

# The Concierge

TIPS FOR TOURING HERE AND ABROAD

NEW YORK

## Boutique in a quiet universe

New York Edition offers touches of elegance in an aura of calm

BY CHRISTOPHER MUTHER | GLOBE STAFF



What would the tweed-wearing, stiff-collared businessmen of 1911 make of their insurance offices now? The ground-level executive suites, once filled with Underwood typewriters, big oaken desks, and cigar smoke, now serve as a lounge, bar, and restaurant where monied travelers sip drinks called the Dandy New Yorker and Michelin-starred chef Jason Atherton offers a modern twist on the traditional steakhouse — with British influences (better than it sounds).

The original mahogany wainscoting and herringbone oak floors of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Co. Tower are still intact, but the walls above the wainscoting are stylishly crammed with photos of Deborah Harry, the Sex Pistols, and street scenes in opulent French baroque gold leaf frames. The restaurant and bar are part of the New York Edition, the city’s of-the-moment celebrated hotel.

Upstairs in the clocktower, smaller offices, once filled with filing cabinets, have been transformed into rooms of understated luxury. A neutral color palette stretches throughout the rooms. There are undulating ceilings and the scent of Le Labo’s floral-tinged black tea perfume fills the cool air. The scent was custom made for the hotel.

Forget for a moment that this hotel is part of the Marriott International chain; it doesn’t feel like a Marriott. What you should focus on is that the New York Edition is somewhat of a masterpiece of 2015 lodging. With rates starting at \$600 a night, it had better be perfect — although you can find cheaper prices with the usual travel detective work. It is the latest hotel developed by Ian Schrager, the former Studio 54 co-owner who, when his clubbing days came to an end, went on to create a blueprint of what a modern boutique hotel should look like.

It joins the wildly successful Miami Beach, London, and Istanbul Edition hotels. The concept of the Edition has been so embraced by travelers that Marriott is opening 10 more (none in Boston) over the next four years.

There has been much fuss made over the hotel since its May opening, but the most appealing aspect of the Edition is an odd feeling of calm in the rooms — or at least in the room I tried this summer. The decor was de-



ceptively simple. The only thing in my room that screamed “You’re in a fancy place!” was the faux mink throw on the bed. Schrager is a master of this relaxation trick. Once you spend a day traipsing around London, Miami, or New York, you need refuge. You may be paying that (sometimes ridiculously) high rate to hang out in the buzzy lobby bar or claim the bragging rights that come with staying at an of-the-moment hotel, but the biggest benefit of it all is the feeling of escape into a tranquil universe behind the door.

So what would those 1911 businessmen think of their

offices now? They’d probably object to the no smoking policy and wonder why there were pictures on the walls of men calling themselves the Sex Pistols. I suspect, however, that they would have no objection to the cocktail list.

**THE NEW YORK EDITION** 5 Madison Ave., New York. 212-413-4200, [www.editionhotels.com/new-york](http://www.editionhotels.com/new-york). Rates \$600-\$1,200 a night.

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A bar (left) and staircase (above) in the public spaces at New York Edition, and two views of rooms in the new Marriott property that once was an insurance company office building.



### HERE

**HARVARD TOUR SERVES UP LOCAL HISTORY AND FARE** Emily Miyahara, a Harvard College student and theatrical guide who has led hundreds of tours, will lead you and as many as 19 others on a historic and culinary tour of Harvard Square on Oct. 24, 3-5:30 p.m. The Hahvahd Tour will take you to local artisan shops and restaurants, including Cardullo’s, where you can shop for gourmet imports; Salt & Olive, where owner Mary Taylor will offer tastings and explain how to enhance dishes using wine, olive oil, or vinegar; Follow the Honey, where owner Caneen Canning tells you all about the world of bees and offers samplings from three different hives; and the Russell House Tavern, where you can try seasonally inspired American fare and local brews (pictured above). \$43 per person (plus \$3.36 booking fee). 855-455-8747, [www.harvardsquaretastingtour.com](http://www.harvardsquaretastingtour.com)

