

## Inside Novak Djokovic's quarantine hotel: Maggots found in meals and disturbing reports regarding treatment of refugees



People standing in a window gesture towards pro-refugee protestors demonstrating outside the Park Hotel, where Serbian tennis player Novak Djokovic is believed to be held

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World number one Novak Djokovic is being temporarily held at the Park Hotel in the Carlton suburb of Melbourne after being refused a visa upon his arrival into Australia this week.

Here is a look at a quarantine hotel which has gained notoriety in recent months for how asylum seekers have allegedly been treated.

### Hotel

Describing itself as "luxurious" and "4.5 stars" on its website, the hotel situated in a "prime location" has the usual amenities provided to guests, with 107 "fully equipped, air-conditioned bedrooms" on offer. A smoke-free property there are a variety of "complimentary" internet options that could be used by Djokovic. However, the nine-time Australian Open champion will presumably not have access to its outdoor swimming pool. Also likely to be out of bounds are beauty services, including body and facial treatments, and "rejuvenating" massages.

### Controversy

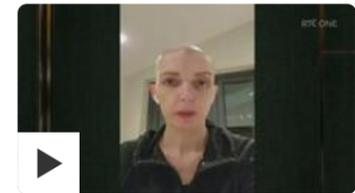
Disturbing recent reports in Australia have centred on the sustenance provided to refugees in the hotel, with alleged instances of maggots and mould found in some of the meals. Mustafa Salah, an Iraqi asylum seeker being detained at the property, told SBS News last week: "I was just shocked. The food they've been delivering is putting people in danger. Even an animal cannot eat this type of food." Djokovic has a well-renowned gluten tolerance and follows a gluten-free and dairy-free diet, aiming to eliminate as much sugar as possible, too.

### Reviews

Some of the more recent reviews on TripAdvisor have brought attention to the alleged plight of the refugees and asylum seekers within the facility. The most recent review by someone who seems to have stayed there came in December 2020 with a description of the property as "really seedy" in a one-star review. Nevertheless, of the 718 appraisals left by various customers, more than half (476) have given four or five-star reviews, with 37 one-star assessments - the lowest possible rating. - In Carlton, an inner-city suburb of Melbourne, the Park Hotel was previously known as Rydges on Swanston, and is close to the University of Melbourne and the Royal Women's Hospital.

### Facts about the Park Hotel

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Activists have held protests against their detention outside the hotel and there are messages on the exterior of the hotel and on the ground outside it against detentions and in support of detainees.

- The hotel's website bills it as a "luxurious 4.5-star hotel set in a prime location". It has 107 rooms, all air-conditioned.

- In October last year, there was a COVID-19 outbreak among refugees and asylum-seekers being held there.

- In December, a fire at the hotel led to minor injuries, according to media. The cause has not been determined.

- Soon afterwards, some of the detainees complained that their food contained maggots and mould, according to media.

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