

June 18, 2013

The Sanctuary Hotel New York



GT CHECKLIST

- Doorman/valet
- Less than 10 minutes for check-in
- Separate tub and shower
- Large vanity
- High-quality towels
- Powerful, unattached hair dryer
- High-quality bed linens
- Large, flat-screen television
- Large desk with convenient outlets
- Large, complimentary laptop safe
- Complimentary in-room WiFi
- Complimentary bottled water
- Stocked minibar
- Ample lighting
- In-room coffeemaker
- Iron and ironing board
- On-site restaurant and bar
- 24-hour room service
- State-of-the-art fitness center

Arrival/Check-In: I arrived at the hotel by taxi straight from the airport on a sunny afternoon. The driver did not know of this small boutique hotel, but with my handy smartphone we found it easily enough. The hotel's simple white exterior blends into the New York buildings, giving it a great hideaway feel. Unfortunately, there was no doorman at the time to help me with my bags, and I navigated the front stairs awkwardly on my own. Once inside, I was quickly ushered to the front desk and checked in. While waiting, I looked around the lobby and was impressed that although there were no windows, the room and its colorful lighting felt comfortable and open. The seating area adjacent to a roaring fireplace completed the look. After a quick check-in, I was shown to the elevators in the middle of the lobby.

Guest Quarters: My superior queen room felt right at home in New York; although small, it had great character and everything within reach. The room was designed in rich red textures; black-dyed wood and leather accents gave it a modern feel. The queen-sized bed dominated the space but left room for a small desk with complimentary WiFi positioned right near the flat-screen television. Since the room was small, the lighting was excellent, with lamps on either side of the bed and attached to the wall, leaving plenty of space to plug in tech gadgets and enough lighting to read in bed. The chandelier above the bed provided light but lent great charm to the room more than anything.

The bathroom was in the same room as the bed, just off to the side with a thick red curtain to hide the glass-enclosed shower. The single marble-topped sink offered enough room for personal amenities, and the light surrounding the mirrors was sufficient. Everything was out in the open except the toilet, which luckily had its own room. This arrangement was great for a single traveler but could get very tight with another person.

Services/Amenities: The Sanctuary is right in the center of Times Square; with so many options of restaurants, walking, and entertainment, you spend little time at the hotel. Unfortunately for a business traveler who must get work done, the hotel amenities left me wanting. Although their HAVEN Rooftop lounge offered great food and a festive atmosphere, there was no on-property full-scale restaurant at the time of my stay; and room service was not available. There was no gym, but guests have free access to an Equinox gym about five blocks away. That gym is upscale and well equipped, but it was daunting to find it through the press of tourists. Each morning, guests enjoy a complimentary breakfast of bagels, coffee, cereals and more — a great convenience when in a rush for meetings.

The Experience: The Sanctuary is in the heart of Times Square and the theater district, providing a home base amid the chaos. Although I would not recommend it to the business traveler, the property is perfect for guests looking to explore the city. A signature restaurant, 24-hour in-room dining, private dining and meeting spaces, and a fitness center are in the works; I hope to return when these updates are completed.