InterContinental Wharf DC Hotel Review

Room with a (Majestic) View

It's literally been months since our last post. COVID-19 has turned the world upside down, and DC Outlook is no exception. But life goes on, and we decided to venture out. Cross town, to the District Wharf and the exquisite InterContinental Washington D.C. - The Wharf. The kind of place that transcends the term "staycation" into something sublime. After all, if you're finally going to go out, why not go all the way?

First off, if you haven't been to the new District Wharf yet, you're missing out on one of DC's premier destinations. The renovations are spectacular, with a "boatload" of hip places to eat & drink and The Anthem music venue (currently closed) as well as a bustling boardwalk, that's packed day & night with happy locals and tourists alike. Smack dab in the middle of it all, is the InterContinental, the perfect place to set up camp for a (very) special night out, weekend, or (if time allows, which it probably does) an extended stay.
Checking in, is friendly, professional and indicative of the hotel overall. Lots of friendly faces, and an ice cold bottle of Evian water to "cool you down." As you likely know by now, I'm all about the little details, and the InterContinental (which I'll refer to as IC going forward) has them in abundance. In fact, I received a warm greeting each and every time I walked through the IC's airy, modern lobby. Not intrusive mind you, but attentive and welcoming. Kudos to an A+ staff, especially considering the pandemic.

In case you're wondering, the IC might be the safest place in the DMV (including The White House.) God only knows how, but they've taken so many precautions (plastic, plastic, plastic) I felt safer than I do at home. Door handles, remote controls, you name it, and odds are, it's protected in plastic. This added security comes with a few minor inconveniences (no rooftop pool, stands out the most) but they pale in comparison to the peace of mind you'll enjoy throughout your stay.
Entry to the room is effortless (their key card is idiot proof, touch & turn) and once you step inside, prepare to be blown away. I decided to amp up the luxury by securing the Executive Riverview Suite on the 8th floor. This room normally goes for over $500, but the view alone is worth every penny. And if you're trying to impress a special someone... say no more.

How's this for a view?

Speaking of good impressions, it's hard to trump a personal note, complimentary macarons and a bottle of CK Mondavi Cabernet Sauvignon (with two glasses) waiting for you, directly across from your king size bed. This, after taking in your first view from the sweeping balcony window. Again, first class all the way, and oh so welcoming.

or this (from the balcony)

Wine in hand, it was time to inspect the room... critic-style. That starts with the temperature, which is set at 71*, but dials down to a chilly 67* almost instantly, and 63* during the night (yes, I like it cold.) Quiet too, which isn't always automatic. The suite features not one, but two 50" Samsung HDTVs, with a wide array of channels, including HBO and EPIX. There's a cozy sectional sofa and a beautiful marble top desk, plus a dual trash can that includes a place for recycled items. There are USB outlets everywhere (four bedside, five elsewhere, but none in the bathroom) and two telephones, with easy-to-follow instructions.
The decor strikes a more masculine note (especially in the hotel hallways) but is warm and well-lit. Artwork varies (a lot) with a particularly striking piece facing the bathroom door (see below.) And speaking of that door... It's a whopping 36" wide and almost seven feet tall. I don't recall ever mentioning a bathroom door before, but this one practically *commands* acknowledgment.

