



The Blakely New York

Arrival/Check-in: The day I arrived was as frigid as the Arctic and as windy as Chicago, so The Blakely New York's lobby, with its warm men's club décor of dark paneling and leather chairs and sofa, was especially welcoming. Like most New York boutique hotels, the lobby is small and intimate, and as soon as I entered I was greeted warmly by the amiable and efficient front-desk staff. After a quick check-in, I was on my way to my room on the 11th floor. (28/30)

Guest Quarters: My room was a deluxe one-bedroom suite, with 525 square feet of space that included a sitting room with a long daybed/couch, dark hardwood floors and one of the two flat-screen TVs in the suite. A full kitchenette with a mini-fridge, microwave, coffeemaker and dishes was off the sitting room. The bedroom had a king-sized bed, an armchair, a desk chair, a dresser and a desk with desktop outlets and another flat-screen TV. The bed, with a down mattress topper and a luxurious duvet, was very comfortable, so I slept like a log. The bathroom, although somewhat cramped, was very attractive and efficiently laid out; a marble rain shower with a glass partition made the space feel larger than it was. (28/30)

Services/Amenities: The Blakely offers complimentary wireless high-speed Internet, which is becoming more common in boutique hotels. Travelers dislike paying exorbitant

rates for wireless access, so maybe large hotel chains should take note. Other in-room amenities included two phones and a DVD/CD player; Frette robes and Penhaligons toiletries, two international luxury brands, are in keeping with the hotel's attention to top quality. I was pleased to see the 24-hour fitness facility, which seemed more than adequate. Breakfast is served in Ristorante Abboccato, which also provides room service. Abboccato, specializing in seafood, is accessible from the street and the lobby and is Michelin and Zagat rated, so there is no need to leave the premises for a superb meal. My colleagues and I had an excellent dinner there. (38/40)

The Experience: The hotel is located in the heart of Midtown, across the street from City Center and within walking distance of Carnegie Hall, Rockefeller Center, Central Park, the Museum of Modern Art and the Broadway theater district, which makes it an ideal place to stay whether on a business or leisure visit. The Boardroom, a full-service meeting space, accommodates up to 45 people for events.

Total Score: 94/100 Richard T. Evans

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