

# Conrad Washington, DC

## A modern take on D.C.'s upscale hotel scene.

By: Emma Reynolds



### Why did this hotel catch your attention?

Just blocks from The White House, in the heart of downtown, the hotel anchors the recently-created CityCenterDC mixed-use development, a five-block complex that features residential and commercial spaces and dozens of shopping and dining options. Once up in the sleek hotel tower, though, you'll feel far away from it all—though the 10-floor building, designed by Pritzker Prize Laureates Herzog & de Meuron (of London's The Tate Modern and Beijing's Bird's Nest stadium fame), is flooded with natural light and downtown views at every turn, thanks to an all-glass exterior. The lobby, check-in and main dining and lounging spaces are located on the third floor, adding to the above-the-fray feel.

### What's the backstory?

Opened in 2019, the hotel is the flagship property for the Conrad brand, and Hilton's first luxury offering in the nation's capital. The hotel itself is owned by an array of real estate companies and investors, chief among them the Qatari royal family—which means if the owners are in town, expect to find plenty of men in black and strict security measures.

### Is there a charge for Wi-Fi?

Wi-fi is free in the rooms and public areas; faster Premium service comes with fee.



### Tell us all about the accommodations.

#### Any tips on what to book?

While Conrad is one of Hilton's luxury brands, the overall ethos of the collection tends towards the unfussy and uncluttered, and this flagship is definitely right in line with that vibe. Interiors firm Rottet Studio has created 360 bright, airy rooms with a streamlined contemporary décor of modular furnishings and a muted color palette of whites, grays, and light woods; in most, the unadorned, white linen-topped beds take center stages. Suites have extras like low-slung couches and fireplaces, and all rooms have marble bathrooms with double vanities, walk-in showers, and Byredo bath amenities, but overall, the feel is pretty simple. (In what seems to be a Conrad standard, the hotel doesn't do evening turn-down, so you won't even find any extra touches to the bedside table come bedtime.) Rooms to get are the Premium Corner King, which have a wraparound wall of windows.

#### Drinking and dining—what are we looking at?

Estuary, The Conrad's signature restaurant, is led by DC-based Chef Ria Montes and brings an innovative and seasonal approach to the flavors of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed (don't miss the brunch.) Just off the lobby atrium, the circular Estuary Bar is an elegant spot for drinks, though the real nighttime star is the Summit rooftop bar and lounge, serving libations and light bites with its 360-degree city views—a must come sunset. There are also a couple of furnished outdoor terraces and cozy nooks dotted around the main atrium to which you can order something from the lobby bar.

#### How was the service?

Front desk service was efficient if a bit corporate, while the staff in the restaurant had more personality and a warmer touch.

#### What type of travelers will you find here?

The extensive ballroom and meeting facilities make it popular with corporate, group, and event clients, while the location makes for a good hub for visiting officials and dignitaries, and locals looking for a discreet spot for meetings or power lunches. I didn't spy many families, though the room sizes can comfortably accommodate kids.



### What about the neighborhood? What else is here?

The location in CityCenterDC means there's a ton of shopping and dining within walking distance, along with each access to major monuments and Metro lines. The setting, service, and value on privacy make this a solid luxury option in town—particularly for guests whose tastes tend towards the more modern and unfussy, who might prefer this over the city's more traditionally old school five-star options.

### Any other hotel features worth noting?

Take note of the hotel's contemporary art collection, which has been curated by consulting firm Tatar Art Projects and pays homage to the city's Washington Color School and other historic art movements. A first for Conrad, the 10th-floor Sakura Lounge—which can be accessed by guests of certain room categories, or via an additional fee—serves as an all-day retreat offering dedicated butler and concierge service, perks like free pressing and priority reservations for the rooftop, meeting spaces, and a la carte breakfast and dinner from a chef, plus all-day drinks and snacks. Be sure to try some of the lounge's private reserve Japanese whiskeys or—if you're here on a weekend—the afternoon tea. There's a decent gym with walls of windows, but no spa or wellness facilities.

### Bottom line: Why should we choose the Conrad?

As one of the newer spots in town, the Conrad brings a modern sensibility to D.C.'s upscale hotel landscape, along with a convenient location, efficient service and destination dining. Depending on the season, prices can be very reasonable, too.