

[Art at the Ocean House](#)

Watch Hill, Rhode Island

[March 14, 2013](#) | [Meredith](#)



After seeing the Ludwig Bemelmans “La Colombe” murals in the lower gallery of the [Ocean House](#), I half-jokingly suggested to Michael that we should do an entire post about the art at the Ocean House, but it wasn’t until we started exploring the second and third floors of the hotel (and every other public space in between) that we realized an art-themed post might make quite a bit of sense! In fact, the following photos are just a small portion of the various works of art on display throughout the property. To truly appreciate the breadth of the rotating, multi-million dollar collection, visiting the Ocean House in person is an absolute must!

While the pieces & aesthetics vary from space to space, it wasn’t difficult for either of us to select our favorites from the hotel’s vast collection. We were both instantly captivated by the drawings of Ludwig Bemelmans in the “Farewell to the Ritz” series on display in the Ocean House Living Room. The drawings, commissioned by *Town & Country Magazine* when the hotel was torn down in 1951, tell the story of the famed New York Ritz-Carlton on 46th Street & Madison Avenue. Bemelmans, best known for his *Madeleine* books (of which every room at the Ocean House has [this compilation](#) for your reading pleasure), worked at the Ritz upon moving to the US and therefore perfectly captures the spirit of the Ritz from the perspective of the staff.

Sets of notecards from this collection are for sale at the Ocean House Boutique, so we decided to pick one up as a memento from our visit to the hotel. Number 8 (a reproduction of the illustration in the above image) is now framed and on display in our kitchen!

Among the other illustrated narrative collections we enjoyed while browsing were the Story of Susan, a series of watercolor paintings & text that tell the story of the societal debut of a country girl, and the pages of a very old children's poem, depicting an amusing dog repeatedly surprising its owner with human acts.

Besides the grand paintings in the Ocean House Living Room (one of which is of another Relais & Chateaux property that we love, [Castle Hill Inn](#)), Michael was drawn to the satirical drawings of French society on the second floor (where I also fell in love with the beautiful floral works).

It's not an exaggeration to say that almost every public wall in the Ocean House is covered in some beautiful work of art. A collection of Victorian ladies in gilded frames on stripes of pink await women guests in the ladies' powder room and a display of turn of the century cruise ship prints will guide you to the workout facilities and OH! Spa. Walking through the many long halls of the Ocean House, you'll want to take your time, stopping to look at every carefully chosen piece, because I can say, without a doubt, that this is one property where the art is an integral part of the overall experience.













