HOTEL REVIEW

This Newly Transformed Hotel in Canada's Most-visited National Park Has a Luxe Bathhouse and Incredible Mountain Views

Rimrock Banff, Emblems Collection, is housed in a historic hotel, set above the popular town.

By **Kendall Hunter** | Updated on October 23, 2026

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Take in the scenic mountain views.
Credit: Grant Harder/Rimrock Banff, Emblems Collection

WHAT WE LIKE

- Rimrock Banff retains the hotel's original mountainside architecture, with unobstructed mountain views taking center stage inside.
- The Bathhouse's infinity pool, suspended high above the valley floor and facing the mountains, is reason enough to visit.
- The Listening Room pairs speakeasy-style glamour with expertly crafted cocktails and vinyl, making it a standout spot for post-dinner entertainment.

RIMROCK BANFF, EMBLEMS COLLECTION

A bus at capacity carried me up Mountain Avenue, away from Banff's congested streets, toward the Upper Hot Springs and Banff Gondola. I got off near the springs, across the road from Rimrock Banff, the newest addition to Accor's Emblems Collection and its first North American property.

Banff's tourism story began on this mountainside, where hot springs long known to Indigenous peoples drew visitors in the 1880s. A reserve was

established in 1885, and two years later, it became Canada's first national park, later renamed Banff National Park. Today, it is the country's most popular, with over 4.5 million visitors passing through last year alone. And with Banff's streets and trails heaving under crowds, the Rimrock, set above town, offers breathing room.

I grew up in Banff, and as I stood on the road, steam from the sulfur pools rising through the pine and fir trees above me, I could tell the hotel retained the scale of a boutique inn. Built into the mountainside, its nine levels stepped down the slope toward the valley below. This was still the Rimrock I remembered, but more elegant.



The entrance to the Rimrock Banff, Emblems Collection.
Credit: Nicci Cornelison/Rimrock Banff, Emblems Collection

The 115-million-Canadian-dollar transformation, undertaken with Oxford Properties Group, was led by California-based Studio Collective, with contributions from the Canadian firm Frank Architecture and Interiors. Stepping in, I immediately noticed that a large section of the second floor had been removed to open the arrival space, creating what Studio Collective called a "walk-in wow moment." Beyond reception, the lobby flowed into Social, an expansive dining and gathering space buzzing with activity. At 750 feet above town, its floor-to-ceiling windows framed Mount Rundle. A soaring hammered copper shroud floated above a fire flickering from a dark granite base, reimagining the old lobby fireplace as Emblems' signature Timeless Hearth design feature.



The entrance to the Rimrock Banff, Emblems Collection.
Credit: Nicci Cornelison/Rimrock Banff, Emblems Collection

At the hotel's Bathhouse, I ran into sisters Leanne and Carolynn Pawluck, whose parents held the leasehold and developed the Rimrock when it opened in 1963. "When I first walked into the hotel, I felt I was home," Leanne Pawluck told me. She recognized details from her childhood in the redesigned hotel: frosted glass panels in the lobby lounge, the mountain goat mosaic in the coffee shop, and furnishings inspired by the '60s and '70s. "Our mom and dad would be so proud of what their dream has become," she added, "they always wanted a five-star world-class hotel with a view from every room."

That five-star service extends beyond the property's walls. Rimrock Banff has a team of local experts, dubbed Pathfinders, who tailor experiences to guests' interests and guide them toward quieter corners of the park. I booked a forest bathing session at Johnson's Lake, paired with Indigenous storytelling. After years of constantly being on the move in the Rockies, I slowed down this time, watching the sunlight dance on the water, listening to birdsong, and breathing in the scent of the forest. On the shoreline, Elder Pablo, a Kainai Blackfoot storyteller and Sundance leader, shared stories, drumming, and spoke about his vision quest. He invited us to consider our own "inner bison" to help us weather life's storms.

Here, my complete review of Rimrock Banff, Emblems Collection.

The Rooms



Interior of a guest room.
Credit: Antonio Cuellar/Rimrock Banff, Emblems Collection

I stayed in an eighth-floor Rimrock Vista View King overlooking Bow Valley, where breakfast on a window-side sofa was a serene start to the day. Guest rooms and suites climb in altitude, from treetop-level Classics to the top-floor Infinity Two-Bedroom Suite, with a 1,260-square-foot terrace, barrel sauna, and fire table.

