



First Taste: Savoring the sights and flavors of the refreshed Hotel Kabuki

By [Sarah Chorey](#)

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Japantown always get us with the allure of ramen and a mall full of idiosyncratic treasures, but now a seriously impressive new addition is drawing us to the neighborhood.

Retrofitted by Brooklyn-based [Mark Zeff Design](#), Joie de Vivre's Hotel Kabuki has stepped boldly into the 21st Century and is showing off its \$31-million-dollar makeover. And trust, it's mighty enough to become a destination in the area, and not just for Instagrammers.

The Kabuki makes a grand first impression in the lobby, where the 19-foot ceiling, made from vintage factory windows, is back-lit like a work of art; behind the reception desk, the glass panels serve to frame a mural of a Bay Area map. Just beyond, the library has echoes of a Japanese house with a gorgeous open framework of

wooden beams, metal brackets and floor to ceiling windows. By day, the sunlight floods over midcentury modern furnishings accented with fur throw pillows and books, a plenty cozy spot to curl up and order a cocktail and Japanese share plates from the adjacent bar and restaurant.

Upstairs the rooms are all chicly redone in a manner of refined simplicity: gray accent walls, Japanese-inflected art, leather furniture with hand-worked finishes. The hotel's old Japanese sunken baths have been replaced (you won't even miss them) with more eco-friendly cascading rain showers. If you do make a reservation for an overnight stay, try and snag a corner room for an unobstructed view of the western half of SF.

This spring, perhaps as the cherry blossoms come into bloom, look for finishing touches including a new zen garden, viewable from most of the hotel's public spaces, and an outdoor lounge with fire pits and a pond.

// Rooms starting at \$249/night; Hotel Kabuki, 1625 Post St., jdvhoteles.com.



Vintage album covers provide a pop of color in the modern new lobby lounge.

(Photography by Sarah Chorey)