

A Good Knight’s Sleep

Netflix’s most-watched scripted series inspires an immersive overnight stay at Lexington’s 21c Museum Hotel.

From one lockdown to the next, the greatest – and only – form of escape available right now is through our TV screens. So it’s no surprise that 62 million households streamed chess-based drama The Queen’s Gambit within the first 28 days of its release. Based on the 1983 novel of the same name, the Netflix series follows orphaned chess prodigy Beth Harmon on her quest to become the world’s greatest player and is filmed on a set that captures the essence of 1960s America.

In a bid to capitalise on Lexington’s starring role as Harmon’s hometown, 21c Museum Hotel – an art-centric property in the heart of the city – has partnered with VisitLex and Cornett to create The Harmon Room, an immersive overnight stay inspired by the show.

A collaboration between interior designer Isabel Ladd and preservationist Lucy Jones, The

Harmon Room is a time capsule of Mid-Century Modern design, replete with vintage accessories and period furniture from local antique shop Scout. Custom wallpaper in a pattern dubbed ‘The Knight’s Gambit’ has been designed specially for the room, while shelves are stocked with copies of Chess Review. The show’s most memorable moment has been translated as an artistic recreation of Harmon’s drug-induced hallucinations; a larger-than-life chessboard installation suspended from the ceiling in an arrangement that takes cues from her ultimate match with Russian grandmaster Vasily Borgov. And of course, no room inspired by The Queen’s Gambit would be complete without an actual chess set for its occupants to hone their skills. Checkmate seems a little more acceptable in a room where reality and fantasy combine.



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