

Room to Breathe

WITHIN THE FAST PACE AND CHAOS OF THE CITY, ASTORIA PLAZA CARVES A SPACE WHERE CALM IS STILL POSSIBLE

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Die-hard urbanites like me know that city life is a relentless tale of keeping up. It is the life of the multi-tasker who must stick to a rigid schedule, meet multiple deadlines, and go the extra mile to earn that extra credit; keeping tabs on the trends to stay relevant, but at the same time reigning them in to be one step ahead. The city is where the action is, and those in the thick of it must keep up not to be kicked out. Very likely, those who find this kind of life thrilling and enjoyable achieve more and become more—city life, after all, is rife with its peculiar opportunities and rewards.

But even the hard worker will get tired at some point, and finding a balance between meeting the demands of the urban lifestyle and recharging the spirit is a must. This gets harder and harder to do as we navigate closer to the center of the action. Down time becomes a luxury, a reward for a job well done. This is par for the course, and while we might dream of the ideal reward as a long vacation some place far and exotic, the effort and time to get there means that we only get to reach that place more seldom than we deserve. Meantime, our fast lives go on, taking a toll on our peace of mind.

We need to de-stress constantly to preserve our balance, and if that means stealing those little bits of time between our over-productive work days (and nights!), then that's that. We may not be able to hie off into far-flung beaches or fog-wrapped mountains when we feel the need to, but just finding a place nearby where one can hide from the hustle and bustle—take deep breaths in a cocoon of calm and quiet, enjoy some pampering in a laidback ambience—will do the trick.

The Astoria Plaza is one such hideaway. Picture the casual atmosphere of home without worrying how to make it happen.

Here, one can experience hotel service in unusually roomy lodgings. Choose between their one- or two-bedroom fully serviced residential suites, with areas ranging from 60 to 130 square meters—spacious abodes free from the usual cares of either work or home. Ambience is key to relaxation, and with modern interiors done up in soothing neutrals like white and chocolate brown accented by the details of nature, the suites of the Astoria Plaza offer understated style to calm the senses and refresh the mind. For intense detoxifying, spend a whole afternoon at the spa and salon and emerge transformed in time for cocktails at the bar, and then dinner with friends at the café. You may cap your capsule vacation off with an hour or two just drifting drowsily on the breezy pool.

Of course, late-night mavens get to enjoy the Astoria Plaza's proximity to a host of hip and happening hotspots clustered within the Ortigas area, and the shop-happy are just a shuttle away from the trendy malls. But when you spend a huge part of your work hours working the room at swank events and scouring the city for the best products, sometimes the best gift you could give yourself is a time to tune off, tuck in early, and sink under fresh, cool sheets into deep slumber. For those of us who take pride in taking care of ourselves, there is something liberating when you go to bed at night and not have to think of the little details you will have to do when you wake up. Likewise, it is the simplest joy to wake up on a weekend, leisurely stretch on your comfy bed, stand up slowly and throw the curtains wide apart and take in the cityscape as the sun rises. But calling room service for your fresh coffee and croissant is transcendent, especially if you know the service staff by name. Astoria Plaza's team of warm and meticulous people makes even the briefest of vacations an intimate and cherished experience.