

3. *Full-service, midpriced hotels and motels.* 24-hour front desk, upgraded interior and exterior decors, limited food service, extra room amenities, and other services. (Courtyard by Marriott, Four Points by Sheraton, and Holiday Inn)
4. *Full-service, upscale hotels.* Better quality and more luxurious, upgraded food service, and usually **concierge service**. (Delta Hotels, Hyatt Hotels, Hilton Hotels, and Westin Hotels)
5. *Luxury hotels.* Lavish guest rooms offering the ultimate in room amenities. Noted worldwide for service and surroundings. (Ritz-Carlton and Four Seasons Hotels)
6. *All-suite hotels.* Separate sleeping and living quarters, limited kitchen facilities, and complimentary food and/or beverage service in morning and evening. (Embassy Suites and MainStay Suites)
7. *Extended-stay hotels.* Apartment/studio living quarters targeting travelers seeking accommodations for five or more nights. (Residence Inn, Hyatt Summerfield Suites, Studio 6, and Staybridge Suites)
8. *Botique and lifestyle hotels.* Small to medium-sized hotels offering high levels of service with historic or innovative features. (Kimpton Hotels, Aloft, and Moxy Hotels)

Other organizations such as Smith Travel Research use classifications such as upper upscale, upscale, midscale with food and beverage, midscale without food and beverage, and economy to differentiate properties based on room rates.<sup>12</sup> Historic hotels (independently owned properties that are over 50 years old) occupy a special category in the classification system. They not only fulfill all the requirements of a typical full-service hotel but also have a unique character created through restored architectural structures and collections of antiques and other memorabilia. Each of these classification systems provides managers with reference groups and **benchmarks** against which they can evaluate performance and plan for the future. Best practices have been identified for a variety of hotel operations including check-in, housekeeping, maintenance, food and beverage, marketing, and information technology. For example, the Newark Gateway Hilton and the Ritz-Carlton Dearborn designed processes to speed up the traditional check-in process, and Motel 6 achieved excellence by creating a cohesive, chain-wide promotional campaign.<sup>16,17</sup>



This hotel is inspected and approved by tourism BC under its approved accommodation program and it is also rated by the Canadian star quality accommodation system. Photo by Cathy Hsu

Rating systems can be just as confusing as classification systems. There are literally hundreds of rating systems, both public and private, in every country. With published guides, blogs, and tourism sites boasting individual rating services, it is easy for the consumer to become confused. Confusion has been introduced into rating systems as many online sources have created their own rating rubrics. In fact, in one study, it was reported that about 60% of the hotels were found on at least six of the selected distribution channels, and only 24% of the hotels had consistent star ratings across different distribution channels. Results of data analysis indicated that consistent star ratings become even more difficult to maintain as the number of distribution channels used increases making it difficult for users to rely on these third-party distribution website ratings.<sup>18</sup>