

# WHEREVERFAMILY



## INTERCONTINENTAL WASHINGTON, D.C. – THE WHARF

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The contemporary, glass-clad [InterContinental Washington, D.C. – The Wharf](#) is the most luxurious of the three hotels anchoring [The Wharf](#), a two-year-old, 24-acre, mile-long entertainment, residential and commercial development on the Potomac River. On weeknights the lodging welcomes mostly business travelers; it attracts leisure travelers, couples and especially families for weekend stays with promotional packages, including one planned for Valentine’s Day.

The valet-staffed entry to the 278-room hotel is on a side street abutting the riverfront promenade and opens into a large lobby with check-in straight ahead, a Clef d’Or Concierge to the right, comfortable seating and an entry into [Kith/Kin](#), the 3,500-square-foot, 96-seat on-site restaurant. The casually chic space features a large bar and a massive mural with quotes from favorite chefs and feels more upscale than the prices; the dining area benefits from the light through window-walled doors that open out to the promenade.

Our 11<sup>th</sup>-floor room was large, with two queen beds. At the far end, a floor-to-ceiling window wall showcased the phenomenal view over the harbor, down the Potomac and included the sliver of East Potomac Park across the channel. Guestrooms feature a quiet beige and blue palette with a geometric-patterned carpet, a leather wall backing the beds and a chair and an oval table placed near the window wall. I was impressed with the state-of-the-art touch panel technology and the long and well-designed console which stretched out to a desk top; it offered plenty of space for the large TV, an ample number of drawers for clothes and for storing coffee paraphernalia, minibar items, cups and a safe; it even housed the fridge, which cleverly opened from one end. The bathroom was spacious and featured a spa-inspired shower, with herringbone marble design.

Families can reserve the Anchor Suite, which has a billiard table, or choose Premier Riverview rooms with Juliette balconies. Among the 33 suites, The Constellation is the two-story Presidential Suite with panoramic views of the river.

The pet-friendly lodging offers a high-tech waterfront fitness center and a 4,250-square-foot L'Occitane Spa. L'Occitane products from Provence, in the south of France, are familiar in the States, but this is the second-ever stateside spa. There are five spacious treatment rooms, including an oversized duo cabine, a nail bar and spacious lounge with day beds and window seats both viewing the waterfront. And, there was one luxe detail I had never seen before: the sheets on the massage table were monogrammed: THE WHARF SPA by L'OCCITANE.



At Kith/Kin, the Afro-Caribbean fare reflects Bronx-born executive chef Kwame Onwuachi's homage to his family's Creole roots in Jamaica and Trinidad, as well as Nigeria and Louisiana. The spices, flavors and exotic dishes also incorporate his own youthful travels, including visits to Washington, D.C., where his grandfather, a professor of African American history and anthropology at Howard University, and to Nigeria, where he lived for a time. As a youth, he sold candy on the New York subway and financed his own catering business; graduated from the Culinary Institute of America; worked in two elite Manhattan restaurants; opened and closed his own D.C. venue; and was awarded James Beard's Rising Star Chef of the Year.

Our party of three arrived at Kith/Kin early; because the bar was hopping and we wanted to chat quietly, we ordered drinks while waiting for our table in the lobby lounge. The lovely server carried a mini-table for our drinks and placed it next to our seats. At dinner, I wished we were a party of six or seven so I could get to taste so many more dishes I didn't get to sample, like jollof rice, goat roti, jerk chicken, king crab in a creamy yellow curry or shrimp in a white wine and wheat beer sauce. Of the three interestingly flavored appetizers, I adored the cucumber and avocado juxtaposed with chunks of crunchy, marinated (lemon juice and white balsamic vinegar) cucumber, Asian pear and gooseberry Piri Piri puffed quinoa; and the Uni Escovitch, which featured Maryland crab and lobster, with avocado mousse on a crispy roti. Mushroom Forest, the third appetizer, was a huge portion of roasted mushroom spread with charred eggplant dip with crispy honey-touched flatbread (called m'semen). The dish was so satisfying, only one of us had room for an entrée and ordered braised oxtails. For dessert, we shared rich Tamarind pecan pie and a buttermilk pie — both Thanksgiving specialties.

The rooftop sports a swimming pool and sweeping views. The ground floor leads out to all the attractions of The Wharf — including dozens of restaurants — along its pedestrian promenade and side streets, including The Anthem, a 3,000-seat major concert venue; The Watering Hole, an open-air bar owned by the hotel; a firepit on Recreation Pier; and kid-friendly venues with games and a fountain at 7th Street Park. The location is convenient to the national monuments and the museum-lined Mall; there's even a free Southwest Shuttle bus from the corner to a major metro stop and the mall.