

TRAVEL+ LEISURE

I Took My Son to This Oklahoma City Resort With an Indoor Water Park, and We Both Had the Time of Our Lives

It's the savvy traveler's answer to an elevated water park resort experience.



Okana Resort & Indoor Waterpark in Oklahoma City.

WHAT WE LIKE

- In addition to the five on-site restaurants, the resort also has five casual, quick-bite options located near the lagoon and water park rides, all offering generous portions and kid-friendly flavors.
- Okanarama game hall has over 100 arcade games, virtual reality activities, a mirror maze, and an escape room.
- The First Americans Museum, a 175,000-square-foot family-friendly institution dedicated to the history and culture of Oklahoma's 39 federally recognized First American Nations, sits next door to Okana's campus.

I didn't set out to cover water parks; the water parks found me — by way of my son. Parents know the drill: you might plan the trip, but kids often pick the lane. This is how I, a person who once wouldn't have deigned to dip a toe into a lazy river, somehow became a full-blown water park aficionado. So believe me when I say Oklahoma City's [Okana Resort & Indoor Waterpark](#) is the savvy traveler's answer to an elevated water park resort experience.

The 40-acre campus along the Oklahoma River in [the city's Horizon District](#) is a flagship project from the Chickasaw Nation, a \$400 million tourism destination. The resort's name blends the nation's words for water ("oka") and friend ("inkana"). An 11-story, [404-room hotel anchors the development](#), which I first clocked from the freeway a few miles before we arrived for a recent stay.



The indoor water park.

The story-tall, primary-colored letters spelling "Okana" run vertically down the side of the building, grabbing my attention across the prairie landscape. At first, the bold shades—splashed all over the property—had me bracing for full elementary-school birthday-party energy. Instead, the execution is surprisingly dialed in. Okana may borrow notes from the [Great Wolf Lodge playbook](#) (say, with its on-site arcade), but the overall vibe lands closer to [Beaches Resort](#) than to a theme park.

There's art and lots of it. Works exclusively created by 28 First American artists appear throughout the property, with striking pieces lining the guest rooms and hallways. Other thoughtful nods to Indigenous makers continue across the resort: Dockside, Okana's gift shop, stocks products from Native American brands like [Bedré Fine Chocolate](#), while in-room amenities come from [Mother Earth](#), a Canadian Indigenous-owned luxury bath and body company.



A lounge area in the lobby.

Of course, art can only hold a 10-year-old's attention for so long, and soon enough, we were speed-walking toward the water park. It is here that Okana's real version of parental luxury reveals itself: when your kids are blissed out, living their absolute best cannonball life.

Brian Szydloski, the water park general manager, told me that Okana operates on a kid-first imperative without forgetting the adults are the ones footing the bill and quietly craving ease. At check-in, everyone gets a wristband that doubles as a room key and a water park pass: scan and go, no digging through beach bags while someone is dripping water on the carpet. You can even give your child purchasing power via the wristband—a privilege my son found incredibly thrilling, if slightly dangerous to our snack budget. The hotel connects to the water park via a bright, window-lined walkway, creating a constant, happy migration of swimsuit-clad families.

Everything is engineered to make traveling with kids feel frictionless. So when my son finally tapped out after repeat laps on the Whiplash and Tide Twist slides—and I was five chapters deep into a new book—dinner was literally steps away, with several restaurants ready to absorb us, wet hair and all.

Below, my full review of Okana Resort & Indoor Waterpark.

The Rooms



Interior of a King guest room.

Our Bunk Suite featured a bedroom with a king-size bed and a balcony overlooking the lagoon. A separate bunk room with its own TV brought the total to three large screens, including another in a compact sitting area with a sleeper sofa, chair, and desk.

The setup clearly anticipates larger family groups, though a few design choices surprised me. The bathroom, for example, included only a shower and lacked a shelf for soap or a razor. Another note: housekeeping runs on a three-day rotation, according to the front desk, unless guests request service.

Food and Drink



The Dive pool bar.



The Curveball Kitchen.

While Okana is just a 15-minute drive from downtown Oklahoma City, the resort offers plenty of on-site dining choices. Szydloski told me the goal is for guests to experience the property like an all-inclusive — even if they are not technically paying a single, all-in rate. To make that especially appealing for families, dining doubles as entertainment.

Three of the five signature restaurants come with built-in entertainment. Curveball Kitchen, the baseball-themed spot, serves ballpark classics — think pretzels roughly the size of a kid's head — alongside virtual batting cages. Bullseye, true to its name, is an axe-throwing speakeasy (limited to ages 13 and up). Smokehouse Social delivers the property's take on Oklahoma barbecue and has virtual golf stations. Portions run generous and flavors skew crowd-pleasing, the kind of lineup designed to keep everyone fed, happy, and firmly on property.

The Spa

Okana has a lovely spa with seven treatment rooms tucked between two restaurants and directly across from its lagoon. I booked an anti-aging facial in the calm, softly lit space, which also offers guests complimentary access to a dedicated red-light therapy room before or after treatments.

My aesthetician was delightful, and the entire experience felt indulgent enough that I seriously considered going back the next day for a pedicure.

Accessibility

The resort's pools are zero-depth entry, and a dedicated wet transfer chair allows guests with mobility issues to transfer in and out of the pools.

The property offers ADA-compliant guest rooms with wheel-in showers, which can be requested at the time of booking.

How to Book



The cabanas around the resort beach.

Okana Resort & Indoor Waterpark is not currently part of any points-based loyalty program. Before booking a stay, check [the resort's website](#) for its most current offers and packages.

Nightly rates at [Okana Resort & Indoor Waterpark](#) start from \$159.