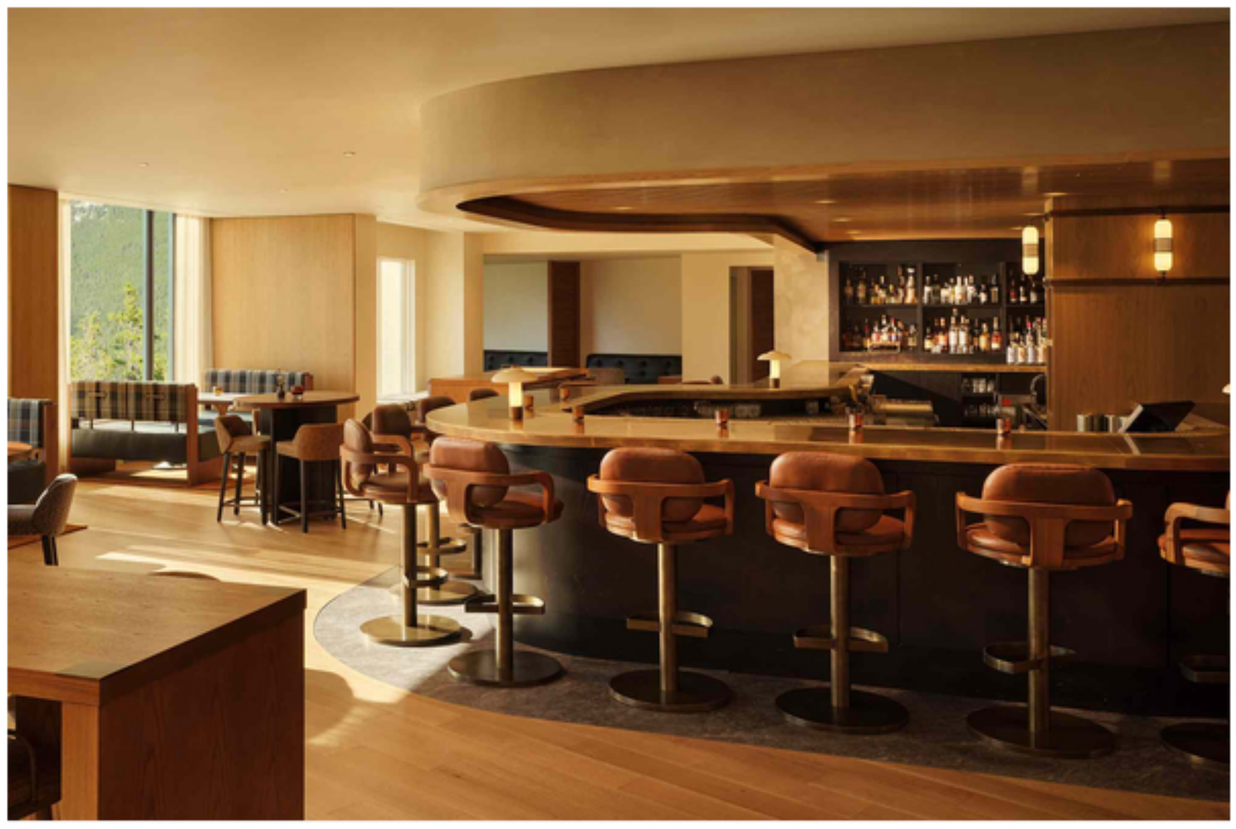
Gone are the old dark woods and heavy gold-and-red fabrics. My room felt soft and warm instead, with a nature-inspired color palette and a corner nook that gave the impression of sitting out on a ledge. At turndown, a sweet-dreams box arrived with mountain tea and bedside treats.

Food and Drink



Interior of the signature restaurant Parker's Table.
Credit: Antonio Cuellar/Rimrock Banff, Emblems Collection

