering-on-crime-den than boutique hotel. Using a pin code to get inside, the art-lined walls indicate that the austere exterior is but a ruse; inside is another story altogether.

Like many Hollywood residents, Gold-Diggers is a slashie. It's a recording studio, but also a bar, soundstage, live music venue and 11-room hotel. How very LA. The historic building's colourful past adds some extra sizzle: the bar was once the domain of exotic dancers and the soundstage was used by legendary filmmaker Ed Wood in the 1950s.

Forget standard-issue hotel bedspreads, each room is different from the other. My Full Single room is a studio-style affair, cleverly designed to balance form with function. Featuring velvet cushions, gold bathroom fixtures and a mural painted by local multimedia artist Kristi Head, the warm and inviting space is filled with colour, texture and character.

Looking a little closer I discover unique touches rarely found in hotel rooms. Instead of the Gideons' Bible, there's a book of dystopian poetry. Goodbye clock radio; hello tape deck and cassette collection. Gold-Diggers also gets the basics right. The bed is comfy, the bathroom is spotless and stocked with

Malin+Goetz products, and the balcony lets in fresh air and sunshine.

In true rock'n'roll fashion, the minibar is named 'the Rider' and includes everything from kombucha to cold brew and hangover patches. Sure, I could play tunes via the Alexa-enabled Sonos speaker system, but instead I load a David Bowie cassette into the tape deck and kick back like it's 1985. Afterwards, I head downstairs to the bar where a bartender recommends his favourite ales. (I now see the need for in-room hangover patches.)

There aren't any bellhops or elevators at the entry of Gold-Diggers, so it's best suited to independent travellers who don't mind carrying their luggage up the stairs (pack light; there is, however, an ADA-compliant studio suite and lift access for guests with disabilities). It can get loud after dark, so earplugs are provided for a good night's sleep. If you're after poolside cocktails and 24-hour concierge service, then you're in the wrong place. Art, music, interior design and late nights more your thing? You'll fit in just fine at Gold-Diggers. **IT**



## GOLD-DIGGERS

5632 Santa Monica Boulevard, Los Angeles, California, USA; [gold-diggers.com](http://gold-diggers.com)

## THE IT VERDICT

A one-of-a-kind boutique hotel well-suited to music fans, art lovers and design devotees drawn to LA's considerable creative clout.

## LOCATION: 7.5/10

LA's multiculturalism is ever-present in this busy, overlooked pocket of East Hollywood that's close to West Hollywood.

## STYLE/CHARACTER: 10/10

Original art, in-room tape decks, multi-hued soft furnishings and other cool touches make this hotel a true Hollywood original.

## SERVICE: 7/10

Efficient, friendly service when needed, but you're mostly left to do your own thing.

## FOOD AND DRINK: 7/10

There's no hotel restaurant, but you'll receive tokens to use in the bar downstairs.

## VALUE FOR MONEY: 8.5/10

A Full Single room costs \$280 per night and includes a vinyl record pressing to take home.

All IT reviews are conducted anonymously and our writers pay their own way – so we experience exactly what you would.