

SEPTEMBER 2017 ₹150

Business Traveller INDIA



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Empire State Of Mind

Exploring New York City



Roger Smith Hotel New York



BACKGROUND This boutique family-owned (and operated) hotel opened in 1929 and has been in the same family since then. One of the lesser known gems of midtown Manhattan, it's a charming little property right on Lexington Avenue that stands out with its old school vertical board that's lit in green.

WHAT'S IT LIKE? The entrance is embellished with vivid bronze artwork including two showpieces. The lobby also features similar pieces of art and oil paintings that have been created by James Knowles. He is the president and chief operating officer and husband of Suzanne Knowles, who owns the hotel with her two sisters. Wooden fixtures and a red carpet complement the art around the lobby. Guests can also pick up Green Mountain Yogurt from Vermont and apples at any time of the day from here.

WHERE IS IT? It's on Lexington Avenue, walking distance to Grand Central Station. Major corporations like Anheuser-Busch, JP Morgan and the United Nations are close by.

ROOM FACILITIES I checked into my One Bedroom suite (53 sqm) late evening. It felt homely and warm with a fireplace, a

bookshelf (with a great collection of biographies), two colonial writing desks and a cabinet with a microwave, mini-fridge and a Nespresso machine. Walls bear flower motifs and the artwork around the space is vintage American. The sofa (with a pullout bed) in the living room is quite comfortable — my preferred spot to unwind in the evenings. There's a balcony with two chairs and a table that opens up to the surrounding buildings. The snug space is well-lit with a number of cleverly placed lamps. Between the living room and the bedroom is the large bathroom that carries Beekman 1802 toiletries. There is also an iron and ironing board, free wifi and a hair dryer. Evident attention to detail is paid in the design of the accommodation that has personally been designed by Suzanne Knowles. All rooms and suites at the property feature different layouts, but have the same soul — an old-world charm. The hotel believes in book exchange, allowing you to leave a book behind if you wish to take one home.

RESTAURANTS AND BARS I quite enjoyed my evening at Henry's (open April-November), the hotel's bar that's named after



the family dog. It's a classic Manhattan rooftop venue that's surrounded by midtown's skyscrapers — a signature New York experience that's highly recommended. Lily's is another bar on the ground floor that opens in the evenings. It features a wall that exhibits art from local artists and a glass window that offers an uninterrupted view of Lexington Avenue.

BUSINESS AND MEETING FACILITIES For a boutique hotel, Roger Smith has impressive meeting spaces. In reception style — Solarium can accommodate 120, Winthrop can fit 60 and Starlight Loft can have 100 people. I enjoyed dinner at Penthouse that has been reconstructed at the very place Suzanne grew up at. It has portraits of her bygone family members in addition to a piano and a vintage collection of hardbound books. The terrace at Penthouse offers the most magnificent view of the Chrysler building.

LEISURE FACILITIES During their stay, guests have free access to a nearby health club.

VERDICT An art-inspired choice for business travellers looking to stay in the heart of midtown Manhattan.

TESTED BY
Akanksha Maker

HOW MANY ROOMS?
132 rooms and suites.

HIGHLIGHTS
Feel of Henry's and Penthouse, and the collection of books across the property.

PRICE
Internet rates for a midweek stay in October in a Classic Standard room started from \$327/£21,091.

CONTACT
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- FREE WIFI
- 2 BARS
- 5 MEETING ROOM