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Travel

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Hotel Review: The Dupont Hotel in Washington, D.C.



SUSANA RAAB FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Guest room at the Dupont, which is the only hotel on Dupont Circle.

By **FRED A. BERNSTEIN**

Spring brought cherry blossoms and a new hotel to the nation's capital: the 327-room Dupont Hotel, displaying a cool and modern (but not aggressively modern) style. The Dupont, known as Jurys Washington Hotel in its previous incarnation, occupies a white-brick building that has undergone a top-to-bottom renovation. The official opening isn't until the end of the summer, but the hotel, part of the

Doyle Collection of hotels, was operating nicely during my stay in April.

LOCATION

There are plenty of hotels near Dupont Circle, but this is the only one actually on it. The circle isn't as beautiful as, say, the National Mall, but it is the heart of a lively neighborhood full of popular stores and restaurants. And the Dupont Circle Metro station is about a block from the hotel. From there, it's only four

or five stops (and under \$2) to most of Washington's attractions.

THE ROOM

My room was large and had a masculine, clubby décor, with wood shutters rather than curtains, and dark striped carpeting. The bed, with a beige leather headboard, was flanked by a pair of terrific gooseneck reading lights. The flat-screen TV was contained in a handsome wooden frame. The hotel is completing 13 suites on



its top floor. Expected to be ready at the end of the summer, they will offer enhanced amenities, like larger-sized Kiehl's products in the bathroom (though the regular sizes seemed plenty large to me).

THE BATHROOM

The design strikes a good balance between openness and privacy. The sink and vanity are in an alcove off the bedroom. The toilet and shower (no tub) are in a separate room, with a partial glass partition between them. Two quibbles: The gray granite on the floor around the toilet shows every spot (gentlemen!). I suppose it's a good thing, then, that the floor gets soaking wet when the shower is on.

ROOM SERVICE

The all-day menu includes items like salade niçoise (small \$13, large \$20), which arrive on a square wood tray so large it's a struggle for the server to get it through the door. Breakfast was promised in half an hour; it took more than 45 minutes. It was also incomplete (the toast was missing). Happily, the egg-white frittata, piled with corn and beans, was delicious (\$14, plus \$5 for a side of potatoes). But because the hotel was only a week old when I got there, I can forgive small mistakes.

AMENITIES

The bar, which overlooks Dupont Circle through floor-to-ceiling windows, is cheerfully designed. The restaurant, also airy and attractive, could use some fine-tuning (at lunch, a bland tuna tartare and mediocre chicken club sandwich cost \$25, plus tax and tip). Wi-Fi is everywhere. The basement health club offers cardio machines, each with its own 19-inch TV. On-street parking is scarce; the hotel charges \$32 a night for valet service.

BOTTOM LINE

In a city with lots of hotels, many of them cookie-cutter, the Dupont fills a niche: boutique without being creaky. Doubles from \$189, plus tax. Dupont Hotel, 1500 New Hampshire Avenue NW; (202) 483-6000; www.doylecollection.com/dupont.