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## 8/10 Location

It's hard to imagine that the trams running down this broad avenue in the centre of Nantes were previously boats, when the street was the River Erdre, a tributary of the Loire. Almost across the street, the 1970's 32-storey Tour de Bretagne is one of Nantes' less-successful modern creations, though happily hidden by trees so you don't see it all the time. The hotel is about 1400 metres (1500 yards) from the train station, past the Château des Ducs de Bretagne fortress and museum, and eight miles (12 km) from Nantes Atlantique Airport. It's a mile-and-a-half to the Victor Schœlcher footbridge leading to the Île de Nantes, where the former shipyards have been replaced by the law courts, a new creative district and Les Machines de l'île's fantastical marine roundabout and giant mechanical walking elephant.

## 10/10 Style & character

Nantes architects Barto-Barto designed the interior as well as exterior down to every last detail from bedroom lamps and tables to the text font used for the hotel's name, often working with local craftsmen for the made-to-measure furniture and fittings. The new owners insist that rather than creating a trendy new place, they wanted above all to preserve its soul and construction methods. Named after 18th-century naval officer and explorer, Jean-François de La Pérouse, the slightly diagonal profile recalls the ships of Nantes' maritime past, the 1990's building had to be the same height as its historic neighbours, yet with long, horizontal windows it's hard to tell how many floors there are, with a roof that flows on from the walls as part of the stone-faced façade.