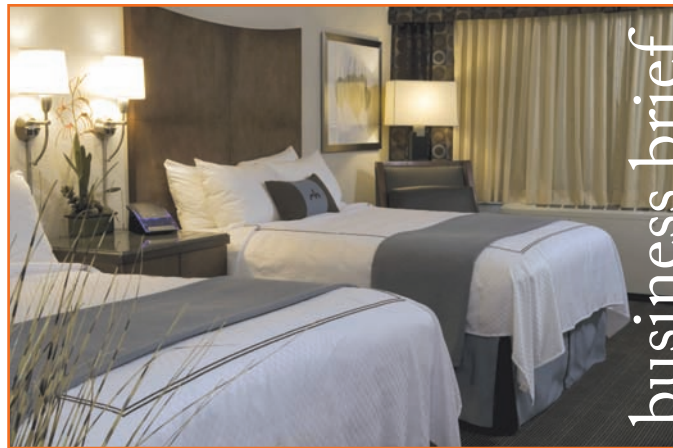


A new ambiance at Capitol Hill Suites. Photo by Donovan Marks.



Capitol Hill Suites Home Sweet Home Away From Home

BY HEATHER SCHOELL

Location, location, location ... Capitol Hill Suites is known by anyone who has worked on the Hill as the closest hotel to the House and the place to put up your incoming RNC and DNC politicals. It's a short stroll to the Metro, shops and restaurants, but after a top-to-bottom renovation, staying there is no longer only about location.

New and Improved

Capitol Hill Suites has had some serious elective surgery, not just another coat of paint. From ceilings to floors, interior and exterior, this is a new and improved hotel.

Each room has its own safe. The bathrooms offer Aveda products, the kitchens are stocked with cooking utensils, and the rooms are set up with WiFi and hardwired computer ports. Each will have cordless phones and a DVD player to go with the DVD library offered in the lobby. There is year-round temperature control and enough furniture to put away clothes properly. These amenities are great, but the most important feature in a hotel stay is, of course, the bed.

The beds are double pillow-top, meaning there is a cushiony featherbed (without the feathers) over the pillow-top mattress. You'll be out like a light once you've savored the turndown chocolates. According to Ian Harvey, general manager of Capitol Hill Suites, the guests are greatly impressed with the luxuriousness of the beds.

The lobby has a comfortable place to sit and watch the news on a flat-screen television. There is a complimentary coffee bar and a number of toiletries set up for purchase. The staff is courteous and welcoming. Common areas have fireplaces and piped-in music. The main building houses junior suites, while the next-door annex offers larger suites which

have a full kitchen. Some have a dining area and separate living room. The annex offers a small fitness center, a self-serve laundry facilities, and a boardroom big enough for 12.

The sidewalks will be replaced with inlaid details at the entrances, and the landscaping will be completed by the end of the month.

It's the People

Ian Harvey has only been general manager of Capitol Hill Suites for about four months. He took the position when he realized the owner's level of commitment to quality. "I have worked in big hotels where you don't meet people, but I like this," he said. For example, the Texas ranchers who visit Congress every year in their suits and cowboy hats stay at the Capitol Hill Suites. Just that morning, Harvey was called to the elevator by two elderly ladies – it was stuck between floors. Immediately, the technician was there to fix the problem, which was that all 15 ranchers had squeezed in together, tipping the scales and far exceeding the weight limit. They all had a good laugh, and the ladies headed up to their room smiling. That's the kind of human interaction that Harvey enjoys at this boutique hotel.

"I've spent 24 years in hotels," he said. "To have most of the feedback be positive is really great."

Capitol Suites Hotel will have an official kickoff celebration on June 26, but Harvey has future plans for a special reception to thank the neighbors for graciously putting up with the lengthy construction phase. "We would like for Capitol Hill Suites to be a welcome asset to the Capitol Hill neighborhood," he said.

Capitol Hill Suites is located at 200 C St. SE. Visit www.capitolhillsuites.com or call 202-543-6000 for more information. ★

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