**THRILLS, CHILLS, AND PONY RIDES AT CANOBIE LAKE PARK** Perfect your scream and then head to Canobie Lake Park in Salem, N.H., to explore five

bone-chilling haunted houses open weekends through Oct. 31. New haunts during SCREEEMFEST include the Canobie Lake Hotel, where “ghostly guests” wander the halls, and Black Hollow Cove, a re-created lair of old-time pirates. Keep an eye out for roaming monster-like creatures and the weekly monster parade. The amusement park, open weekends through October, offers rides for all ages, games, and other attractions. Pet baby goats, sheep, donkeys, and alpacas, and enjoy pony rides at Canobie’s Petting Zoo, 1-5 p.m. on weekends through Oct. 25. Tribute bands rock the Midway Stage, paying homage to Van Halen, Led Zeppelin, and other classic bands. Don’t miss the extreme motorcycle

stunts, strange physical feats of daring, and other live entertainment. Adults \$36, under 4 free. 603-893-3506, [www.canobie.com](http://www.canobie.com)

### THERE

**STAY AT A HIGH-END HOSTEL IN 9 EUROPEAN CITIES** Gather your best backpacking buddies or a few families and friends and book a Generator hotel in one of nine European cities, from Barcelona to Berlin to Dublin. Generator offers affordable luxury hotels (read: swanky hostels) that have more space than many big-city European equivalents and are designed to reflect their surroundings and history. Generator Hamburg was once used as

a Beatles recording studio and Generator Berlin Mitte showcases exclusive works from some of Berlin’s top artists, for instance. Each hostel typically has public spaces where guests can hang out 24/7, complimentary Wi-Fi, 24-hour laundry facilities, hosted events with local artists and musicians, and a spot to grab snacks. Pay \$25 per bed per night for dorm-style accommodations (ranging from four to 10 beds), book a private room with one or two beds for \$40 per room, or pay about \$100 for a penthouse with a private balcony. [www.generatorhostels.com](http://www.generatorhostels.com)

**EXPLORE ALASKA’S NOOKS AND CRANNIES BY BOAT** You still need to endure winter, but it’s not too early to plan for

next summer’s adventures. Alaskan Dream Cruises will add a new ship, the Chichagof Dream, to its fleet next June. The vessel will carry up to 74 passengers in 37 staterooms, and it has big viewing areas on the promenade deck. Enjoy Alaska’s Glacier Bay and Island Adventure, an 8-day cruise that travels between Sitka and Juneau and features wilderness days for kayaking, hiking, and exploration (pictured below) and cultural days for meeting the locals. Prices start at \$3,379 with a 10 percent discount if you book by Oct. 31; includes ship’s accommodations, all meals, shore excursions, airport transfers, and use of recreational equipment. 855-747-8100, [www.alaskandreamcruises.com/cruises](http://www.alaskandreamcruises.com/cruises)

### EVERYWHERE

**GARMIN’S NEW, IMPROVED ACTION CAMERA** Take Garmin’s new VIRB XE HD action camera on your adventures and capture high-quality images and videos from snowy mountaintops to underwater realms (it remains waterproof up to 50 meters — no housing needed). The 5.3-ounce action camera takes 12-megapixel shots (with bursts up to 30 frames per second) and 1080-pixel videos, and comes with Wi-Fi capability and built-in GPS and sensors for recording your speed, elevation, G-force, and location. Transfer photos from the camera to your mobile device using Bluetooth and the Apple- and Android-compatible app, and then share



online. The XE (pictured above) doesn’t have a preview screen, but you can use the phone app as a viewfinder. With the phone and camera connected, you can also use the VIRB tracking feature to find your camera if you lose it in the woods or drop it in the snow, for instance. Extra bonus: The camera now uses GoPro-compatible mounts. \$399.99. 800-800-1020, [www.garmin.com](http://www.garmin.com)

**SLIM WIRELESS KEYBOARD FOR TRAVELERS** Wirelessly connect Penclic’s Mini Keyboard K2 to your laptop or other USB-compatible mobile devices, and stay productive while you’re on the road. The sleek keyboard has a compact design with regular-size responsive keys that make typing feel natural. It measures just 5mm to help prevent wrist strain, and runs on two rechargeable AAA batteries that can be charged using a micro-USB and last up to two months per charge. Plug the included mini nano dongle into the USB port of your computer, charge the Penclic batteries through the USB, and then start working. The wireless keyboard works with Macs and PCs, and comes in black or white. Retail for \$79.95 (or \$68.99 on Newegg.com). [www.penclic.se](http://www.penclic.se) KARI BODNARCHUK

