



I stayed at the iconic Waldorf Astoria New York after its eight-year restoration

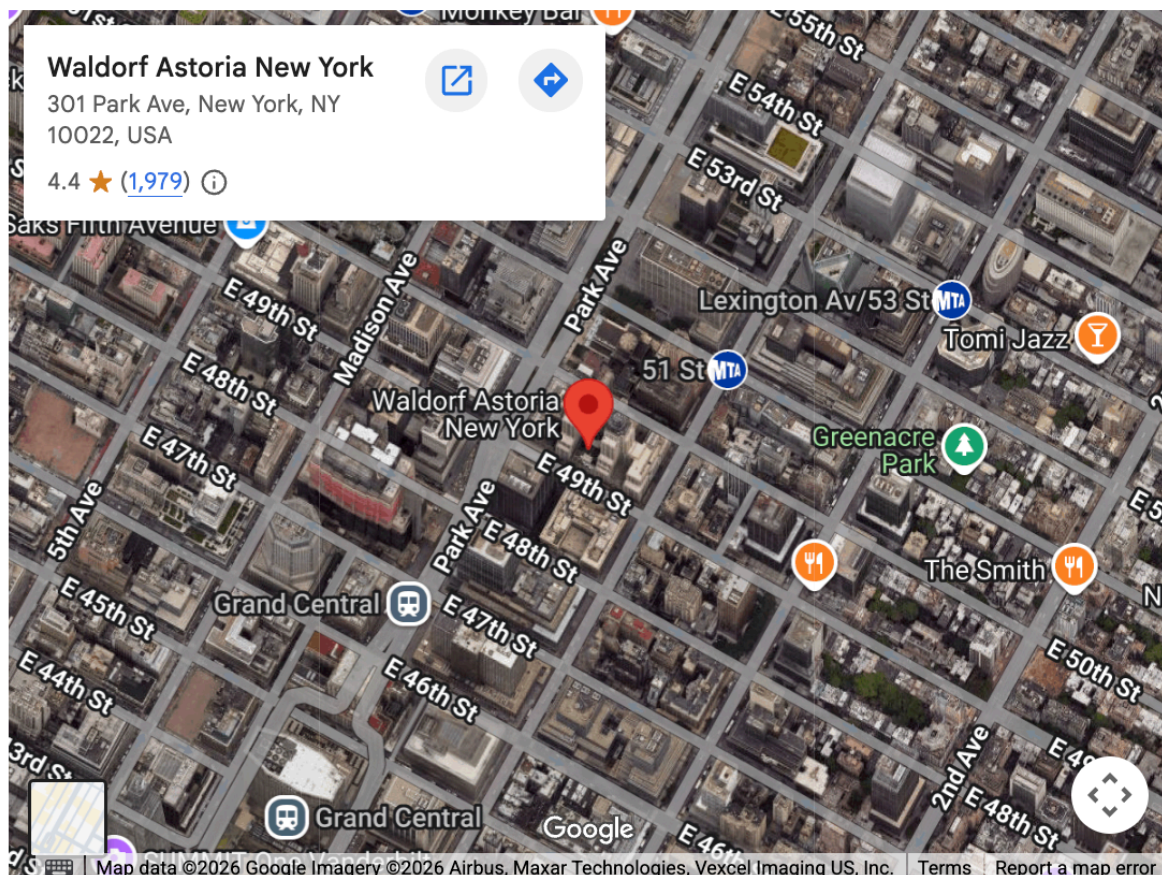


This New York grande dame is back and better than ever after a scrupulous eight-year transformation, complete with a marble-columned cocktail bar, a buzzy contemporary restaurant, and sophisticated rooms

Location

Occupying a full block between Park Avenue and Lexington, a stay at the landmark Waldorf Astoria **New York** brings you to the heart of Midtown East. This thrumming business and shopping hub is close to various well-known NYC landmarks, like the Chrysler Building, Grand Central Station and the United Nations Headquarters. It's also a hop from all the luxury boutiques and flagship shops lining Fifth and Madison Avenues. For culture, Museum Mile on the Upper East Side is a pleasant 20-minute stroll away through Central Park or short taxi ride. Here you'll find the Met, the Frick and the Guggenheim.

