

Hey, this is the hotel for you in Washington DC

By [Brian Berkman](#)

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If its all about location, location, location then the fact that it's right across from The White House is about all you need to know. The Hay-Adams, a historic boutique hotel and Leading Hotel of the World, in Washington, DC has The White House, Lafayette Square and St John's Church as immediate neighbours.



The Hay-Adams has a proud history and a proud history of excellent service.

On a Sunday, you might find The First Family in the pew next to you at St John's, the church of American presidents since James Madison.

This year also marks the hotel's 12th consecutive listing in *Travel & Leisure* magazine's World's Best Hotels list, as well as an accolade as Condé Nast Johansen's Best Urban Hotel and Award for Excellence for Canada, Mexico and USA.

A proud history

It was initially built as a home for Hay and Adams. John Hay served as a personal secretary to Lincoln while Adams was a historian and Harvard professor, and descendant of Presidents John Adams and John Quincy Adams. Political, intellectual and social movers and shakers have made a bee-line for this site since its inception.

After its conversion to a hotel in the 1920s, The Hay-Adams with its 145 guest rooms, including 21 suites and 9 ADA-compliant rooms for people with disabilities, has been a sought-after address. It was, after all, the first dining room in DC to have air-conditioning.

What I loved was that a warm and relaxed ethos permeated the hotel. While we were waiting in the elegant, clubby timber-clad lobby, we spied hotel regulars being welcomed back with open arms. Despite its prominent history and smart looks, the underlying energy at The Hay-Adams is a welcoming warmth which is why it is such a pleasure to stay there. One reason for this might be that the hotel remains family owned rather than purely driven by corporate imperatives. Under the direction of affable General Manager, Hans Bruland, service is intimate while being discreet. I had the feeling this aspect was as important to him as maintaining superb luxury standards.



The suites are as you're expect in a premium establishment.



Expect meals second to none.

As anchored as this hotel is in its history, it is also entirely modern in the most important of ways: it was the first DC hotel certified with a Luxury Eco Certification Standard (LECS) award following a comprehensive on-site inspection and guests are encouraged to be environmentally aware beyond the usual towel-saving request most properties employ. The Hay-Adams is among a handful of hotels I have stayed at where in-room bins are divided for recycling.

The place to be seen but not heard

As a premium hotel, rates are priced accordingly but there is also complimentary Wi-Fi for all guests, which is not standard in the United States. During our December stay, hot chocolate and apple cider were served in the lobby as a

complimentary offering that even extended to non-residential guests.

A potential drawback if you are staying on a hurried business trip is that breakfast in the Lafayette restaurant is a la carte and not buffet-style. Lunch, dinner and a renowned Sunday brunch are also served there. Another dining option is at Off the Record bar. Chosen by Forbes as one of the World's Best Hotel Bars, it has the reputation as the place to be seen and not heard.

While pointing out the layout of The White House to us from the Top of the Hay, a rooftop events space with glass doors that can open entirely, Hans tells us that 4 July event invitations at the Top of the Hay are among the city's hottest tickets. No ticket is so hot however, that Eric Gammill, Les Clefs d'Or USA member and chief Concierge at The Hay-Adams cannot secure.



The underlying energy at The Hay-Adams is a welcoming warmth.

For more information go to www.HayAdams.com.

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