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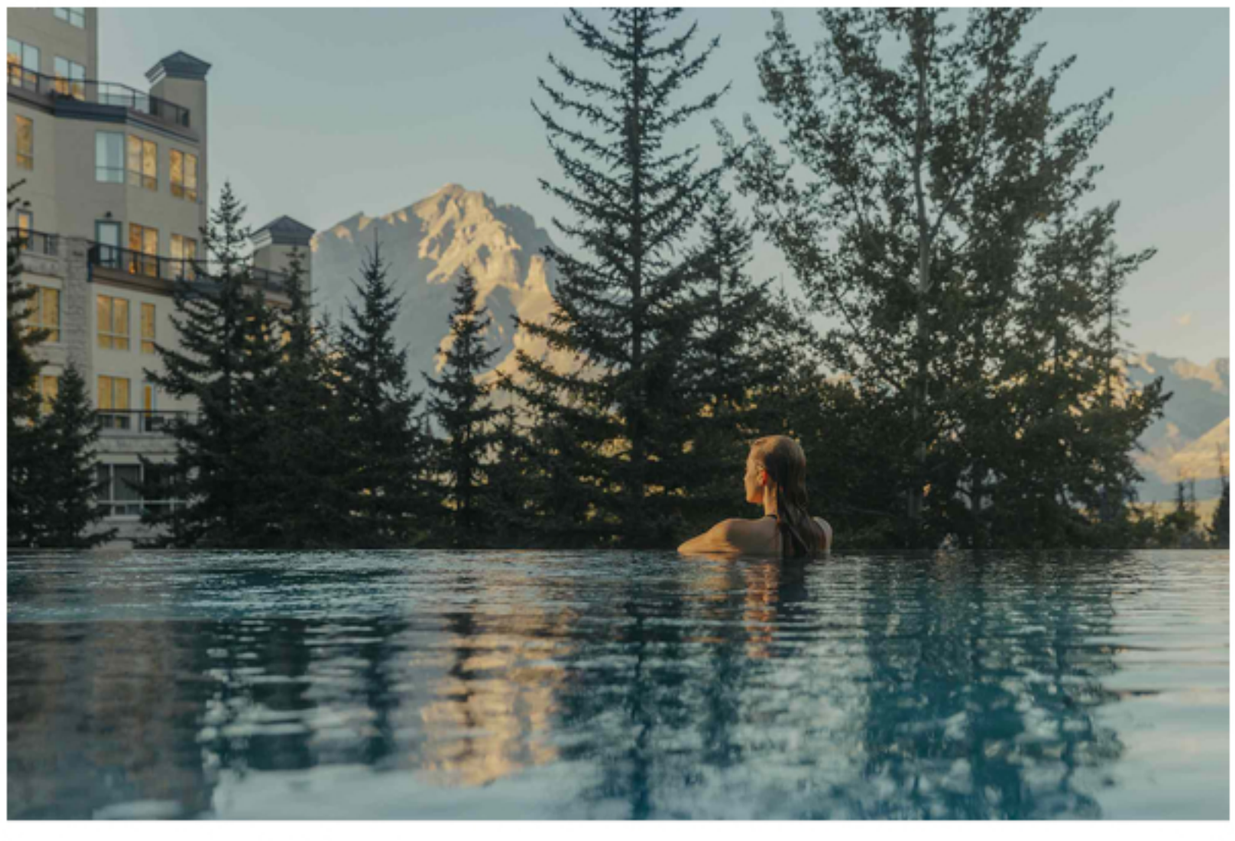
The Rimrock Social bar.
Credit: Antonio Cuellar/Rimrock Banff, Emblems Collection

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Alpine honey from a family-run Alberta apiary is the hotel's signature ingredient, appearing in everything from the welcome drink to the pine needle cake with honey ganache by Korean pastry chef Yun Eunyoung.

For the full terroir-driven menu, book Parker's Table, named for Alpine Club of Canada co-founder Elizabeth Parker. At our dinner, chef Dave Gibson's bison and lamb impressed, but I savored the rainbow trout in chamomile beurre blanc. At Social, a shiitake rice bowl in curry broth with a jammy egg made an easy arrival dinner, and my server steered me toward an old fashioned made with Wheeler's Reserve, an exclusive private-label whiskey from Wild Life Distillery. In-Robe Dining—a version of room service—brings a hearty breakfast and pastries, while The Market sells grab-and-go items, including Chronicle Coffee, electrolyte drinks, sandwiches, bowls, chia pudding, beer and wine. The drinks menu also features Goat lager, brewed in collaboration with Canmore-based Grizzly Paw Brewing Company.

The Spa



The signature outdoor infinity pool.
Credit: Grant Harder/Rimrock Banff, Emblems Collection

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The mountain-view sauna.
Credit: Nicci Cornelison/Rimrock Banff, Emblems Collection

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The Bathhouse is a self-guided, 9,600-square-foot retreat. Outdoors, the infinity pool includes an elevated vitality pool, with two cedar barrel saunas and fire-pit lounges along heated stone walkways. Inside are more pools, vista and salt saunas, an aromatic steam room, a glacial-cold plunge, a suspended meditation room, and the Aurora Room, where shifting light and music evoke the northern lights.

Accessibility

Accessible rooms have roll-in showers; elevators have Braille; and emergency strobe lights serve guests with hearing loss. A step-free route runs from the entrance to the lobby and restaurants.

How to Book

Rimrock Banff, Emblems Collection, is part of Accor Live Limitless (ALL), the company's loyalty program, which lets members earn and redeem points on stays and offers perks such as upgrades and personalized in-room amenities.

Nightly rates at Rimrock Banff, Emblems Collection start from $523.

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