

The Blakely Hotel

136 W. 55th Street

EXCELLENT



New York has no shortage of high end, first class hotels. But trying to find a good, moderately priced hotel is a real chore. Until recently every "value" hotel we have visited has had small rooms, poor service, a property badly in need of maintenance or just no charm at all. We began to wonder if it was impossible in New York to have a really nice hotel with some character without breaking the bank.

So, we were overjoyed with the discovery of The Blakely on W. 55th Street, a 118 room little gem with rooms starting at a very generous 310 sq. feet. Perfectly located between 6th and 7th Avenues and within walking distance to major attractions and restaurants, The Blakely is the latest addition in the Manhattan portfolio of BD Hotels, owned by Richard Born and Ira Drukier that includes The Mercer, The Chambers, The Maritime, and The Elysee. The partnership has recently joined forces with Robert DeNiro in the development of The Greenwich Hotel in Tribeca.

The small wood paneled lobby resembles a private club with hunt pictures, comfortable leather couches, bookshelves and oriental rugs. Check-in is swift and efficient and the staff pleasant and helpful.

Rooms range from 310 sq. ft for a deluxe room to 425 sq. ft for a deluxe studio to 525 sq. ft for a one bedroom suite. They are tastefully furnished with beige walls with blue or rust accents, cherry furniture, a tray ceiling with a chandelier, rich oak baseboards and hunt artwork. The bed had a pillow top mattress, a linen duvet and luxurious Egyptian linens. Most rooms have a comfortable reading chair and ottoman. Equipped with a flat screen TV, CD/DVD player, wireless internet access, work desk, full kitchenette with sink, microwave, mini-fridge, dishes and flatware it is a home away from home. The large marble bath had a great rainfall shower, Penhaligon toiletries, plump towels and Frette robes.

Other amenities include a 24 hour fitness center, complimentary delivery of the NY Times to your door in the morning, in-room coffee service, discounted overnight parking, complimentary Continental breakfast and a delightful restaurant Abboccato that Zagat calls ""Interesting"" Italian food, ""lovely"" digs and a ""convenient"" location ""across from City Center"" add up to ""delightful"" dining at this ""discreet"" Midtown sibling of Oceana and Molyvos"

New York is expensive enough to visit, save some money at the Blakely without sacrificing comfort or style and splurge on a great restaurant.