From JFK airport, either take the AirTrain to Jamaica Station, then the E subway train to Lexington Ave/53rd St; the LIRR to the Grand Central Terminal (less than a 10-minute walk from the hotel) or a taxi.



The vibe



Born from a 19th-century family rivalry on Fifth Avenue, the Waldorf Astoria started life as two separate **hotels** built side-by-side that defined opulent Gilded Age hospitality. It relocated to its current iconic Park Avenue location in 1931 and its recent eight-year transformation celebrates its Art Deco heyday.

The history is palpable from the moment you whirl through its storied revolving brass doors and sashay up one of several marble staircases into Peacock Alley, its signature bar and lobby lounge which is the social heart of the hotel. It's home a Steinway piano that once belonged to the American composer Cole Porter and is home to the hotel's most iconic feature, the Waldorf Astoria Clock, made for the 1893 Chicago World's Fair.

[BOOK NOW](#) 

Service

The Waldorf Astoria New York has a huge team of welcoming and efficient staff. Whichever entrance you choose to make – Park, 50th or the private historic 49th *porte-cochère* – friendly, uniformed staff await your arrival, ready to whisk away your luggage and usher you inside.

As I wandered into the Library Lounge, a suited staff member manning a drinks trolley offered me a glass of champagne to sip while checking in, before I was escorted all the way to my room by another.

Despite the hotel's landmark status and excellent reputation, service here isn't over the top or overly gushing as you might expect. Everyone I encountered seemed to have gracefully mastered the art of understated attentiveness.

Bed and bath

There are 375 rooms and suites – whittled down from its original 1,400 to create fewer, larger rooms (starting at 570 square feet). Plush king-size beds, work desks and seating areas feature in most.

City views vary depending on what side of the hotel you're on, with some facing out over Lexington Avenue and others Park, but both guarantee to offer impressive people watching.



The classic, cream-toned decor reflects the hotel's air of timeless sophistication, with elegant furnishings and plush fabrics, as well as statement ceramic lamps and abstract artworks, which add a contemporary feel.

Spa-like marble bathrooms are kitted out with Aesop products and have deep tubs, rainfall showers, single or double marble sinks and separate Japanese Toto toilets with heated seats. Suites have an adjacent dressing room area with a vanity table.

Read more: [New York's forgotten neighbourhood – how Little Syria vanished from Manhattan's streets](#)

Food and drink

There are two restaurants and a bar at the Waldorf Astoria New York. All-day Lex Yard Brasserie has contemporary fine dining covered. It's set within two dramatic spaces across different floors, each with a distinct atmosphere. Both have contemporary decor inspired by the jazz age – the dazzling downstairs space feels more buzzy; while upstairs, where breakfast is served, is more plush and peaceful.

Chef Michael Anthony's pared-back menu features beautifully presented crowd-pleasing dishes, including crispy baby artichokes, roasted and fried chicken – and the Waldorf Salad (a crunchy, creamy mix of apple, celery, walnuts and grapes dressed in mayonnaise, invented at the hotel.)

The daily breakfast served a la carte was a highlight of my stay. Not only for the light and fluffy baked egg frittata stuffed with goat's cheese and cherry tomatoes, but also for getting to sit in one of the beautiful light-green banquettes.

