This year’s World’s Best Awards survey was open for voting January 11 through May 10, 2021, as destinations around the world were lifting COVID-19 restrictions. Survey rules have always allowed readers to reflect on their travel experiences over a three-year period. We hope that this year’s honorees will inspire your own travels as you get back out into the world.

With marquee additions to its cultural, hotel, and culinary scenes over the past several years, the District of Columbia has proven its wide-reaching appeal. As popular as historic sites like the Lincoln Memorial and the White House continue to be, relatively newer destinations like The Wharf have caught the attention of an even broader swath of travelers who—judging from this year’s winners for the best hotels in Washington, D.C.—clearly appreciate having a breadth of options.

Every year for our World’s Best Awards survey, T+L asks readers to weigh in on travel experiences around the globe—to share their opinions on the top hotels, resorts, cities, islands, cruise ships, spas, airlines, and more. Readers rated hotels on their facilities, location, service, food, and overall value. Properties were classified as city or resort based on their locations and amenities.
This year, readers voted in equal measure for newer hotels (No. 9 InterContinental Washington D.C. - The Wharf) and classics (No. 2 The Jefferson). The latter group includes the 120-year-old icon Willard InterContinental Washington D.C., which claimed the No. 5 spot this year. Readers touted the "very comfortable beds," "history," and "the history gallery and the gingerbread exhibit." Other readers had similarly positive things to say about the No. 3 Ritz-Carlton Georgetown, Washington, D.C.'s service and overall guest experience, calling it "great, great, great!" and commenting that "they aim to please."

But it was the Hay-Adams that emerged once again as T+L readers' pick for the best Washington, D.C. hotel. Keep reading to find out what made the repeat winner rise above the rest.

**9. InterContinental Washington D.C. - The Wharf**

Score: 87.06

More information: wharfintercontinentaldc.com