

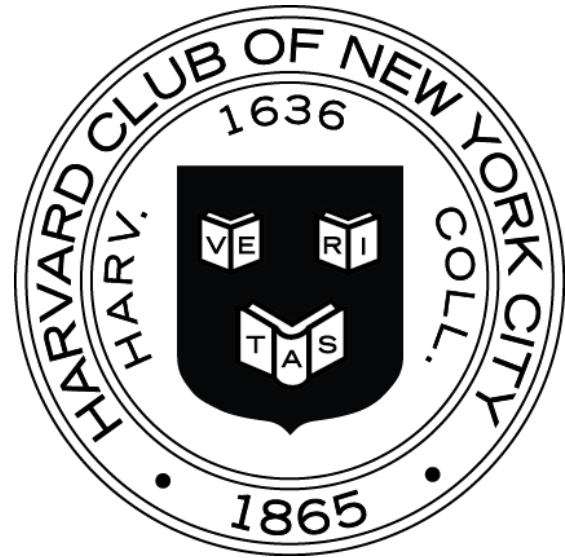
HUGE ATMOSPHERIC CLUB, GOOD LOCATION, EXPENSIVE BEDROOMS

THE HARVARD CLUB, NYC

by Lew Toulmin

SUMMARY

We visited the Harvard Club and viewed a bedroom in early August 2010. The Club consists of an original building and several additions, with the older portions decorated in a traditional Teddy Roosevelt style, featuring dark woods and animal trophies, and very large, beautiful meeting rooms. The queen bedroom we viewed was rather small and claustrophobic, and expensive, especially in the summer (when much lower prices are usual at most NYC clubs). Some bedrooms have no en suite bath yet are still expensive. Most staffers were helpful and knowledgeable. We did not eat at the Club and hence provide no information on this topic.



CLUB HISTORY AND FACILITIES

The Club was founded before 1865 as a dining and alumni group. In 1887 the Club incorporated and leased a brownstone on 22nd Street. In 1894 the Club moved up to the new “club land” area around 44th Street, and built a new structure designed by McKim,



Mead and White in a neo-Georgian style. This has been added on to four times over the years, creating the current massive club, which goes all the way across the block from 44th to 45th Streets. The present address is 35 West 44th Street, between 5th and 6th Avenues. It is about 400 yards west of Grand Central Station and 500 yards east of Times Square, and two blocks north of Bryant Park and the main headquarters of the NY City Library.

The décor in the older portion of the Club features chandeliers made of elk horns and trophy game heads of elephant, wild boar, deer, elk and ibex. The wood paneling is dark and atmospheric. Teddy Roosevelt, a Harvard man, would certainly feel at home in the present club.

The Club library appears to be slightly larger than the Cosmos Club's. All the books are held behind diagonal latticework screens, thus making casual access more difficult. The meeting and dining rooms are numerous, massive and impressive.

The Club bar was virtually dead on a Saturday night in the summer, as was the case in most of the NYC clubs except the Yale Club.

The Club has a fitness center which includes four squash courts, treadmills, elliptical trainers, and weight lifting equipment. Daily group exercise and cardio classes are offered. The Club has a surprisingly small reciprocal network of only about 16 clubs, apparently the smallest such network of all major clubs.

Three out of four Harvard Club staffers we encountered were knowledgeable and helpful, one was new and untrained. There is a separate wheelchair entrance.

DRESS CODE AND RULES

The dress code is "business casual" year round throughout the facility, except in the Main Dining Room, where jacket and tie are required. Business papers may not be displayed except in certain limited locations.

BED ROOM DESCRIPTION

We were shown one bedroom, which was about 11 x 10 feet, rather small and claustrophobic feeling. It had a brown and white attractive décor, queen bed, no closet, a narrow armoire, a moderate sized TV in the armoire, large window facing 44th Street, and a small bathroom en suite with tub and shower. The room had been redone recently. All bedrooms have WiFi access, air conditioning, hair dryers, and room service (during main dining room hours). Apparently not all bedrooms have been re-decorated, and some do not have en suite bathrooms.

BED ROOM RATES

The rates for reciprocals are the "guest" rates; these rates are about \$21 to \$46 more expensive for guests/reciprocals than for actual members, for standard rooms. The reciprocal rate including taxes but not breakfast is: single, no bath: \$222; single, with basin: \$233; queen no bath: \$244; queen with bath (the room we viewed): \$376; two twin beds with bath: \$376; two queen beds with bath: \$422; king with bath: \$410; and queen suite: \$541. We enquired about a summer discount; this is apparently not offered, unlike in most NYC clubs. (Although one staffer informed us over the phone that normal rates are dropped "about \$10" in the summer, but on site staff stated that the normal rates

apply.) Hence we estimate that these summer rates are the most expensive for comparable rooms among reciprocal clubs in NYC. For the fall-winter-spring season, we estimate that these rates are in the upper high range, exceeded only by the Penn and Princeton Clubs. We note that the rates for rooms with no en suite bath seem extremely high.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership is open to persons who have attended Harvard for at least a year, or persons who are or were on the Harvard faculty or boards. (There are no non-Harvard associated colleges or universities accepted.) Annual dues for persons over 10 years out of undergraduate college, who are residents of NYC, are \$1502. For New York suburbanites (50 mile radius), dues are \$1002; for residents east of the Mississippi dues are \$676; west of the Mississippi or abroad: \$451. Harvard faculty or officers pay dues of \$300. The initiation fee is 100% of the applicable annual dues amount. Women were first admitted to membership in 1973.

FOOD

We did not eat at the Club, but we noted on the Club website an interesting recipe for popovers from Club executive chef Angelo Ljubicic of Croatia. The recipe is located at: <http://www.hcnyc.com/files/chefsrecipes.pdf>. Enjoy!

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