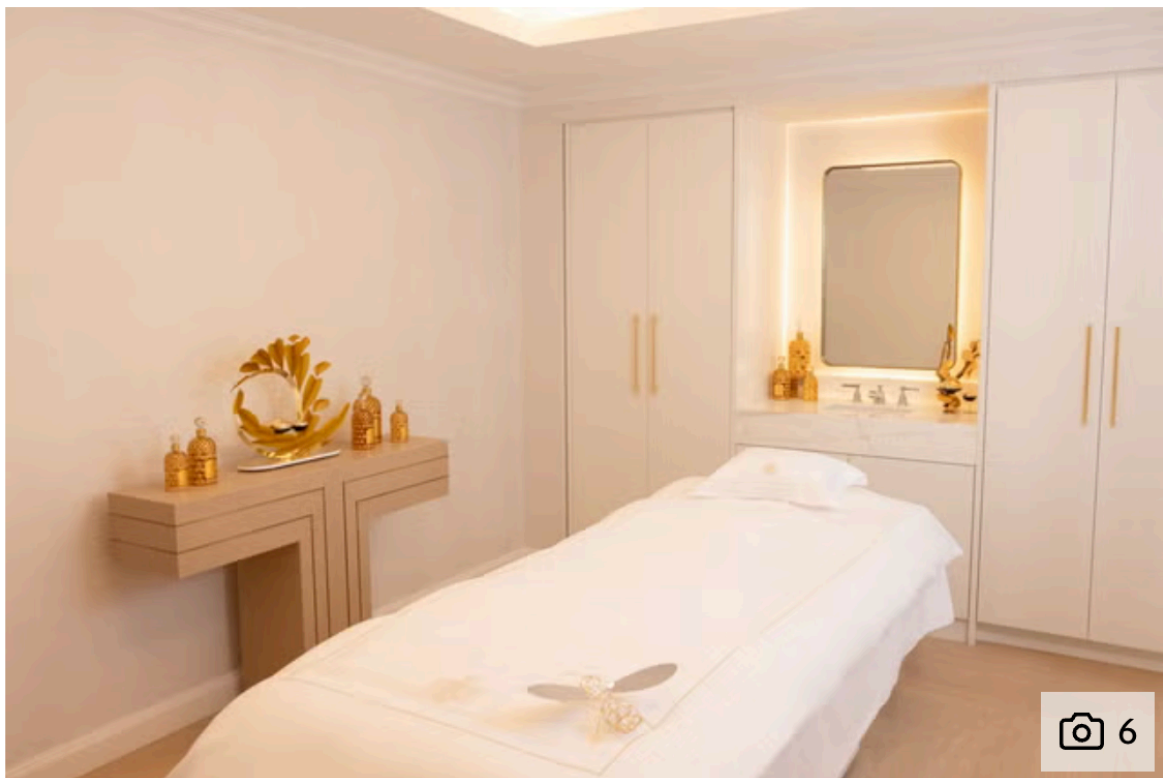
Vegetarian, vegan and gluten-free options are available.



Hiding in the Park Avenue lobby, which features the famous Wheel of Life mosaic from 1939, is Japanese restaurant Yoshoku. It serves elegant tasting menus for dinner which can be paired with sake, as well as offering a Japanese afternoon tea.

For drinks, Peacock Alley is a glorious, storied highlight not to be missed. It serves a classic cocktail list inspired by the hotel's history. Think a smooth Waldorf Martini, or seasonal signatures such as the Lottery Pick, a smoky mix of mezcal, lime, pineapple, passion fruit, agave and ginger beer.

Facilities



The 24-hour fifth-floor gym is generously kitted out with high-tech LifeFitness equipment including running machines, cross-trainers, exercise bikes, as well as free weights. Indulging in a treatment at the plush Guerlain Wellness Spa is an absolute must, with its 16 treatment rooms (including two couples' suites.) The Harmony Jet Lag massage is a decadent hour-and-a-half treatment carried out to the sound of Tibetan singing bowls, which are said to soothe the nervous system and induce a good night's sleep.

Save time to enjoy the experiential post-treatment relaxation areas, plus the sauna, steam room and arctic cave (for cold therapy).

Accessibility

The hotel has 32 adapted rooms with wide bathroom doors, roll-in showers and grab bars.

Pet policy

Dogs are welcome to stay free of charge at the Waldorf Astoria New York and dog-friendly treats are available on request, such as welcome bottles of “CharDOGnay” or “ZinfanTAIL”. The hotel also offers gourmet food, plush beds, water and food bowls.

Check-in/check-out

Check-in is 4pm; check-out is 12pm.