The bathroom is, in a word... fabulous. The Kohler toilet is discreetly tucked away in a corner, but make sure you set a towel down, as the tile floor gets a little cold. Of course, if you're wearing your complimentary slippers (TY Presidential Collection) this shouldn't be an issue. Unfortunately, I wear a size 14 shoe, and have yet to discover a pair of hotel slippers that fit me. Perhaps some day.
I love a big bathroom, and the IC obviously does as well. Two people can go about their business, without ever bumping elbows (but where's the fun in that?) The walk-in shower is sensational and spacious. Strong water pressure, and fairly easy to figure out (you'd be surprised.) It comes stocked with Agraria toiletries in, what I can only describe as an intoxicating Lemon Verbena scent. How intoxicating? I'm going online to order some, as soon as I finish this review. 51 years on Earth, and I'm just now discovering lemon scented bath oils? But the pièce de résistance? A cleverly placed foot rest in the opposite corner of the shower. Sheer brilliance. On the other hand, I was a bit disappointed with the size of the towels, as in too small. I'd love to see bath sheets as the default size. As is, the smaller towels are still absorbent and soft.
The bar can be found in the middle of the room, and contains the usual goodies. Warning: Items aren't cheap (9 bucks for a mini can of Pringles?) but if you're thrifty like me, there's a CVS Pharmacy less than 100 feet away from the main entrance of the hotel. As far as bar areas go, it's both beautiful and minimal. If you like hot beverages, there's a Nespresso machine tucked inside the bedroom bureau, with a wide assortment of complimentary coffee pods (and Harney & Sons Egyptian Chamomile tea bags!)

The suite itself is perfectly designed, with very soft carpeting and plenty of closet space, although that seems to be less important nowadays. I love the idea of two TVs in two separate areas of the hotel room. Even better, if you have kids in tow. The bedroom area has everything you need, including the ability to control all the lights & stuff from a nightstand console. There's also an easy-to-set Braun alarm clock (sans radio) although that's probably unnecessary with smart phones. I found it comforting all the same.
Speaking of comfort, perhaps the most important part of any hotel room is the bed, and the IC spares no expense in setting you up for a superb night’s sleep. The mattress is very firm (firmer than I’m used to, but I grew to love it) with four gigantic, sumptuous Lynova pillows (100% dream soft polyester fiber… very comfy.) As I mentioned earlier, I like it cold, but rest assured the high quality blankets will keep any normal person super warm & cozy.

Waking up was a delight, especially from one of the deepest sleeps in recent memory. Greater still, after opening the blinds and soaking in that breathtaking view again. When was the last time you woke up to airplanes landing at National Airport? I literally texted a half dozen of my friends with photos, just to prove how nice it was. Sometimes, words can't capture just how terrific something is to behold.
The IC has clearly built an oasis of a property in an exciting part of town. Sadly, the aforementioned pandemic has affected the communal effect in and around the hotel. The rooftop deck & lounge (which is open from 11 AM to 8 PM) was empty when I arrived, which is a shame, given the majestic, unfettered views and the oh-so-inviting pool, mere feet from the bar. Also, the wildly popular Kith/Kin's dining room was closed on the very night of my stay. Not the end of the world, mind you, but it's similar to watching the Washington Capitals in person... without Alex Ovechkin in the lineup. They're still probably going to win, but it won't be quite as special to witness.

Lucky for me, Kith/Kin's kitchen was still open for room service (and dining on the rooftop, although it was close to 100°, so I wound up eating back in my room.) Their full menu wasn't available, but there's enough there to "get a taste." I ordered Jerked Chicken Wings ($14) and a Kith Burger & Waffle Fries ($24) which took about 15 minutes to arrive (plenty of time to enjoy an ice cold Corona Extra.) The wings were scrumptious, giant in size, with tons of juicy meat and a generous coating of authentic jerk seasoning. Nice and messy too. A++. 
Unfortunately, the burger wasn’t as good. It’s enormous, which I love, but both patties were
overdone, and the bacon wasn’t salty. On a brighter note, the fries were crispy, firm outside, and
fluffy on the inside, with no oiliness and just the right amount of salt. Needless to say, I can’t
give a proper review without dining in the restaurant (with the benefit of a full menu, and a top-
flight staff) and I plan to rectify that in the very near future. Stay tuned.

Overall, it’s hard to find any fault with the IC. Running a 5-star hotel in the middle of a
worldwide pandemic is seemingly impossible; yet, my visit was this close to perfect.
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![Gorgeous Lobby](image1.jpg)

To learn more about the InterContinental Wharf DC (including rates) [click here](#).